

ORIGINAL

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PROCEEDINGS BEFORE

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20543

THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

DKT/CASE NO. 83-5424

TITLE GLEN BURTON AKE, Petitioner v. OKLAHOMA

PLACE Washington, D. C.

DATE November 7, 1984

PAGES 1 thru 56



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IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

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BLENN BURTON AKE, :

Petitioner, :

v. : No. 83-5424

OKLAHOMA :

- - - - -x

Washington, D.C.

Wednesday, November 7, 1984

The above-entitled matter came on for oral
argument before the Supreme Court of the United States
at 11:32 o'clock a.m.

APPEARANCES:

ARTHUR B. SPITZERM, ESQ., Washington, D.C.; on
behalf of the petitioner.

MICHAEL C. TURPEN, Esq., Attorney General of Oklahoma,
of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma;
on behalf of the respondent.

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 CHIEF JUSTICE BURGER: Mr. Trott, I think you
3 may proceed whenever you are ready.

4 ORAL ARGUMENT BY ARTHUR B. SPITZER

5 ON BEHALF OF PETITIONER

6 MR. SPITZER: Mr. Chief Justice, and may it
7 please the Court.

8 In this case, the State of Oklahoma convicted
9 an indigent defendant of murder having refused his
10 request for expert psychiatric or psychological
11 assistance that was necessary for him to make any real
12 defense to the charges against him.

13 Additionally, the State requested and obtained
14 the death penalty based in part on an expert prediction
15 of the defendant's future dangerousness, which the
16 defendant was unable to rebut because he could not
17 afford the same expert assistance.

18 The State tried this defendant in the face of
19 obvious and recognized indications that he may not have
20 been competent to stand trial.

21 We submit that the constitution, as a matter
22 of due process, equal protection, and the right to
23 effective assistance of counsel, requires the States to
24 provide indigent defendants with such necessary
25 assistance.

1 QUESTION: Would you apply this rule you have
2 just asserted to every case, or capital cases, or to
3 just the sentencing part of the capital case? Do you
4 break it down at all?

5 MR. SPITZER: Well, Your Honor, what is before
6 the Court, of course, is a capital case and the Court
7 need not decide more than is before it. But to the
8 extent, which I think is a large extent, that these
9 questions go to the accuracy of the truth finding
10 process at the trial, I think the logic would apply then
11 to other cases as well as capital cases.

12 With respect to the sentencing proceeding, of
13 course, a capital sentencing proceeding is a
14 considerably different procedure than a sentencing
15 proceeding in a normal case, and there different
16 considerations might well apply.

17 QUESTION: In other words, you might say that
18 even if it is not applicable to the criminal charges
19 generally, but it must be in the capital case.

20 MR. SPITZER: I would certainly say that, Your
21 Honor.

22 As I will explain in more detail later, to the
23 extent that this Court applies a due process balancing
24 test as it did in Little against Streater, then it is
25 legitimate to consider the State's countervailing

1 interest and fiscal economy balanced against the
2 interest of the defendant. Then, of course, the
3 interest of the defendant is greater in a capital case
4 than it is in other kinds of cases. So those
5 considerations may legitimately be considered.

6 In October, 1979 --

7 QUESTION: Mr. Spitzer, do you plan to address
8 the jurisdictional problem during the argument today?

9 MR. SPITZER: Your Honor, I'll address it
10 right now. The State argues that Mr. Ake waived his
11 right to bring these issues to this Court by not
12 including them in a motion for a trial in the trial
13 court.

14 There are two answers to that. The first is,
15 the State Court of Criminal Appeals dealt with these
16 issues on the merits, and under this Court's
17 jurisprudence that is all that is required to preserve
18 the issues.

19 QUESTION: It didn't really deal with a due
20 process argument, did it, or the merits?

21 MR. SPITZER: Your Honor, I think both
22 arguments were made to it that the court's treatment of
23 these arguments --

24 QUESTION: I didn't find anything in the
25 opinion that indicated that it dealt with the due

1 process argument.

2 MR. SPITZER: Certainly the court's treatment
3 in its opinion was brief, but in the briefs that were
4 presented to the Court of Criminal Appeals those
5 arguments were made, and I think the court dealt with
6 the issue. I think it is the constitutional issue that
7 is important.

8 The second argument, or the second response,
9 Your Honor, is that it would have been absolutely futile
10 to raise this in a motion for a new trial. The point of
11 a motion for a new trial is to give the trial judge a
12 chance to correct his errors at that point, holding a
13 new trial right away without going through an appellate
14 process, if he recognizes the error of what has
15 happened.

16 But in this case, the trial court committed no
17 error under the law of Oklahoma. The trial court was
18 correctly following the law of Oklahoma in denying these
19 experts and bringing it to his attention was pointless
20 because he couldn't have given --

21 QUESTION: That is not an exception under
22 Oklahoma law, I assume, for failing to bring the motion
23 for a new trial on that ground?

24 MR. SPITZER: I don't know whether it is under
25 Oklahoma law, Your Honor.

1 QUESTION: You have researched the cases,
2 though, in Oklahoma?

3 MR. SPITZER: As to whether futility an
4 exception on that point.

5 QUESTION: Yes.

6 MR. SPITZER: I don't know the answer under
7 Oklahoma law.

8 QUESTION: Have you found any cases suggesting
9 that it would be?

10 MR. SPITZER: No, Your Honor, but I think that
11 it is a consideration that this court can legitimately
12 apply. There is really no point in requiring counsel to
13 exercise a pointless procedure if he had raised that
14 question to the trial court's attention.

15 QUESTION: There is an adequate and
16 independent State ground, then, existing here?

17 MR. SPITZER: I believe not, Your Honor, and I
18 believe that because the Oklahoma Court of Criminal
19 Appeals did address the merits of this issue, it's
20 properly in this court.

21 QUESTION: Mr. Spitzer, you don't cite, in
22 support of the argument that is made, Douglas v. Alabama
23 in 380 U.S. Are you familiar with it?

24 MR. SPITZER: Your Honor, I am afraid I'm not
25 familiar with it.

1 QUESTION: I thought in that case we held on
2 something like futility grounds that there to the extent
3 that the Alabama rule -- that was Alabama -- requires
4 objection at each and every question in the suit, it is
5 totally inadequate to bar a review of the Federal
6 question presented as to whether or not it was
7 inadequate State ground, and to bar a review was a
8 question for us to decide.

9 MR. SPITZER: Thank you, sir.

10 QUESTION: I would have supposed you would
11 rely on it. I thought that decision seems to foreclose
12 any argument that there was an inadequate State ground.

13 QUESTION: That is a different argument than
14 you present. You say that your submission is just
15 because the Court of Criminal Appeals discussed the
16 merits that there is jurisdiction here.

17 Suppose the Court of Criminal Appeals says: We
18 think that there should have been an objection at trial,
19 or there should have been a motion for a new trial on
20 this ground and there was not, so it is barred, we
21 cannot reach it.

22 But in the event that the Supreme Court of the
23 United States thinks that this is not an adequate State
24 ground, we are going to address the merits," and they go
25 ahead and address the merits. You wouldn't think that

1 they are addressing the merits, and then give us
2 jurisdiction, do you?

3 MR. SPITZER: Well, Your Honor, I don't think
4 that's what happened.

5 QUESTION: I could see that there would be a
6 question that would survive, the one that Justice
7 Brennan refers to, as to whether that really an adequate
8 or an independent State ground, but that is not your
9 submission.

