

1978—Pub. L. 95-598, title II, §241(b), Nov. 6, 1978, 92 Stat. 2671, directed the addition of item for chapter 90, “District Courts and Bankruptcy Courts”, which amendment did not become effective pursuant to section 402(b) of Pub. L. 95-598, as amended, set out as an Effective Date note preceding section 101 of Title 11, Bankruptcy.

1976—Pub. L. 94-583, §4(b), Oct. 21, 1976, 90 Stat. 2897, added item for chapter 97.

CHAPTER 81—SUPREME COURT

Sec.	
1251.	Original jurisdiction.
[1252.	Repealed.]
1253.	Direct appeals from decisions of three-judge courts.
1254.	Courts of appeals; certiorari; certified questions.
[1255, 1256.	Repealed.]
1257.	State courts; certiorari.
1258.	Supreme Court of Puerto Rico; certiorari.
1259.	Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces; certiorari.
1260.	Supreme Court of the Virgin Islands; certiorari.

Editorial Notes

AMENDMENTS

2012—Pub. L. 112-226, §2(b), Dec. 28, 2012, 126 Stat. 1606, added item 1260.

1994—Pub. L. 103-337, div. A, title IX, §924(d)(2)(B), Oct. 5, 1994, 108 Stat. 2832, substituted “Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces” for “Court of Military Appeals” in item 1259.

1988—Pub. L. 100-352, §§1, 2(c), 5(a), June 27, 1988, 102 Stat. 662, 663, struck out item 1252 “Direct appeals from decisions invalidating Acts of Congress”, struck out “appeal;” after “certiorari;” in item 1254, and struck out “appeal;” after “State courts;” in item 1257 and after “of Puerto Rico;” in item 1258.

1983—Pub. L. 98-209, §10(a)(2), Dec. 6, 1983, 97 Stat. 1406, added item 1259.

1982—Pub. L. 97-164, title I, §123, Apr. 2, 1982, 96 Stat. 36, struck out item 1255 “Court of Claims; certiorari; certified questions” and item 1256 “Court of Customs and Patent Appeals; certiorari”.

1961—Pub. L. 87-189, §2, Aug. 30, 1961, 75 Stat. 417, added item 1258.

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

DEFINITIONS OF COURTS AND JUDGES

Act June 25, 1948, ch. 646, §32, 62 Stat. 991, as amended by act May 24, 1949, ch. 139, §127, 63 Stat. 107, provided:

“(a) All laws of the United States in force on September 1, 1948, in which reference is made to a ‘circuit court of appeals’; ‘senior circuit judge’; ‘senior district judge’; ‘presiding judge’; ‘chief justice’, except when reference to the Chief Justice of the United States is intended; or ‘justice’, except when used with respect to a justice of the Supreme Court of the United States in his capacity as such or as a circuit justice, are hereby amended by substituting ‘court of appeals’ for ‘circuit court of appeals’; ‘chief judge of the circuit’ for ‘senior circuit judge’; ‘chief judge of the district court’ for ‘senior district judge’; ‘chief judge’ for ‘presiding judge’; ‘chief judge’ for ‘chief justice’, except when reference to the Chief Justice of the United States is intended; and ‘judge’ for ‘justice’, except when the latter term is used with respect to a justice of the Supreme Court of the United States in his capacity as such or as a circuit justice.

“(b) All laws of the United States in force on September 1, 1948, in which reference is made to the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia or to the District Court of the United States for the District of Columbia are amended by substituting ‘United States Dis-

trict Court for the District of Columbia’ for such designations.

“(c) All laws of the United States in force on September 1, 1948, in which reference is made to the ‘Conference of Senior Circuit Judges’, or to the ‘Judicial Conference of Senior Circuit Judges’ are amended by substituting ‘Judicial Conference of the United States’ for such designations.

“(d) This section shall not be construed to amend historical references to courts or judicial offices which have no present or future application to such courts or offices.”

§ 1251. Original jurisdiction

(a) The Supreme Court shall have original and exclusive jurisdiction of all controversies between two or more States.

(b) The Supreme Court shall have original but not exclusive jurisdiction of:

(1) All actions or proceedings to which ambassadors, other public ministers, consuls, or vice consuls of foreign states are parties;

(2) All controversies between the United States and a State;

(3) All actions or proceedings by a State against the citizens of another State or against aliens.

(June 25, 1948, ch. 646, 62 Stat. 927; Pub. L. 95-393, §8(b), Sept. 30, 1978, 92 Stat. 810.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Based on title 28, U.S.C., 1940 ed., §§341, 371(7), (8) (Mar. 3, 1911, ch. 231, §§233, 256, 36 Stat. 1156, 1160; Oct. 6, 1917, ch. 97, §2, 40 Stat. 395; June 10, 1922, ch. 216, §2, 42 Stat. 635).

