IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE FIFTEENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT, IN AND FOR PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA. CRIMINAL DIVISION "T"

STATE OF FLORIDA.

CASE NO.: 84-4014CF A02

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DUANE OWEN,

Defendant.

FILED

MAR 2 3 1999

DOROTHY H. WILKEN, CLERK CIRCUIT & COUNTY COURTS (CRIM, DIV.)

ORDER SENTENCING DEFENDANT

THE DEFENDANT, Duane Owen, comes before this Court for sentencing this 23rd day of March, 1999.

The Defendant has been found guilty by the trial jury of the offenses of first degree murder, attempted sexual battery with a deadly weapon or force likely to cause serious personal injury, and burglary of a dwelling while armed.

After a second phase jury trial, the jury has recommended that Duane Owen be sentenced to death for first degree murder by a vote of ten to two (10-2).

This morning the parties presented argument to the Court and the Defendant presented additional evidence which the Court read into the record including affidavits presented through investigator, H. Sheehan, the Defendant's high school equivalency diploma, and the Defendant's general discharge under honorable conditions from the United States Army. The Defendant chose not to orally address the Court but had his attorney read into the record his written statement in lieu of personally addressing the Court.

The testimony and evidence presented in the guilt/innocence phase and penalty phase of trial demonstrates a tragic and horrific series of events as set forth herein. These are the facts as the Court now finds them:

The Defendant, Duane Owen, grew up in a small town in Indiana. He lived in a home with his older brother and older half-brother together with his parents. Both of his parents were hopeless alcoholics. He was exposed to sexual and physical violence on almost a daily basis from his infancy until his teenage years.

The Defendant himself began to experience sexual abuse upon himself at nine years old. His older brother's friends did exploit him sexually. He, in turn, would begin to exploit other children sexually. In the meantime, he continued to witness and/or hear his mother being

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physically abused and raped by his father. Eventually, his mother became terminally ill with cancer and cirrhosis of the liver and died when the Defendant was approximately eleven leaving him in the care of his alcoholic father. His older half-brother, who had been even more severely abused and forced to live in the home's basement where he took his meals and slept, was finally "freed". He went to live with his maternal grandparents and received years of therapy and counseling before succumbing to AIDS in 1995. However, the Defendant and his older full brother continued to reside for approximately two more years in the home with their father until the father committed suicide in the garage when the Defendant was thirteen. The Defendant's older full brother and the Defendant allowed the dead father to remain in the garage for about three days before the authorities interceded. They apparently kept the suicide a secret so that they would not be removed from the home.

Any neighbors or babysitters who had been in the home during these years indicated that it was in a filthy and deplorable condition and that there was absolutely no guidance or help for the Defendant. Some who had helped bathe the Defendant when he was a young child, noted numerous bruises and welts on his body indicative of physical abuse.

When the Defendant was thirteen he was removed from Indiana to the Veterans of Foreign Wars orphanage in the State of Michigan together with his older full brother. The VFW orphanage in Michigan was just as bad, or even worse, than the Defendant's former home. Sexual abuse was carried on between the adult caretakers and children at the home and between the children themselves. Physical abuse was perpetrated upon the children by the adult caretakers and the children themselves. The Defendant's only family or friend, his older brother, ran away leaving the Defendant without a person he could relate to. The home was so bad that an eventual investigation required it to be closed down.

In the meantime, the Defendant had learned throughout his entire life that brutality, sexual deviancy, and fear was the expected way to live. No family, friend, or other responsible adult ever intervened to properly develop the Defendant's growth psychologically.

Therefore, at the end of his teen years the Defendant moved out into society as an emotionally scarred and severely disturbed individual with virtually no support system.

The Defendant eventually found his way to Florida where a frightening escalation of criminal events took place. At some point before his serious documented criminal activity began, the Defendant did suffer a head injury in 1981 when a car that had been jacked up fell on his head. The injury may have aggravated his antisocial behavior.

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Around 1982 the Defendant is documented as having indecently exposed himself, mutilated himself, burglarized womens' homes to steal intimate female clothing, and he came into contact with Palm Beach County police agencies. His antisocial behavior was recognized but not dealt with. The Defendant "takes a break" from escalating criminal activity by spending time in the U.S. Army before being discharged and by spending some time in jail up north.

