

reaching was a holding that invalidated the penalty structure of a statute under which defendants could escape a possible death sentence by entering a guilty plea; the statute “needlessly encourage[d]” waivers of defendant’s Fifth Amendment right to plead not guilty and his Sixth Amendment right to a jury trial.²²¹

Although this “needless encouragement” test assessed the nature of the choice required to be made by defendants against the strength of the governmental interest in the system requiring the choice, the Court soon developed another test stressing the voluntariness of the choice. A guilty plea entered by a defendant who correctly understands the consequences of the plea is voluntary unless coerced or obtained under false pretenses; moreover, there is no impermissible coercion where the defendant has the effective assistance of counsel.²²² The Court in an opinion by Justice Harlan then formulated still another test in holding that a defendant in a capital case in which the jury in one process decides both guilt and sentence could be put to a choice between remaining silent on guilt or admitting guilt and being able to put on evidence designed to mitigate the possible sentence. The pressure to take the stand in response to the sentencing issue, said the Court, was not so great as to impair the policies underlying the Self-Incrimination Clause, policies described in this instance as proscription of coercion and of cruelty in putting the defendant to an undeniably “hard” choice.²²³ Similarly, the Court held that requiring a defendant to give notice to the prosecution before trial of his intention to rely on an alibi defense and to give the names and addresses of witnesses who will support it does not violate the clause.²²⁴ Nor does it violate a defen-

²²¹ *Jackson v. United States*, 390 U.S. 570, 583 (1968).

²²² *Parker v. North Carolina*, 397 U.S. 790 (1970); *Brady v. United States*, 397 U.S. 742 (1970); *McMann v. Richardson*, 397 U.S. 759 (1970). *Parker* and *Brady* entered guilty pleas to avoid the death penalty when it became clear that the prosecution had solid evidence of their guilt; *Richardson* pled guilty because of his fear that an allegedly coerced confession would be introduced into evidence.

²²³ *McGautha v. California*, 402 U.S. 183, 210–20 (1971). When the Court subsequently required bifurcated trials in capital cases, it was on the basis of the Eighth Amendment, and represented no withdrawal from the position described here. *Cf. Corbitt v. New Jersey*, 439 U.S. 212 (1978); *Bordenkircher v. Hayes*, 434 U.S. 357 (1978).

²²⁴ *Williams v. Florida*, 399 U.S. 78, 80–86 (1970). The compulsion of choice, Justice White argued for the Court, proceeded from the strength of the state’s case and not from the disclosure requirement. That is, the rule did not affect whether or not the defendant chose to make an alibi defense and to call witnesses, but merely required him to accelerate the timing. It appears, however, that in *Brooks v. Tennessee*, 406 U.S. 605 (1972), the Court used the “needless encouragement” test in striking down a state rule requiring the defendant to testify before any other defense witness or to forfeit the right to testify at all. In the Court’s view, this impermissibly burdened the defendant’s choice whether to testify or not. Another prosecution discovery effort was approved in *United States v. Nobles*, 422 U.S. 233 (1975), in