

OCT 1 1980

No. 85, Original

MICHAEL RODAK, JR., CLERK

IN THE  
**Supreme Court of the United States**  
OCTOBER TERM, 1979

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STATE OF TEXAS, *Plaintiff,*

v.

STATE OF OKLAHOMA, *Defendant.*

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**SUPPLEMENTAL BRIEF OF TEXAS POWER & LIGHT  
COMPANY IN SUPPORT OF MOTION FOR LEAVE  
TO INTERVENE IN SUPPORT OF THE  
STATE OF TEXAS**

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HARRY A. POTH, JR.  
PEYTON G. BOWMAN, III  
REID & PRIEST  
1111 19th Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036

FRANK M. RYBURN  
BURFORD & RYBURN  
1511 Fidelity Union Life Bldg.  
Dallas, Texas 75201

*Attorneys for  
Texas Power & Light Company*

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On February 13, 1980, Texas Power & Light Company (TP&L) filed a motion to intervene in support of the State of Texas with a supporting statement in the above entitled original action. On August 29, 1980, the Special Master requested the States of Texas and Oklahoma to file, on or before October 1, 1980, responses to TP&L's motion to intervene and authorized TP&L to file a supplemental brief in support of its intervention. Specifically, the Special Master desired that the filings be directed to the question of "whether or when intervention of a private party is appropriate in original jurisdiction proceedings."

TP&L has a distinct and compelling interest in the outcome of the instant case, and, as an original principal in the underlying litigation, should be granted leave to intervene.

**I. The Supreme Court's Rules Provide for Intervention By a Private Party In an Original Action**

The Supreme Court's Rule 9, "Procedure in Original Actions" provides that the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure "may be taken as a guide to procedure." Rule 24(a)(2) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, provides that intervention:

shall be permitted . . . when the applicant claims an interest relating to the property or transaction which is the subject of the action and he is so situated that the disposition of the action may as a practical matter impair or impede his ability to protect that interest, unless the applicant's interest is adequately represented by existing parties.

**II. The Supreme Court on Several Occasions has Permitted Intervention by a Private Party in Original Actions**

In an earlier proceeding involving the two parties to the instant case, *Oklahoma v. Texas*, 258 U.S. 574 (1922), which also was concerned with the boundary formed by the Red River, numerous parties were permitted to intervene. The Supreme Court held that intervention should be permitted as a matter of fairness because the proceeding was the only one in which the intervenors' rights could be determined (258 U.S. at 581):

Numerous parties have since intervened for the purpose of asserting rights to particular tracts in

the receiver's possession and are seeking to have the same and the net proceeds of the oil and gas taken therefrom surrendered to them. Many of these claims conflict one with another and all are in conflict with the claims of one or more of the three principal litigants.

[1] Under the Constitution (article 3, § 2), our original jurisdiction extends to suits by one state against another and to suits by the United States against a state. In its first stage this was a suit by one state against another. When the United States intervened it became also a suit by the United States against those states. In its enlarged phase it presents in appropriate form the conflicting claims of the two states and the United States to the river bed and calls for their adjudication. The other claims, being for particular tracts and funds in the receiver's possession and exclusively under our control, are brought before us because no other court lawfully can interfere with or disturb that possession or control. It long has been settled that claims to property or funds of which a court has taken possession and control through a receiver or like officer may be dealt with as ancillary to the suit wherein the possession is taken and the control exercised—and this although independent suits to enforce the claims could not be entertained in that court.

In another original action involving a boundary dispute between Texas and Louisiana, the City of Port Arthur, Texas<sup>1</sup> was permitted to intervene "for purposes of protecting its interests in the island claims of the United States". *Texas v. Louisiana*, 426 U.S. 466 (1976).

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<sup>1</sup> While the City arguably is not a "private party", there is no indication it received special treatment because of its status as a city. As indicated, intervention was granted because of its interests in the proceeding.



More recently, on November 14, 1977, the Supreme Court upheld its Special Master in overruling an exception to his Report permitting several individuals to intervene in an original action. *South Dakota v. Nebraska*, 46 U.S.L.W. 3322 (1977). This ruling is particularly pertinent because the proceeding involved a boundary dispute between two states resulting from an alleged accretion caused by river currents which would change the boundary between them. The Special Master permitted the interventions because the interest of the individuals was different from that of the States. (See, "Report of Special Master and Recommendation" attached hereto as an appendix).

### **III. Texas Power & Light Company has a Distinct and Compelling Interest in This Original Action**

This proceeding was commenced by the State of Texas when it filed a Complaint stating that a dispute exists as to the boundary between the State of Texas and the State of Oklahoma in the vicinity of Lake Texoma. The State of Texas specifically asks that the boundary be established as the south cut bank of the Red River as it existed prior to the construction of the Denison Dam which forms Lake Texoma. The State of Oklahoma has responded, stating that "there is an actual controversy involving a conflict of the sovereign interests" of the two States.