However, by 1984 the Defendant has returned to Palm Beach County and is involved in a series of frighteningly violent crimes including attempted first degree murder and burglary while armed on the victim/ burglary with an assault or battery on the victim/ first degree murder, sexual battery with a deadly weapon and burglary while armed on the victim/ and for the crimes in the case at bar upon the victim for which the Defendant has been found guilty of first degree murder, and the other crimes aforementioned against the victim

The fact that the Defendant, Duane Owen, had one of the more horrific childhoods that this Court has seen or heard of is uncontested in the evidence. It is truly a shame that anyone should be put on this earth to endure a childhood like Duane Owen's. Although the Court will address the aggravating circumstances and mitigating circumstances arguably applicable to this case, what this case really comes down to at this point is whether Duane Owen's background has made him mean, calculating, cruel and evil or whether it has made him too mentally ill to be able to become mean, calculating, cruel and evil.

In this case, the facts Indicate that on a March evening in 1984 the Defendant began casing a comfortable neighborhood in Delray Beach, Florida. He found the private residence where the victim, a fourteen year old babysitter, was babysitting two young children. He entered the residence through a window and saw the eventual victim, braiding the hair of one of the young children in her charge. Nobody saw him at that time. The Defendant then left the residence and went to a local Delray Beach bar and returned to the residence approximately two hours later. He went into the residence after having first removed his clothing down to a pair of nylon shorts. He left his clothing outside the residence with his bicycle. He put his socks over his hands so there would be no fingerprints. He entered the residence and saw at the telephone in a front room of the home. She saw him, a strange young man in the home, stripped down to a pair of nylon shorts. He told to put the phone down. She did. Taking the knife that he carried into the residence

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with him, he began to stab	. He stabbed	after she turned around and
saw him coming while she was on	the phone. When	put the phone down he
grabbed the phone and he stabbe		
immediately, went d	own to the floor on her back.	was unable to
·		s showed evidence that there may
have been a struggle.		
were inflicted in quick succession		
Each wound inflicted pain on		
		ree inches deep. Several wounds
		ng. The collapsing of the lung and
the cutting of the throat (larynx ar		
loss of blood was		
response and a belief in her of im		
The Defendant stated that fear in		
cause deliberately pain and fear		
		curred over a period of time. She
remained conscious for somewhere	ere between twenty seconds	and two minutes with a full minute
as a fair estimate. Of the eighter	en wounds inflicted upon	eight were in her back.
They were all stab wounds. Fou	r were cutting or slashing wo	ounds in her throat - neck area. Six
were stab-type wounds in the ne	ck. Seven of the eighteen w	ounds would have been lethal in
and of themselves, i.e., each ind		
suffered by would I		
causing the collapse of a lung w	ould contribute to blood filling	g up the lung resulting in air
hunger, i.e., the need to take in	air without the ability to respon	ond. As blood
poured out of her (practically all	of her blood), the Defendant	checked the children sleeping in
their room, closed their door, sh	ut out the lights, turned off th	e TV and dragged
by her feet into the master bedro	oom with her head trailing be	ehind her body and blood pouring
out covering the floor as if it wer	e a red carpet. The Defenda	ant then closed the door to the
master bedroom, took off		ng her shorts and pulling up her top.
Her bra was taken off and push	ed up. The Defendant then	had sexual intercourse with
having covered her fac	e with a towel. Afterwards	body was left
spreadeagle and naked on the	master bedroom floor. The I	Defendant then went into the master
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bedroom bathroom and showered washing the blood off. He then left through the sliding glass door, dressed in his clothes that had been kept outside, and road off on his bicycle. He went to his residence and turned back the clocks in his residence in an effort to provide himself an alibi covering the time of the murder. He called his roommate's attention to the time on the clock that had been turned back.

In deciding what sentence is appropriate in this case, the Court is required to give great weight to the jury's recommendation that the death sentence be imposed. The jury made that recommendation by a ten to two (10-2) vote. The Court will give the jury's recommendation great weight.

