

OCT 3 1974

Chronicle Computer Expert Who Told Is Fired

Washington

A government computer expert who leaked information to Congress about a proposed federal computer network has been fired by the General Services Administration.

John E. Holt, 44, a \$32,000-a-year research and planning specialist with 22 years of government service, was fired by GSA Administrator Arthur F. Sampson. Holt's dismissal will be effective tomorrow.

Holt's supporters said he was fired because he interfered with Nixon administration efforts to politicize the civil service and because he gave congressional investigators information about the controversial FEDNET proposal. This was a GSA plan to set up a \$200 million computer network shared by various federal agencies.

Sampson, according to a GSA spokesman, "categorically denied that any recrimination was involved." In-

stead, the GSA said, Holt was fired because he failed to perform his duties and because he falsely defamed his fellow workers.

The FEDNET plan ran into opposition by some experts who said it wouldn't work. But the most vehement protests were raised by congressmen and senators who said it would serve as a "big brother" data bank and anyone with access to it could probe the private affairs of any individual who ever had contact with the government.

Congress blocked the use of GSA funds for FEDNET in July.

Holt also had complained to the Civil Service Commission and the FBI in 1971 about attempts by GSA officials to solicit campaign funds for the re-election of then-President Richard M. Nixon. The Civil Service Commission eventually suspended several top GSA officials in the case.

Associated Press