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AFFIDAVIT OF MICHAEL MOFFITT

STATE OF NEW JERSEY)
 TOWNSHIP OF PRINCETON) SS:

I was born in 1951 and am now 39 years old. I was 25 when the car in which I was riding exploded -- killing my bride, Ronni, killing my boss, mentor and close friend, Orlando Letelier, seriously injuring me and terminating the world and life that I knew. Ronni and I had only been married for 113 days. This event inalterably affected my life. For approximately five years following the bombing, my life was a living hell marked by total preoccupation with the bombing, sleeplessness, crying, alcohol abuse and a complete inability to remove it from my mind. To this day I am still plagued by the persistent memory of the horror and find that much of my life is occupied with efforts to avoid any situation which might rekindle the pain.

I had first come to Washington, D.C. in the spring of 1973 as a student working for the Institute for Policy Studies. Upon graduation from college, I decided to return to IPS where I continued to assist in research and enrolled in graduate school in economics, at American University. Although I earned a modest salary, I was excited and challenged by the work and felt there was an excellent opportunity for advancement both inside and outside IPS. In very early 1975 I met Ronni Karpen. At the time she too was working at IPS. She had seemed the kind of

woman who was always out of reach for a person like myself. She was beautiful and charming. Unlike me, she came from a family that was close and loving, and she possessed a special aura or grace that was thrilling. We met and fell in love. It was like a miracle to me. I could hardly believe my good fortune. Very soon after we began dating, we became engaged and were in each other's company constantly. I was deeply and totally in love the way I had always wanted to be.

At approximately the same time, Orlando Letelier came to the Institute as the director of a new international program with an office in Amsterdam as well as Washington, D.C. He needed a research assistant and I applied for the position and was hired. Working with Orlando was enormously exciting. He was a handsome, charismatic, international intellectual and diplomat, and his influence seemed to grow geometrically as the weeks went by. As our relationship developed, I soon became his executive assistant in addition to his researcher. He took me with him nearly everywhere. My first trip abroad to Holland in 1976 was with Orlando. I helped plan his schedule, decide on his engagements, and consulted with him about his opportunities and strategies. He introduced me to scores of influential people in Washington. He was an outspoken critic of the Pinochet dictatorship and worked tirelessly to expose the terrible human rights abuses that were rampant there and to improve the conditions of the Chilean people who were suffering from Pinochet's actions. Simultaneously, we began to conceive a major study of the

international economy and its impacts on the oil-importing Third World. We envisioned a preliminary study leading to a jointly-authored book and a major international conference. He used his contacts in the Group of 77 and the Non-Aligned Movement to explore a whole range of possibilities.

Orlando had strong relationships with many of the major Democratic leaders in the U.S. Senate such as George McGovern and Edward Kennedy. By 1976, the consensus was that the Democrats were about to win back the White House. Many of us felt that Pinochet's dictatorship would not survive long, particularly with a Democrat in the White House. In mid 1976, we organized a trip to Chile by three members of the U.S. Congress. In June, Orlando spearheaded a legislative campaign that resulted in the Kennedy-Harkin bar on arms sales to Chile -- the first U.S. legislation ever to link human rights issues with U.S. foreign assistance. I believed that Orlando would be a high official in the next Government of Chile, if not a candidate for president. And, he assured me that I would continue to play an important role in his future. This was a tremendously exciting experience for a twenty-four year old from a working class, Catholic background like myself.

On May 30, 1976 Ronni and I were married. The ceremony and reception took place in the back yard of her parents' home. We had a wonderful honeymoon and then moved into a clapboard house on Falls Road in Potomac, Maryland, one of the lovely suburbs of

Washington, D.C. I felt truly happy for the first time in my life. Life was full and beautiful. It was Ronni, and professionally, Orlando, who changed my life so. I did not have a particularly happy adolescence and had never before been so socially or professionally successful. But Ronni brought immense joy to my life. She was popular and energetic. We were a devoted young couple. She began to turn our house into a home. We refinished the furniture and painted the rooms. She hung curtains and planted and tended a small flower garden. Just being in her presence made me content. She was very creative. She played the flute well and was an accomplished artist. She ran a crafts fair on the Washington Mall that came off splendidly. And, during all this time she continued to excel in her position at IPS.