The Court must also conduct its own evaluation and examination of the testimony and evidence in a weighing process to determine whether sufficient aggravating circumstances exist in this case to justify the imposition of the death penalty and whether sufficient mitigating circumstances exist to outweld any aggravating circumstances. Any aggravating circumstance must be established beyond a reasonable doubt before it can be considered by this Court. Any mitigating circumstance that I am reasonably convinced exists must be given some weight.

In this case, the State has argued and presented evidence concerning four aggravating circumstances provided by Florida law. They are as follows:

1. DEFENDANT HAS BEEN PREVIOUSLY CONVICTED OF ANOTHER CAPITAL OFFENSE OR OF A FELONY INVOLVING THE USE OF VIOLENCE TO SOME PERSON.

This aggravating circumstance is conceded by the defense to exist in this case. It has been proven beyond all doubt, i.e., proven by a standard even higher than beyond a reasonable doubt. The Defendant has been previously convicted of a first degree murder capital felony involving the victim, as proven by the documentary and testimonial evidence. The Defendant has also been proven beyond any and all doubt to have been previously convicted of several felonies involving the use of violence to some person, to wit: attempted first degree murder, burglary of a dwelling while armed with a dangerous weapon, sexual battery with a deadly weapon or the use of force likely to cause serious personal injury and burglary of a dwelling with an assault or battery as set forth in the documentary evidence and testimony involving the victims, and as well as the victim. Again, this has been proven by a standard higher than beyond all reasonable doubt.

The Court gives great weight to the aggravating circumstance of previous conviction of 0.04.053

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another capital offense or of a felony involving the use of violence to some person.

2. THE CRIME FOR WHICH THE DEFENDANT IS TO BE SENTENCED WAS COMMITTED WHILE HE WAS ENGAGED IN THE COMMISSION OF AND/OR AN ATTEMPT TO COMMIT OR FLIGHT AFTER COMMITTING OR ATTEMPTING TO COMMIT THE CRIMES OF SEXUAL BATTERY OR BURGLARY.

The Defendant concedes that the crime for which he is to be sentenced was committed while he was engaged in the commission of and/or an attempt to commit or flight after committing the crime of burglary. This aggravating circumstance has, once again, been proven beyond all doubt, a standard higher than beyond a reasonable doubt.

The Defendant objected to a finding that he was engaged in the commission of and/or attempt to commit or flight after committing the crime of sexual battery. For the purposes of weighing aggravating circumstances and mitigating circumstances only this Court will accept the Defendant's position and not consider the attempted sexual battery which is not conceded by the Defendant. It is not a factor contributing to the Court's finding as to this aggravating circumstance. It simply is not necessary to consider attempted sexual battery in this aggravating circumstance since the Defendant has conceded the burglary.

Once again the Court gives great weight to the aggravating circumstance of the Defendant having committed murder while engaged in the commission of burglary.

3. THE CRIME FOR WHICH THE DEFENDANT IS TO BE SENTENCED WAS ESPECIALLY HEINOUS, ATROCIOUS OR CRUEL.

As previously noted,	was stabbe	d or cut eighte	en times.	She was alive
when all the wounds were inflicted. She wa	is in terror.	She undoubte	dly had a	belief of her
impending doom. Her fear and heightened	level of anx	iety occurred o	over a per	iod of time.
Most important the Defendant told Dr. McKi	inley Chesh	ire that fear in	his victim	was necessary
The Defendant stated that causing delibera	te pain and	fear would inc	rease the	flow of female
bodily fluids which he needed for himself.	The punctur	ing of	10	ing caused her
to literally drown in her own blood. She exp	perienced al	r deprivation.	Each of th	ne eighteen cul
slashes and/or stab wounds caused pain by	y penetratin	g nerve ending	s in	body
The crime of murdering	nced extrer	ne and outrage	ous depra	avity. The
Defendant desired to inflict pain and fear or	n 💮 💮	"to increas	e the flow	of her female
bodily fluids which he needed for himself."	The Defend	iant showed a	n utter ind	ifference to
suffering. He was conscient	nceless and	d pitiless and u	nnecessa	rily torturous to

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She had an absolute full knowledge of her impending death with unimaginable fear and anxiety.