This section reconciles provisions of sections 341 and 371(7), (8) of title 28, U.S.C., 1940 ed., with Article 3, section 2 and Amendment 11 of the Constitution.

Sections 341 and 371 of title 28, U.S.C., 1940 ed., were not wholly consistent with such constitutional provisions. Said section 341 provided that the Supreme Court should have original jurisdiction of controversies between a State and citizens of other States or aliens, whereas the 11th Amendment prohibits an action in any Federal Court against a State by citizens of another State or aliens.

The original jurisdiction conferred on the Supreme Court by Article 3, section 2, of the Constitution is not exclusive by virtue of that provision alone. Congress may provide for or deny exclusiveness. *Ames v. Kansas*, 1884, 4 S.Ct. 437, 111 U.S. 449, 28 L.Ed. 442; *U.S. v. 4,450.72 Acres of Land, Clearwater County, State of Minnesota*, D.C. Minn., 1939, 27 F.Supp. 167, affirmed 125 F.2d 636.

Sections 341 and 371 of title 28, U.S.C., 1940 ed., did not confer expressly exclusive jurisdiction on the Supreme Court in civil cases between States, *Louisiana v. Texas*, 1899, 20 S.Ct. 251, 176 U.S. 1, 44 L.Ed. 347, as has been provided in subsection (a)(1) of the revised section. The language at the beginning of said section 341, for which said subsection has been substituted, was ambiguous and made it appear that an action by a State against the United States would be within the exclusive jurisdiction of the Supreme Court. However, in *U.S. v. Louisiana*, 1887, 8 S.Ct. 17, 123 U.S. 32, 31 L.Ed. 69, the Supreme Court, in a case appealed from the Court of Claims, held to the contrary.

So, also, in actions by the United States to condemn lands of a State or to enforce penalties for violation of a Federal statute against a State-owned utility, the United States district courts have jurisdiction. See *United States v. State of Utah*, 1931, 51 S.Ct. 438, 283 U.S. 64, 75 L.Ed. 844; *United States v. 4,450.72 Acres of Land, Clearwater County, State of Minnesota*, D.C. Minn. 1939, 27 F.Supp. 167, affirmed 125 F.2d 636; *United States v. State of California*, 1936, 56 S.Ct. 421, 297 U.S. 175, 80 L.Ed. 567.

The intent of section 371(7), (8) of title 28, U.S.C., 1940 ed., that the jurisdiction of the courts of the United

States should be exclusive of the courts of the States in controversies to which a State is a party, and suits against ambassadors, public ministers, consuls and vice consuls, is preserved and clarified by this section and section 1351 of this title.

The revised section preserves existing law with reference to foreign ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls. Under subsection (a)(2) the Supreme Court has exclusive jurisdiction of actions or proceedings against the ambassadors or public ministers of other nations.

Under subsection (b)(1) the Supreme Court has original but not exclusive jurisdiction of actions or proceedings brought by such ambassadors or other public ministers or to which consuls or vice consuls of other nations are parties.

Section 1351 of this title gives to United States district courts, exclusive of the courts of the States, jurisdiction of civil actions against such consuls and vice consuls.

This section and said section 1351 of this title have no application to ambassadors, public ministers, consuls or vice consuls representing the United States. See *Milward v. McSaul*, D.C.S.D.N.Y. 1846, 17 Fed.Cas.No. 9,623 and *State of Ohio ex rel. Popovici v. Alger*, 1930, 50 S.Ct. 154, 280 U.S. 379, 74 L.Ed. 489.

Changes were made in phraseology.

Editorial Notes

AMENDMENTS

1978—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 95-393, §8(b)(1), designated introductory provision of subsec. (a) and (a)(1) as (a), and struck out “(2) All actions or proceedings against ambassadors or other public ministers of foreign states or their domestics or domestic servants, not inconsistent with the law of nations”.

Subsec. (b)(1). Pub. L. 95-393, §8(b)(2), substituted “to which ambassadors, other public ministers, consuls, or” for “brought by ambassadors or other public ministers of foreign states or to which consuls or”.

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 1978 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 95-393 effective at the end of the ninety-day period beginning on Sept. 30, 1978, see section 9 of Pub. L. 95-393, set out as an Effective Date note under section 254a of Title 22, Foreign Relations and Intercourse.