She was promoted at IPS shortly after our marriage and became the Fund Raising Coordinator. She was awarded a raise to take effect January 1, 1977 of \$15,000.00, which was more than I earned. It was an extremely important position, as fundraising is the lifeblood of a not-for-profit organization like IPS. Her career, for someone of her young age, was on a successful track.

Ronni was ambitious, as well. We would often lay together at night and talk about the future. We both eventually wanted to have children and to buy a home, but Ronni also wanted to continue with her work, as it gave her the opportunity to be influential in a political and humanitarian sense.

Ronni had graduated from the University of Maryland in 1972 with a B.A. in elementary education, and had taught at the Rocking Horse Elementary School in Montgomery County, Maryland. After leaving that position she went to work at Young and Simon, an insurance firm in Washington, D.C. At that time she, along with some other young women, founded a community center in Washington called "The Music Carry-Out," which provided evening music entertainment at no, or a very minimal charge. While starting this project she applied for a grant from the National Endowment of the Humanities, and it was through those efforts that she met Marcus Raskin who was then co-director of IPS. He later offered her a job, and she began her career at IPS as I have previously described.

Living together as husband and wife, sharing so much as newlyweds, building a home for ourselves, and sharing our efforts and challenges at work, we grew very close; and I was very happy. I loved my wife deeply, admired and respected my employer, and was challenged and excited by my work. I felt I was on top of the world. But my elation was short-lived. After being married for only four months, Ronni and Orlando were murdered that September.

I remember everything about the murders, every detail. All of it has become a fixture of my memory, ever present, the images never far from the surface. I have been forced to relive the experience during several trials, in working to bring about

justice and in talking about the murder with my doctors and lawyers. While these proceedings are necessary it is the more random and regular reliving of the event which causes me the greatest suffering. The pain and anxiety can be brought back to me in a moment. A scene in a movie, a car noise, a smell, dreams or even a random image can bring the entire event back to me. I expend considerable effort trying to insulate myself from any stimulus that will rekindle these images. For a long while afterwards, the murders totally dominated my life.

We were scheduled to have dinner with the Letelier family at their home the evening of September 20. Since our car stalled at the IPS, we drove together to the Letelier home on Ogden Court. Orlando and I worked together after dinner and around midnight I drove his car to our home in Potomac. In the morning, Ronni and I returned to his house in Orlando's car to pick him up for work. I remember that Isabel, Orlando's wife, was in the kitchen rinsing some dishes, and she and I talked some about Jimmy Carter. As we left his home, I remember that I asked Orlando if he would like me to drive, but he declined. So he took the wheel, and I opened the door for Ronni, who sat beside him. I climbed in the back. From Ogden Court in the Maryland suburbs of Washington, we drove down River Road, and then over to Massachusetts Avenue. I remember looking out the back window at all the embassies on that grand street.

As we entered Sheridan Circle, Orlando proceeded about one-quarter of the way around it. It was then that the bomb exploded. It was as if the entire car were heaved off the ground, accompanied by a blinding flash and a deafening blast. I recall that everything was thrown upward, my head struck the roof of the car. My shoes were blown off. The car then crashed into a Volkswagen and stopped. There was smoke everywhere and intense heat, as if we were in a furnace. Most powerful of all, though, was the overwhelming stench of burned flesh and hair.

I found myself on my hands and knees in the back. My shoes had been blown off and, initially, I had no physical sensation below my waist. My first instinct was to get out of the car before the gas tank exploded. Somehow, I pulled myself up to a window which had been blown out, and I toppled out of the car. My lungs were burning and I was choking and gasping for air. All of this happened in the first moments after the blast.

I recall that I first looked for Ronni and saw her stumbling away from me and the car toward a lawn at the edge of the street. Her back was to me but since she was on her feet, I assumed that she must be all right. I knew by this time that it had been a bomb, or at least some kind of incendiary device, aimed at Orlando. So I went around to the front of the car, because I couldn't see him. When I got there there was a huge hole in the floor of the car. Orlando was turned around facing the back of the car. He was leaning back, and his head was rolling back and

forth. His eyes were moving a little but he looked unconscious. I tried to talk to him, but I was not sure if he heard me. So, I slapped him, and I said "Orlando, this is Michael, can you hear me?" In response, he muttered a few words, but he never said anything that I could really understand. I then tried to get my hands and my forearms up under his arms so I could lift him out, but it was very difficult since he was surrounded by jagged metal. And, I was getting cut trying to lift him. After I had moved him slightly, I saw that his lower torso -- basically, the whole bottom half of his body -- had been blown off. There were gobs of flesh and bloody pieces of seat stuffing everywhere. A sturdy six-foot man looked like a broken doll.

