1	IN THE SUPREME COURT	OF THE UNITED STATES
2		x
3	ALEX BLUEFORD,	:
4	Petitioner	: No. 10-1320
5	v.	:
6	ARKANSAS.	:
7		x
8	Wash	ington, D.C.
9	Wedne	esday, February 22, 2012
10		
11	The above-ent	itled matter came on for oral
12	argument before the Supreme	Court of the United States
13	at 11:22 a.m.	
14	APPEARANCES:	
15	CLIFFORD M. SLOAN, ESQ., Washington, D.C.; for	
16	Petitioner.	
17	DUSTIN MCDANIEL, ESQ., Atto:	rney General, Little Rock,
18	Arkansas; for Respondent	
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1	PROCEEDINGS	
2	(11:22 a.m.)	
3	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: We'll hear argument	
4	next in Case 10-1320, Blueford v. Arkansas.	
5	Mr. Sloan.	
6	ORAL ARGUMENT OF CLIFFORD M. SLOAN	
7	ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONER	
8	MR. SLOAN: Mr. Chief Justice, and may it	
9	please the Court:	
LO	The question in this case is whether the	
11	jury foreperson's announcement that the jury had voted	
12	unanimously that Petitioner was not guilty of capital	
13	murder and first-degree murder has double jeopardy	
L 4	consequences. We respectfully submit that it does, for	
15	two reasons.	
16	First, the foreperson's announcement on this	
L7	record establishes an acquittal; and, second, even if it	
18	is not viewed as an acquittal, under this Court's	
19	well-established standard, there was not manifest	
20	necessity for a second trial on the same murder charges.	
21	Now, with regard to the acquittal, the	
22	reasons why the foreperson's announcement was an	
23	acquittal are twofold: First, the foreperson's	
24	announcement was clear and explicit that the jury had	
25	voted unanimously against guilt; and, second	

- 1 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Is that -- is that
- 2 altogether clear, because she first said -- didn't she
- 3 first say that the jury cannot agree on any one charge?
- 4 MR. SLOAN: Yes, Your Honor. And then the
- 5 court specifically asked what is the count on capital
- 6 murder? And she said unanimous against that. What is
- 7 the count on first-degree murder? Unanimous against
- 8 that. And both the Arkansas trial court and the
- 9 Arkansas Supreme Court here observed that the foreperson
- 10 has been explicit that the jury had voted unanimously
- 11 against --.
- 12 JUSTICE SCALIA: Well, that's the count. The
- 13 jury takes lots of votes. Was it utterly clear that the
- 14 jury could not go back and reconsider that? Unless that
- 15 was absolutely clear, it seems to me a verdict had not
- 16 been announced. She just said how we voted the last
- 17 time.
- MR. SLOAN: With regard to finality, Your
- 19 Honor, I think that -- that the jury could have changed
- 20 its mind, but I want to emphasize the reason I say that
- 21 because I think it highlights something very important
- that is conspicuously absent here; and three brief
- 23 points on that, Your Honor.
- 24 First, when the foreperson announced that
- 25 the jury had voted unanimously against guilt on the

- 1 murder charges, she was announcing a jury decision.
- 2 There was nothing equivocal or qualified about that.
- 3 Second, Your Honor --
- 4 JUSTICE SCALIA: Excuse me. Excuse me.
- 5 When you say she was announcing a decision, then you
- 6 mean they can't go back on it?
- 7 MR. SLOAN: No, that was -- well, that's
- 8 my second --
- 9 JUSTICE SCALIA: She was announcing a vote.
- 10 MR. SLOAN: Yes. She was announcing the
- 11 decision that they had made at that point. But the
- 12 reason -- my second point, Your Honor, the reason why I
- 13 say that they could have gone back is the historic
- 14 traditional principle that a jury can correct or revise
- 15 a verdict while it continues to be sitting.
- 16 Now, in this Court's opinion, in Smith v.
- 17 Massachusetts, this Court talked about that traditional
- 18 and historic principle, cited an English case from 1824,
- 19 the Parkin case, where the jury had done that, had gone
- 20 back after announcing a verdict. And how that would
- 21 play out here, if the jury came back and they said, you
- 22 know, we were unanimous before, but now one juror says
- 23 that he doesn't really agree with that, then, of course,
- 24 a court could take that into account.
- 25 JUSTICE ALITO: I think you've conceded away

- 1 your case when you say that. The one characteristic of
- 2 a verdict that seems perfectly clear to me is that it is
- 3 final.
- 4 The jury can't render a verdict and be
- 5 discharged and then come back the next day and say, you
- 6 know what, some of us -- one of us has changed his mind
- 7 or her mind. It's the final vote. And so, why isn't
- 8 the critical question here whether what the -- what the
- 9 foreperson said was this is our final vote, we're not
- 10 going to go back, this is it; or this is the way we
- 11 voted now, and it's -- one or more of us may have wanted
- 12 to -- wanted to retain the right, reserve the right, to
- 13 go back and -- and vote again.
- 14 MR. SLOAN: Because the -- the reason why I
- 15 think the announcement was an acquittal here is twofold:
- 16 First, there was the explicit statement of -- of what
- 17 the vote was at that time; but, second, there is nothing
- 18 on the record in this case that contradicts that
- 19 statement. At the time the jury was discharged and at
- 20 the time the trial ended, the jury had said nothing that
- 21 contradicted that earlier statement.
- 22 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Suppose the -- suppose the
- 23 court said, after this colloquy, I want you to go back
- 24 and think about this whole case again. Could the jurors
- 25 then have revisited the first count?

- 1 MR. SLOAN: Well --
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: The capital murder count?
- 3 MR. SLOAN: Your Honor, if -- if the jurors
- 4 had come back and said --
- 5 JUSTICE KENNEDY: No. The colloquy is what
- 6 we've got.
- 7 MR. SLOAN: Yes.
- 8 JUSTICE KENNEDY: And the judge said I want
- 9 you to deliberate more about this entire case. (A) was
- 10 he permitted to do that under Arkansas law, I guess is
- 11 one of my real questions.
- MR. SLOAN: Oh. Well, in terms -- in terms
- 13 of Arkansas law and the particular transition
- 14 instructions here, no, we don't think that the
- 15 transition instructions operate that way, Your Honor.
- 16 There's nothing in the instructions that say that --
- 17 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Nothing -- nothing --
- 18 Arkansas law doesn't permit the jury to -- before it's
- 19 delivered its final formal verdict, to think about the
- 20 case again and vote on it again?
- MR. SLOAN: No. It -- it does, Your Honor,
- 22 and that's why I'm trying to draw a distinction between
- 23 how the transition instructions here operate, the sort
- 24 of acquittal-first instructions, and the general
- 25 principle that a jury can correct or revise its verdict.

- 1 I mean, in a sense, one way to think about --
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: Well, but I -- I think
- 3 this may be what Justice Alito asked. Well, I -- I
- 4 don't think it gave a verdict here. I don't think it's
- 5 revising its verdict.
- 6 MR. SLOAN: Well --
- 7 JUSTICE KENNEDY: It's mid-deliberation, as
- 8 Justice -- Justice Scalia said at the outset.
- 9 MR. SLOAN: There -- there's nothing in the
- 10 jury statement at all that suggested that it was
- 11 tentative. It said we have unanimously voted against
- 12 guilt on the murder charges.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Counsel, one --
- 14 JUSTICE GINSBURG: But then they went -- then
- 15 they went out again.
- MR. SLOAN: Pardon me?
- 17 JUSTICE GINSBURG: And that's the problem.
- 18 They, the jury -- the judge gave them an Allen charge,
- 19 and they went out again. And I think you have
- 20 recognized that the jury could have then said we'll go
- 21 back to square one, we'll consider capital murder,
- 22 first-degree murder.
- 23 So, they -- I think you recognize that after
- 24 the judge gives them a charge of this kind, they can
- 25 begin all over again. And here, when they came in and