This aggravating circumstance has been proved beyond a reasonable doubt. The Court gives it great weight.

4. THE CRIME FOR WHICH THE DEFENDANT IS TO BE SENTENCED WAS COMMITTED IN A COLD AND CALCULATED AND PREMEDITATED MANNER, AND WITHOUT ANY PRETENSE OF MORAL OR LEGAL JUSTIFICATION.

The facts cited above that go to prove this aggravating circumstance beyond a reasonable doubt are the Defendant's overall plan and design in committing this crime in such a cunning way. The crime was committed at night. The Defendant stalked the victim. He came to the home where she was babysitting. He entered the home, observed her and left. He came back approximately two hours later removing his clothing and leaving them outside. He entered with socks on his hands in only a pair of nylon shorts. He did not take any property from the home stating that he did not want to get caught with the property. He showered to wash the blood away. He concocted an alibi by turning back clocks. He dragged feet from one part of the house to another. He carefully closed the door to the children's room. face. He positioned her naked body spreadeagle on the floor of the master bedroom. He stabbed and cut seems eighteen times. Finally, there was no pretense of moral justification. His pretense of moral justification came ten years later in 1994 after he had contacted the Defendant's psychiatric expert. The Defendant acted cleverly in a cool and calm manner. He carefully planned or pre-arranged this murder and had all the indicators of a heightened level of premeditation as set forth in the facts above since for all he was still alive when all these events took place. knew at the time,

This aggravating circumstance has been proven beyond a reasonable doubt and the Court gives it great weight.

The Court having found several aggravating circumstances exist in this case by proof beyond all doubt and/or beyond a reasonable doubt, the Court must determine whether mitigating circumstances exist and whether they outweigh the aggravating circumstances.

The Defendant has presented the following mitigating circumstances:

1. THE CRIME FOR WHICH THE DEFENDANT IS TO BE SENTENCED WAS COMMITTED WHILE HE WAS UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF EXTREME MENTAL OR EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCE. 0.04.055

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Clearly the evidence shows that the Defendant was, and is, mentally ill. The Court is reasonably convinced that this mitigating circumstance exists. Even the State's experts have conceded that the Defendant has a sexual disorder, has an antisocial personality and is not mentally healthy.

Being born to an alcoholic mother, watching one's hopelessly alcoholic parents brutalize each other, watching and hearing one's mother raped, having an alcoholic father abuse a half-brother by keeping him locked in the basement for years, being sexually abused from age nine and living on a steady diet of sexual and physical abuse from childhood through teen years, losing ones only two caretakers to cancer and suicide during one's formative years, and then spending teenage years in an equally abusive home or environment where adult role models are the chief abusers, is it any wonder that the Defendant is, and has been, mentally sick? It is true that some individuals can adjust adequately in their adulthood with much counseling, therapy and some supportive help and live relatively normal lives. Duane Owen had no help, therapy or counseling and could never be expected to live a normal life. The very place he was sent to for the purpose of protecting him and getting him such help, made matters even worse and irreversible.

The Court having found this mitigating circumstance to exist has given it considerable weight.

2. THE CAPACITY OF THE DEFENDANT TO APPRECIATE THE CRIMINALITY OF HIS CONDUCT OR TO CONFORM HIS CONDUCT TO THE REQUIREMENT OF THE LAW WAS SUBSTANTIALLY IMPAIRED.

The Defendant undoubtedly was able to appreciate the criminality of his conduct. He wore socks over his hands. He showered to wash away blood. He did not take any property so as not to be caught with property belonging to the victim. He fled from the scene of his crime. I have no question that the Defendant knew of the criminality of his conduct.

However, whether the Defendant was able to conform his conduct to the requirements of law is another issue. The Defendant did know that he had a serious problem. Law enforcement knew it as early as 1982 and the Defendant admitted to it. Nevertheless, without treatment or any type of serious behavior modification, the Defendant went on to his escalating criminal activity which ultimately culminated in the murders of and and the Defendant simply was unable to stop. In essence, he became a serial killer and, if given the opportunity, would do it again as testified to by his own expert. Dr. Berlin.

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This mitigating circumstance regarding his ability to conform his conduct to the requirements of law has been established and I am reasonably convinced that it exists and that the Defendant had, and still has, that substantial impairment.