This dispute first arose in a proceeding before the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), *Texas Power & Light Company*, Docket No. E-9578, which involves the question of whether TP&L is sub-



ject to FERC's jurisdiction.<sup>2</sup> In that proceeding, the FERC sought to adjudicate the boundary between Texas and Oklahoma at the United States Corps of Engineers' Denison Dam so as to determine if interstate energy entered or left the TP&L system. At issue before the FERC was the question whether construction of the Denison Dam had caused a change in the south bank of the Red River by accretion or by avulsion. After the FERC ordered an evidentiary hearing on that issue, the State of Texas petitioned to intervene in the FERC proceeding and moved to stay that proceeding, so as to allow this Court to make the boundary determination. After this Court accepted the Complaint filed by the State of Texas, the FERC granted the motion for stay of its proceeding insofar as the Texas-Oklahoma boundary was at issue.

The State of Texas is interested in this issue because if there is a determination that the border between Texas and Oklahoma has shifted southward, it would result in a loss of territory by the State of Texas. TP&L has an entirely separate and fundamental interest in this boundary determination.

TP&L purchases under long term contracts with the Southwestern Power Administration, substantial quantities of electric energy generated at the Denison Dam. If there is a finding that the power house at the Denison Dam, which was constructed in the State of Texas, is now located in the State of Oklahoma, then

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<sup>2</sup> Because no interstate energy enters or leaves the TP&L system, it never has been subject to the jurisdiction of FERC. As an intrastate utility, it is regulated by the Public Utility Commission of Texas.

electric energy would cross the Oklahoma-Texas state line and enter TP&L's facilities. This passage of energy in interstate commerce would subject TP&L and all interconnected electric utilities within the State of ~~Oklahoma~~ <sup>Texas</sup> to the jurisdiction of the FERC rather than sole regulation by the Public Utility Commission of Texas.

Such jurisdiction would change the method of operation employed by TP&L and other interconnected utilities and could imperil the reliability of service which these utilities render, as well as placing other burdens on their customers. For many years, the interconnected electric systems in the State of Texas have been constructed to enable them to operate most efficiently and reliably by utilizing facilities and rendering service entirely within the State of Texas. If the FERC were to achieve jurisdiction over TP&L, it could result in a massive disruption of this method of operation with major adverse consequences to TP&L and its customers.

TP&L agrees with the State of Texas that the construction of Denison Dam did not change in any manner the boundary between Texas and Oklahoma. The boundary remains the south cut bank of the Red River as it existed prior to the construction of the Dam.

However, as indicated, the interest of TP&L is quite distinct from that of the State of Texas. The State of Texas is concerned with its territorial integrity and TP&L with its status as a utility regulated by local authorities rather than the FERC. Consequently, TP&L's unique interest in this proceeding may not be adequately represented by existing parties.

**IV. Texas Power & Light Company's Intervention in This Proceeding is Necessary Because It is so Situated that the Disposition of this Action May as a Practical Matter Impair or Impede Its Ability to Protect Its Interest**

As previously indicated, Rule 24 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure provides for intervention by a private party in an original action proceeding where the applicant for intervention "is so situated that the disposition of the action may as a practical matter impair or impede his ability to protect [his] interest" in the proceeding. The Supreme Court is the only forum where boundary disputes between states can be adjudicated. For that reason, the Court, on at least three occasions involving such boundary disputes, has permitted intervention by outside parties where, as here, the applicant for intervention's ability to protect his interest otherwise would be "impair[ed] or impede[d]". These interventions were granted in proceedings in which the fact situations were remarkably similar to that in the instant case.

In *Oklahoma v. Texas*, *supra*, intervention was granted to numerous parties because the Supreme Court recognized that there was no other forum for them to protect their interests. Here, because the Supreme Court is the only forum available to litigate the sole issue in this case, the location of the Texas-Oklahoma state line, TP&L is in the identical position of the intervenors in *Oklahoma v. Texas*. The Supreme Court is the only place in which TP&L can protect its interests.

There is a difference between the cases, however, which lends even greater support to TP&L's interven-

tion. In *Oklahoma v. Texas*, there were “numerous intervenors” which could expand the scope of the proceeding beyond the original action concept. Here, there is only one intervenor with no intention of expanding the scope of the proceeding, and there is no present prospect of additional intervenors.

Both *Texas v. Louisiana* and *South Dakota v. Nebraska*, like the instant proceeding, involve boundary disputes between States. As indicated at page 4, *supra*, the *South Dakota* case is particularly pertinent because the issue of a boundary change resulting from alleged accretion caused by river currents is identical to the issue that underlies the instant case. In the *South Dakota* case the intervenors’ interest involved land title and the States were concerned with sovereignty. Here, the States are concerned with sovereignty and TP&L’s interest involves its jurisdictional status which, if anything, is even further removed from the interest of the States than was the case in the *South Dakota* proceeding.

Finally, it should be pointed out that TP&L was the party below that originally opposed the concept of a change in the State boundary resulting from alleged accretion of the banks of the Red River. TP&L vigorously opposed such a change because it was vital to its particular interest. The State of Texas has brought this action because it correctly submits that only the Supreme Court can adjudicate a State boundary determination. However, equity demands that TP&L, the original party below with a vital interest in the boundary determination, should be permitted to pursue its

interest before the Supreme Court, the only forum capable of making such a determination.

