



## Billionsaire conservative Richard Mellon Scaife dies

By Joy Y. Wang  
July 4, 2014

A principal heir to the Mellon banking, oil, and aluminum fortune, billionaire conservative and publisher of the *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review* Richard Mellon Scaife died on Friday morning at his home. He was 82.

Scaife announced in May that he had been diagnosed with an untreatable form of cancer. He was the grand-nephew of Andrew Mellon, who served as treasury secretary to the Harding, Coolidge, and Hoover administrations.

Scaife gained notoriety in 1990s for being closely connected to efforts to impeach then-President Bill Clinton. He gave \$1.7 million to *American Spectator* magazine to fund a project focused on investigating Bill and Hillary Clinton's roles in the real estate scandal known as Whitewater. During that time, Hillary Clinton referred to the accusations as a "vast right-wing conspiracy" against her husband.

In a 1998 interview with John F. Kennedy, Jr., who was then the editor of *George* magazine, Scaife called President Clinton "an embarrassment." A decade later, he told *Vanity Fair* that he had lunched with Clinton and said he had "never met such a charismatic man in [his] whole life."

Scaife's feelings toward Hillary Clinton also notably changed in 2008. His newspaper endorsed Clinton in her run for president, and he wrote in a commentary that he had "a very different impression of Hillary Clinton today. And it's a very favorable one indeed."

In 1964, the notoriously private Scaife backed Sen. Barry M. Goldwater as the Republican candidate for president. Goldwater lost in a landslide to Lyndon Johnson. In 1972, Scaife turned his attention to the re-election campaign of President Richard M. Nixon. Scaife donated \$1 million to that campaign. Of that money, \$45,000 went to a

secret fund connected to the Watergate scandal, according to *The New York Times*. Scaife later went on to support Ronald Reagan's presidency.

The media mogul, who was worth \$1.4 billion in 2013 according to *Forbes*, was well-known for funding numerous foundations and trusts with conservative ties, including the Cato Institute, the Heritage Foundation, and the Hoover Institute in California.

Scaife also donated to causes that aligned with his libertarian social views, including Planned Parenthood. Scaife supported the legalization of marijuana and marriage equality, and he opposed the 2003 invasion of Iraq.

The son of Alan and Sarah Mellon Scaife, Scaife provided philanthropic support to the Carnegie Institute, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, and the National Gallery of Art, among other organizations.

Scaife purchased the *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review* in 1969.