

GSA workers to be quizzed

WASHINGTON — The head of the General Services Administration, looking to break open what may be the biggest money scandal in government history, is asking 35,000 employees to tell what they know about payoffs their colleagues took from contractors.

Administrator Jay Solomon presided at a news conference Wednesday at a long-running federal grand investigation will result in bribery and fraud indictments against about 50 people, including GSA employees, employees of other agencies it serves, and private vendors and contractors.

The GSA's top investigator, special counsel Vincent Alto, said he believes payoffs to GSA officials totaled in the millions of dollars. Solomon indicated the investigation, probing wrongdoing over the past several years, is still growing. He said its success will depend in large part on cooperation from agency employees.

The employees are saying to us, "This has been going on a long time. We've known it," Solomon said. "I say, 'Why don't you come forth and tell us? If you know it's there, come forward and help us.' They've

been scared."

He said the decision to reinstate two GSA whistleblowers — Robert J. Tucker and Robert Sullivan, who were dismissed for removing agency documents in an effort to expose abuses in Massachusetts — was an attempt to show GSA employees they can trust the agency's current leadership.

Solomon, named to head the GSA a year and a half ago, has spent much of the time trying to clean up the scandal involving evidence dozens of contractors — sometimes at their own initiative and sometimes at the suggestion of GSA employees — delivered huge cash payoffs to obtain business and circumvent competitive bidding procedures.

Asked if there was a chance the massive investigation would drive him to give up his job, Solomon said many employees "are beating I'm going to leave. I've got to beat that bet."

Justice Department officials have expressed concern that without more witnesses they will have difficulty bringing indictments against many suspects in the case, despite evidence middle-income employees have hundreds of thousands of dollars stashed in bank accounts.

Solomon and Alto have estimated the scandal already has cost the government \$66 million in fraud — mostly to contractors who were paid above competitive prices, provided inadequate work or products, or were paid for work never done.

Sewer pipe break may be flooding quad

By DOUG GRAHAM
Battalion Staff

Water was rising in the quad between McInnis Hall, but the residents weren't hauling their belongings to the roof.

Instead they stood and watched Bennie Bilbo, a foreman with the area maintenance section of the university's facilities department, who was taking pictures with a video camera.

The pictures were of a manhole cover which had been partially lifted by water rushing out of the storm sewer.

This is to prove that this is flooding," he said.

The sewer flooded during the rain Thursday at Texas A&M University. Bilbo said the sewer overflowed because of blockage.

He said the physical plant had run a road through the line, but that for some reason it was stopped up anywhere.

Bilbo agreed with area maintenance superintendent Gordon Dean that the problem probably came from the collapse of a line.

Dean said the line could have been crushed by heavy equipment used in building the mall.

Bilbo said the crushed portion was probably near the gushing manhole because a drain farther off was still functioning. It was there that the ankle-deep pond disappeared.

"As soon as the water settles, we'll start work on it," Dean said. Dean estimated it would take about a week to finish the repair.

In the meantime, while maintenance workers faced another job, students from Moore Hall, next to McInnis, scrambled inside of their dorm.

For hammers and nails to build a fence. They were trying to get up a game of mud football.

Felsenthal finally festive Arkansas town booms

United Press International
FELSENTHAL, Ark. — Nestled just where the Ouachita River flows south into Louisiana, Felsenthal once again has become a town after 67-years.

Townpeople have elected a city government, revived the town's incorporation and are making plans for a resort — which they hope will have better success than their hopes for a boomtown 74 years ago.

Felsenthal already has 175 people, a wilderness river, the promise of an Army Corps of Engineers lake and wildlife refuge and supposedly fantastic fishing. All it really needs to become a resort town is a sewer system.

"We knew we could get better help through grants and such as

that if we were incorporated," said the new mayor, J.T. Young, whose civic pride runs to practicalities.

"We have the potential of having one of the biggest recreation centers that there is in Arkansas here," he said.

When it first was incorporated in 1904, citizens had high hopes of gaining a sawmill to make Felsenthal grow. But the sawmill moved to Huttig and the disappointed citizens let the incorporation lapse in 1911.

And that's the way things stood until this summer.

Forty of the town's 60 registered voters signed petitions favoring incorporation, and the county court revived Felsenthal as a legal town July 17. This

week, Young was elected mayor along with five aldermen and a city recorder.

The federal government is planning to dam the Ouachita River to make a lake and preserve some of the land as a wildlife refuge, which overlaps the Felsenthal city limits.

Hunting will be allowed in the refuge, and the already good fishing is expected to improve beyond imagination, say Young and refuge manager, Charles Strickland.

The town is growing almost too fast for them to keep up.

One developer already has cleared the land for a 20-unit motel, Young said by telephone from his combination home and city hall.

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<p>THURSDAY EVENING SPECIAL Italian Candle Light Spaghetti Dinner SERVED WITH SPICED MEAT BALLS AND SAUCE Parmesan Cheese - Tossed Green Salad Choice of Salad Dressing - Hot Garlic Bread Tea or Coffee</p>		
<p>FRIDAY EVENING SPECIAL BREADED FISH FILET w/TARTAR SAUCE Cole Slaw Hush Puppies Choice of one vegetable Roll or Corn Bread & Butter Tea or Coffee</p>	<p>SATURDAY NOON and EVENING SPECIAL Chicken & Dumplings Tossed Salad Choice of one vegetable Roll or Corn Bread & Butter Tea or Coffee</p>	<p>SUNDAY SPECIAL NOON and EVENING ROAST TURKEY DINNER Served with Cranberry Sauce Cornbread Dressing Roll or Corn Bread - Butter - Coffee or Tea Giblet Gravy And your choice of any One vegetable</p>

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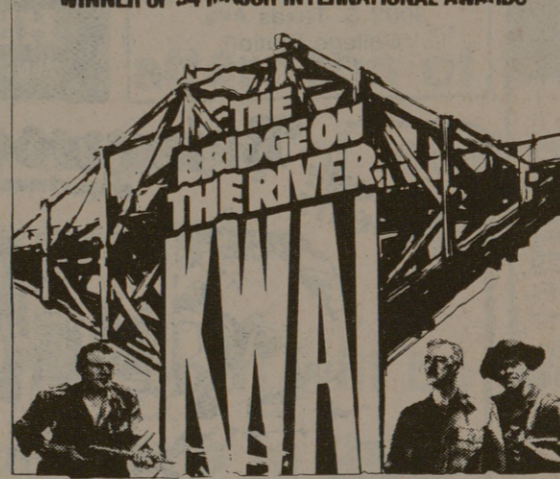


The story dramatizes the struggle by a young Indian half-breed and an idealistic teacher to maintain a Freedom School against the violent opposition of the entire township.

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