It was then that I looked back over at Ronni, and I saw she had fallen to the ground. I knew I could not help Orlando, so I rushed over to my wife. She was on the lawn on her back and was much worse than I had thought. Her belly was swollen and protruding like she was eight months pregnant and blood was gushing out of her mouth - a huge current of blood. A woman who said she was a doctor - I later learned her name was Dr. Petersen - was kneeling over Ronni, trying to plug her carotid artery. The police then were rushing around us. One of them tried to pull Dr. Petersen away from Ronni. By this time I was losing, or had lost, control of myself. I was hysterical, and I went after that officer. I don't recall exactly what happened then, but there was a moment that I thought the police were going to shoot

me. I sensed that they mistook me for the criminal, the murderer. I remember thinking that I was going to die.

The police would not let me ride with Ronni in the ambulance. I remember screaming and cursing them, but they refused. I was taken to the emergency room at George Washington University Hospital in a separate vehicle from Ronni. The doctor removed a piece of metal from my breastplate and my wounds were stitched but all I cared about was how Ronni was. I frantically demanded information from everyone about her condition. When they gave me nothing concrete, I figured she was dead and they weren't telling me. Some nurses stayed with me, and I am sure I was given some sedatives. I remember I requested a priest and asked him to help me. I asked the priest to ask God to spare Ronni's life - just for that one small favor, to spare her life. I was filled with anger and horror and a feeling of helplessness. I felt powerless to do anything to prevent these two people -- who were my whole life -- from dying.

Before the doctors told me she had died, the police came in and began questioning me. I had been given a green hospital gown to wear. I sat there on a bed, in that gown, trying to answer their questions; and I feared she was dead, but nobody would tell me. Finally they laid me on an examining table with some burly men around and the one who appeared to be in charge quietly told me that she and Orlando had died. They never let me see her body

and I realized that I had seen Ronni for the last time. I remember I was very cold.

During this time, the hospital seemed to fill up with people. Isabel came in, looking shocked and totally crushed. I had to call Ronni's parents. I found a phone and I talked to her mother, Hilda, who began telling jokes. I interrupted her to tell her that Ronni was dead. It was horrible. Then I called my own parents. Afterwards, they took me to the F.B.I. where I spent the remainder of the day. They needed a total debriefing, in painstaking detail. It was grueling. They took me to our home in Potomac for help with possible clues. Bomb-sniffing dogs smelled the scent on me and growled. I believe I was in a state of shock. I was not given a moment's rest and did not bathe. My hair was singed and matted and I carried with me the horrible smells and soot of the bombing. I did not wash the entire evening, as if to suffer in some small way what they had suffered.

That night I went to stay with friends in Georgetown. There was a constant flow of visitors all evening. Congressmen, Senators, diplomats, people from all over Washington came. I was numb and empty. I did not appreciate, even then, the extent to which my life also had been destroyed that day. After people stopped coming, I drank liquor until I fell asleep. Everything I was and loved and cared for was destroyed by that bomb. My wife and family life, my mentor and close friend, my job and

professional career all no longer existed. Everything was gone, all vanished forever.

I was in shock at first, and so I went to New Jersey to stay for a while with Ronni's parents. Her parents and I thought we might care for and help each other. I felt sick and could barely get out of bed to face the day. I slept in the same bed Ronni slept in when she was growing up. Hilda and Murray, her parents, were both broken by her death as well, and staying there was like living in a tomb. After I could stand it no longer, I went on a couple of long trips before going back to Washington. I had extreme difficulty sleeping and cried regularly.

The next four years after September of 1976 were the most difficult years of my life. In retrospect, I was a complex mass of anger, guilt and overwhelming sadness. I became basically non-functional. The event was always with me and my preoccupation with it was heightened by my involvement in the lengthy efforts to obtain justice. While I remained on the IPS payroll, I did little else but work on the investigation of the murders and the political activities that grew out of them. At IPS when I was introduced to dignitaries or financial supporters, I was always on display as the survivor of the murders -- never a person in my own right. Each incident, whether it was a mere introduction as the survivor, or the need to discuss the murders with yet another investigator, lawyer or potential supporter forced me to relive the horror of the bombing. I was totally

obsessed with the murders to the exclusion of virtually everything else. When I was not working on the investigation day or night, I started drinking heavily. Most nights I closed the bars down - drunk, striving to obliterate the present as well as the past. My house became a slum. I couldn't bring myself to clean up, mow the lawn or do anything. For months, all of Ronni's things remained around the house as if she was alive and I refused to allow anyone to take them away.

