



## ***Media Advisory***

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*Whistle Blower Summit:* <http://whistleblowersummit.com>

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### **Richard Scrushy, Founder of Billion-Dollar Companies and Victim Of Nationally Notorious Prosecution, Counsels on “Courtroom Setbacks” At Annual *Whistle Blowers Summit* In DC July 29**

Washington, DC — Richard M. Scrushy, the founder and former CEO of HealthSouth, Inc. and co-defendant in one of the most widely condemned federal prosecutions in recent U.S. history, will share his hard-won insights July 29 on Capitol Hill.

Scrushy, still an entrepreneur and now also an author and motivational speaker, speaks at 4 p.m. on the opening day of the annual *Whistle Blowers Summit* to advise others on coping with the legal hardships that many whistleblowers must endure. At 6:30 p.m., he talks to the National Press Club’s McClendon Group at an informal dinner open to the press and public.

Along with advice, Scrushy provides his take on the long prison terms he and former Alabama Gov. Don Siegelman have endured on corruption charges stemming from 1999 actions despite gross courtroom irregularities and unprecedented nationwide protests by legal experts. Siegelman is scheduled for release in mid-2017.

Scrushy was convicted solely for what he describes as a \$250,000 HealthSouth donation much like that of several other big Alabama companies. It was to defray the costs of a failed 1998 referendum to increase state funding for K-12 schools with state lottery proceeds. He says prosecutors won their case by exaggerating the donation’s size, source, destination, and purpose – and pressuring their star witness into a false testimony motivated by the serious charges he faced in another case. Scrushy received a 78-month term from federal trial judge Mark Fuller, who has since become so scandal-ridden that he resigns his lifetime post Aug. 1.

Many whistleblowers and other critics have documented irregularities of the federal Siegelman-Scrushy prosecution. In 2008, CBS “60 Minutes” presented Republican lawyer Dana Jill Simpson, who said that Scrushy, a Republican, was a fall guy targeted in a political plot to end the career of Siegelman, Alabama’s state’s most popular Democrat. In an unprecedented filing to the U.S. Supreme Court, 113 former state attorneys general — former chief law enforcers of more than 40 states — protested prosecution.

Yet courts have consistently rejected the defendant’s major appeals while dismissing some of the charges and slightly reducing the original sentences. Among many rejected appeals was Scrushy’s argument that the trial judge Fuller should have recused himself instead of hiding secret ownership of up to 44 percent of Doss Aviation, Inc. Unknown to defendants, Doss

received \$300 million in no-bid federal contracts for such purposes as training U.S. and Saudi Air Force pilots and refueling Air Force planes, including the presidential Air Force One.

Scrushy is now the president/CEO of the consulting company 7venth Power and last year published, "*When Building A Billion Dollar Company*" – *Here Are A Few Things To Think About.*" As indicated by his company website and book, his focus remains on business and positive motivational stories. These are drawn from his rise from his modest origins. He was born in 1952 in Selma, Alabama, one of the birthplaces of the 1960s civil rights movement.

However, Scrushy has generously revisited on request the nightmare of his federal prosecution and imprisonment, which inflicted collateral damage not simply on the co-defendants (some of whom were acquitted) but also upon many families, including those of whistle blowers who stepped forward only to be crushed by government reprisal taking several forms.

In 2009, the Justice Department fired Tamarah Grimes, its top paralegal working on the Siegelman-Scrushy case, for example, after she complained of irregularities on the case to Attorney Gen. Eric Holder. Scrushy and the still-imprisoned former Jefferson County Commissioner Gary Smith, another Republican, separately claimed they turned down plea offers that would have won them leniency if they perjured themselves to implicate Siegelman.

Under the Bush and Obama administrations, the Justice Department has denied irregularities and vigorously fought all defendant appeals. President Obama's first Solicitor General Elena Kagan, now a Supreme Court justice, signed briefs in 2009 opposing one major appeal.

Scrushy will speak on a 4 p.m. panel at the *Summit* entitled "Political Prosecutions and the Danger to Democracy." Two other speakers will share their powerful first-hand experiences fighting injustice regarding: 1) electronic surveillance of U.S. citizens without probable cause; and 2) the safety protection of U.S. presidents. The speakers on those issues will be:

- Former Qwest Communications Chairman/CEO Joseph Nacchio, a critic of the new USA Freedom Act for what he describes as its inadequate privacy protections for the public; and
- Abraham Bolden, 80, (via Skype because of his age), recruited by President John F. Kennedy to become the first African American Secret Service officer guarding a president. In Bolden's memoir "*The Echo from Dealey Plaza*," he alleged gross Secret Service misconduct.

Moderator Andrew Kreig directs the non-partisan Justice Integrity Project and has written extensively about the panelists, whose cases are treated in his forthcoming book *Presidential Puppetry 2016: The Candidates' Secrets*. Free registration for the *Summit* begins at 9 a.m. at the Stewart Mott House, 122 Maryland Ave, NE. Nacchio speaks also at a 10 a.m. news conference and Scrushy at a 6:30 p.m. dinner, both at the National Press Club, 529 14<sup>th</sup> St., NW. The Dutch-treat dinner is open to the public.

**About Richard M. Scrushy:** Scrushy is President/ CEO of 7venth Power, Inc., which helps businesses achieve their goals. He founded and served as chairman/CEO two Fortune 500 companies with revenues in the billions of dollars. One became a leading healthcare company with \$4.5 billion in revenue, 2,350 locations and employing more than 52,000 people. He helped found other companies, closing hundreds of acquisitions and raising billions of dollars. Married, he is a father of nine children and grandfather of six. He is also a commercial pilot, author, musician, and song writer. Details: [www.7venthpower.com](http://www.7venthpower.com).

**About the Whistle Blowers Summit for Civil and Human Rights:** Beginning in May 2007, whistleblowers have convened annually for education and advocacy at a free conference in Washington, DC. The general theme for this year's *Summit* from July 29-31 is "Black Lives Matter — The Movement!" *Summit* panels and events include other major speakers, plus practical tips, book signings, other networking. Details: <http://whistleblowersummit.com>. # # #