STATUTES GOVERNING WRITS OF ERROR TO APPLY TO APPEALS

Act Jan. 31, 1928, ch. 14, §2, 45 Stat. 54, amended Apr. 26, 1928, ch. 440, 45 Stat. 466; June 25, 1948, ch. 646, §23, 62 Stat. 990, provided that “All Acts of Congress referring to writs of error shall be construed as amended to the extent necessary to substitute appeal for writ of error.” See also, notes preceding section 1 of this title.

[§ 1252. Repealed. Pub. L. 100-352, §1, June 27, 1988, 102 Stat. 662]

Section, acts June 25, 1948, ch. 646, 62 Stat. 928; Oct. 31, 1951, ch. 655, §47, 65 Stat. 726; July 7, 1958, Pub. L. 85-508, §12(e), (f), 72 Stat. 348; Mar. 18, 1959, Pub. L. 86-3, §14(a), 73 Stat. 10, provided for direct appeals to Supreme Court from decisions invalidating Acts of Congress.

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

EFFECTIVE DATE OF REPEAL

Repeal effective ninety days after June 27, 1988, except that such repeal not to apply to cases pending in Supreme Court on such effective date or affect right to review or manner of reviewing judgment or decree of court which was entered into before such effective date,

see section 7 of Pub. L. 100-352, set out as a note under section 1254 of this title.

§ 1253. Direct appeals from decisions of three-judge courts

Except as otherwise provided by law, any party may appeal to the Supreme Court from an order granting or denying, after notice and hearing, an interlocutory or permanent injunction in any civil action, suit or proceeding required by any Act of Congress to be heard and determined by a district court of three judges.

(June 25, 1948, ch. 646, 62 Stat. 928.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

Based on title 28, U.S.C., 1940 ed., §§47, 47a, 380 and 380a (Mar. 3, 1911, ch. 231, §§210, 266, 36 Stat. 1150, 1162; Mar. 4, 1913, ch. 160, 37 Stat. 1013; Oct. 22, 1913, ch. 32, 38, Stat. 220; Feb. 13, 1925, ch. 229, §1, 43 Stat. 938; Aug. 24, 1937, ch. 754, §3, 50 Stat. 752).

This section consolidates the provisions of sections 47, 47a, 380, and 380a of title 28, U.S.C., 1940 ed., relating to direct appeals from decisions of three-judge courts involving orders of the Interstate Commerce Commission or holding State or Federal laws repugnant to the Constitution of the United States.

For distribution of other provisions of the sections on which this revised section is based, see Distribution Table.

The language in section 380 of title 28, U.S.C., 1940 ed., referring to restraining the enforcement or execution of an order made by an administrative board or a State officer was omitted as covered by this revised section and section 2281 of this title.

Words in section 380a of title 28, U.S.C., 1940 ed., “This section shall not be construed to be in derogation of any right of direct appeal to the Supreme Court of the United States under existing provisions of law,” were omitted as unnecessary.

Section 217 of title 7, U.S.C., 1940 ed., Agriculture, provides for a three-judge court in proceedings to suspend or restrain the enforcement of orders of the Secretary of Agriculture under the Packers and Stockyards Act of 1921.

The final proviso of section 502 of title 33, U.S.C., 1940 ed., Navigation and Navigable Waters, for direct appeal in certain criminal cases for failure to alter bridges obstructing navigation, is recommended for express repeal in view of its implied repeal by section 345 of title 28, U.S.C., 1940 ed. (See *U.S. v. Belt*, 1943, 63 S.Ct. 1278, 319 U.S. 521, 87 L.Ed. 1559. See reviser's note under section 1252 of this title.)

Section 28 of title 15, U.S.C., 1940 ed., Commerce and Trade, and section 44 of title 49, U.S.C., 1940 ed., Transportation, are identical and provide for convening of a three-judge court to hear and determine civil cases arising under the Sherman anti-trust law and the Interstate Commerce Act, respectively, wherein the United States is plaintiff and when the Attorney General deems such cases of general public importance.

Section 401(d) of title 47, U.S.C., 1940 ed., Telegraphs, Telephones, and Radiotelegraphs, made the provisions of sections 28 and 29 of title 15, U.S.C., 1940 ed., Commerce and Trade, sections 44 and 45 of title 49, U.S.C., 1940 ed., Transportation, and section 345(1) of title 28, U.S.C., 1940 ed., relating to three-judge courts and direct appeals, applicable to orders of the Federal Communications Commission enforcing the Communications Act of 1934.

§ 1254. Courts of appeals; certiorari; certified questions

Cases in the courts of appeals may be reviewed by the Supreme Court by the following methods:

(1) By writ of certiorari granted upon the petition of any party to any civil or criminal