

Politics alleged in ex-gov's prosecution

by UPI

MONTGOMERY, Ala. - The former Democratic governor of Alabama convicted on obstruction of justice and bribery charges claimed he is a victim of Washington Republican politics.

Prosecutors in Montgomery, Ala., recommended a 30-year sentence for Don Siegelman, 61, although just a few of more than 100 charges were thrown out, a Los Angeles Times correspondent reported Tuesday.

Siegelman's supporters claim his popularity among both black and white voters dating to 1998, when he was elected, made him a target for Republican GOP political strategists.

Grant Woods, a Republican former attorney general of Arizona and friend of Siegelman, told the Times the harshness and severity of the prosecution was unusual.

"Congressional committees ought to investigate what in the world went on in this case," Woods said. "From start to finish, this case has been riddled with irregularities. It does not pass the smell test."

Other supporters point out a 30-year sentence is more than the average given to murderers and for a man Siegelman's age, was the equivalent to a life sentence, the Times said.

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