

# Watson's 'Robot' State Told at Murder Trial

## Person Can Be Programmed to Kill by Drugs, Persuasion, Psychiatrist Says

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Testimony in the murder trial Wednesday again centered around the defense premise that a person can be programmed by relentless mental persuasor and heavy ingestion of psychedelic drugs to commit homicides in a robot-like manner.

Dr. Vernon Bohr, a court-appointed psychiatrist, testified that Watson at the time he participated in the seven Tate-La Bianca murders was "functioning in a dreamlike state." He said that Watson's capacity for "rational, logical thought was minimal and he could not perform at any intellectual level, unable to form intent or harbor malice and his ability to premeditate murder was extensively impaired due to his psychotic state."

Should the jury find that Dr. Bohr is correct, Judge Adolph Alex-

and a moderately severe depression."

Bohr, who said he had examined about 1,500 drug abuse cases at the Ingle-side Mental Health Center at Rosemead, testified that such patients often talk "guides" or "guru-type persons" such as cult leader Charles Manson.

Bohr called Watson a "robot."

Manson, he said, under examination by defense attorney Sam Budrick, could have transformed Watson into a robot to kill at his command. He pointed out that Watson was a follower and immature—the kind of person who would be particularly susceptible to mental conditioning, especially if it were accompanied by heavy drug use.

"Would prolonged heavy drug use change his personality?" Budrick asked. "I believe it would," Bohr answered.

To pinpoint a cause of Watson's illness would be

speculative, Bohr added, "but I believe he had organic brain damage was caused."

Dep. Dist. Atty. Vincent T. Bugliosi, on cross-examination, asked if Watson's demeanor might not have indicated the Ganser syndrome, in which an individual accused of serious crimes appears psychotic after incarceration.

Bohr said the syndrome may have been involved but he didn't believe it was in Watson's case. He said stories given by such persons "are usually ex-

travagantly bizarre — caricatures and I don't see this in Mr. Watson."

Bohr said he based his diagnosis of Watson solely on what Watson himself had told him in their sessions.

"Do you think Watson was an unbiased source?" Bugliosi asked.

"No, I don't."

"Can you tell me one thing Watson told you that you did not believe or did you buy everything he said, lock, stock and barrel?" Bugliosi asked.

"Not lock, stock and barrel," Bohr answered.