10 MR. SPITZER: That question would certainly
11 survive, and I will be glad to adopt Justice Brennan's
12 position on that question.

13 QUESTION: I would think you would.

14 MR. SPITZER: But that's not what happened
15 here. The court first addressed the issue on the merits
16 and then said: By the way, it was not raised in the
17 motion for a new trial.

18 QUESTION: But it is still alternate grounds.
19 It is still completely alternate grounds.

20 If a State court decides a question before it
21 where there is a claim of constitutional violation on
22 both State and Federal constitutional grounds, making
23 clear that they are both separate ones, we say that is
24 an adequate ground, even the Federal constitutional
25 issue is discussed at length.

1 MR. SPITZER: Your Honor, I think I have cited
2 a couple of cases in my briefs where the court has ruled
3 that when the State did treat the Federal question on
4 the merits that was all that was necessary.

5 QUESTION: But not if they give also a
6 statement that we are also deciding this case on the
7 State constitutional grounds.

8 MR. SPITZER: Your Honor, I guess I just don't
9 think the State's decision was that clear in giving an
10 alternate State ground. I do think this issue was
11 plainly presented to the trial court, and the trial
12 court could not have done other than it did under the
13 Oklahoma law, and I believe that the issue is adequately
14 preserved.

15 QUESTION: Mr. Spitzer, do you think that
16 Michigan against Long has any bearing on this issue?

17 MR. SPITZER: Your Honor, I must confess that
18 I am not familiar with what that case held on this point
19 either.

20 QUESTION: I guess you wouldn't be able to
21 enlighten me on it.

22 MR. SPITZER: I'm afraid not.

23 Your Honor, assuming that this court has
24 jurisdiction, if I may pass to the merits of the case,
25 Mr. Ake was arrested some six weeks after the killings,

1 and he confessed at that time that he had committed the
2 acts.

3 While he was in jail and at his arraignment,
4 about 11 weeks later, his conduct was so bizarre that
5 the trial judge, on his own motion, had him examined by
6 a psychiatrist and sent to the State Mental Hospital for
7 observation, but only on the issue of competency to
8 stand trial.

9 The hospital concluded after a month that he
10 was not competent, and at a hearing the psychiatrist
11 testified that he was paranoid schizophrenic, that he
12 had extreme dillusions, that he lived in a different
13 dimension, that he did not accept the ordinary concepts
14 of right and wrong.

15 QUESTION: What was the lapse of time between
16 the alleged murder and the competency examination?

17 MR. SPITZER: The murder was in October, Your
18 Honor, and the competency examination, the first one,
19 was in February.

20 The defense counsel had raised the issue, at
21 least to a certain extent, at the preliminary hearing in
22 January, that is the first hearing at which we have a
23 transcript, and he asked questions of various deputies
24 as to whether they had observed him having fits and
25 seizures at the jail.

1 He asked questions of witnesses about Ake's
2 mental state at the time of the crime. But there was no
3 formal proceeding directed to competency at the
4 pretrial until arraignment in February.

5 After this finding of no competence, Ake was
6 recommitted to the hospital, but again for care and
7 treatment, not for any observations with respect to
8 sanity at the time of the crime. Six weeks later, the
9 hospital reported that on medication he had improved to
10 the point where he was competent, and he was sent back
11 for trial. No hearing was held to determine whether he
12 was competent at that time.

13 At this point, his counsel moved for funds to
14 retain a psychiatrist to examine him with respect to his
15 mental condition at the time of the crime, and to assist
16 in preparing and presenting the defense of insanity.

17 QUESTION: In that request did he also tender
18 the proposition that the court could designate the
19 psychiatrist?

20 MR. SPITZER: Your Honor, that is correct, as
21 an alternative. He requested first funds to retain a
22 psychiatrist, but as an alternative, as a fall-back, he
23 suggested that the defense would be contend if the court
24 would appoint a neutral court psychiatrist. Both
25 requests were denied, and both on the same ground.

1 It wasn't deried because the trial judge had
2 any doubt that insanity was an issue and that such
3 assistance would be very helpful to the defendant, it
4 was denied simply on the ground that under Oklahoma law
5 no such assistance of either kind could be provided in
6 any case. As a result of that decision, there was no
7 expert testimony at Ake's trial with respect to his
8 mental condition at the time of the crime, no direct
9 testimony.

10 In an attempt to present an insanity defense,
11 defense counsel, who were court appointed, called the
12 three doctors who had examined Ake with respect to his
13 competence. They all testified that he was mentally
14 ill, diagnosed as a paranoid schizophrenic.

15 Two of them specifically mentioned that they
16 were relying on the criteria in the American
17 Psychiatrist Association's diagnostic manual and those
18 criteria require at least a six-month duration of
19 symptoms for such a diagnosis. Both psychiatrists
20 testified that the illness might have been affecting his
21 conduct -- "might have been apparent," were the words
22 that one used -- on the day of the crime.

23 Dr. Garcia, specifically in answer to a
24 hypothetical question, testified that someone with Ake's
25 condition, who had consumed drugs and alcohol, as he had

1 on the day of the crime, might not have been able to
2 know right from wrong under that circumstance.

3 On cross-examination, each doctor was pressed
4 and each doctor admitted that he could form no
5 professional opinion, could give no expert testimony
6 about Ake's mental condition at the time of the crime
7 because he had not performed an examination with that in
8 view.

9 The jury was then charged, in accordance with
10 Oklahoma law, that the defendant had the burden of proof
11 of raising a reasonable doubt as to sanity, and because
12 the State appears to dispute that, I would like to read
13 briefly from that charge to the jury. It is in the
14 Joint Appendix, at 57 and 58, and I am omitting
15 unnecessary words.

16 "The law presumes every person to be sane and
17 able to distinguish right from wrong as applied to any
18 particular act, until a reasonable doubt of his sanity
19 is raised by competent evidence. When the plea of
20 insanity is interposed, the burden of proof is on the
21 defendant to introduce sufficient evidence to raise in
22 the minds of the jury a reasonable doubt of the
23 defendant's sanity at the time of the commission of the
24 acts in question. When this is done, the burden of
25 proof is on the State to prove the sanity of the

1 defendant by competent evidence, beyond a reasonable
2 doubt."

3 In closing argument, the prosecutor argued
4 that the defendant had not met his burden of raising a
5 reasonable doubt and the reason he gave was that no
6 psychiatrist had so testified. The prosecutor didn't
7 argue that --

8 QUESTION: Have you raised this point in your
9 petition for certiorari?

10 MR. SPITZER: Yes, Your Honor, I believe we
11 did. The prosecutor argued that because there was no
12 expert testimony, no doubt had been raised. Of course,
13 the reason why there was no expert testimony was because
14 the defendant had been denied the psychiatrist
15 examination requested.

16 QUESTION: Maybe I didn't make my question
17 clear. Did you present the question of the court's
18 instruction?

19 MR. SPITZER: No, Your Honor, and there is
20 nothing wrong with the court's instruction under
21 Oklahoma law, and I do not contend that Oklahoma cannot
22 require the defendant to shoulder the initial burden of
23 raising a reasonable doubt about his sanity at the time
24 of the crime, not at all. That was a proper
25 instruction.

1 What was improper was -- what was a violation
2 of due process was the catch-22, if I may use that
3 phrase, of requiring the defendant to shoulder that
4 burden, then depriving him of what was effectively the
5 only means of doing so, of shouldering that burden.