- 1 said we -- we can't agree, defense counsel didn't ask to
- 2 have the jury polled.
- 3 MR. SLOAN: The -- the defense counsel asked
- 4 for verdict forms to be sent into the jury room that
- 5 would allow them to record their verdicts on the murder
- 6 charges. And that's a very important point here, Your
- 7 Honor, because it was the State that prevented any
- 8 additional elucidation about what the jury thought on
- 9 the murder charges.
- 10 JUSTICE SCALIA: But that -- so long as it's
- 11 still tentative thoughts, it doesn't matter. The jury
- 12 could have -- suppose the jury went back after this
- 13 announcement -- you know, we -- you know, we've decided
- 14 on a -- on the greater charge, or we voted on the
- 15 greater charge for the defendant. Suppose they go back
- 16 and one of the people who wants to convict on the lesser
- 17 charge, as to which they are deadlocked, finally says,
- 18 well, look it, if you won't come along to convict him on
- 19 the lesser charge, by God, I'm not -- I'm not going to
- 20 acquit on the greater charge.
- Isn't that the kind of stuff that goes on in
- 22 jury rooms all the time?
- 23 MR. SLOAN: Yes, it does, Your Honor.
- JUSTICE SCALIA: So, there is no certainty
- 25 whatever that -- that what was the vote at that time

- 1 would be the vote when they finally got done.
- 2 MR. SLOAN: Well, but, Your Honor, on the
- 3 record as the case comes to this Court, what you have is
- 4 this very clear and explicit statement against guilt on
- 5 the murder charges and then nothing in what the jury
- 6 says when it comes back that contradicts that --
- JUSTICE KAGAN: Well, I guess one --
- 8 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Counsel, I thought that
- 9 part of your argument was that, given the instructions
- in this case, which the jury appears to have followed to
- 11 the T, they can't get to a lesser count unless they've
- 12 acquitted on the preceding count.
- MR. SLOAN: Yes.
- 14 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: When the judge asks
- 15 them, did you reach criminal negligence, they say we
- 16 were told not to.
- 17 Now, the judge, whether he was right or
- 18 wrong under Hughes as to whether they followed the
- 19 instructions or he misunderstood them, I don't know.
- 20 But it's very clear in context from the government's
- 21 arguments to the jury, to the defense argument to the
- 22 jury, you don't reach the split count or even talk about
- 23 it unless you've been acquitted.
- So, given that the jury responds at the end
- 25 we haven't reached a verdict, and the jury said earlier

- 1 that they hadn't reached a verdict on the one issue,
- 2 isn't the -- the only assumption is that they didn't go
- 3 back?
- 4 MR. SLOAN: Yes, I think that's exactly
- 5 right, Your Honor, because the jury instructions very
- 6 explicitly said that you don't go to a lesser offense
- 7 unless you have a reasonable doubt on the greater
- 8 offense. The State --
- 9 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, it's --
- MR. SLOAN: -- over and over --
- 11 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: I'm sorry. Go
- 12 ahead.
- MR. SLOAN: I was just going to say the
- 14 State over and over again in its closing argument said
- 15 to the jury you cannot reach a lesser offense unless you
- 16 unanimously find the defendant not guilty on the greater
- 17 offense. And as you point out, the Arkansas Supreme
- 18 Court in the Hughes case has said that the law in
- 19 Arkansas is that you don't get to a lesser offense
- 20 unless -- the jury doesn't get to a lesser offense
- 21 unless it in essence acquits on the greater offense.
- 22 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Right, but that's
- 23 the final say. You don't know what the jury did as a
- 24 preliminary matter. I would think it in a case like
- 25 this perfectly reasonable for the jury to say: Let's

- 1 take a preliminary vote; we'll go down; and if -- if we
- 2 all agree on something right away, that's what we'll do.
- Does everybody agree on capital murder? No,
- 4 some don't. Does everybody agree on murder? No. Does
- 5 everybody agree on manslaughter? Yes. Okay, we all
- 6 know that manslaughter, he's at least guilty. Now let's
- 7 go back and talk about the more serious offense, and
- 8 some of us will try to persuade the holdouts.
- 9 And yet, you would say as soon as they
- 10 reached the point of saying, yes, he's guilty on
- 11 manslaughter, they can't go back.
- MR. SLOAN: Well, the instructions don't
- 13 provide for them to -- for them to go back. The State,
- 14 which had never made that argument until this Court in
- 15 this litigation, that they can go back, doesn't point to
- 16 any case that --
- 17 JUSTICE KENNEDY: Well, but then I'm not
- 18 sure it's just a matter of State law then, we're --
- 19 what we're doing here is talking about the
- 20 constitutional minimum. And I -- Justice Scalia gave a
- 21 hypothetical, you can have a more -- even a more
- 22 principled juror than that. He says, you know, now that
- 23 we're thinking about manslaughter, it is true that thus
- 24 and so happened; maybe we were wrong on the first --
- 25 first-degree count. I mean, that's perfectly plausible.

- 1 MR. SLOAN: Well, let me say, whatever one
- 2 thinks about finality -- and I do think there was
- 3 sufficient finality here for the reasons we have been
- 4 discussing, but whatever one thinks about finality,
- 5 let's consider this in the context of manifest necessity
- 6 because whatever one thinks of finality, I submit that
- 7 it is clear that when a jury foreperson stands up in
- 8 front of the jury, in front of the defendant, lawyers
- 9 for both sides, and says we have voted unanimously that
- 10 he is not guilty of these murder charges, that is
- 11 something at the very core of the Double Jeopardy
- 12 Clause --
- JUSTICE ALITO: Are you saying --
- 14 MR. SLOAN: -- at the heartland of it.
- 15 JUSTICE ALITO: Are you saying that there
- 16 was no manifest necessity to declare a mistrial as to
- 17 any count, in which case there could be no retrial
- 18 whatsoever, or no manifest necessity to declare a
- 19 mistrial on capital murder? And if you're saying the
- 20 latter, then what would you have us do with the decision
- 21 by the Arkansas Supreme Court that Arkansas law does not
- 22 allow a partial verdict?
- 23 MR. SLOAN: Okay. Your Honor, so, first I'm
- 24 saying only that there was no manifest necessity as to
- 25 capital murder and first-degree murder, which were the

- 1 two charges on which they were unanimous. We agree he
- 2 can be retried on manslaughter and negligent homicide.
- Now, as to the Arkansas Supreme Court
- 4 decision on that -- and that brings up a very important
- 5 point because the State's position essentially is it
- 6 could never be final enough, as Your Honor suggests,
- 7 because it simply is impermissible under Arkansas law to
- 8 have an acquittal on a greater offense as long as you're
- 9 deadlocked on a lesser offense.
- 10 And as to that, this Court's opinions are
- 11 clear that if you have a State law that prevents giving
- 12 effect to what is in substance an acquittal, it must
- 13 yield to the Federal constitutional command of the
- 14 Double Jeopardy Clause.
- 15 And Hudson v. Louisiana is very instructive
- on this point because, in Hudson, Louisiana had a law
- 17 that after a conviction, a judge could not enter an
- 18 acquittal order; he could only enter a new trial order.
- 19 And after the conviction on murder in Hudson, the judge
- 20 entered a new trial order and explained that it was
- 21 because of insufficient evidence.
- 22 And this Court unanimously said that that
- 23 substantively was an acquittal; it has full double
- 24 jeopardy consequences, notwithstanding the fact that
- 25 Louisiana law does not allow a judge to enter an

- 1 acquittal order --
- JUSTICE BREYER: What's bothering me is I
- 3 can't figure this out very well. We have an imaginary
- 4 State, and what the State says to the jury: Jury, you
- 5 have three choices. Choice one is you acquit this
- 6 person of everything. Choice two is you convict him of
- 7 something. Choice three is you say you're hung. Okay?
- 8 I don't see anything in the Constitution
- 9 that prevents a State from doing that. So, if that --
- 10 if no -- what is it? And, of course, if you follow
- 11 that, there was no acquittal on those early charges.
- 12 That wasn't a permissible verdict. And now you
- 13 structure your argument any way you want, but that
- 14 the State has -- I would think, within the limits of due
- 15 process, it can structure the jury's arguments as it
- 16 wishes.
- 17 But -- so, what's wrong with that? And if
- 18 that -- if there's nothing wrong with that, then how do
- 19 you win?
- 20 MR. SLOAN: Okay, Your Honor. Two points:
- 21 One that focuses on the jury foreperson's announcement
- 22 here --
- JUSTICE BREYER: Well, you could say, well,
- 24 you could -- well, that's one route. What you say is
- 25 nothing wrong with that. But if the judge is foolish

