

NOTE: Where it is feasible, a syllabus (headnote) will be released, as is being done in connection with this case, at the time the opinion is issued. The syllabus constitutes no part of the opinion of the Court but has been prepared by the Reporter of Decisions for the convenience of the reader. See *United States v. Detroit Lumber Co.*, 200 U. S. 321, 337.

## SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

### Syllabus

#### MISSISSIPPI ET AL. V. LOUISIANA ET AL.

CERTIORARI TO THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE  
FIFTH CIRCUIT

No. 91-1158. Argued November 9, 1992—Decided December  
14, 1992

After private plaintiffs brought suit against private defendants in the District Court to quiet title to certain land riparian to the Mississippi River, Louisiana intervened in the action and filed a third-party complaint against Mississippi seeking to determine the boundary between the two States in the vicinity of the disputed land. Following this Court's denial of leave to Louisiana to file a bill of complaint against Mississippi in this Court, the District Court found the land in question to be part of Mississippi and quieted title in the plaintiffs. The Court of Appeals reversed.

*Held:* The uncompromising language of 28 U.S.C. §1251(a), which gives to this Court "original and *exclusive* jurisdiction of all controversies between two or more States" (emphasis added), deprived the District Court of jurisdiction over Louisiana's third-party complaint against Mississippi. Though §1251(a) is phrased in terms of a grant of jurisdiction to this Court, the plain meaning of "exclusive" necessarily denies jurisdiction of such cases to any other federal court. See, e. g., *California v. Arizona*, 440 U.S. 59, 63. The District Court's adjudication of a *private* action involving the location of the boundary between two States does not violate §1251(a), since that section speaks in terms of parties, not claims or issues. But the adjudication of such an action would not be binding on the States in any way. Because both of the Courts below intermixed the questions of title to real property and of the state boundary's location, it must be determined on remand whether on this record the claims of title may fairly be decided without additional proceedings in the District Court. Pp.2-6.

937 F.2d 247, reversed and remanded.

REHNQUIST, C. J., delivered the opinion for a unanimous Court.