

LOBBY WATCH

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Russian Roulette:

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A Moncrief Abandons An Abusive Lawsuit

As 'Tex' Moncrief funded TLR, His Son's Oil Company Used a Falsified Document to Press a \$1.4 Billion Gazprom Lawsuit

It was a mortifying moment Monday when Fort Worth-based Moncrief Oil International (MOI) suddenly [dropped](#) a decade-long lawsuit against deep-pocketed Russian gas giant Gazprom. MOI withdrew its claims after defense attorneys revealed that the plaintiff had falsified evidence and lied under oath.

To prove that Gazprom stole its trade secrets, MOI introduced a smoking-gun document that it claimed dated back to 2004. The case unraveled after Gazprom lawyers demonstrated that the fabricated document could not have been made in 2004 since it contained academic work published *eight years later*. After this Perry-Mason moment, the defense moved for dismissal (the so-called "civil death penalty") and MOI dropped its suit.

MOI attorney Marshall Searcy of Kelly Hart & Hallman said an

accountant's "tragic error" unraveled the case. Searcy told [Forbes Magazine](#) that the decision to drop the suit reflected "my client's basic honesty and integrity."

The deception underlying MOI's efforts to prove its \$1.37 billion claim against Gazprom sounds like the kind of litigious excess that might prompt some people to bankroll Texas' biggest PAC: Texans for Lawsuit Reform.



TLR-backer 'Tex' Moncrief

In fact, one TLR contributor is none other than legendary wild-catter W.A. "Tex" Moncrief, whose son, Moncrief Oil International founder R.W. "Dick" Moncrief, attended every day of the trial. Months after the 2012 publication of the article that would eventually torpedo MOI's lawsuit, Tex Moncrief gave TLR PAC \$25,000—to fight lawsuit abuse.