- 1 enough to get the jury -- to get the foreperson to say
- 2 what the state of the deliberation is in detail, then
- 3 the Double Jeopardy Clause kicks in. Well, that's an
- 4 argument.
- 5 MR. SLOAN: Well, Your Honor --
- 6 JUSTICE BREYER: So, they make a mistake and
- 7 now suddenly it's jeopardy where it wasn't before,
- 8 or -- this seems like a minor matter compared to the
- 9 issues of jeopardy, whether the jury honestly said what
- 10 was going on in the room, particularly if it's
- 11 changeable.
- MR. SLOAN: With respect, Your Honor, I
- 13 disagree that it's a minor matter when a foreperson
- 14 stands up, with the jury present, and says we have voted
- 15 not guilty. And as to that, with an announcement -- for
- 16 example, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court
- 17 decision in the Roth case, which is in the briefs, is
- 18 instructive because in that case the Massachusetts court
- 19 said very emphatically you should not ask a jury that
- 20 kind of question, but --
- JUSTICE BREYER: Okay. So, let's -- go
- 22 ahead.
- MR. SLOAN: But -- may I just finish --
- JUSTICE BREYER: Please.
- 25 MR. SLOAN: -- the sentence, Your Honor?

- 1 But in that case, the trial court had asked
- 2 the jury, and the foreperson had said that they had
- 3 voted against guilt on the greater offenses. And so,
- 4 the Massachusetts court said, if the -- essentially,
- 5 these are my words -- but if the Double Jeopardy Clause
- 6 means anything, it means that when you have an
- 7 announcement like that, it has to matter.
- 8 And the other point, Your Honor, is that
- 9 this Court's opinions such as Fong Foo and Sanabria say
- 10 that it doesn't matter if an acquittal is on an
- 11 erroneous basis. Once it happens, we give full double
- 12 jeopardy consequence to it. So, even if one thinks that
- 13 the judge shouldn't have asked the question and it would
- 14 have been permissible not to ask the question, once he
- 15 did and once that's on the record, that is of
- 16 considerable constitutional --
- 17 JUSTICE SCALIA: Only if --
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: Why should there --
- 19 JUSTICE SCALIA: Only if -- and I think this
- 20 is the premise of your argument. Only if there is a
- 21 constitutional necessity to -- to sever the various
- 22 charges, there is a constitutional necessity to let the
- 23 jury come in on one charge without coming in on the
- 24 other. It seems to me that's the premise of your
- 25 argument. And I don't know where that constitutional

- 1 necessity comes from.
- MR. SLOAN: Well, Your Honor, first, on the
- 3 manifest necessity point, when there is an
- 4 announcement like this, because --
- 5 JUSTICE SCALIA: Your manifest necessity
- 6 depends upon the necessity of severing, yes. If you
- 7 sever, then there is no manifest necessity of
- 8 resubmitting the greater charge. But it assumes -- it
- 9 assumes a severing, and I don't know where the severing
- 10 comes from.
- 11 MR. SLOAN: The -- the manifest necessity
- 12 argument is that when there is an announcement like this
- 13 that goes right to the core of double jeopardy -- and,
- 14 you know, we know that with greater and lesser included
- 15 offenses, if there is a basis for an acquittal, then
- 16 that has to be given effect on the separate charges.
- 17 That's Green and Price.
- 18 JUSTICE KENNEDY: But that's -- but that's
- 19 after a verdict. Why is it that the purposes of the
- 20 Double Jeopardy Clause are implicated when a jury,
- 21 before it delivers a final verdict, says where -- where
- 22 it is mid -- mid-deliberations? The defendant, of
- 23 course, is terribly disappointed if they go back and
- 24 then find him guilty. So, I guess there's a personal
- 25 disappointment interest for the few hours that it takes

- 1 for the jury to come to a different verdict, but he
- doesn't have to prepare the defense again; he doesn't
- 3 have to go to trial again. It's all one trial.
- I don't see why there's a double jeopardy
- 5 interest in the Massachusetts case that you point out.
- 6 I don't see where the double jeopardy interest was in
- 7 saying that you can't go back.
- MR. SLOAN: Well, because --
- 9 JUSTICE KENNEDY: What -- what --
- 10 MR. SLOAN: It's not --
- 11 JUSTICE KENNEDY: What purpose of the Double
- 12 Jeopardy Clause is implicated by the rule that says you
- 13 can't go back?
- 14 MR. SLOAN: Well, Your Honor, on the
- 15 manifest necessity point, I'm not saying you can't get
- 16 back. What I am saying is that when you have an
- 17 announcement of such constitutional moment at the
- 18 heartland of the Double Jeopardy Clause, a judge can do
- 19 many things --
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: I'm asking why it's the
- 21 heartland of the Double Jeopardy Clause.
- 22 MR. SLOAN: Well, because this Court --
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: I question that.
- MR. SLOAN: Yes, Your Honor. Because this
- 25 Court, again and again, has talked about the special

- 1 role of an acquittal where a jury finds the defendant
- 2 not guilty. Now, even if one views that as not final,
- 3 it surely is significant at the heartland of the Double
- 4 Jeopardy --
- 5 JUSTICE BREYER: Why "surely"?
- 6 MR. SLOAN: Pardon?
- JUSTICE BREYER: I mean, why "surely"?
- 8 Look, the thing ends. To go back to my example, the
- 9 case is over, the jury comes in and says, Judge, we're
- 10 hung. Okay? Everybody is going to go home.
- MR. SLOAN: Okay.
- JUSTICE BREYER: But the defense lawyer
- 13 says, Judge, I'd like to know which of the five charges
- 14 they're on. Does the defense lawyer or the prosecutor
- 15 have a constitutional right to find out?
- 16 MR. SLOAN: Okay. Well, Your Honor. If one
- 17 assumes the foreperson's announcement is not in it or
- 18 it's of no consequence -- it's --
- JUSTICE BREYER: No, I'm not assuming
- 20 anything. I'm giving you the example.
- MR. SLOAN: What -- but, no, no -- it's just
- 22 what I'm saying. So, there's just the question, does
- 23 the defendant have a right to inquire?
- JUSTICE BREYER: Yes.
- MR. SLOAN: And here --

- 1 JUSTICE BREYER: What's the answer?
- 2 MR. SLOAN: -- there's -- I would say
- 3 definitely, yes, in a hard-transition State. This
- 4 is where you get into the --
- 5 JUSTICE BREYER: In the State I imagine
- 6 is -- remember, there were three possible verdicts:
- 7 Acquit of everything, convict of something, or say
- 8 you're hung. That's what we're imagining. Okay? And
- 9 you can imagine the set of instructions -- go to A, B,
- 10 C. That's fair enough. Those four things.
- MR. SLOAN: Right.
- 12 JUSTICE BREYER: Okay? Now, case over,
- 13 acquitted -- no, hung, Your Honor.
- 14 Defense attorney: I want to find out which
- 15 of the five they're on.
- 16 Does he have a constitutional right to get
- 17 the answer?
- MR. SLOAN: He does, if --
- JUSTICE BREYER: He does?
- 20 MR. SLOAN: Yes, if it is a hard-transition
- 21 State. And the -- or especially if it's a
- 22 hard-transition State.
- JUSTICE BREYER: I don't know what -- I'm
- 24 sorry.
- 25 MR. SLOAN: Okay. What a hard transition --

- 1 or sometimes it's called an "acquittal first" State,
- 2 which may put it in relief more, which is where, as in
- 3 this case, the jury is told you may go to a lesser
- 4 offense --
- JUSTICE BREYER: Okay. Okay. I see, okay,
- 6 fine.
- 7 MR. SLOAN: -- only if you acquit on the
- 8 greater offense.
- 9 JUSTICE BREYER: In other words, here -- I
- 10 got it. If --
- MR. SLOAN: And every State court, except
- 12 for Arkansas here, that has addressed the issue in the
- 13 context of a hard transition, has said that the
- 14 defendant does have a right to inquire --
- 15 JUSTICE BREYER: Okay. Okay.
- 16 MR. SLOAN: That's very different if you
- 17 don't have that kind of hard transition.
- JUSTICE BREYER: Wait. I'm only midway,
- 19 because I'm trying to follow this through. I still
- 20 don't know why the Constitution does that, but I'll take
- 21 your word for it. I'd assume it was State law that does
- 22 that, but -- but fine.
- Now he says, yes, you have the right, either
- 24 of you has the right.
- We're on number three.