I felt extremely guilty that I had survived. Guilty because I had not helped Ronni at the scene because I was trying to help Orlando. Guilty that I had survived and she hadn't particularly because I was responsible for her being in the car, guilty that I could not obtain justice for both of them. With Orlando gone, I felt inadequate to continue the work that he had begun, both relating to Chile and also the book we had planned to write together. I failed at virtually everything. My life had changed dramatically for the worse. I had little interest in, or an inability to commit to, normal relationships with friends, family or others. Things that previously brought me great joy, such as social activities and athletics became chores. I put on a significant amount of weight. This non-functional period and the heavy drinking went on for between four and five years. Except for the pain I endured, it was almost as if those years of my life never existed.

The F.B.I. investigation seemed to consume all my time during the first few months. They did an exhaustive investigation into my personal life, into Ronni's personal life, and into Orlando's life. I was forced to turn over my telephone book and personal information to the government as if I was the accused. I was always on the defensive - trying to defend myself, Ronni and Orlando from the lies and rumors that were being spread in the press about why Letelier was killed, that he was a Cuban agent, that he and Ronni were lovers or that we were planning to bomb the Chilean Embassy. I had -- and still have -- a terrible need for justice, and this need has constantly driven me and eaten away at me since the killings. I have worked with the F.B.I., with the prosecution, and with my own attorneys for endless hours. Press interviews were constant.

The trials were absolute nightmares. They seem to come every couple of years, just as my mind had begun to cope with the reality of Ronni's death and the memories had begun to subside. The trials always brought it all back. The heat, the stench, the fear, the terrible pain, and, most of all - the loss. To this day any loud noise, like an auto backfiring leaves me anxious and jumpy for hours. To be a good witness, to convict those I was testifying against, I had to go back to September 21, 1976 and remember what it was all like. Then I had to sit in a courtroom and tell it all before hundreds of strangers. The defendants used to smirk and joke. I wanted to kill them.

The first criminal trial of the Cubans involved was in early 1979. I was consumed in preparing for it. While I was working on it in Washington, my father died. I believe the murders - and what he saw that they did to me - broke his heart and killed him. On his deathbed, when he needed me most, I was not there. He was 57 years old. After the first trial, I remember one occasion when I stayed in bed for over a week. It was not that I was physically sick. I just had no will to get up. No will to participate in life. I wanted to die. While the indictments of Contreras and Espinosa in 1978 and the conviction of several of the Cubans in 1979 raised our hopes about justice, my personal problems continued. My heavy drinking continued and while I had sexual relations with a number of women, they were totally devoid of emotion and more often than not, promiscuous in nature. I had no regular friends, was estranged from my family and felt totally alone.

For years, I continued to be involved heavily in Chilean politics since 1) that is what Orlando would have wanted, and 2) there was a genuine feeling that the scandal over the Letelier-Moffitt murders might become the catalyst to overthrow the Pinochet government. But in retrospect, what it meant for me was continued ^{immersion} emersion in the most horrible experience of my life. There was simply no escaping it. The brief successes we enjoyed in the legal system soon evaporated as well. The conviction of the Cubans was reversed on appeal. After a second trial they were acquitted on a simple technicality relating to the gathering

of evidence. Pinochet remained in power and while the violence (murders, disappearances and torture) diminished, the Chileans remained under the jackboot of dictatorship and Orlando's dream of a free and democratic Chile was deferred. The Pinochet government refused to extradite Contreras and Espinosa for trial. Although we obtained a judgment in our civil case we were unable to collect it, adding to my total sense of frustration.

