



Pearson, W. Robert: Files, 1985-1987

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Subtitle/Office

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Record Type

Textual

Biography

Biography

W. Robert Pearson was born in 1943 in Tennessee. He graduated from Vanderbilt University, where he received a Bachelor of Arts degree, and he received a law degree from University of Virginia Law School in 1968. He speaks English, French, Chinese, and Turkish.

From 1969-1973, he was a member of the U.S. Navy Judge Advocate General's Corps. He served in Beijing, China as a political officer and began his Foreign Service career with a 2-year assignment in Auckland, New Zealand in 1976.

Pearson was appointed Deputy Executive Secretary of the National Security Council from 1985 until 1987. Between 1991 and 1993, Pearson was Executive Secretary of the Department of State under Secretary James Baker.

He Served twice at NATO, from 1987 to 1990 on the international staff as chair of NATO's Political Committee, and from 1993 to 1997 as Deputy Permanent Representative to the U.S. Missing during the Balkan crisis and NATO's enlargement.

Pearson was Deputy Chief of Mission of the US Embassy to France from July 1997 to July 2000. He closely followed the evolution of the European Union, and defense and security issues within the Atlantic Alliance and the EU. He actively promoted business ties between France and the US and helped in the opening of five new American offices in France's regions.

He was then the United States Ambassador to Turkey in Ankara from 2000 to 2003. He managed US interests in Turkey through two severe domestic economic crises, a general election, the war in Afghanistan and the liberation of Iraq.

He was director general of the U.S. Foreign Service from 2003 to 2006, repositioning the American Foreign Service to meet the new challenges of the 21st century and winning two national awards for his efforts.

He served from 2008 to 2014 as president of IREX, an international development NGO based in Washington, spearheading its expansion to reach more than 125 countries worldwide.

As of 2020, Pearson was the President of American Diplomacy Publishers, and A DUCIGS/Rethinking Diplomacy Fellow.

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