- 1 Your Honor, I would like a poll of the jury
- 2 as to the acquittal as to one and two.
- 3 Does both -- do both sides have the right to
- 4 get that?
- 5 MR. SLOAN: So, after -- after they've
- 6 announced an acquittal?
- 7 JUSTICE BREYER: No. Well, here's what
- 8 happened: Judge, I want to know what number they were
- 9 on when they couldn't reach a --
- 10 MR. SLOAN: Right.
- 11 JUSTICE BREYER: Foreman: Number five, Your
- 12 Honor.
- Judge, I would like a poll of the jury, each
- 14 juror, as to numbers one, two, three, and four to be
- 15 sure that they were unanimous on each as to the
- 16 acquittal, which under the instruction allowed them to
- 17 go to the next one.
- 18 Okay? Constitution requires it?
- 19 MR. SLOAN: Well, no. I mean, look, I think
- 20 there can be variations in State procedure, but I think
- 21 the core --
- 22 JUSTICE BREYER: No, no. Why doesn't the
- 23 Constitution require it? You have to be sure there was
- 24 an acquittal. You have to be sure there was an
- 25 acquittal. And what -- what I'm doing obviously is I'm

- 1 spinning out what I see as the constitutional
- 2 consequences of taking your constitutional position, and
- 3 I'm going to be ending up by saying I've never heard of
- 4 this before.
- 5 MR. SLOAN: Well --
- JUSTICE BREYER: But there's a lot of stuff
- 7 I haven't heard of. So, that doesn't prove that much.
- 8 (Laughter.)
- 9 MR. SLOAN: Well, there are several States
- 10 that have this, and the reason --
- 11 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Counsel, what do several
- 12 States have? I've -- if I read what those States are
- 13 saying, including the Massachusetts State that you point
- 14 to, it's a very simple rule. And you seem to be arguing
- 15 past it or around it or -- I think what they say is,
- once the jury announces an acquittal, then that's the
- 17 substance; the person's been acquitted once they've made
- 18 a judgment and announced it. It -- the Constitution
- 19 doesn't -- the Double Jeopardy Clause doesn't entitle
- 20 someone to have it announced, doesn't entitle someone to
- 21 force the jury to announce it.
- 22 But if the jury gets up at the end of the
- 23 trial in a State that doesn't permit partial verdicts
- 24 and said, contrary to the instructions of the judge,
- 25 contrary to the law of the State, the jury says we

- 1 acquitted on counts one and two, we're hung on count
- 2 three, the Constitution says jeopardy attaches because
- 3 there has been an announcement of a verdict. Isn't that
- 4 your position?
- 5 MR. SLOAN: That's exactly right. There's
- 6 another body of case law also which I was addressing,
- 7 which talks about when jeopardy attaches even if there's
- 8 not that kind of announcement. But, Your Honor --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Well, Ball -- our case
- in Ball says it doesn't matter whether a judgment is
- 11 entered or not. As far back as 1896, Ball said the
- 12 judgment is irrelevant. It is the verdict of acquittal,
- 13 and it basically equated that verdict with -- it doesn't
- 14 matter if it's entered properly, if the jury is polled,
- 15 if anything happens. It's as soon as the jury announces
- 16 acquittal, that's the operative double jeopardy kicker.
- 17 Isn't that what you're saying?
- 18 MR. SLOAN: Yes. Yes, Your Honor.
- 19 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: And I thought I heard
- 20 you arguing that here the lack of manifest necessity was
- 21 that the judge had heard they reached that verdict.
- MR. SLOAN: Well --
- 23 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: And he should not have
- 24 discharged the jury without asking them, could they
- 25 reach a verdict that they had -- had they reached the

- 1 verdict that they announced?
- 2 MR. SLOAN: Yes. From a manifest necessity
- 3 perspective, this Court's decisions on manifest
- 4 necessity, from United States v. Perez in 1824 through
- 5 Renico v. Lett in 2010, have emphasized the judge has to
- 6 exercise sound discretion. And to exercise sound
- 7 discretion here, the judge could have done many things,
- 8 but the one thing he could not do, consistent with sound
- 9 discretion, is to do nothing and to proceed as though
- 10 that announcement hadn't happened, and --
- 11 JUSTICE ALITO: You suggested that the --
- 12 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: You've talked about
- 13 our manifest necessity decisions. It's true that we --
- 14 isn't it, that we said last year we have never reversed
- 15 the district courts' exercise of discretion under the
- 16 manifest necessity standard?
- 17 MR. SLOAN: In the case of a jury deadlock?
- 18 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Yes.
- 19 MR. SLOAN: Is what Your Honor is talking
- 20 about? Yes, this Court has emphasized the -- the
- 21 deference due a district court. But Renico --
- 22 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: In -- and under
- 23 that -- I'm sorry. Go ahead.
- MR. SLOAN: Renico did not present the
- 25 important threshold issue about what are the charges on

- 1 which the jury is deadlocked. And here there's an
- 2 insufficient basis to conclude that the jury was
- 3 deadlocked on the murder charges. There was nothing
- 4 like the foreperson's announcement at issue in Renico.
- 5 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: I don't want to --
- 6 I'm sorry for taking up your time, but your friend says
- 7 you did not object when the judge announced that he was
- 8 going to declare a mistrial; is that correct?
- 9 MR. SLOAN: Your Honor, there's not an --
- 10 an objection at that time, but that is not a waiver for
- 11 a couple of reasons. First, the Arkansas Supreme Court
- 12 reached the merits. It's a Federal constitutional
- 13 issue.
- 14 Second, before that point, defense counsel
- 15 had been very explicit that it only wanted a mistrial on
- 16 the -- on the remaining counts and not on the other
- 17 ones.
- 18 And, third, this Court has emphasized that
- 19 the distinction in manifest necessity is when the
- 20 defendant affirmatively consents or moves for a
- 21 mistrial, as opposed to either if the judge does it
- 22 sua sponte, and the defendant doesn't have to object, or
- 23 the prosecutor moves for it.
- 24 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you, counsel.
- 25 General McDaniel.

1 ORAL ARGUMENT OF DUSTIN MCDANIEL 2 ON BEHALF OF THE RESPONDENT 3 MR. MCDANIEL: Mr. Chief Justice, and may it 4 please the Court: 5 There are three key reasons why jeopardy has 6 not terminated in this case. First, the jury was free 7 to revisit capital and first-degree murder when it 8 resumed its deliberations. Thus --9 JUSTICE KAGAN: Where does it say that in 10 the jury charge? 11 MR. MCDANIEL: I think that there's a critical misunderstanding by Petitioner of Arkansas's 12 13 jury instructions, and there's a lot of use of -- of 14 titles, such as "acquittal first" or "hard transition" 15 or "soft transition." 16 JUSTICE KAGAN: Well, as I understand what 17 the Arkansas instructions said, what the instructions in 18 this case said, is that the jury unanimously had to have a reasonable doubt on an offense before it could go down 19 20 to the next offense. So, that's to say that the jury unanimously had to find what is -- what leads to an 21 22 acquittal. So, the jury had to unanimously acquit on 23 the greater offense before it could go down to the next. 24 And the -- the instructions don't say 25 anything about moving back up. And this jury seems to

- 1 take its responsibility under these instructions
- 2 extraordinarily seriously. This jury was instructing
- 3 the judge on the instructions --
- 4 (Laughter.)
- 5 JUSTICE KAGAN: -- and about how they had to
- 6 go down step by step and reach unanimity on the one
- 7 before they could get to the next lowest down. So, I
- 8 guess I'm asking why do you think, under these
- 9 instructions, that the jury felt itself able to go back
- 10 up?
- 11 MR. MCDANIEL: Well, there are three primary
- 12 reasons. One, in States that are acquittal-first
- 13 States, States that truly require a resolution of each
- 14 charge before the transition to subsequent charges, they
- 15 use words like "unanimous." In fact, they all use the
- 16 word "unanimous" in their instruction. Arkansas doesn't
- 17 do that. We use a rather ambiguous, or unambiguous,
- 18 depending on how you look at it --
- 19 JUSTICE KAGAN: The chief prosecutor kept
- 20 saying: You all have to agree on this.
- 21 MR. MCDANIEL: And he was accurate, and he
- 22 was echoed by the defense counsel in her closing
- 23 argument as well. But there is no requirement of a
- 24 resolution. The jury verdict forms reflect that
- 25 perfectly.