Approximately five years after the end of the murders, my involvement in the case began to ~~wain~~^{wane}. I realized that I had to go about my life and through a very difficult separation process removed myself from the constant reminders of the murders. I moved from Washington and began working in a totally unrelated field. I eschewed all but the most essential contacts with the legal proceedings, and refused to attend events such as the memorial service in D.C. As a result, my mental health and professional life improved, and I was able to resume a more normal life and, eventually, my efforts to obtain justice. Years of psychotherapy with Dr. Harold Kaufman helped me to cope with the loss of Ronni and resolved in my mind some of the issues that had tortured me in the early years: blaming myself for Ronni's death which has sometimes been called "survivor's guilt." At some point, I stopped drinking liquor. Though I had discontinued my graduate studies in economics, I managed to assemble a proposal to write a book on international banking which at the time was becoming a popular issue in the United States. In 1981

I received an advance and began work in earnest on the book. The book was finally published in 1983.

During the period 1981 to 1984, most of the activity in the case was carried on by our lawyers, both in terms of the criminal aspects of the case and the civil suit. In the civil case various collection procedures were studied by the lawyers with relatively little involvement by me.

However, my intense involvement in the case resumed again after the Second Circuit Court of Appeals voided the collection procedure in our civil case in 1984. At that time, working in close collaboration with Samuel Buffone, Esq., we began an intensive campaign in Washington, D.C. to force the Republic of Chile to pay the civil judgment and prosecute those responsible for the assassination. This campaign lasted about seven years until the present time. It involved dozens of trips to Washington, D.C. (which are described in the appendix to this report) to lobby members of Congress, the State Department and other parts of the federal bureaucracy. This seven years of political activity led to the convening of this distinguished tribunal and what, we hope, will be a prosecution of Manuel Contreras in Chile.

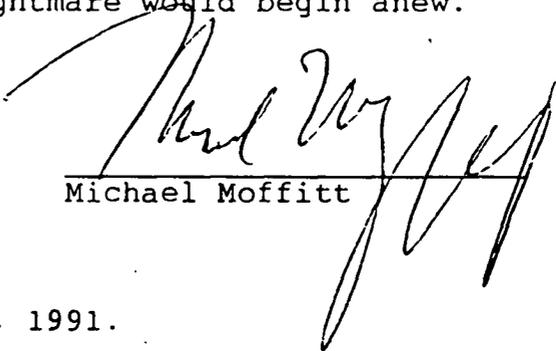
While it is true that my state of mind today is vastly different than it was in the first four to five years following the murders, my continued involvement in seeking justice in the case does continue to take a toll on me psychologically. I have realized that whether justice is achieved in this case or not I

will live with what happened to me on September 21, 1976 for the rest of my life.

I still grieve for Ronni and the horrible death that she died. I grieve for Orlando, a brilliant diplomat, scholar and politician, whose career was cut short by animals who remain free in Chile. My heart will always be sick with some guilt that my association with Letelier put Ronni in that car on that morning, and that she died and I didn't. I blame myself for being unable to fix our automobile which is why we wound up in Letelier's car on that morning. This element of chance -- that disaster is lurking unless I prevent it -- tortures me to this day. I am afraid now of what the world can do to you in a violent instant. This fear still affects me in numerous ways. I still jump when an automobile backfires or when a car that is driving too fast screeches to a halt to avoid hitting a child, dog or cat. When I watch accounts of murder or violence on the television and see the parents or relatives sobbing over a dead loved one I understand in a very personal way their suffering and relive my own. I fear for the lives of my second wife and my children - that they some day be ripped away from me the way Ronni was. I am overly protective and insist on taking every precaution to avoid any risk to them. For example, each time I plan an automobile trip with my family, I am plagued by images of the bombing and obsessively check the car and watch for danger on the road. I carry with me to this day the horrible image of

Orlando's terribly dismembered body. To this day I cannot watch violence or bloodshed on television or in movies and if I do not turn my head, I become physically ill. Even in my dreams, I still see Ronni in the dirty, bloated and bloody form that I last saw her. I have asked God to give me the strength to one day forget that the morning of September 21, 1976 ever existed, but as the years go on I have my doubts that this wish will be granted. I don't know that I will ever be able to relax emotionally, to be care-free or fully enjoy the good life. For life has taught me that this can come ^{crushing / 14th} ~~cracking~~ down in a single, violent instant.

This was most evident to me during a recent and extended life threatening episode involving my infant son. He was hospitalized for an extended period and I found that during my long vigil I was never far from the memories of the murder and had extreme anxiety that the nightmare would begin anew.


Michael Moffitt

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO
before me this 16 day of July, 1991.


Notary Public

STACY S. CHAPMAN
NOTARY PUBLIC - NEW JERSEY
My Commission Expires Oct. 1, 1995