

WXPof GSA Critic Is Reinstated After White House Acts

By William Glidce
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John E. Holt, the General Services Administration computer expert who was fired with the personal approval of GSA head Arthur F. Sampson, was reinstated by Sampson yesterday after the White House intervened.

The reinstatement followed an earlier statement yesterday by GSA in which it said it was standing by its dismissal of Holt despite a 2-1, vote by a GSA job review panel Wednesday to change Holt's job rating from unsatisfactory to satisfactory.

"I had a hunch it would work out, after the review board's vote," Holt said last night "I feel pretty good now."

Holt, 44, had been informed last month by Sampson that yesterday was to be his last day of work on grounds of unsatisfactory performance. Holt's daughter, Victoria, 19, then asked President Ford in a letter "to step in and prevent the dismissal," charging "Gliberate attempts to demoralize and degrade" her father. In 1971, Holt filed a com-



JOHN E. HOLT
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plaint against the collection of money by GSA officials from GSA employees to be used for political funds for President Nixon. The Civil Service Commission later found six GSA officials guilty of Hatch Act violation in connection

See GSA, A3, Col. 5

GSA, From A1

with the collection. Holt also spoke out this year against a massive computer data bank project known as FEDNET, since abandoned by GSA, that had been criticized as a possible invasion of privacy by, among others, Mr. Ford.

In her letter to the President, Miss Holt, a student at New Mexico State University, charged "a personal vendetta" against her father at GSA and said, "It stands to reason that nobody goes from outstanding to unsatisfactory ratings unless he or she gets help from upstairs."

"For my father to be persecuted for freedom of speech indicates that the system in which we live is failing miserably," she wrote.

Without the letter, Holt said, his job probably would not have been saved. "It was really the trigger of the publicity," he said. "I think the committee helped the attention to get the report out before the 4th final day of work."

The review panel—consisting of an appointee by Holt, one by management, and a third representative chosen by the other two—eliminated the grounds for dismissal when they changed the unsatisfactory rating.

Nevertheless, GSA, in a press release yesterday morning made no mention of the review panel's action. It made clear that the dismissal stood and concluded,



ARTHUR F. SAMPSON
... GSA chief yields

"Holt will receive a full review" of this action by the Civil Service Commission, in accordance with regulations."

A member of the review board had suggested earlier that if the matter were prolonged until the Civil Service Commission could act, he believed the commission would also decide in Holt's favor and that Holt would then have to receive back pay.

After GSA's first announcement yesterday it was learned that the White House had intervened with GSA. A White House source said the presidential legal staff made the contact with GSA. Later yesterday GSA made the announcement of Holt's reinstatement.



VICTORIA HOLT
... wrote President

Sampson rescinded the removal action "based on the report of a three-person panel reviewing the unsatisfactory performance rating," according to a GSA spokesman. He added that Holt was offered the option of keeping his present job or changing to a different one within the agency. Holt said he would take the new one, in a different department, at the same GS-15 scale.

Floods in Sudan

Reuter

KHARTOUM, Oct. 4—The worst floods in a decade have left 250,000 people homeless in southern Sudan according to a government announcement today.