6 The jury found the defendant guilty, and the
7 Court of Criminal Appeals, in affirming, relied on the
8 same reasoning. They affirmed not on the ground that
9 the State had proved its burden of showing sanity beyond
10 a reasonable doubt, but on the ground that the defendant
11 had never raised a reasonable doubt about sanity.
12 Again, the only evidence they point to was the lack of
13 psychiatric opinion testimony, the testimony the
14 defendant was unable to obtain because of his poverty.

15 QUESTION: I note that you don't cite Davis,
16 at least in your main brief, Davis against the United
17 States, an 1897 case which held that as soon as there is
18 any indication of any mental factor in a case, the
19 burden of proof shifts.

20 MR. SPITZER: Your Honor, as I understand it,
21 that was a rule for Federal courts, and not necessarily
22 a rule for the State courts. But Oklahoma, I think,
23 follows that rule, or at least Oklahoma's position is
24 that if the defendant raises a reasonable doubt by
25 sufficient evidence, the burden shifts.

1 But the holding of the Oklahoma court here was
2 that the burden had never shifted. It was that it was
3 the defendant who hadn't satisfied his burden and,
4 therefore, the defendant is the party in this case who
5 had burden throughout the case. It never shifted.

6 We believe that under those circumstances that
7 the burden on the defendant, with as a practical matter
8 that burden carriable only with expert testimony, the
9 defendant had the right to that expert assistance.

10 The State concedes in this court that there
11 are circumstances where such expert testimony is
12 necessary to a fair trial and would, therefore, be
13 required by the Constitution. We submit that this is
14 such a case.

15 Insanity is not a subject where the
16 observations of lay witnesses or the common sense
17 reasoning of lay jurors is sufficient. Only a trained
18 clinician can recognize the often puzzling symptoms of
19 mental disease, and explain to a jury the etiology of
20 the disease and how it may affect someone's conduct.

21 QUESTION: Mr. Spitzer, may I ask you a
22 question here.

23 Would it have been at least theoretically
24 possible that you might have called lay witnesses,
25 friends, relatives, and the like, who knew your client

1 in the period when the crime was committed, who could
2 have testified to whatever behavior they knew about.
3 Then, you might have asked one of these three
4 psychiatrist hypothetical questions, based on the
5 following assumptions which would be supported by the
6 lay testimony?

7 What your opinion be? Couldn't you possibly
8 have crossed the threshold in that manner?

9 MR. SPITZER: Your Honor, that is a
10 theoretical possibility, but I think it is not more than
11 theoretical certainly in a case like this. The ability
12 of the lay witness to recognize and to report symptoms
13 of mental illness may be present in some cases, where
14 the symptoms are florid, where the illness is obvious,
15 but that is certainly not always the case and it may
16 well not have been the case here.

17 Oregon -- I cited in my brief several cases,
18 and there is a long line of cases in Oklahoma where lay
19 testimony such as that is held not even to raise a
20 reasonable doubt. In Garrett against State, for
21 example, the defendant was an 80-year old woman who shot
22 a foster child of hers.

23 She had raised a dozen foster children, and
24 shot one one day and two other people. One of the
25 victims testified that she looked crazy, she looked

1 bizarre when she was doing it. The defendant testified
2 on the stand that she couldn't remember anything about
3 what happened. The Oklahoma held that she never raised
4 a reasonable doubt.

5 In High against State, two deputy sheriffs,
6 who were the jailers, testified that the defendant did
7 not appear to them to be a normal person. He had no
8 memory, that he was unintelligible, that he was grossly
9 lacking in personal hygiene. No reasonable doubt of
10 sanity was ever raised.

11 QUESTION: In Oklahoma, is there some overt
12 time when the burden shifts? Is there some
13 announcement, or a holding?

14 MR. SPITZER: Your Honor, I understand that
15 under current Oklahoma practice, which has changed since
16 this trial, the judge does not instruct the jury on
17 insanity until the judge determines that it is an issue
18 in the case.

19 At that point, the judge instructs only that
20 the State has the burden of proving beyond a reasonable
21 doubt. But at this time, this was not the practice, and
22 the judge simply instructed the jury on both, and
23 allowed the jury to determine that.

24 QUESTION: Just so I get the extent of your
25 position clear, suppose under the present Oklahoma

1 practice, the judge says a reasonable doubt about sanity
2 has been raised, so the State has the burden, and the
3 State then puts on some testimony.

4 Is it part of your submission here that you,
5 even in those circumstances, would have the right to
6 have your own psychiatrist appointed?

7 MR. SPITZER: I think the answer is, yes, but
8 the reasoning is different. In those circumstances, it
9 may be that the defendant needs psychiatrist assistance
10 in order to rebut or cross-examine the State
11 psychiatrist, just as the State has been held in most
12 circuits to have a right.

13 QUESTION: You want a psychiatrist who may
14 testify quite contrary to the other psychiatrist.

15 MR. SPITZER: Exactly so. I think in this
16 case, the answer is the same but for different reasons.
17 In this case, the defendant apparently needed that
18 assistance not to rebut the State's case but to shoulder
19 his burden. I think the result in either of those cases
20 is the same.

21 QUESTION: Mr. Spitzer, is your position that
22 the psychiatrist must be selected by counsel for the
23 defendant?

24 MR. SPITZER: Not necessarily, Your Honor. I
25 think that the State could have the same flexibility as

1 it does in providing lawyers for indigent defendants.
2 There could be a panel from which a person could be
3 appointed.

4 QUESTION: Could the court simply appoint?

5 MR. SPITZER: The court, I think, could
6 appoint one. I think the key thing is that once
7 appointed, the psychiatrist must be there to assist and
8 consult with defense counsel, as well as to examine the
9 defendant. It is not, in other words, the State's
10 doctor, it is the defense's doctor.

11 QUESTION: Not a mutual psychiatrist, but one
12 who, in effect, would participate in assisting defense
13 counsel in conducting the trial.

14 MR. SPITZER: That is our primary submission,
15 Justice Powell, but let me say that even if the court
16 were to conclude that all that the Constitution requires
17 is some psychiatric examination where a defendant's
18 mental condition is an issue, as occurred, for example,
19 in United States Ex Rel. Smith against Baldi, even was
20 not done here, and even that would require a reversal in
21 this case.

22 QUESTION: Why would it require it? It wasn't
23 requested here, was it?

24 MR. SPITZER: Your Honor, I think the defense
25 request at the pretrial conference can be interpreted to

1 include that. What the defense was asking was for some
2 psychiatric examination.

3 QUESTION: Certainly the point raised, at
4 least in the opinion of the Oklahoma Court of Criminal
5 Appeals, simply says that he is entitled to be furnished
6 a psychiatrist. That is the way the Oklahoma -- I don't
7 think you have really preserved, unless the idea is that
8 the greater includes the lesser, which I don't think
9 there are on.

10 MR. SPITZER: I think in a case like this, the
11 greater certainly includes the lesser. At the
12 prehearing trial where the request was made, defense
13 counsel phrased the request in a variety of different
14 ways, but I think it was clear to the trial judge that
15 what they were asking at a minimum was that there be
16 some psychiatric examination of this defendant with
17 respect to his sanity at the time of the crime.

18 QUESTION: Do you think that it was made
19 equally clear to the Oklahoma Court of Appeal?

20 MR. SPITZER: Your Honor, I would have to look
21 at the brief that was filed there, but certainly United
22 States Ex Rel. Smith against Baldi was repeatedly cited
23 by the trial courts, had been relied upon by the
24 Oklahoma Court in the case which it cited in this case.
25 So I think that question was one that the court would

1 have understood to be before it, even if it was not
2 explicitly before it in so many words.

