

The Dynamics of Organized Corruption in the Courts

How judicial wrongdoing tolerated or supported in one instance gives rise to the mentality of judicial impunity that triggers generalized wrongdoing and weaves relationships among the judges of multilateral interdependency of survival where any subsequent unlawful act is allowed and must be covered up

A judge that engages in wrongdoing once and gets away with it because the other judges will not discipline him or her, will be more likely to do wrong again because they realize that as a matter of practice wrongdoing is an easy or profitable way of handling judicial business and can be engaged in with impunity regardless of the harm caused to third parties. An example is set for their fellow judges to follow. In time, everyone knows about the wrongdoing of the others, whether it be bias, abuse of power, or disregard for the law and the facts. Then they must cover for each other, for if one were allowed to be indicted, he or she could tell on another who could tell on another and with domino effect all would fall. This effect would take place even if the incriminated judge were low in the judicial hierarchy, for he or she could trade up in a plea bargain by incriminating those higher up, whether appellate judges or a chief judge, who knew about that one's wrongdoing, or though ignoring it, knew about the wrongdoing of other judges subject to the domino effect, but passively tolerated, or even actively supported them through a cover up or participation, despite their duty to safeguard the integrity of judicial process.

In a hierarchy where integrity is of the essence for the court's single business, that is, administering justice in accordance with due process, the incrimination of a chief judge would give rise to a most threatening question, to wit, what else did he or she tolerate or support that impaired or denied due process in any other case or all other cases of the indicted judge and, by the same token, of any other judge and all the other judges of the court. In one single step, the trade up, the whole court would come under scrutiny and with it the validity-determinative due process element of the decision in every one of its cases.

This illustrates the dynamics of multilateral interdependency of survival in a practically closed and stable group of people, such as the federal judiciary, where no member, however low in the hierarchy, is expendable: If one judge falls, all fall, unless that one was the odd man out who went outside the group on a folly of his own and never became privy to the wrongdoing of the other judges. Once those dynamics are allowed to determine the relationships among judges, the mentality of everything goes develops, for another, even a more egregious, act of wrongdoing must be tolerated or supported. Were it not, a complaint that was investigated and led to disciplinary action would set a precedent that other complaints could cite in their support, each one of which could support other complaints, thus triggering a chain reaction and uncovering a pattern of wrongdoing that could lead to the fall of a court or the judiciary.

The everything goes mentality gives a boost to a degenerative trend that leads from judicial wrongdoing to organized corruption. In such organization, even third parties outside the court, whether it be court staff, lawyers, others frequently before the court, such as bankruptcy trustees, or litigants, are allowed in the corruption in exchange for a material or moral benefit payable or receivable in the case at hand or in IOUs for future cases. By then, the force dominating the court and its judges' business is not the law of Congress under the Constitution, but rather their interest in surviving and thriving. The court becomes a racketeer influenced and corrupt organization.