I have given this mitigating circumstance some weight.

3. THE AGE OF THE DEFENDANT AT THE TIME OF THE CRIME.

The Defendant was twenty-three years old physically and chronologically at the time of the murder of the murder of the defense argues that the evidence shows he was younger than the fourteen-year-old victim in this case psychiatrically and/or psychologically at the time of the crimes, i.e., eleven years old at the time. There was some expert testimony and documentation for this finding. I am reasonably convinced that record evidence exists to support the Defendant's contention. However, I give it only little weight.

4. THE DEFENDANT WAS RAISED BY ALCOHOLIC PARENTS.

As set forth above the Court is reasonably convinced this fact is true and has given it some weight.

5. THE DEFENDANT WAS RAISED IN AN ENVIRONMENT OF SEXUAL AND PHYSICAL VIOLENCE.

As set forth above the Court is reasonably convinced that this fact is true and has given it some weight.

6. THE DEFENDANT WAS A VICTIM OF PHYSICAL AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE.

As set forth above, the Court is reasonably convinced that this fact exists and has given it some weight.

7. THE DEFENDANT WAS ABANDONED BY THE DEATH OF HIS PARENTS AND ABANDONED BY OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS.

As set forth above the Court is reasonably convinced that this fact exists and has given it some weight.

8. THE DEFENDANT HAS A MENTAL DISTURBANCE AND HIS ABILITY TO CONFORM HIS CONDUCT TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF LAW WAS IMPAIRED.

As set forth above the Court is reasonably convinced that this fact is true and has given it some weight.

9. THE DEFENDANT HAS BEEN COOPERATIVE IN COURT AND NOT DISRUPTIVE DURING COURT PROCEEDINGS.

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The Defendant has made numerous Court appearances over the course of fifteen years and has not been disruptive in the Courtroom. The Court has determined that there was no need for special restraints for the Defendant in the Courtroom.

The Court is reasonably convinced that this fact exists but gives it little weight.

10. THE DEFENDANT HAS MADE A GOOD ADJUSTMENT TO INCARCERATION AND WILL BE A GOOD PRISONER.

The Defendant has been incarcerated for almost fifteen years in this case in the Palm Beach County Jail and on Death Row at Florida State Prison. He has lived quietly in prison and/or jail and has caused no problems with other inmates.

The Court is reasonably convinced that this fact is true but has given it little weight.

11. THE OFFENSE FOR WHICH THE DEFENDANT IS TO BE SENTENCED HAPPENED FIFTEEN YEARS AGO.

The crime for which the Defendant is to be sentenced happened in March, 1984. It is now March, 1999. The case was tried in 1986 and the Defendant was sentenced to death and was afforded a mandatory appeal to the Florida Supreme Court. The conviction was reversed and, thereafter, a further series of appeals kept this case in the appellate courts for many years. Therefore, the Defendant argues that there would be no deterrent value to a death sentence at this point in time. The Court is reasonably convinced that it is fifteen years since the crime was committed. The Court gives little weight to the Defendant's arguments about sentencing at this time.

12. THE DEFENDANT WILL NEVER BE RELEASED FROM PRISON IF GIVEN LIFE SENTENCES WITHOUT PAROLE.

The Defendant wishes to be sentenced to life in prison without possibility of parole waiving a sentence of life in prison with the possibility of parole after twenty-five years. He also argues that the life without parole sentence can be imposed consecutively to other life sentences and sentences for periods of years. Therefore, the Defendant argues that spending his entire life in prison is sufficient punishment and a mitigator.

The Court has considered the Defendant's arguments and proffered waiver but rejects them and gives minimal weight to consideration of a life sentence as a mitigator.

13. THE DEFENDANT HAS COOPERATED WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT.

The Defendant did cooperate with law enforcement by confessing to this offense and

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many others that would not have been solved without his statements. It is true that before the availability of DNA evidence that many of the Defendant's crimes, including this one, would not have been solved without his statement, i.e., cooperation with law enforcement.

The Court is reasonably convinced that this fact exists but has given it little weight.