3 I have little time, and let me briefly touch
4 on the other two issues that we have raised in this
5 case.

6 The first is, at the sentencing hearing, Ake
7 was again disadvantaged severely by the lack of his sane
8 expert assistance. Psychiatrists predicted his future
9 dangerousness, and I should mention that they were
10 called as defense witnesses at the merit phase of the
11 trial, but the prosecution had previously announced its
12 intention to call those as its own witnesses. So I
13 think the fact that the testimony came out earlier is
14 not of great significance.

15 QUESTION: You are not submitting that the
16 defendant, if convicted, has the right to a psychiatrist
17 in every single capital sentencing?

18 MR. SPITZER: No, Your Honor, that's not our
19 position.

20 QUESTION: It is only when there is this
21 element of future dangerousness that the jury has to
22 find.

23 MR. SPITZER: Those are the facts in this
24 case, Your Honor, and that is what our argument is
25 directed to here.

1 QUESTION: How much broader do you think it is
2 than that?

3 MR. SPITZER: I really don't know that, Your
4 Honor. I think, though, that here the need is clearer
5 by a wide margin because there is no effective rebuttal
6 to expert opinion testimony, except expert opinion
7 testimony and perhaps the ability to cross-examine with
8 the assistance of an expert to help you cross-examine.

9 QUESTION: Was cross-examination of the
10 State's witnesses on the question of future
11 dangerousness conducted at this sentencing proceeding?

12 MR. SPITZER: No, Your Honor. These witnesses
13 were not called at the sentencing proceeding. They
14 testified --

15 QUESTION: I guess that could have been done
16 by the defendant himself on the question of future
17 dangerousness.

18 MR. SPITZER: Your Honor, certainly the
19 defendant could have tried to cross-examine on this
20 question, but we don't require lawyers to be educated
21 about the internal disputes among the psychiatric
22 profession, about their ability to make this kind of
23 prediction, without any expert either to testify on his
24 behalf or to assist him in that cross-examination. I
25 think that it was more than we could reasonably expect

1 for defense counsel.

2 QUESTION: You say that you really can't
3 expect a lawyer to be able to cross-examine an expert
4 witness without an expert witness of his own to suggest
5 questions?

6 MR. SPITZER: That's certainly not always
7 true, Your Honor. It depends, I think, on the nature of
8 the expertise and the nature of the case.

9 QUESTION: Certainly, if one were to read
10 Justice Blackmon's dissent in our Barefoot Decision,
11 there is a good deal of psychological literature, and
12 psychiatric literature available on the issue.

13 MR. SPITZER: That's true, Your Honor, and I
14 am not saying that that is not a theoretical
15 possibility. But we have a situation here where
16 Oklahoma pays defense counsel a very modest sum to
17 defend a first degree murder case and provides them with
18 none of the same assistance that it provides the State.
19 In these same kinds of cases, Oklahoma makes funds
20 available and makes experts available to the State.

21 I think the real answer to the question is,
22 the defendant was entitled to expert assistance to rebut
23 by expert opinion testimony these opinions, if that was
24 possible. But such an expert could also be of great
25 assistance in helping defense counsel to know how to

1 cross-examine.

2 Our final point had to do with the defendant's
3 competency to stand trial. He was receiving a large
4 amount of Thorazine during his trial, and acting in a
5 way that certainly raised questions about his
6 competence. I can't say I know he was incompetent, but
7 I don't think the courts of Oklahoma are in a position
8 to say that they know he was competent.

9 Under this court's precedence in Pate against
10 Robinson, Grove against Missouri, we submit it was the
11 court's duty, when the court was aware and acknowledge
12 those questions, to inquire into the subject.

13 If I may, I would like to reserve what remains
14 of my time for rebuttal.

15 CHIEF JUSTICE BURGER: We will resume at 1:00
16 o'clock, Mr. Attorney General.

17 (Whereupon, at 11:59 o'clock a.m., the court
18 recessed, to reconvene at 1:00 o'clock p.m., the same
19 day.)
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1 AFTERNOON SESSION

2 12:59 p.m.

3 CHIEF JUSTICE BURGER: Mr. Attorney General.

4 ORAL ARGUMENT BY MICHAEL C. TURPEN

5 ON BEHALF OF RESPONDENT

6 MR. TURPEN: Mr. Chief Justice, and may it
7 please the Court.

8 On October 15, 1979, the petitioner in this
9 case, Glen Burton Ake, committed the murder of the
10 Reverend Richard Douglass, and his wife Marilyn. It
11 wasn't until some eight months later, at trial, that the
12 issue we are here on today was ever even raised. When
13 it was finally raised, a right to a psychiatric
14 examination, be it constitutional or otherwise -- I
15 expect that is the issue we are here to decide -- was
16 raised just a few days before trial in an oral motion.

17 The attorney at that point in time saw fit to
18 bring no one forward, nobody that had seen the defendant,
19 if you will on the date of the crime, not his father,
20 not his grandfather, who had helped him move furniture
21 the morning of the date of the crime. He brought no one
22 forward to supplement his motion.

23 QUESTION: Mr. Attorney General, I thought
24 that before the trial commenced, he had been committed
25 for observation.

1 MR. TURPEN: It is correct.

2 QUESTION: to make sure that he was competent
3 to stand trial. Is that right?

4 MR. TURPEN: That is exactly correct. I was
5 about to draw the distinction between the issue of
6 sanity at the time of the crime, and competency at the
7 time of trial.

8 QUESTION: You must be saying at least that
9 just because there was an issue about competency to
10 stand trial that that didn't necessarily mean that there
11 was ever an issue about competency at the time of the
12 crime, or insanity at the time of the crime.

13 MR. TURPEN: Exactly. We get a little bit
14 confused in Oklahoma with the interchangeability of
15 those two terms. At the time of this trial, it was
16 sanity at the time of the crime, as well as sanity at
17 the time of the trial. Now in Oklahoma the law has
18 changed, and we talk about competency to stand trial, as
19 this Court, of course, has in past cases, and sanity at
20 the time of the crime.

21 There is a whole body of case law, of course,
22 that says to plead not guilty by reason of insanity
23 doesn't automatically put competency at the time of the
24 trial into issue. Of course, we believe that the
25 reverse is true.

1 Some several months, four or five months after
2 the crime, you do have the issue of competency raised,
3 but we don't believe that it automatically calls into
4 issue sanity at the time of the crime. Those are two
5 different tests, two different times, and frankly, two
6 different people.

7 QUESTION: Attorney General Turpin, what if
8 the competency inquiry for trial purposes develops
9 testimony by the State psychiatrist that the defendant
10 suffers from a chronic mental condition, that at least
11 could have existed at the time of the commission of the
12 offense, does that in and of itself raise additional
13 concern that would make it appropriate or necessary for
14 the court to consider appointment of psychiatric expert
15 for the defense?

16 MR. TURPIN: I think we have to look at a
17 test, if you will, and I am not sure one exists, except
18 by looking at Grove versus Missouri where they do say
19 that you have to look at three different factors. I
20 say, "they say," and I mean, you say, this Court said
21 that you look at, number one, prior medical opinion;
22 number two, the history of irrational behavior; and,
23 number three, the demeanor at trial. That is for
24 competency at trial, of course.

25 I think that same test could be applied to

1 sanity at the time of the crime for determining the
2 nature or quantum of type of evidence we look at to
3 decide this very test.