Wherefore, Texas Power & Light Company respectfully submits that there is ample precedent to support its motion for leave to intervene.

Respectfully submitted,

HARRY A. POTH, JR.  
PEYTON G. BOWMAN, III  
REID & PRIEST  
1111 19th Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036

FRANK M. RYBURN  
BURFORD & RYBURN  
1511 Fidelity Union Life Bldg.  
Dallas, Texas 75201

*Attorneys for*  
*Texas Power & Light Company*

October 1, 1980

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I hereby certify that I have this day served copies of this Supplemental Brief on the following:

MARK WELLS WHITE, JR.  
Attorney General of Texas

JOHN W. FAINTER, JR.  
First Assistant

TED L. HARTLEY  
Executive Assistant

DAVID HUGHES  
Assistant Attorney General  
Chief, Energy Division

LEON BARISH  
Assistant Attorney General  
P.O. Box 12548, Capitol Station  
Austin, Texas 78711

*Attorneys for Plaintiff, the State of Texas*

JAN ERIC CARTWRIGHT  
Attorney General of Oklahoma

RICHARD F. BERGER  
Assistant Attorney General  
112 State Capitol Building  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105  
(405) 521-3921

*Attorneys for Defendant, the State of Oklahoma*

PEYTON G. BOWMAN, III  
*Attorney for  
Texas Power & Light Company*

October 1, 1980

## **APPENDIX**





**APPENDIX**

SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

No. 72 Original

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA,  
*Plaintiff,*

v.

STATE OF NEBRASKA,  
*Defendant.*

Received June 10, 1977

**REPORT OF SPECIAL MASTER AND RECOMMENDATION**

In its Order, entered October 4, 1976, the Supreme Court of the United States, on consideration of the Motion for Leave to file a Bill of Complaint, granted the Motion of the plaintiff and allowed the State of Nebraska, defendant, thirty (30) days in which to answer.

On November 22, 1976, Robert J. Foley, Phyllis K. Foley, and Otto Isaak filed a Motion for Leave to Intervene as defendants in intervention and brief in intervention as defendants. In its Order of December 6, 1976, appointing the Honorable Oren Harris, Senior Judge, United States District Court for the Western District of Arkansas, Special Master in the case, the Court referred the Motion of Robert J. Foley, et al., for leave to intervene to the Special Master.

On January 26, 1977, the Special Master advised counsel for the parties that it is well established that procedures governing the exercise of the Supreme Court's original jurisdiction are not invariably governed by common-law precedent or current rules of civil procedure. United States Supreme Court, Rule 9. The parties were further advised that the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, where appro-

priate, may be used as a guide as to procedure which will be utilized by the Special Master.

On the Motion of Robert J. Foley, et al, for leave to intervene as defendants and to file Complaint in Intervention, the Special Master directed counsel for the parties to file briefs with the Special Master. Such briefs have been received from counsel for the parties. Consideration has been given to the contentions of the parties on the Motion and, pursuant to reference of the Motion for Leave to Intervene to the Special Master by the Court, this report is submitted with the recommendation that an Order be entered granting leave to file complaint in intervention and that the intervenors be designated parties defendant in the case.

The stated purpose of the litigation is to determine jurisdiction between the States of South Dakota and Nebraska over an Island situated in the Missouri River, which forms the boundary between the States. The interest of South Dakota and Nebraska is to determine and protect their boundaries and sovereignty over real property within those boundaries against any encroachment.

From the record and briefs filed with the Special Master, there are approximately 994 acres involved in the dispute. The Movants (intervenors) contend they are the owners and in possession of the property to which their remote grantors acquired record title by patent dated March 28, 1865, consisting of approximately 147.65 acres and to which have been added accretions from the Missouri River until the Island and accretions have developed into the land mass presently in dispute. Intervenors contend that the real estate is now and at all times has been located in the State of Nebraska. The intervenors claim that the disposition of the dispute between the States may impair or impede their ability to protect their interest unless adequately represented as intervenors in the litigation.

The intervenors are citizens of South Dakota. The record discloses that there is a probable conflict between the intervenors and the State of South Dakota as to the ownership of the property. It is claimed, and with good reason, that, should South Dakota prevail and it be determined that the Island is located within the State of South Dakota, the State, by its appropriate agency, would claim title to the lands against the Movants.

The primary interest of the State of Nebraska is to protect its boundaries and sovereignty, without regard to the ownership of the property.

The intervenors' claims and defenses as to the major questions of law or fact are in common with those asserted by the defendants and, in the opinion of the Special Master, the exercise of the Court's discretion in permitting intervention will not unduly delay or prejudice the adjudication of the rights of the original parties.

In submitting this report, the Special Master respectfully recommends that the Motion of Robert J. Foley, Phyllis K. Foley, and Otto Isaak for leave to intervene as defendants and to file Complaint in Intervention be granted and that an Order be entered by the Court accordingly.

DATED this 8th day of June, 1977.

/s/ OREN HARRIS  
Oren Harris  
SPECIAL MASTER