14. THE DEFENDANT HAS OBTAINED A HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY DIPLOMA.

The Defendant did obtain a high school equivalency diploma which, he argues, is indicative of his intent to try to improve himself.

The Court is reasonably convinced that this fact is true but has given it little weight.

15. THE DEFENDANT RECEIVED A GENERAL DISCHARGE UNDER HONORABLE CONDITIONS FROM THE UNITED STATES ARMY.

The Defendant did receive a general discharge under honorable conditions from the United States Army which, he argues, is indicative of his intent to try to improve himself.

The Court is reasonably convinced that this fact is true but has given it little weight.

16. THE DEFENDANT SAVED A LIFE IN HIS YOUTH.

The Defendant's investigator, H. Sheehan, testified this morning that her investigation revealed that the Defendant was responsible for saving a life when he was a young teenager and that his companions were willing to abandon the person in question to die. The Defendant argues that this is indicative of his general regard for human life.

The Court is reasonably convinced that he may have contributed to saving a human life as a youngster but has given this little weight.

17. THE DEFENDANT SUFFERED FROM ORGANIC BRAIN DAMAGE.

In 1981, the Defendant was injured when a car that had been jacked-up fell on his head. He also may be the product of fetal alcohol syndrome due to the extensive use of alcohol by his mother as described above.

The Court is reasonably convinced that these facts are true and have given them some weight.

18. THE DEFENDANT LIVED IN AN ABUSIVE ORPHANAGE.

As set forth above, the Court is reasonably convinced that this fact is true and has given it some weight.

19. ANY OTHER ASPECT OF THE DEFENDANT'S CHARACTER, RECORD OR BACKGROUND.

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The Court has recited at length the Defendant's character, record, and background and has given those factors weight as set forth above.

20. ANY OTHER CIRCUMSTANCE OF THE OFFENSE.

The Court has considered any and all circumstances of the offense as set forth above, together with all matters of record and has also considered the fact that the Defendant did not harm the two young children who were entrusted to the victim, and care on the evening of her murder. In addition, the Court has also considered the fact that the Defendant did not harm two young children on the evening of her murder. All these factors have been given some weight by this Court.

The Court having considered all aggravating circumstances that have been proven beyond all doubt and/or beyond a reasonable doubt, and having weighed these aggravating circumstances against all aforementioned mitigating circumstances that the Court is reasonably convinced exists in this case, and the Court having given weight as indicated above to these factors, and the jury's recommendation, the Court finds the aggravating circumstances in this case outweigh the mitigating circumstances. In essence, the Defendant, Duane Owen, suffered extreme and inhuman indignities and abuse as a child and teenager. He was without any reasonable support system and was molded into a sick and conscienceless individual.

Nevertheless, he was not so sick that he was unable to become mean, calculating, cruel and evil – a wicked person who now deserves to die. It is therefore

ORDERED AND ADJUDGED that for the crime of first degree murder the Defendant is found and adjudged to be guitty and sentenced to death. For the crime of attempted sexual battery of which the Defendant has been found guilty by the jury in this case, the Defendant is adjudged guilty and is sentenced to fifteen years in the Department of Corrections. For the crime of burglary of which the Defendant has been found guilty by the jury in this case, the Defendant is adjudged guilty and is sentenced to life in prison. The sentences of fifteen years, and life in prison are to run consecutively to each other and consecutively to the death sentence imposed in this case. In addition, the life sentence and fifteen year sentence in this case are to run consecutively to any other sentences previously imposed upon the Defendant for which he is serving time in the Department of Corrections.

The Defendant is hereby advised of his right to appeal the final judgment, sentence, and order of this Court by filing a notice of appeal within thirty (30) days of today's date. In the 0.04060

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event that the Defendant cannot afford counsel, the Court will appoint counsel to represent the Defendant for appellate purposes.

For purely technical and legal reasons, the Defendant is granted credit for any time served.

MAY G-D HAVE MERCY ON YOUR TORTURED SOUR-DUANE OWEN.

DONE AND ORDERED at West Palm Seach, Fidings this 20th day of March, 1999.

HAROLD JEFFREY SOMEN
Judge, Circuit Court (Oriminal Division T)

Copy furnished:

Wayne Chalu, Assistant State Attorney
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