4 In our case, there was no prior medical
5 opinion. He had never been adjudicated or committed
6 before. in our case, there was no history of irrational
7 behavior. In fact, the only history was his mother
8 testified that he had a normal childhood.

9 There is something that you brought up where
10 Dr. William Allen said that we do have a history of him
11 talking with Jesus at the age of seven after his daddy
12 beat him for cigarettes -- for smoking cigarettes. I'll
13 suggest to you that that is a subjective symptom, if you
14 will. That was what the petitioner told this doctor,
15 otherwise there was nothing in the record except for the
16 fact that the mother said personally that he had a very
17 normal childhood, and that is in the record. So you
18 have an objective observation there versus a subjective
19 symptom.

20 QUESTION: I don't believe that you have
21 answered my question.

22 MR. TURPEN: I am trying to. I think I'd
23 suggest that I don't think it does automatically. To
24 answer your question most directly, I don't think it
25 does automatically trigger the right to further

1 psychiatric examination in and of itself just based on
2 that competency issue, I think that at the time of
3 trial, a few days before trial, when he raised the
4 issue.

5 QUESTION: I think the fact that I added was,
6 if the testimony of the examining physician reveals what
7 can be characterized as a chronic or ongoing mental
8 condition that could amount to evidence of insanity,
9 legal insanity.

10 MR. TURPEN: I think perhaps the crux of this
11 case, as far as the facts are concerned, depends on the
12 if you just suggested. I do believe that there might be
13 a constitutional right to a psychiatric examination in
14 the appropriate case, that is, if they show the trial
15 court judge that there is a real, substantial and
16 legitimate doubt as to the man's sanity at the time of
17 the crime. If they show, as you say, as this Court says
18 in Pate versus Robinson, if you show that there is a
19 bona fide doubt. Once again, this was as to competency,
20 but I think you can extrapolate the same test as to
21 sanity at the time of the crime.

22 QUESTION: Did the Oklahoma Court look at --
23 Excuse me, go ahead.

24 QUESTION: Why did you have the competency
25 hearing? You say that there must be a showing, and

1 there has never been any showing as to this man's
2 sanity. Why did you have the competency hearing?

3 MR. TURPEN: Some four months after the crime,
4 the crime being October 15, 1979, and we are now
5 Valentine's Day, February 14, 1980, at District Court
6 arraignment. At that point in time there was some
7 action on the part of the petitioner in this case that
8 gave rise in the trial court's mind to go ahead and have
9 a psychiatrist that he appointed locally to come and
10 look at this man.

11 He did look at him and said that there is
12 symptoms of paranoia or schizophrenia here, or that he
13 is malingering, one or the other. Those were his two
14 conclusions. Then they sent him to Eastern State
15 Hospital for further observation.

16 QUESTION: Don't you want to revise your
17 statement that prior to the trial there was no instance
18 of insanity?

19 MR. TURPEN: Your point is well taken. When I
20 talk about prior medical opinion, once again I am
21 looking at the case of Drope and Pate versus Robinson
22 where I think in both cases you had prior medical
23 opinion, and I expect prior to the date of the crime.

24 But your point is well-taken, there is no
25 prior medical history in this case prior to the date of

1 the crime, but certainly the action that the trial court
2 judge took on February 14 and February 20, when he
3 actually had the observation, did predate the exact time
4 of the trial. But never in this case, until several
5 days before trial, did the defense counsel ever bring up
6 the issue of a psychiatric examination for the purpose
7 of sanity at the time of the crime, and then it wasn't
8 supplemented by any witnesses.

9 QUESTION: Sanity at the time of the crime,
10 you mean?

11 MR. TURPEN: That's correct.

12 QUESTION: You said at trial, or I
13 misunderstood you.

14 What you are focusing on now is that only just
15 before the trial did the question of is mental state at
16 the time of the crime arise; is that right?

17 MR. TURPEN: That's exactly right. That's
18 exactly right.

19 QUESTION: But it did arise.

20 MR. TURPEN: Well, we believe that if you look
21 at the test of prior medical opinion, at least prior to
22 the date of the crime, and if you look at the test of
23 the history of irrational behavior, and the best you
24 have in the record is that he had a normal childhood,
25 and you do have some testimony as to Dr. William Allen,

1 the one psychiatrist, saying that clear back to age
2 seven, he could have had some problems because his
3 father beat him back then. This is all what exactly the
4 petitioner told the psychiatrist, there is no other
5 documentation.

6 QUESTION: General Turpen, I think that I
7 understand that two psychiatrists, the State
8 psychiatrists, testified at least before the trial that
9 the petitioner was not sane and that he could not then
10 distinguish right from wrong, and he suffered from
11 chronic paranoia and schizophrenia, and that was the
12 reason he was confined for treatment before he was ever
13 determined to be competent to stand trial. Is that
14 right?

15 MR. TURPEN: The determinations to right and
16 wrong, under the McNaughton test, this is the very issue
17 that we are about here today.

18 QUESTION: But there was that testimony by the
19 State's own psychiatrist.

20 MR. TURPEN: I think there was testimony by
21 psychiatrists that that possibility did exist, and it
22 did get into right and wrong to a certain extent.

23 QUESTION: Then the petitioner did request
24 appointment of an expert at the pretrial conference. Is
25 that correct?

1 MR. TURPEN: He did, court appointed or money
2 to go and hire his own. He never did suggest that they
3 send him back to the hospital again for a hospital
4 provided examination.

5 QUESTION: Do you read the Oklahoma Court of
6 Appeals' opinion as holding that the State would have no
7 duty under any circumstance to appoint a psychiatrist
8 for a defendant, an indigent defendant?

9 MR. TURPEN: In fact, in this case, we had
10 three different psychiatrists, or at least three
11 different doctors and two different psychiatrists that
12 were appointed and did testify, as we know. The State
13 never called a psychiatrist.

14 QUESTION: Do you read the opinion of the
15 Oklahoma Court of Appeals as holding that the State
16 flatly does not have a duty to provide a psychiatrist to
17 an indigent defendant under any circumstances?

18 MR. TURPEN: Yes, I believe they believe that
19 there is no responsibility on the State's behalf to
20 provide a psychiatrist, or a psychiatric examination for
21 sanity at the time of the crime. They do, of course --

22 QUESTION: It is your position that under some
23 circumstances, there would be that duty?

24 MR. TURPEN: It is our position exactly. I
25 don't think there is any doubt that the circumstance may

1 exist.

2 QUESTION: So you don't buy your Court of
3 Criminal Appeals' opinion in its entirety?

4 MR. TURPEN: The Court of Criminal Appeals
5 goes into the fact in several opinions that there may be
6 the possibility, in fact, where you need a psychiatrist,
7 particularly in the second stage --

8 QUESTION: I thought you answered just the
9 opposite way to Justice O'Connor's question.

10 MR. TURPEN: Once again, I'm talking the
11 difference between sanity at the time of the crime and
12 competency at the time of trial. They do provide -- The
13 law provides and the Court of Criminal Appeals provides
14 unequivocally that you are guaranteed a psychiatrist in
15 the State of Oklahoma to help you establish competency
16 at the time of trial.

17 It is true that they deny that this
18 Constitution in this country that we are here to define
19 today, does not require they to make a psychiatric
20 examination available for sanity at the time of the
21 crime. That is true.