- In fact, Justice Breyer's example of a given
- 2 State is exactly what Arkansas does, as compared to a --
- 3 a true acquittal-first State, where there are multiple
- 4 jury verdict forms, where you truly resolve one charge
- 5 attaching final resolution and, in fact, attaching
- 6 jeopardy or terminating jeopardy at that point.
- 7 In this case, there is one verdict form.
- 8 You can decide something --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: I'm sorry. I'm so
- 10 totally confused by you ignoring Hughes.
- 11 MR. MCDANIEL: I think --
- 12 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: The Arkansas charge
- 13 says: If you have a reasonable doubt of the defendant's
- 14 guilt on the charge of capital murder, you will consider
- 15 the charge of murder in the first degree.
- 16 And I thought the Arkansas cases said no one
- 17 juror is going to think they can go to the next count.
- 18 They have to understand from this charge that it has to
- 19 be unanimous. And that's what the prosecutor argued.
- 20 It's what the defense argued. It's what your supreme
- 21 court has said has to happen. I'm a little confused,
- 22 given your case law, your supreme court case law, that
- 23 says you can't move on to the next one unless it's
- 24 unanimous, how you can answer Justice Kagan's question
- 25 the way you have. I mean, there's nothing in your case

- 1 law that --
- JUSTICE SCALIA: You didn't finish your
- 3 answer, did you? I thought you were going on to some
- 4 other points.
- 5 MR. MCDANIEL: I did. And, in fact, I think
- 6 that Hughes is extraordinarily important. And,
- 7 respectfully, I believe that the Petitioner has
- 8 mischaracterized Hughes. There is a line of dicta in
- 9 Hughes that is particularly useful in the Petitioner's
- 10 brief, but it is Justice Corbin of the Arkansas Supreme
- 11 Court who authored Hughes, who was rejecting a double
- 12 jeopardy claim in Hughes and, in fact, invoked this line
- 13 which says -- what has been quoted in the briefs. It is
- 14 Justice Corbin who was presented with this exact same
- 15 argument to interpret the instructions in Blueford and
- 16 authored Blueford and rejected what allegedly was his
- 17 position on the instructions. Hughes was not about the
- 18 instructions. No part of Hughes was asked to interpret
- 19 what our instructions are.
- 20 JUSTICE KAGAN: I think if you -- if you
- 21 look at what the -- what the judge said, what the
- 22 prosecutor said, what the defense counsel said, and then
- 23 what the jury said, it's clear that they all thought
- 24 that they had to unanimously agree on something before
- 25 they could go to the next crime. And, again, there's no

- 1 suggestion in what anybody said that they could go back
- 2 up.
- 3 JUSTICE SCALIA: Is there any suggestion
- 4 that they couldn't go back up?
- 5 MR. MCDANIEL: That is extraordinarily
- 6 important, Justice Scalia. There's not.
- 7 JUSTICE SCALIA: Isn't it usually assumed
- 8 that a jury is not finished until it's finished?
- 9 MR. MCDANIEL: The State would assert that
- 10 that is precisely the case here. You have exactly the
- 11 type of jury verdict form that Justice Breyer suggested
- 12 in his example. They have to decide on something. You
- 13 have one charge, capital murder and its lesser -- lesser
- 14 and includeds.
- This person, Mr. Blueford, does not deny
- 16 that he is guilty of a homicide offense. That was
- 17 included in their closing argument. Does not deny that
- 18 he's subject to retrial because there was manifest
- 19 necessity on at least two of the charges. They simply
- 20 would like to say that there was not manifest necessity
- 21 for the greater of the two.
- 22 And the only way that that happens is
- 23 either -- to answer, I believe it was Justice Kennedy's
- 24 hypothetical earlier -- are you required to go in and
- 25 engage in partial verdicts even if a State does not

- 1 choose to do so, even if a State is, in fact, a general
- 2 verdict State?
- JUSTICE KAGAN: Well, even if, General --
- 4 MR. MCDANIEL: Or --
- 5 JUSTICE KAGAN: Even if you're not
- 6 required -- and maybe you are required -- but even if
- 7 you're not, here the jury comes back. The jury tells
- 8 the judge we've unanimously reached acquittal on these
- 9 two counts. At that point, why doesn't the judge have
- 10 an obligation -- you know, the judge sends them back for
- 11 a half hour. There's no reason to think that in that
- 12 half hour they moved back up the scale. There's every
- 13 reason to think they just remained stuck where they
- 14 were.
- 15 But even assuming that there is some
- 16 conceivable possibility that they went back up, why
- 17 doesn't the judge, working with the manifest necessity
- 18 standard, have an obligation to say, well, what about
- 19 it? Did you? Did you reach acquittal? Did you reach a
- 20 judgment on these two counts?
- MR. MCDANIEL: Well, there are a couple of
- 22 reasons. One, I think it's fair to say that the State
- 23 recognizes it was improper for the judge to inquire in
- 24 the way that he did. I think that it's fair to say that
- 25 he recognized that it was improper, as he didn't do it

- 1 on their first announcement of deadlock and he didn't do
- 2 it on their final announcement of deadlock.
- It's important to note that, although
- 4 defense counsel at trial did ask for revised verdict
- 5 forms, that was not her initial reaction. Her initial
- 6 reaction was to say, judge, I think that the jury needs
- 7 to go back and keep deliberating, and I would ask that
- 8 you give them another Allen charge. That's not the
- 9 reaction that anyone would have if they had just heard
- 10 an acquittal of their client. This was, in fact, a
- 11 mid-deliberation report, probably wrongfully elicited by
- 12 the trial judge, but it was just that, a snapshot in
- 13 time with no intent by the jury to make an announcement.
- 14 So, when they returned, the real question, I
- 15 think, hinges -- as this Court analyzed in Smith v.
- 16 Massachusetts, is, is it possible for there to be
- 17 revision? And it doesn't, in fact, Justice Kagan, have
- 18 to be the entirety of the jury completely pivoting in
- 19 their decisions. All it would have to be is one. And
- 20 we recognize that, even after they have announced
- 21 unanimously, signed a verdict form, offered their
- 22 assent, if they're polled in the box and one person
- 23 changes their vote, then that bears the effect of
- 24 changing the verdict.
- So, is it possible? Yes.

