No. 141 Origina1

> In The
> SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

STATE OF TEXAS
v.

STATE OF NEW MEXICO and STATE OF COLORADO

TRANSCRIPT OF AUGUST 19, 2015
STATUS CONFERENCE BEFORE
A. GREGORY GRIMSAL, ESQ. SPECIAL MASTER

## Appearances:

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For the State of Colorado:

For the United States:

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Proceedings recorded by mechanical stenography using computer-aided transcription software.

## PROCEEDINGS

(August 19, 2015)
THE SPECIAL MASTER: I know Mr. Somach suggested he would like to have a status conference at this point. The floor is open.

MR. SOMACH: Thank you. I wanted to raise this issue with you because it's of, I think, fundamental importance. We filed this action when we did because Texas was suffering real material injury from New Mexico's actions. Unfortunately, those actions continue and the injury continues.

In addition to that, because of the way this complex system works, if we are successful, if the motion is dismissed and then we are successful in litigation, there will be a remediation obligation that would be imposed upon New Mexico. It won't be easy, and it will take a very long time to remediate what has been done and the harm that has been done over a very, very, very long time.

Texas' goal is not to punish New Mexico; it's to correct the situation so we can move forward. And while we have pled damages -- as was the case in Kansas v. Nebraska, which we have talked about earlier -- I note that the Court there itself said that what we care about and what is important is that water flows down rivers, not money.

All that's kind of a predicate to a request that Texas has. It's really a two-part request.

The first is that with respect to your recommendation on this motion to dismiss, you had indicated that your intent was to put out a draft, allow for comments, and then revise the final recommendation. Texas would waive that first draft and would request that the Special Master just move toward the recommendation. After a11, the motions have been briefed. We now have had a fairly extensive argument on those motions. If there are exceptions taken, there will be more briefing before the Supreme Court on that.

As a mechanism to hopefully move us toward resolution and stop both the injury as well as the harm that might befall New Mexico in terms of remediating the injury, we would request, then, that the Special Master simply draft a recommendation and have it submitted to the Court and allow the parties to, in the normal orderly way, take exception to it.

Second -- and I did raise this, I think, in one of our first case management conferences. I'm going to raise it here again as a request. And that is, to the extent your recommendation is to deny the motion to dismiss, we would really request that you establish a date by which New Mexico files its answer and also establish a case management conference in order for us to move forward.

I don't know of any rule that requires all this stuff to be done in a linear fashion. There's no reason why some of this stuff can't be done paralle1. There is no
conceivable way any of this will happen quickly, no matter how fast we attempt to move this. I suspect the trial in this case will be lengthy. It will be complex. And then your final deliberation will be, I assume, lengthy also. Anything we can do certainly at this stage to start putting us in a position to get this case at issue we think would be beneficial not just to Texas, not just to the United States as plaintiffs; but quite frankly, if we prevail, it will be very beneficial also to defendants.

THE SPECIAL MASTER: Thank you, Mr. Somach.
With respect to your first suggestion, I'll take that into consideration. I'11 consult with my folks, and we wil1 figure out what we want to do about that.

With respect to a scheduling order and so forth, I think you will recall that in one of the very first status conferences we had, I put it to the group that it didn't make sense to me at that time for the parties to confer, to come up with a scheduling order at this procedural posture.

I was open then and I'm open now that if the parties want to confer and come to some sort of agreement in that regard, I'm prepared to entertain whatever agreement you are able to come up with. So I think that covers both your issues.

Without in any way indicating what we are going to do on the motion to dismiss, as I suggested back then -- so
my position is consistent today -- if the parties are interested in conferring with each other and coming up with a scheduling order, I'm fine with that. Just let me know, and I'11 accommodate you and provide whatever assistance and guidance you need to do that.

MR. SOMACH: I will certainly pursue that with the other parties. I do just want to mention that once you make your recommendation, we will be in a bit of a different situation, one that is different from where we were then and, quite frankly, even where we are as we sit here today. Once you make that determination and recommendation, then I think that -- also looking at what is the next step and how quickly we can get to the next step is something that, while I can talk to the parties, I would also request that you, as the Special Master, think about moving forward with that.

THE SPECIAL MASTER: Let me confess. At some measure you have been a victim of my trial calendar. I had a one-month trial scheduled for July which settled as to one defendant on the verge of trial, and the other defendants are scheduled to go to trial in November. So I have been attempting to accommodate and move this along as quickly as I possibly could.

MR. SOMACH: I just want to say, as also a practicing lawyer, I actually was almost positive -- and I couldn't understand -- you know, I was thinking what happens if someone had asked me to become a special master. I clearly would have
said yes, in any case. Then I would have to figure out -THE SPECIAL MASTER: I'm not asking for pats on the back.

MR. SOMACH: No. I would simply go: Now what am I going to do with my case load? It didn't go way just because I said yes.

Actually, I certainly have been -- we get that. I get that. A11 I'm saying, though, is that as we move forward now, it seems to me that this is an appropriate stage to start looking to see if some of the stuff could be done in a parallel fashion so we can get ourselves closer to trial in this case, with the assumption, of course, that the motions are denied.

THE SPECIAL MASTER: I express no inclination in that regard one way or the other today. If the parties wish to confer about a scheduling order or anything else, with or without my participation -- although perhaps you really ought to talk to everyone else first.

MR. SOMACH: I will do that.
THE SPECIAL MASTER: Let me know. In the meantime, we have a lot of work to do.

MR. SOMACH: Thank you.
THE SPECIAL MASTER: Is there anything else for the good of the order?

Yes, ma'am.
MS. BOND: Your Honor, I just wanted to state for the
record we support any desire to settle matters as quickly as possible. This is the first we have heard of this request by the State of Texas, so I have not had a chance to confer with clients. I am not prepared to waive the right to file exceptions.

THE SPECIAL MASTER: Believe me, I don't want to see you blindsided or ambushed here. It was I who brought the subject up at our first or second conference because I was desirous of moving the thing along. I also didn't want you to engage in anything that was futile if the motion is going to be granted. So that's how we got where we are.

MS. BOND: Thank you, sir.
THE SPECIAL MASTER: Sure.
Anything else for the good of the order?
I thank everyone. We are adjourned.
THE DEPUTY CLERK: Al1 rise.
(Proceedings adjourned.)

*     *         * 


## CERTIFICATE

I, Toni Doyle Tusa, CCR, FCRR, Official Court
Reporter for the United States District Court, Eastern District of Louisiana, certify that the foregoing is a true and correct transcript, to the best of my ability and understanding, from the record of proceedings in the above-entitled matter.
s/ Toni Doy7e Tusa
Toni Doyle Tusa, CCR, FCRR Official Court Reporter

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