22 QUESTION: What if the evidence before the
23 trial court when the trial opens, or when they are
24 trying to pick a jury, before jeopardy has attached, the
25 conduct of the man is such that coupled with the

1 examination for competency that Justice O'Connor has
2 just referred to, showed that he was probably a
3 psychopath, or at least very seriously mentally
4 disturbed. Do you say then that there no constitutional
5 right or obligation on the State to provide an
6 independent medical examination to inform the Court, I
7 am speaking now as to his condition at the time of the
8 crime, not the competency to stand trial?

9 MR. TURPEN: I understand your question. I do
10 believe that there obviously is the possibility where a
11 constitutional right would exist or an appropriate case
12 as to a psychiatric examination to help prepare or to
13 determine sanity at the time of the crime.

14 I don't necessary mean, in fact, I do not
15 mean, I'll be unequivocal about this, that it should
16 ever go to the point that we provide somebody with the
17 money to go hire a psychiatrist of his own choosing.
18 The right of counsel doesn't even go that far.

19 QUESTION: What about providing an examination
20 by the psychiatrist selected by the court?

21 MR. TURPEN: I think that in an appropriate
22 case that may well be what fundamental fairness and due
23 process requires, or an examination by a doctor in a
24 State hospital.

25 QUESTION: Then this case narrows down to

1 whether, on the record of this particular case, that
2 standard was invoked. You say that it was not, that
3 there wasn't any evidence that called for the
4 designation of a neutral psychiatrist.

5 MR. TURPEN: I think that we understand each
6 perfectly at this point. What I would like to share
7 with the Court is that you had an incredible situation
8 On October 15, 1979, an incredibly distinctive case, if
9 you will, where you have a petitioner, who at the very
10 time of the crime, and I don't mean to recount the facts
11 and detail, but just one statement, he said to the
12 family, as they laid there on the floor, all four tied
13 up, "I'm sorry. I'm in a bad position here, but dead
14 men don't talk."

15 We submit, Mr. Chief Justice, that there are
16 incredible facts in this case. If you look at the
17 McNaughton rule, which we can argue about in and of
18 itself, but that is the law in the State of Oklahoma,
19 did he know right from wrong? Did he have the capacity
20 to distinguish between right from wrong?

21 We think we have a compelling record in this
22 case that at the very moment of the crime, you have a
23 contemporaneous statement that is compelling to the fact
24 that he did know right from wrong, as well as an
25 incredible record where he had a reason to pick out that

1 house. He had a reason, through the use of deception,
2 to enter the house. He said, "I need to use the
3 telephone." He had a reason to cut all the telephone
4 wires. He had a reason to tie up this family. He had a
5 reason to ransack the home, and he had a reason to shoot
6 them. It is a crime of reason, as opposed to other
7 paranoiac/schizophrenic situations.

8 QUESTION: Don't you usually have experts for
9 that testimony, isn't that the usual way?

10 MR. TURPEN: I would submit that lay witnesses
11 can share with the jury and the court objective
12 observations.

13 QUESTION: Didn't you use expert testimony to
14 find out whether he was competent to stand trial?
15 Didn't you?

16 MR. TURPEN: Yes.

17 QUESTION: Weren't they still available?

18 MR. TURPEN: Yes.

19 QUESTION: Why couldn't you have used them?
20 It wouldn't even cost you anything.

21 MR. TURPEN: In fact, they were called to
22 testify.

23 QUESTION: Not on this point.

24 QUESTION: In fact, they testified on this
25 point to a certain extent. It is interesting that the

1 law in the State of Oklahoma is that they must raise the
2 defense with sufficient evidence. They must show
3 "sufficient evidence" that there was a doubt as to
4 sanity, and then it is up to the State. We have a
5 Federal rule where the burden is on us to prove that he
6 was, in fact, sane.

7 I submit that the petitioner wants you to
8 believe that the testimony, as we talked about a while
9 ago, Justice O'Connor, that the testimony from the
10 psychiatrists on competency is strong enough to trigger
11 the right that we are talking about here today, the
12 constitutional right to a psychiatrist, but not strong
13 enough to actually bring the defense of insanity to the
14 jury.

15 I don't think that they can have it both
16 ways. It is either strong enough to trigger the right
17 and, therefore, strong enough to raise that sufficient
18 evidence with the jury.

19 QUESTION: Are you saying that it wasn't
20 strong enough to trigger the right? The testimony that
21 the man at one time was not competent to stand trial is
22 not enough to trigger?

23 MR. TURPEN: From my personal perspective,
24 based on reading Grove and Pate --

25 QUESTION: I am not asking your opinion. I am

1 asking any reasonable person's opinion.

2 MR. TURPEN: I don't think that it is strong
3 enough to a reasonable person looking at this whole
4 record, Justice Marshall. I don't think it is strong
5 enough to trigger either right. I don't think it's
6 strong enough to raise it to the jury, I am not arguing
7 that, but I also don't think it's strong enough to
8 trigger a right to further psychiatric examination.

9 They are two different tests addressed to two
10 different times to two different people. One person at
11 the time of the crime, and another one, five months
12 later, who has been in prison or in jail for five
13 months. We can look at experts in the field, and Dr.
14 Carl Menenger comes to mind, where he talks to the crime
15 of punishment. What happened to a man in just five
16 months in prison, standing around and thinking about
17 shooting four people, four fellow human beings, in the
18 back. You are talking about two different tests at two
19 different times and two different people in this
20 incredibly --

21 QUESTION: May I raise a question. Am I
22 correct in understanding that the transcript of the
23 arraignment on February 14, 1980, has never been filed?

24 MR. TURPEN: We have the minutes.

25 QUESTION: What I'm curious about is there is

1 an entry in the Joint Appendix that says, "Defense
2 counsel specifically do not desire the particular plea
3 of not guilty by reason of temporary insanity to be
4 entered." This is the occasion, as I recall, when the
5 defendant acted in the strange way that prompted the
6 inquiry into his competence to stand trial. That's
7 correct, is it not?

8 MR. TURPEN: That's correct.

9 QUESTION: At that time was known that he
10 intended to plead not guilty by reason of insanity?

11 MR. TURPEN: No.

12 QUESTION: How do they get to discussing -- I
13 am surprised that if the question of the plea that was
14 to be entered was raised at that time, why you wouldn't
15 have had the psychiatric examination encompass both
16 inquiries.

17 MR. TURPEN: Arguably it did, to a certain
18 extent, because they did go into right and wrong as we
19 talked about in some of the testimony a while ago. At
20 that point in time, I submit to you, you had a trial
21 court judge that was on top of the thing enough that sua
22 sponte he asked for this examination to be conducted on
23 his own. But at that point in time, he didn't go ahead
24 and ask for the other test to be done also.

25 QUESTION: But there was discussion of the

1 possibility, at least, of the man being not guilty by
2 reason of temporary insanity. There was a decision not
3 to enter such a plea, which is very puzzling to me. If
4 the question came up at that time, it would seem to me
5 that the normal thing to do would be for the judge to
6 give us a full report on the whole situation, find out
7 what you can about it. Wouldn't that be the normal way
8 to handle it?

9 MR. TURPEN: I think this court has held many
10 times that you rely on trial counsel to help you focus
11 the issues, and I guess that's what we are trying to do
12 here today. The court also relies on counsel to help
13 them focus the issue. I submit to you that in this
14 case, he had very little help as far as focusing on this
15 one particular specific issue. There was aggressive
16 motion practice. They filed a motion to disqualify the
17 judge, and that sort of thing.