- 1 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Would this be different
- 2 if they had -- if the judge had called them back in and
- 3 said, are you deadlocked on the third count? And -- my
- 4 hypothetical to your adversary. And they said: Well,
- 5 we have acquitted on capital murder. We've acquitted on
- 6 the second count. We are still, Judge, deadlocked.
- 7 If this had been announced at the very end,
- 8 what would be your position today?
- 9 MR. MCDANIEL: Certainly, there would be --
- 10 it would be a tougher case if everything ended at that
- 11 moment because, at that point, counsel would have to ask
- 12 the trial court, if you're declaring a mistrial at this
- 13 moment on this report, what are you going to do? Are
- 14 you going to accept this or are you not going to accept
- it? Will there be an opportunity for polling?
- 16 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Doesn't sound like the
- 17 judge was interested in any of the defense counsel's
- 18 positions on mistrial. He announced that whether the
- 19 jury told him they were deadlocked or not, he was going
- 20 to call them back.
- So, I don't know that the judge would have
- done what you suggested.
- MR. MCDANIEL: It's --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Because a judge -- the
- 25 defense attorney did ask for partial verdicts after

- 1 their first announcement.
- 2 MR. MCDANIEL: And, Justice Sotomayor, they
- 3 were -- they were rightly rejected. Partial -- partial
- 4 verdicts are not contemplated in Arkansas law. It would
- 5 have been error for him to engage in partial verdicts at
- 6 that time. And there's nothing in the Fifth Amendment
- 7 that would require this Court to intrude upon the
- 8 liberty of the States to determine whether they're
- 9 general --
- 10 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: So, if the State rule
- 11 says we don't take partial verdicts and the judge had
- 12 entered a verdict -- a judgment -- declared a mistrial
- 13 or entered a judgment saying hung jury as to all counts,
- 14 would jeopardy have attached?
- MR. MCDANIEL: If there's a hung jury as to
- 16 all counts, then --
- 17 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: No. If the jury had
- 18 announced what it did, but following Arkansas law as you
- 19 read it, you don't take partial verdicts, it could only
- 20 be one hung jury.
- MR. MCDANIEL: Correct.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Would jeopardy have
- 23 attached?
- 24 MR. MCDANIEL: No. If there's manifest
- 25 necessity for a mistrial, and in this case there's one

- 1 charge, one homicide offense, and as this Court has long
- 2 recognized, Brown v. Ohio being a key -- a key
- 3 analysis --
- 4 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: So, really the only
- 5 issue here is whether it's reasonable to conclude that a
- 6 jury that had been told acquit first comes back and says
- 7 we're only hung on this, and the jury says listen to
- 8 each other on what your hung on, that that jury
- 9 reasonably -- the judge could have ignored their stated
- 10 verdict and enter a trial -- a mistrial on everything
- 11 else.
- MR. MCDANIEL: Respectfully, Justice
- 13 Sotomayor, they were not told acquit first.
- JUSTICE SCALIA: You don't agree --
- MR. MCDANIEL: That is a -- a subtle but key
- 16 distinction.
- 17 JUSTICE SCALIA: You don't agree -- I don't
- 18 think you agree that it was their stated verdict, do
- 19 you?
- 20 MR. MCDANIEL: I absolutely do not. It was
- 21 not a verdict. And bears none of the hallmarks.
- 22 JUSTICE BREYER: There is no room in Arkansas
- 23 law for saying you're acquitted as to one, acquitted as
- 24 to two. But Arkansas law says you come in with a
- 25 verdict of quilty of something, a verdict of acquittal

- 1 of everything, or the words "hung jury." Is that right?
- 2 MR. MCDANIEL: Well, it's not up to the jury
- 3 to determine whether they're hung.
- 4 JUSTICE BREYER: No. They say to the judge,
- 5 Judge, we are hung. Judge says "hung jury."
- 6 MR. MCDANIEL: That is correct, Justice
- 7 Breyer. That is correct.
- 8 JUSTICE KAGAN: I quess, General McDaniel,
- 9 one question about what Arkansas law does is -- it seems
- 10 a little bit as if it's trying to get the sweet of an
- 11 acquittal for a State without the bitter. So, the sweet
- is an acquittal-first system, where you force a jury to
- 13 reach agreement on one thing before it goes to the next
- 14 thing, makes compromised jury verdicts harder, and
- 15 that's why a State might say we want an acquittal-first
- 16 system.
- 17 The bitter that most States take with that
- is that they say, well, if we're forcing them to agree
- 19 on these things and they agree on a verdict of not
- 20 guilty, we're stuck with that.
- Now, what Arkansas seems to want is a system
- 22 in which it forces juries to agree on the -- the greater
- 23 charges before going to the less, but won't take the
- 24 consequence of that, which is that sometimes they agree
- 25 that on the greater charges, they're not guilty.

- 1 MR. MCDANIEL: No, Justice Kagan. The --
- 2 the majority of the States and circuits recognize there
- 3 is a difference between a hard-transition instruction
- 4 and an acquittal-first instruction. They recognize the
- 5 difference between a partial verdict and a general
- 6 verdict on charges that include lesser and includeds.
- 7 And what we require is one verdict on a charge: guilty
- 8 or not guilty.
- 9 And they are at liberty to consider -- they
- 10 can be at the very end -- again, it's very important to
- 11 know -- it's wholly speculative in this case to know
- 12 where they were when they ultimately were hung. And so,
- 13 we are -- we are operating in the world of bright-line
- 14 rules, which are very important for jeopardy.
- 15 We know when jeopardy attaches. When the
- 16 jury is in the box. We know when jury -- or when
- 17 jeopardy terminates, and it's when there's some
- 18 conclusion with finality. Every case that this Court
- 19 has analyzed, even Price and Green and Selvester, where
- 20 the jury remained silent, there was some finality that
- 21 led to termination of jeopardy.
- 22 JUSTICE GINSBURG: General McDaniel, in this
- 23 case, they deliberated for 4-1/2 hours at the point
- 24 where the judge asked them where do you stand on this
- 25 count; where do you stand on that? And so, they were up

- 1 to the manslaughter, and they were stuck on that. And
- 2 the jury foreman said we can't go to negligent
- 3 homicide because we haven't reached agreement on -- on
- 4 the manslaughter charge. Then they go back for just a
- 5 half hour.
- 6 How realistic is it to think that they began
- 7 over at that point, rather than trying to resolve the
- 8 manslaughter charge so they could do exactly what the
- 9 judge told them, and then get to the negligent homicide
- 10 charge?
- 11 MR. MCDANIEL: The State wouldn't venture to
- 12 speculate as to what they did, although I would
- 13 respectfully say that that is probably what happened.
- 14 They went back and they tried to follow the instructions
- 15 of the court. That's certainly viewing things in a
- 16 light most favorable to the Petitioner, and there's no
- 17 evidence --
- JUSTICE SCALIA: General McDaniel, how --
- 19 how probable is it that when the jury is polled, and
- 20 having voted unanimously when they were back in the jury
- 21 room, one of the members of the jury changes his mind
- 22 and votes the other way? That's not at all probable, is
- 23 it? But it happens sometimes, doesn't it?
- MR. MCDANIEL: It does.
- 25 JUSTICE SCALIA: And when it happens, what's

- 1 the result?
- 2 MR. MCDANIEL: It -- it bears all of the
- 3 difference in the finality of the verdict. And, again,
- 4 as this Court noted in Smith, it's the availability;
- 5 it's the incorporation within a State's procedure for
- 6 that finality to be undone. My Lord, how likely is it
- 7 truly for a trial court to completely reverse his or her
- 8 granting of a motion of dismissal? But this Court said,
- 9 if there's a procedure in place for it to be revisited,
- 10 then jeopardy doesn't terminate until the point at which
- 11 there's no return.
- 12 JUSTICE ALITO: Is this a fair explanation
- of Arkansas law, which doesn't seem to me to be
- 14 perfectly clear? What the jury is supposed to do is to
- 15 vote on the greatest offense first and reach a
- 16 reasonably firm vote. And if they reach a reasonably
- 17 firm vote that is unanimous not guilty, then they can
- 18 move on to the next -- to the lower offenses, but that
- 19 reasonably firm vote is not an absolutely final vote,
- 20 and there is still the possibility for the jury to go
- 21 back.
- MR. MCDANIEL: Yes, Justice --
- 23 JUSTICE ALITO: Is that a correct
- 24 understanding?
- MR. MCDANIEL: Yes, Justice Alito, that's

