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MATT MAHWIN



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for this year Newsday ex ...The Village Voice labeled ...y of these labels stick, ...e black preacher, Sharp ...y the Brawley case has ...of television cameras and ...so is self-possessed of the ...urry in his wake trying to ...Sharpton aide, recently ...three advisers know her ...before television camera ...gations. ...is in the spotlight to refute ...ed that he had been hired ...Mason's office. The pur ...se contends, was to pro ...rawley case as it now ap ...has not filed income-tax ...e will go to court to force ...should be taxed. ...get his day in court long ...nett News Service.

JAMES FLANSBURG



They finally listen to him

JUDGING BY HIS angry reaction in the Pentagon procurement scandal, you might put Charles Grassley down as a liberal Democrat desperate to impress the voters with his probity.

It's not an act. He's a usually conservative Republican who doesn't have to face the voters for four more years. But he is awash in anger.

Grassley warned the White House and the Justice Department four or five years ago of a fishy smell at the Pentagon. Not only did they disbelieve him or ignore him, they've been punishing him for his apostasy.

Quietly and firmly — and, to Grassley detractors, deliciously — they've given him a politically impotent image in the eyes of Republican insiders. It has been one of the better kept secrets in Iowa politics.

In the three years since Dick Turner died, Grassley hasn't even been able to get a U.S. attorney named for the Southern District of Iowa.

I don't know how far the ineffectiveness runs but if I were trying for a federal appointment that didn't require Senate confirmation, I'd go to Tom Stoner — and maybe Neal Smith — before I'd go to Grassley.

The last thing I'd want the White House to know was that I was a Grassley friend. I might even try to get him

White House plays one-sided game.

to write a private letter denouncing me.

It's kind of surprising how little news there's been about this. That's partly because Grassley friends are so embarrassed about it, they hardly talk about it with outsiders.

It's partly because Grassley publicly pretends that it doesn't exist. (There's no political benefit in generating news stories about your ineffectiveness.)

And it's partly because Grassley agrees with almost all of the Reagan programs and has soldiered well for it. If Grassley goes out on a limb for Robert Bork's nomination, for example, it stretches the imagination to believe that he's in a bloody, for-keeps, backstage battle with Bork's sponsors.

What it amounts to, I think, is Grassley's inability to live by the principle that drives Washington and much of the nation's politics: If you want to get along, you've got to go along.

Grassley has this idea that there shouldn't be linkage, that each issue should turn on its own merit, that the slate's wiped clean after each vote.

I suspect that he tries to swear off the unrealistic, if noble, habit every day when he wakes up. Usually by nightfall, though, it's got him again.

I'm inclined to believe that when Grassley began reporting \$600 toilet seats several years ago, Reagan and Cap Weinberger looked at the bigger picture. This could jeopardize our bulldup plans, they said, so it has to be pooh-pooed until everything's on the right course.