18 On this particular issue, they don't make it
19 an issue until seven or eight days before trial, when
20 they finally said, "By the way, we'd also like an
21 examination as to sanity at the time of the crime." We
22 think that it is a real bad standard to use, when you
23 have a lawyer at that late date -- obviously they never
24 bring it up again, as we know. They never brought up in
25 their motion for a new trial. It was brought that one

1 time by that lawyer, and never again.

2 Case law, facts, witnesses, they weren't
3 brought to that judge's attention at this time, a few
4 days before trial. I don't suggest that he thought it
5 was delitery practice, I don't suggest at all, but he
6 did, you know, based on the recrd, have no help from
7 trial counsel to focus on the case law across this land,
8 that I have learned about, case law from this court that
9 I have read about, or any evidence or witnesses, or even
10 affidavit from him, how he felt about this man, which
11 some case law suggests that you can do.

12 That motion, he never even filed a written
13 motion. He said that he was going to, and never did.
14 It was all kind of an oral exchange, very casually, a
15 few days before trial. That's the first time that this
16 issue became an issue in this case as far as sanity at
17 the time of the crime. We think that it is perhaps a
18 bad standard to set, and in a lot of respects this could
19 be a retroactive rule if we go that far. That's one of
20 the things that we are suggesting.

21 QUESTION: General Turpen, may I ask you a
22 point or two about the possible adequate and independent
23 State ground. Is it your understanding of Oklahoma law
24 that regardless of whether or not the Federal
25 Constitution would require the appointment of an expert

1 psychiatrist under these circumstances, that if the
2 matter were not preserved in the motion for new trial
3 that under Oklahoma law it could not be considered?

4 MR. TURPEN: It's our understanding of the law
5 of our own State that it simply was not brought up in
6 the motion for new trial.

7 QUESTION: There is no exception for
8 "fundamental error"?

9 MR. TURPEN: There is an exception but, of
10 course, they found in this case that there was no
11 fundamental error, that's what they held. They held,
12 therefore, the right is waived because it simply was not
13 brought up in the motion for new trial. As I pointed
14 out, it was only brought up once in the whole case, and
15 that was a few days before trial. It was never brought
16 up before that, and it was never brought up again after
17 that as far as this specific examination.

18 QUESTION: May I ask you that, Mr. Attorney
19 General, I have the impression that the trial court held
20 two things on the application for some kind of
21 psychiatric assistance. The first, he couldn't have it
22 because it wasn't provided for by the Oklahoma statute,
23 and the second, that not in any circumstances was there
24 any Federal constitutional obligation to provide one. Is
25 that what happened? That's, as I read the transcript,

1 what the trial court said.

2 MR. TURPEN: I think it's fair to say, in
3 relation to whether he was going to give him money to go
4 find his own psychiatrist, to find one of his own, and
5 it is also fair to say that he wasn't going to appoint a
6 psychiatrist for him at that point in time.

7 QUESTION: Did he say he wasn't because the
8 Oklahoma statute made no provision for any, number one.

9 MR. TURPEN: That's right.

10 QUESTION: Number two, as to the Federal
11 constitutional claim, there was no merit in the Federal
12 constitutional claim.

13 MR. TURPEN: That's exactly right.

14 QUESTION: Now, as you just said to Justice
15 O'Connor, that when the motion for new trial was made,
16 it did not repeat the desire or the motion to have a
17 psychiatrist. That's true, is it?

18 MR. TURPEN: Yes, sir.

19 QUESTION: Would it have done them any good to
20 make the application after what the trial judge had
21 already ruled?

22 MR. TURPEN: I think it will always do good to
23 bring to the judge's attention -- This judge is now
24 deceased, but I can't help but think that it would have
25 been very helpful for him to have an attorney that would

1 have brought the wealth of case law to him that you now
2 have before you on this very issue. But, of course,
3 that didn't happen. There wasn't even written motion.
4 It was all I can say, an oral casual situation.

5 No, I can't help but think this judge knew the
6 14th Amendment applied to the State Oklahoma. I believe
7 that he did. I believe that judges in our State do
8 believe that.

9 QUESTION: But he did hold, apparently, on the
10 application that, no, there is no Federal constitutional
11 right whatever to the appointment --

12 MR. TURPEN: That he knew of.

13 QUESTION: -- of that kind of a psychiatrist.

14 MR. TURPEN: That he knew of, and nobody tried
15 to enlighten him, which I think is part of the lawyer's
16 job in any case, and not a psychiatrist to help him.

17 QUESTION: I gather the question of the
18 adequacy of the State ground, if it was one.

19 MR. TURPEN: Okay.

20 QUESTION: The failure to repeat the motion on
21 a motion for new trial, the adequacy of that for
22 purposes of independent and adequate State ground is
23 something we decide, isn't it? It doesn't depend on
24 Oklahoma law.

25 MR. TURPEN: I understand that.

1 QUESTION: Are you familiar with Douglas and
2 Alabama, your adversary wasn't.

3 MR. TURPEN: Well, let's be totally candid and
4 say that I looked it up over the lunch hour.

5 (General laughter)

6 QUESTION: Didn't we hold in that case that
7 there was nothing to be gained by renewing it?

8 MR. TURPEN: That was my reading of the case.

9 QUESTION: That was my reading and writing.

10 (General laughter)

11 MR. TURPEN: We noticed who wrote it, and we
12 commented on that.

13 QUESTION: Would the Oklahoma judge have
14 violated any Oklahoma law or statute if he had said at
15 that time, in view of what has developed, I'm going to
16 send him to the State Hospital for further examination,
17 psychiatric examination, to see if they can determine
18 his probable condition at the time of the crime? Would
19 he have violated any law if he had done that?

20 MR. TURPEN: No, I don't think so. In fact,
21 we believe it has been done. I have talked to the
22 superintendent of the hospitals, they have done it and
23 they do do it.

24 QUESTION: Can you suggest any reason why they
25 didn't do it in this case, other than the failure to

1 make a formal motion? In other words, wasn't there
2 enough to have alerted the trial judge that something
3 was wrong here?

4 MR. TURPEN: Mr. Chief Justice, you have got
5 an incredible situation, once again, where you've got
6 the crime in October, and on December 11, side by side,
7 co-defendants, Glen Burton Ake and Steven Keith Hatch.
8 Steven Keith Hatch's attorney stands up and says, here
9 we are now, a month after the crime -- two months after
10 the crime, "I want my man committed for observation."
11 Glen Burton Ake, the petitioner in this case, sits
12 quietly by, nothing said. They even asked him on the
13 record, "Do you mind if we waive your preliminary
14 hearing -- or continue it," a very big difference. He
15 said, "No, I don't object."

16 Then we go on to January 21st, when you have
17 the preliminary hearing, and there is no objection, no
18 motion, anything about Glen Burton Ake's sanity at the
19 time of the crime raised in this case until his
20 co-defendant gets back from the hospital himself, and
21 they get into the District Court arraignment and we see
22 what happens.

23 I will say to you, at that point in time, the
24 trial court judge may really wonder about the
25 difference, about competency now versus sanity at the

1 time of the crime. We are saying, based on this record,
2 they didn't go very far, if at all, the attorneys, in
3 trying to put sanity at the time of the crime in issue,
4 which is a distinctly different test, or a retroactive
5 inquiry, if you will, versus a present determination, a
6 very distinctive different test, distinctively
7 different. We say that he believed that it never was
8 really an issue. He waits a few days before trial, and
9 you have got to wonder how much good faith that
10 particular attorney used on that specific issue at that
11 point in time.

12 QUESTION: That's true, but it is also true,
13 is it not, that the professional medical judgment was
14 that he really was incompetent for a period, that that
15 was not a contrived situation. Isn't that correct?