- 1 precisely correct. And, just as Justice Scalia noted
- 2 earlier, we recognize that there are compromises that
- 3 are incorporated into transitions. One may be willing
- 4 to say: I'm willing to move on from first-degree
- 5 murder. I'm the only one here that believes that we
- 6 should find guilty of first-degree murder, but that's
- 7 not going to happen. I'm not going to change your
- 8 votes. But I'm willing to move on and go to
- 9 manslaughter.
- 10 JUSTICE ALITO: For double --
- MR. MCDANIEL: But would that vote equate to
- 12 an acquittal if asked in -- with finality?
- 13 JUSTICE ALITO: For double jeopardy
- 14 purposes, is the question what Arkansas law actually
- 15 says, or what the jury understood Arkansas law to be?
- 16 MR. MCDANIEL: I think what Arkansas law
- 17 actually says is how we should be judged, but at the
- 18 same time, the evidence here was that the jury came in
- 19 to answer questions about the status of their
- 20 deliberation. I think that Justice Kagan properly noted
- 21 that they were in fact giving the judge some
- 22 instructions on how the instructions should work.
- 23 And they were answering that question, and
- 24 the foreperson -- one person was asked, well, where are
- 25 you? And she announces -- and we have no reason to

- 1 believe that she was not being truthful. At the same
- 2 time, we have no way to verify it. And the defense
- 3 counsel said, Judge, I think they ought to be given
- 4 another Allen charge, and they need to go keep
- 5 deliberating.
- And at that point, if they had returned, no
- 7 matter how unlikely -- if they'd come back in 10 minutes
- 8 later and said we find unanimously guilty of capital
- 9 murder, no matter how unlikely, if that was possible,
- 10 then jeopardy could not have terminated upon that
- 11 report. It could not have been an acquittal because
- 12 they couldn't have continued deliberating on those
- 13 charges for another instant.
- 14 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: General, how do you deal
- 15 with our cases, Ball and Martin Linen and the whole line
- 16 that says State -- the form of State law judgments
- 17 doesn't control?
- MR. MCDANIEL: I think that Ball is
- 19 particularly helpful to us, and I think that the Hudson
- 20 case cited by Petitioner is also important.
- 21 If -- if a State puts a procedural bar to
- 22 considering a final judgment of acquittal, then that
- 23 procedural bar is trumped by the Fifth Amendment of the
- 24 Constitution. Mr. Ball was --
- 25 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: I'm not sure what that

- 1 means.
- 2 MR. MCDANIEL: Well --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: And that's the problem
- 4 with all of this area, which is States vary on how they
- 5 enter judgments after the jury speaks its verdict. So,
- 6 where do we draw the line as to when a State law
- 7 trumps -- when a Federal law, the Double Jeopardy
- 8 Clause, trumps a State system?
- 9 MR. MCDANIEL: Justice Sotomayor, I think
- 10 that your answer is contained within the question. A
- 11 verdict is the true answer. If there is a verdict, then
- 12 the -- the force and impact of that verdict is what
- 13 matters. Did this jury announce a verdict? If so,
- 14 jeopardy attached. But this was not a verdict. It bore
- 15 none of the hallmarks of a verdict. It wasn't
- 16 published. It wasn't verified. It wasn't accepted by
- 17 the court. It wasn't even accepted by the defendant's
- 18 attorney. It wasn't a verdict.
- In Ball, there was a clear verdict. The
- 20 jury announced acquittal. The judge entered acquittal.
- 21 And later, the indictment was dismissed as being faulty.
- 22 And under the law of England up until that time, even in
- 23 the United States, a faulty indictment dismisses
- 24 everything, and you start de novo. So, even the
- 25 acquittal gets thrown out because you can't acquit of

- 1 something that was void ab initio.
- 2 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Mr. Sloan told us that it
- 3 was the State that prevented the elucidation because
- 4 defense counsel said: Judge, we can try to do what
- 5 Double Jeopardy Clause says, not try a person twice for
- 6 the same offense. So, Judge, please ask the jury to
- 7 rule on those two -- give them a sheet that gives them a
- 8 choice of guilty or not guilty.
- 9 But they went -- that originally was just a
- 10 series of guilty on the four counts, and then their
- 11 other choice was acquittal.
- Now, defense counsel says, ask them, is it
- 13 guilty or not guilty, instead of asking just is it
- 14 guilty. And the judge declines to do that. Isn't that
- 15 why we don't have definitive answers? Because defense
- 16 counsel says -- said, Judge, give the jury the chance to
- 17 tell us whether they --
- MR. MCDANIEL: Some States do, in fact, give
- 19 the opportunity to inquire into the jury's
- 20 deliberations. Partial verdict forms and inquiries are
- 21 permitted, but they're not required. And in Arkansas,
- the State properly objected to changing the agreed-upon
- 23 verdict forms, as the judge said, midstream. They had
- 24 been agreed to; they had been submitted; and they
- 25 properly reflected the law in Arkansas. So that to

- 1 change them would have either been by agreement or
- 2 because they were constitutionally required. And that's
- 3 ultimately the case -- the question in front of this
- 4 Court: Are they -- are they constitutionally required?
- 5 And that leads into the manifest necessity
- 6 analysis because anytime there is a charge with lesser
- 7 and included offenses and a general verdict State, and
- 8 the jury simply announces we cannot reach a
- 9 determination, is -- is the constitutional trigger truly
- 10 resting on the fortuity of the announcement of a
- 11 snapshot vote in open court, or is a constitutional
- 12 trigger how they voted back in the jury room? And if
- that is the constitutional trigger, then wouldn't
- 14 verdicts -- partial verdicts be required?
- 15 In fact, this Court does not require partial
- 16 verdicts. A -- an announcement of unable to render a
- 17 verdict warrants a mistrial. This Court has said
- 18 clearly in Renico that we defer to a -- a trial court's
- 19 decision that manifest necessity exists. In fact, this
- 20 Court has never overturned a trial court's decision that
- 21 manifest necessity existed for the -- on a hung jury.
- 22 Here a jury was hung. They simply could not
- 23 render a decision on the verdict forms they were
- 24 submitted: guilty or not guilty of a homicide? They
- 25 couldn't answer the question. And, therefore, jeopardy

- 1 should continue, and the retrial should be permitted.
- JUSTICE KAGAN: General, you mentioned Green
- 3 and Price before, and those are the cases, of course,
- 4 where there is a conviction on a lesser charge. We
- 5 don't know anything about the greater charge. And then
- 6 the conviction is overturned.
- 7 And what the Court says there is, well, we
- 8 don't know anything, but we're going to make a
- 9 reasonable assumption, and the reasonable -- no, I think
- 10 it said a "legitimate" assumption. The legitimate
- 11 assumption that they acquitted on the greater charges
- 12 before they went down to the lesser charge.
- Now, it seems to me as though there are a
- 14 hundred reasons why that might not be true. The jury
- 15 could have just gone to the lesser charge immediately as
- 16 a compromise position without voting on the greater
- 17 charge, but the Court said we'll make a legitimate
- 18 assumption.
- 19 So, why isn't the same true here? We're
- 20 making a legitimate assumption, I think honestly, on the
- 21 basis of much more than Green and Price had to work
- 22 with, if you will, that the jury, in fact, acquitted of
- those greater offenses.
- MR. MCDANIEL: Well, in Green and Price
- 25 there were verdicts, and --

