

Is a Change of Course at State Department Coming?

Some senior officers are retiring but who and what will replace them?

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There are a lot of anonymous bureaucrats that man the offices in the nation's capital. If one were to mention the name Wendy Sherman at a Washington DC cocktail gathering it is likely that few in the room will have ever heard of her, but she has long been one of the most important players in Democratic Party administrations when it comes to foreign policy in key parts of the world. Sherman, the Deputy Secretary of State, will be retiring this summer after more than thirty years with the Foreign Service. She has been a fixture in often controversial [top level policy making](#) since Bill Clinton was in the White House, where she served as a top adviser to Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, also taking on the role of lead negotiator in the ultimately unsuccessful talks to stop North Korea's ballistic missile program in the late 1990s. With a return to power of the Democrats in 2008, she served as Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs under Obama. To her credit, she was a lead negotiator with Iran on the 2015 nuclear agreement (JCPOA), which Donald Trump acting on bad advice subsequently withdrew from.

More recently, Sherman has been a key part of the Biden administration's efforts to develop strategies to [confront China](#) in the Indo-Pacific and elsewhere whenever Beijing has sought to develop trade relationships with key suppliers of essential raw materials. This has included [putting pressure on allies like Australia and New Zealand](#) in the Pacific to reject Chinese commercial initiatives, elevating what began as competitive trade policies into a perception that China was becoming a threat to American national security. Sherman also played a significant role in encouraging international diplomatic and military support for Ukraine after Russia's invasion.

Sherman's current position as State Department number two was bestowed on her by President Joe Biden. Her comments relating to her retirement reveal something of her own philosophy as well as the views of the current administration. She said

"The arc of history will only bend toward justice if people of conscience steer it in the right direction. That it is our job to have courage, to collaborate with others and seek out common ground, to persist against the odds, to use our voice and our power for good—to keep faith with the promise of our democracy and to never, ever lose hope. Diplomacy is not for the faint of heart..."

Secretary of State Antony Blinken not surprisingly praised Sherman's career, saying that

"President Biden asked Wendy to serve in this role because he knew he could count on her to help revitalize America's alliances and partnerships and manage our complex relationships with competitors."

Blinken described Sherman's lengthy career as a diplomat in a statement after her resignation was announced, saying she has

"helped lead our engagement in the Indo-Pacific, the region where the history of the 21st century will be written. She has deepened our bonds with our friends around the world, especially with the Republic of Korea, Japan, and the European Union. She has overseen our efforts to strengthen the Department's capabilities to manage our relationship with the People's Republic of China, and built greater convergence with allies and partners... Her remarkable career – which spans more than three decades, three presidents, and five secretaries of state – addressed some of the toughest foreign policy challenges of our time. Our nation is safer and more secure, and our partnerships more robust, due to her leadership."

One can expect kind words wrapped around positive government-speak both from Blinken and from Sherman herself after her admittedly long years of service, but there is something manifestly false about the euphoria over a US foreign policy that has during the Biden time in office eschewed diplomacy in favor of military threats and thousands of punitive Treasury Department sanctions. If anything, contradicting Blinken, the United States is in no way "safer and more secure" thanks to his and Wendy Sherman's efforts, quite the contrary. It has, *inter alia*, converted major powers Russia and China, who were actively seeking normalized relations, into *de facto* enemies with all that implies, a result that, even if it does not turn into World War 3, might well mean the end of the dollar as the world's reserve currency as the world moves towards increased financial and banking system multipolarity.

If Sherman and Blinken, acting on behalf of Joe Biden, have had a success it would consist of getting the allegedly defensive alliance NATO [on board](#) the China-phobia train, with Beijing joining Russia as one of the two great autocratic "threats to democracy." At the end of June 2022, Jens Stoltenberg, the NATO Secretary General, declared that China does represent "serious challenges" to the alliance, which, for the first time agreed to include "threats posed by Beijing" into plans for its "future strategy" concept ([PDF](#)), joining Russia as a threat to "NATO's interests, security and values." Stoltenberg explained how "We now face an era of strategic competition ... China is substantially building up its forces, including in nuclear weapons, bullying its neighbors, including Taiwan. China is not [yet] our adversary but we must be clear-eyed about the serious challenges it represents."

Antony Blinken also climbed on to the horse that Stoltenberg was riding, commenting in familiar terms how

“One of the things that [China’s] doing is seeking to undermine the rules-based international order that we adhere to, that we believe in, that we helped build. And if China’s challenging it in one way or another, we will stand up to that.”

That the rules-based order is little more than a contrivance to maintain political and military dominance by Washington and its friends is by now clear to everyone except the people sitting in and around the White House, most particularly to include Blinken and Sherman.

So what comes next as the featured act post Wendy Sherman? It should be noted that the State Department top level is completely staffed by Jewish Americans who are politically-speaking neocons with close ties to Israel who also believe that the maintenance of total military dominance by the United State is good both for them and good for the Jewish state. All of them are Russo-phobes for various reasons often related to the history of Jews in Russia. Sherman [recently participated](#) in discussions in Washington with her Israeli counterpart intended to “...further deepen and expand the US-Israel relationship.” Someone should tell her that it is already far deeper than it should be if one were to go by American interests.

The current third in line at State is the notorious Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Victoria Nuland who started the problems in Eastern Europe when she worked with her colleagues to overthrow and replace the existing government in Ukraine in 2014. Nuland, who recently spilled the beans about direct US involvement in the Ukraine war, is married to leading neocon Robert Kagan. It has often been observed that neocon foreign policy, which originated with the Republican Party and is based on a maintaining a US government monopoly on forms of international violence, has now come to dominate both parties.

If Biden chooses to pull a rabbit out of his hat and comes up with a replacement for Wendy Sherman who is actually in favor of active diplomacy as a mechanism to avoid war, I and many others will be pleasantly surprised and even astonished. More likely it will be Nuland or a Nuland clone or possibly someone having all the Democratic Party boxes checked, i.e. black, Jewish and a transexual who uses [the right pronouns](#) and pretends to be a woman. The fundamental problem is that the United States government is no longer run by people capable of acting in rational self-interest, which would mean doing things for the good of the country. The system is in reality broken and it is now clear that something has gone terribly wrong. The sad truth is that the United States is in decline, wallowing in debt and corruption, and Joe Biden and company have lost control, lying and misrepresenting nearly everything. So good bye Wendy! It was great having you at State where you and your friends turned competitors into enemies. It will be interesting to see what happens next!

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Featured image: This is the official State Department photo for Deputy Secretary of State Wendy R. Sherman, taken at the U.S. Department of State in Washington, D.C., on April 26, 2021. [State Department Photo by Robert Stewart/ Public Domain]

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