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 Date 1 July 1991

Webster Bids Farewell To CIA

WASHINGTON (AP) - William H. Webster on Monday said goodbye to employees of the Central Intelligence Agency, saying his four years as director was "a great and worthy adventure."

The agency "worked hard to build the trust and confidence that was so badly needed" in its relationship with Congress, he said.

"In an era of declining budgets, there will be inevitable strain," he told 2,000 CIA workers during a retirement ceremony.

"A reputation for honesty and competency becomes all the more important."

Webster's four years at the CIA was the fourth-longest tenure of any director. He announced his retirement on May 8. Webster leaves the post later this month, planning to practice law in the Washington area.

At the ceremony, he was presented the Distinguished Intelligence Medal, the CIA's highest career achievement award.

"We are entering a period of reexamination of the intelligence organization," Webster said. "Whatever the outcome, I am convinced that the most important ingredient is professional respect and mutual trust. No laws can make these happen."