

U.S. Supreme Court judge has right-wing friend who is Nazi memorabilia collector

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U.S. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas has defended the frequent lavish trips he received from real estate billionaire and Republican megadonor Harlan Crow, saying he was advised at the time not to report them.

Washington, April 25 (RHC)-- U.S. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas has defended the frequent lavish trips he received from real estate billionaire and Republican megadonor Harlan Crow, saying he was advised at the time not to report them. Thomas also referred to Crow and his wife as being among his family's "dearest friends."

Meanwhile, more details are emerging about Harlan Crow in a resurfaced 2014 article published by The Dallas Morning News in which a tour of his Dallas-area mansion revealed he had a collection of Nazi memorabilia, including a copy of "Mein Kampf" signed by Adolf Hitler, paintings by Hitler, Nazi medallions, swastika-embossed linens, and a garden filled with statues of 20th century dictators.

ProPublica published a bombshell report recently about the right-wing Supreme Court justice that shook Washington, sparked national outrage and caused lawmakers to call for tighter ethics codes for justices.

For more than two decades, Thomas has accepted luxury trips virtually every year from the Dallas businessman without disclosing them, documents and interviews show. A public servant who has a salary of \$285,000, he has vacationed on Crow's superyacht around the globe. He flies on Crow's Bombardier Global 5000 jet. He has gone with Crow to the Bohemian Grove, the exclusive California all-male retreat, and to Crow's sprawling ranch in East Texas. And Thomas typically spends about a week every summer at Crow's private resort in the Adirondacks.

The extent and frequency of Crow's apparent gifts to Thomas have no known precedent in the modern history of the U.S. Supreme Court. These trips appeared nowhere on Thomas' financial disclosures. His failure to report the flights appears to violate a law passed after Watergate that requires justices, judges, members of Congress and federal officials to disclose most gifts, two ethics law experts said. He also should have disclosed his trips on the yacht, these experts said.

Harlan Crow has deep connections in conservative politics. The heir to a real estate fortune, Crow oversees his family's business empire and recently named Marxism as his greatest fear. He was an early patron of the powerful anti-tax group Club for Growth and has been on the board of AEI for over 25 years. He also sits on the board of the Hoover Institution, another conservative think tank.

A major Republican donor for decades, Crow has given more than \$10 million in publicly disclosed political contributions. He's also given to groups that keep their donors secret — how much of this so-called dark money he's given and to whom are not fully known. "I don't disclose what I'm not required to disclose," Crow once told the Times.

Crow has long supported efforts to move the judiciary to the right. He has donated to the Federalist Society and given millions of dollars to groups dedicated to tort reform and conservative jurisprudence. AEI and the Hoover Institution publish scholarship advancing conservative legal theories, and fellows at the think tanks occasionally file amicus briefs with the Supreme Court.

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