1 JUSTICE KAGAN: There was a verdict --2 MR. MCDANIEL: -- in this case there's no 3 verdict. JUSTICE KAGAN: -- that eventually got 4 5 overturned. There was no verdict on the greater 6 offenses. 7 MR. MCDANIEL: You have to look at Green and Price in conjunction with this Court's holding in Brown 8 9 and the analysis of lesser included offenses within a 10 general offense. They are one for jeopardy purposes. 11 In this case, Mr. Blueford was facing one charge for jeopardy purposes. The information, the 12 indictment, only included one charge. So, he could not 13 14 have been convicted of both manslaughter and murder in the first degree. This Court's very clear about that. 15 16 So, in Green and in Price, where there was a 17 conviction on a lesser charge and silence -- in other 18 words, they didn't expressly say not quilty of this 19 higher charge and not guilty of this higher charge, and 20 guilty of this lesser charge -- it stands only to reason, and certainly to constitutional scrutiny, you 21 22 can only be convicted of one of them. And if a jury 23 finds -- and, again, it still requires publication, verification, and acceptance by a court of an actual 24

verdict of one of those charges -- it only stands to

- 1 reason and logic that the upper charges were dismissed.
- 2 That's -- that is entirely different, respectfully --
- JUSTICE KAGAN: Well --
- 4 JUSTICE ALITO: In Green --
- 5 MR. MCDANIEL: -- from this case.
- 6 JUSTICE ALITO: In Green and Price, the
- 7 defendants were tried once on the greater offense, and
- 8 jeopardy terminated without a finding of manifest
- 9 necessity regarding the termination of jeopardy. To me
- 10 that is the sound basis for those decisions. But I have
- 11 to agree with what Justice Kagan said. The -- Justice
- 12 Black's reasoning in Green, that the jury impliedly
- 13 acquitted the defendant of the greater offense by
- 14 convicting the defendant of the -- of the lesser offense
- 15 doesn't really make any sense because they could have
- 16 simply been in disagreement about the greater offense.
- 17 MR. MCDANIEL: Well, and I think that's
- 18 correct, and I think that there has to be some question
- 19 here as to, is it an implied acquittal or was it an
- 20 express verdict? I think the Petitioner can't really
- 21 decide, or at least hasn't articulated, where the
- 22 jeopardy terminating event occurred. Was it when they
- 23 made their announcement? In which case, why did they go
- 24 and subsequently deliberate even on the request of
- 25 counsel? Was it at the conclusion when there was the

- 1 possibility that nothing really had changed after the
- 2 report and a declaration of manifest necessity? Which
- 3 did not come, by the way, at the request of the State.
- 4 It was sui sponte by the court.
- 5 And then there was, in fact, a waiver, and I
- 6 think a legitimate waiver, of an objection by defense
- 7 counsel. There was -- at no time at that point before
- 8 releasing this jury did defense counsel renew a motion
- 9 to submit partial verdict forms, to inquire into the
- 10 jury, to poll where they were.
- 11 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Well -- she had asked;
- 12 so, why was it necessary for her to repeat it? And she
- 13 said, Judge, please let them vote yes or no on the --
- 14 the two most serious charges. And the judge said no.
- 15 She might have figured if she was going to repeat that,
- 16 she would just annoy the judge. She had made the -- she
- 17 had made the request.
- 18 MR. MCDANIEL: The primary difference would
- 19 be, in fact, the possibility that polling may be
- 20 different after another half hour of deliberations. All
- 21 it takes is one juror to change their mind. And, in
- 22 fact, it may have benefitted the defendant. What if they
- 23 had already decided they'd changed their mind again and
- 24 acquitted on -- on manslaughter and had moved down to
- 25 negligent homicide? And that's what they were talking

- 1 about.
- Where they were at the end of the final 30
- 3 minutes of deliberation is purely speculative. And
- 4 because it's purely speculative, regardless of whether
- 5 it could benefit the State or the defendant, it means
- 6 that no report was a verdict. No report could have been
- 7 a verdict.
- 8 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: General, other than
- 9 trenching on State rules that don't create the
- 10 constitutional protection, what's wrong with a simple
- 11 rule that says, once a jury announces that it is
- 12 unanimous on acquittal of a count, you can't go back
- 13 unless the jury says that it's not unanimous in some
- 14 way? What's wrong with that rule?
- 15 MR. MCDANIEL: It would be difficult to
- 16 apply in practicality, and it certainly would be --
- 17 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Why? The jury comes out
- 18 and says we're unanimous. There's a poll. One juror
- 19 says I'm really not unanimous. They go back. But once
- 20 a jury says it's unanimous, a judge can't declare a
- 21 mistrial, can't do something until it ensures itself
- 22 that -- that jeopardy hasn't attached.
- 23 MR. MCDANIEL: The primary reason why the
- 24 majority of jurisdictions have rejected that analysis,
- 25 whether it's announced or not, is the coercive effect on

- 1 -- on a jury.
- If you have a tired, frustrated, potentially
- 3 angry jury, and they're told we're either going to let
- 4 you go or you're -- we're not going to let you go home
- 5 until you decide something; you have to tell
- 6 us something.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: No, I'm not -- I'm not
- 8 asking -- I'm not announcing or setting a rule that says
- 9 you have to ask them, you have to force them to give a
- 10 verdict. I'm not -- I'm saying what's wrong with the
- 11 constitutional rule that simply says, once the jury says
- 12 we're unanimous, there can't be manifest injustice --
- 13 there can't be manifest necessity until you're sure that
- 14 they can't reach a verdict -- that that verdict is not
- 15 their verdict?
- 16 MR. MCDANIEL: So, we're not asking, but if
- 17 -- just so I understand your hypothetical -- we're not
- 18 asking them, but if for fortuitously they happen to
- 19 announce --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: That's what --
- MR. MCDANIEL: -- spontaneously or
- 22 otherwise --
- 23 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: That's what three State
- 24 courts have said. Three State courts have said, if
- 25 there's any meaning to jeopardy, it is that once a jury

- out loud says to a defendant you're not guilty, the
- 2 defendant is entitled to rely on that. So, what's wrong
- 3 with that simple rule?
- 4 MR. MCDANIEL: First, this Court hasn't --
- 5 that court -- that rule -- could be allowed to work,
- 6 and, in fact, it does work in some States. I don't see
- 7 how it could benefit Mr. Blueford; and so, I don't see
- 8 how it follows into his relief because it didn't in fact
- 9 happen. And so, it takes us -- it might be beneficial
- 10 to future defendants if they ever find themselves in
- 11 such a circumstance, but it doesn't apply retroactively.
- 12 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you, General.
- 13 Mr. Sloan, you have 3 minutes remaining.
- 14 REBUTTAL ARGUMENT OF CLIFFORD M. SLOAN
- 15 ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONER
- MR. SLOAN: Thank you, Your Honor.
- 17 The core of the State's position is that the
- 18 foreperson's explicit announcement that the jury had
- 19 unanimously voted against guilt is of no constitutional
- 20 moment whatsoever.
- Now, there is no opinion of this Court that
- 22 has ever said that a jury statement like that is
- 23 entitled to no weight whatsoever. And if this Court
- 24 were to say that in an opinion, it would open the door
- 25 to many of the core double jeopardy evils that this

- 1 Court has repeatedly focused on. For example, acquittal
- 2 avoidance, emphasized in the Arizona v. Washington. A
- 3 court doesn't want to accept the acquittal consequences;
- 4 so, it just says we're not going to accept that.
- 5 And something that's a very real and
- 6 practical danger here, which this Court has emphasized
- 7 over and over again in opinions, is giving the State the
- 8 opportunity to refine and hone its case based on what it
- 9 learned at the first trial about what went badly.
- 10 And that is exactly what happened here. So,
- 11 it was vigorously contested. The State's capital murder
- 12 and murder -- first-degree murder case fell apart.
- 13 Their lead expert on it was destroyed. The jury heard
- 14 both sides, voted unanimously not guilty. And as this
- 15 Court said in Ashe v. Swenson, a core evil of the Double
- 16 Jeopardy Clause is that we don't let the prosecutor have
- 17 a dry run at a first trial, and then get to go before a
- 18 second trial with a new jury and plug the holes in it.
- 19 And the State's position here, that this is of no moment
- 20 at all, would raise that danger very prominently.
- In conclusion, Your Honor, the jury in this
- 22 case heard the evidence on both sides, unanimously voted
- 23 against guilt on the murder charges, announced that in
- 24 open court, and never said a word that contradicted it.
- 25 Forcing Petitioner to run the gauntlet a second time on

1	the murder charges would run counter to what this Court
2	has repeatedly emphasized as the core purposes, policy,
3	and language of the Double Jeopardy Clause.
4	If there if there are no further
5	questions, Your Honor
6	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you,
7	Mr. Sloan, General.
8	The case is submitted.
9	(Whereupon, at 12:21 p.m., the case in the
10	above-entitled matter was submitted.)
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