16 MR. TURPEN: That's correct. That's correct.
17 Well, but you have the day, no several days before
18 trial, and I'd like to share this with you, you've got
19 petitioner in this case, just several days before trial,
20 telling his own cellmate, Charles Yancey -- not his
21 cellmate, but across from him, I'm going to go to trial
22 and "mess with their mind." I'm going to act like some
23 kind of angel.

24 He said, "I liked the people I met down at the
25 crazy-house, and that's when I want to go down, when in

1 fact, I go down." He said, "I liked the food there. I
2 liked the ladies, and I met a guy named The Wizard who
3 is playing crazy just like I am." That's the testimony,
4 and he gave that a week before the trial.

5 QUESTION: You think it's absolutely
6 impossible that someone who is really crazy could have
7 said that?

8 MR. TURPEN: All I can do is clear that with
9 the McNaughton test, irresistible impulse, diminished
10 capacity, the Durham test, perhaps he'd have a problem
11 in any event, or the State would, I should say. I say,
12 under the McNaughton test, whether we agree with that
13 rule or not, in the State of Oklahoma, this record is
14 compelling. This record is compelling that every action
15 of that man throughout this whole record in fact
16 complies with the McNaughton test, as I said again,
17 whether we agree with that test or not.

18 QUESTION: May I ask you one other question.
19 On the independent and adequate State ground point, and
20 specifically the exception in the Hawkins case in
21 Oklahoma for fundamental error.

22 MR. TURPEN: Yes, sir.

23 QUESTION: What do you understand fundamental
24 error, is that constitutional error? In other words, if
25 we disagreed with the merits of their ruling, would that

1 have come within the excpetion, do you think?

2 MR. TURPEN: To me, fundamental error means
3 constitutional error.

4 QUESTION: So if it is constitutional error,
5 then it would not be an adequate independent State
6 ground.

7 MR. TURPEN: Yes. As I said before, we
8 believe in the appropriate case, there is a new
9 constitutional rule to talk about. The constitutional
10 right, I expect we are going that far today, but I will
11 suggest to you that Thomas Huxley once said in closing,
12 "Many a beautiful theory is thwarted by an ugly." I
13 think we have before us today a developing, perhaps
14 beautiful from your perspective, an independent
15 constitutional theory. We submit, in this case,
16 thwarted by the ugly facts of, in fact, a total record
17 that shows this particular petitioner, Glen Burton Ake,
18 did in fact -- I'm not talking diminished capacity,
19 Durham test, irristible impulse -- did in fact know
20 right from wrong.

21 QUESTION: General Turpen, I guess the
22 Oklahoma Court of Appeals really never looked at that,
23 did it. It just there is nc such right to appointment
24 of a psychiatrist in Oklahoma, so it didn't look at the
25 facts in this case. Is that right?

1 MR. TURPEN: I think it's fair to say on this
2 specific issue. That's fair to say.

3 QUESTION: So the weighing that you're asking
4 to be done is something that was not done in your
5 court.

6 MR. TURPEN: The Court of Criminal Appeals?

7 QUESTION: Right.

8 MR. TURPEN: That's right. That's fair to
9 say, I will say.

10 Thank you.

11 CHIEF JUSTICE BURGER: Do you have anything
12 further, you have three minutes remaining.

13 MR. SPITZER: Yes, Mr. Chief Justice, if I
14 might.

15 REBUTTAL ORAL ARGUMENT BY ARTHUR B. SPITZER
16 ON BEHALF OF PETITIONER

17 MR. SPITZER: To answer Justice Stevens'
18 question about that February hearing, I was curious
19 about it, too, why the court minute reflects that they
20 didn't want a plea of not guilty by reason of insanity.
21 We have no transcript. Apparently, the court reporter
22 moved to Texas, and no one can find her.

23 I spoke to the defense counsel, and that's out
24 of the record, but they said to me that they did that
25 because they couldn't talk with their defendant, and

1 they couldn't get from him what plea he wanted entered.
2 So they refused to enter any plea, and you will see from
3 the court minute that the court enters a plea of not
4 guilty. That's what they told me happened at that
5 hearing.

6 Earlier than that, at the January hearing, the
7 defense counsel -- At the preliminary hearing, the
8 defense counsel had raised some questions, and asked
9 some jailers, had they seen Ake having fits and seizures
10 at the jail. Those particular jailers said they didn't
11 see that.

12 But there was some indication that things were
13 wrong, and certainly in April, at the mental competency
14 hearing, psychiatrists testified that he was a chronic
15 paranoid schizophrenic, and that was several months
16 before he went to trial.

17 QUESTION: At anywhere along the line has the
18 issue been raised as to the effective assistance of
19 counsel at the trial court level?

20 MR. SPITZER: Your Honor, we raised that as
21 one of the bases for our argument, but no.

22 QUESTION: When was it raised first?

23 MR. SPITZER: This is a direct appeal, of
24 course, and so --

25 QUESTION: Was it raised in the Louisiana

1 Court?

2 MR. SPITZER: In the Oklahoma Court?

3 QUESTION: The Oklahoma Court, I mean.

4 MR. SPITZER: The Oklahoma Court of Appeals,
5 no, Your Honor. Ake was represented by the same counsel
6 in the Oklahoma Court of Appeals as he was at trial.

7 The law of Oklahoma on this question is quite
8 clear, and I commend to you the Amicus filed by the
9 Oklahoma County Public Defenders, noting, for example,
10 the case of State against Davis, where the judge sent
11 the defendant to the State hospital for an examination,
12 and the State hospital refused on the ground that the
13 State statute didn't authorize such an examination.

14 Similarly, in State versus Paris Johnson,
15 cited there, the court, feeling the 14th Amendment
16 applied to him, ordered a chemist be made available to
17 the defendant to test some blood samples that were
18 crucial evidence in the case, and the Court Fund Board,
19 which dispenses these funds, refused. Defense counsel
20 took a petition for mandamus to the Oklahoma Supreme
21 Court which denied mandamus, so the defendant never got
22 his expert. So the Oklahoma Court's position is really
23 quite unambiguous.

24 Finally, let me say a word about the testimony
25 of the cellmate about faking it in court. It's

1 specifically contradicted by the testimony of the
2 State's own chief forensic psychiatrist that his
3 observations, his careful testing, negate that
4 possibility. They were very suspicious about that when
5 he went to the hospital, and the observed with
6 particular respect to that, and concluded that it was
7 not true.

8 So whatever he may have said to the person in
9 the opposite cell shortly before trial, you have to
10 assume that he was a person who was mentally ill,
11 restored to competence under Thorazine, and then in that
12 condition determine to play act that he was mentally
13 ill. I think that it is hard assumption to make, but it
14 illustrates the difficulty with relying on lay testimony
15 in a case like this. Lay people simply aren't qualified
16 to delve into the intricacies of mental illness and
17 determine what's really going on. That never happened
18 in this case.

19 Thank you, Mr. Chief Justice.

20 CHIEF JUSTICE BURGER: Gentlemen, the case is
21 submitted.

22 (Whereupon, at 1:32 p.m., the case was
23 submitted.)
24
25

CERTIFICATION

Alderson Reporting Company, Inc., hereby certifies that the attached pages represents an accurate transcription of electronic sound recording of the oral argument before the Supreme Court of The United States in the Matter of:

#83-5424 - GLEN BURTON AKE, Petitioner v. OKLAHOMA

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BY

Paul A. Richardson

(REPORTER)

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