

...The system is terribly corrupt. Crimes are committed in the name of "justice" by prosecutors and judges who themselves are never punished ... No matter what they do to obtain convictions, prosecutors are not punished. Neither are judges. I discussed this before an audience composed mainly of judges at a 1993 conference organized by the New York Supreme Court Justices' Association. After several speakers praised themselves and their colleagues, I stood up and made remarks that shocked them:

"I've listened to all of you tonight, and what I've heard is a lot of misinformation. I heard one judge say the judiciary is the only branch that really defends the Constitution. Another said that all the judges work hard and are sincere and don't let their personal ideologies get into it. That is all so much hogwash. I don't believe it, and I don't want my silence at those remarks to be interpreted as agreeing with any of this poppycock ... Judges are creatures of the Establishment. They do what's politically correct for them. The worst of them are mean-spirited, racist bastards. As for defending the Constitution, they probably violate it more than any other branch of government."

I loved it; it was a chance to kick the Establishment in the ass, an opportunity I rarely pass up. And by making my comments before a group of judges, I had a rare opportunity to accuse them directly of their failure to uphold the Constitution, their selfish interest in furthering their own careers above any concern for the justice system, their racism, and finally, their lack of fitness to be judges.

...Our government compromises where it should be demanding, for example, in the area of federal appointees. Supreme Court nominees have been safe, rather pedestrian, choices. To law professors who write letters to the editor that appointees should be individuals of great scholarship, I say, that's baloney. Appointees should be men and women of great integrity and honor, people who want to uphold the Constitution, not people who want to play it safe within a political system to which they are beholden.

...Today I remain convinced that justice often fails in America. We may tout our democratic principles, claim that we represent the free world, and rush to various corners of the earth to aid fledgling nations in the name of democracy. But can we claim to be the America that was envisioned more than two hundred years ago by the framers of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights when our own justice system is rife with corruption and inequities? ... But because I am an unreconstructed optimist, I still seek justice for my clients whenever and wherever I can. In some respects, I see myself as Don Quixote, a good man trying to fight evil who - because he was old and decrepit -- sometimes mistook windmills for the real quarry. But he remains a symbol for those of us who fight for our beliefs, even though we may appear foolish to the rest of the world ... So while some people may view me as wildly and indiscriminately tilting at windmills, I see myself as a keeper of the faith, fighting for my own personal vision of America and my own personal goal: That someday, somehow, we will find the hidden path that leads to what we have always outwardly prized but never attained: Equal justice for all.

William Moses Kunstler, *My Life As A Radical Lawyer*, 1994