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Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
05:00 P.M. EDT,
April 27, 2017

WEST PALM BEACH, FLORIDA, APRIL 27, 2017; Executive Director Joseph Occhipinti proudly announced it took 5 minutes for a jury in a West Palm Beach County Court to deliver a non-guilty verdict that could have sent U.S. Department of Homeland Security Special Agent Angel Echevarria to jail for twenty-years.

— [Download the Press Release Here](#) —

On November 7, 2017, S/A Echevarria was off duty with his wife and five children going to a birthday party when a car being driven by Alla Juma drove recklessly causing the agent to have a motor vehicle accident that was immediately reported to the police. Prior to the accident, Juma and his brother who has a history of prior arrests reportedly threatened the agent and his family by making hand gestures of their pointing a gun at their car and other obscene gestures. The police directed the agent to meet them at a local mall in Boca Raton when upon entering the agent observed Juma’s vehicle illegally parked in front of a Nordstrom’s. The suspects immediately recognized S/A Echevarria at which time Juma pointed a loaded gun at the agent and his family’s vehicle. The agent took appropriate police action, identifying himself as a police officer, and ordering Juma to drop the weapon. Instead, Juma decided to run over the agent and then proceeded to run over his wife. In an effort to save his wife, S/A Echevarria shot to at the suspects’ vehicle who then fled the scene.

It is evident that both a federal and state crime had been committed in the attempted armed and vehicular assault on a federal agent who also had state police status. Almost immediately, Deputy U.S. Marshals responded to the scene only to be told by a Boca Raton detective to “stand down”.

It appeared to be a classic case of a jurisdictional dispute between a local Police detective and federal agents. It is suspected that Boca Raton detective in retaliation decided to charge S/A Echevarria as the aggressor rather than pursue Juma who just attempted to kill a federal agent and family of five.

The police eventually make contact with Juma who is ordered to return to the mall. Instead of returning with the car he used to run over the agent and his wife, he returns with a neighbor's car. The vehicle used by Juma to run over the agent and his wife is eventually located in another county and the police find a loaded weapon under the driver's seat as reported by S/A Echevarria, along with seized drugs and drug paraphernalia.

Ordinarily, an arrest would occur, however, that detective decides not to charge Juma for a list of felony crimes that includes attempted murder, vehicular assault, leaving the scene of an accident with injuries, drug and weapons possession. What is astounding that that detective never notifies the ATF of the federal weapons offenses and decides not to run a ballistics check on Juma's seized weapon to determine if it was used in another crime.

An investigation conducted by the National Police Defense Foundation disclosed that Alla Juma had been arrested four times starting in 2007 and had history with the criminal justice system for a variety of felony crimes including carrying a concealed weapon, battery with great bodily injury, child endangerment, gun possession and 15 serious traffic violations, yet Yuma never spent one day in jail.

As Americans, we see the media portraying the political controversy of sanctuary states and their failure to report criminal aliens to ICE. A review of the Yuma arrests discloses he claimed on one arrest report being born in Jordan and on three other arrest reports birth in the United States, was he a criminal alien claiming to be a U.S. Citizen and or a deportable alien?

What is outrageous is while Mr. Juma remained as the key prosecution witness, he was again arrested on July 4, 2016 by the Florida State Police for speeding more than 100 miles per hour and eluding police with his minor son in the vehicle. A search of Juma's car uncovers another loaded gun and drugs? When you review that arrest report there is no mention of a seized gun and upon further NPFD investigation it was determined that weapon was reportedly returned to Juma without his being charged for weapons possession? Was it the prosecutor's office who intervened on his behalf to obstruct justice?

Often in trials, a defense attorney is precluded from using evidence that the court might deem as being prejudicial to the defense or prosecution case. In such a case, the defense called as their witness the wife of Yuma who admitted that her husband was a violent man

who told her not to call the police that day about the shooting incident, which contradicted his trial testimony. In addition, she privately showed to the defense team and prosecutors a video of her husband engaged in another road rage incident where he was seen pointing a loaded gun at another motorist. The court precluded showing that video to the jury as being prejudicial.

The National Police Defense Foundation has been outraged by the alleged prosecutorial misconduct involved in the Echevarria prosecution case and wrote several letters to the Governor of Florida and other elected officials asking for an independent investigation without any response.

The NPDF Executive Director was present in the court room when it became evident from the witness testimony that S/A Echevarria performed his sworn duty on November 7, 2013 when he took appropriate police action to defend his family and himself from a career criminal who had no respect for the law. The jury's five minutes' deliberation and verdict of "Not Guilty" is indicative that "truth and justice" finally prevailed for a real American hero like S/A Echevarria.

What was truly heartwarming was the remarks made by the presiding Palm Beach County Circuit Judge John Kastrenakes to the jury that he was tempted to stop the trial and acquit the agent, prior to deliberations, but he said he expected the jury would reach the right verdict which they did.

Judge Kastrenakes also told Echevarria, continue to work for the citizens of this country as a DHS Senior Special Agent and Deputy U.S. Marshal and now you know what it is like to be falsely accused of a crime. Similarly, the jurors in the trial who had acquitted the agent went to personally congratulate him with tears filled in their eyes apologizing for the injustice he had to endure over the past four years.

S/A Echevarria publicly recognized the National Police Defense foundation for their support and establishment of his legal defense fund. In that vein, the NPDF would similarly like to thank its members and public who made tax-deductible donations to the S/A Angel Echevarria Legal Defense Fund. Moreover, the outstanding legal work performed by S/A Echevarria's legal defense team, Bruce Lehr and Andrew Levi, the U.S. Marshals who attended his trial daily and the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association (FLEOA) who will assure he gets reinstated with back pay.

For further information on the S/A Angel Echevarria case or to make a tax-deductible donation towards his legal defense fund, call 732-617-2330.

