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U.S. Department of Justice
Immigration and Naturalization Service

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OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS
425 Eye Street N.W.
ULLB, 3rd Floor
Washington, D.C. 20536

[Redacted]

FILE: [Redacted]

Office: Miami

Date: 25 JUL 2002

IN RE: Applicant: [Redacted]

APPLICATION: Application for Permanent Residence Pursuant to Section 1 of the Cuban Adjustment Act of November 2, 1966 (P.L. 89-732)

IN BEHALF OF APPLICANT:

[Redacted]

Public Copy

INSTRUCTIONS:

This is the decision in your case. All documents have been returned to the office which originally decided your case. Any further inquiry must be made to that office.

If you believe the law was inappropriately applied or the analysis used in reaching the decision was inconsistent with the information provided or with precedent decisions, you may file a motion to reconsider. Such a motion must state the reasons for reconsideration and be supported by any pertinent precedent decisions. Any motion to reconsider must be filed within 30 days of the decision that the motion seeks to reconsider, as required under 8 C.F.R. 103.5(a)(1)(i).

If you have new or additional information which you wish to have considered, you may file a motion to reopen. Such a motion must state the new facts to be proved at the reopened proceeding and be supported by affidavits or other documentary evidence. Any motion to reopen must be filed within 30 days of the decision that the motion seeks to reopen, except that failure to file before this period expires may be excused in the discretion of the Service where it is demonstrated that the delay was reasonable and beyond the control of the applicant or petitioner. Id.

Any motion must be filed with the office which originally decided your case along with a fee of \$110 as required under 8 C.F.R. 103.7.

FOR THE ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER,
EXAMINATIONS

Robert P. Wiemann
Robert P. Wiemann, Director
Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The application was denied by the District Director, Miami, Florida, who certified his decision to the Associate Commissioner, Examinations, for review. The district director's decision will be affirmed.

The applicant is a citizen of Venezuela who filed this application for adjustment of status to that of a lawful permanent resident under section 1 of the Cuban Adjustment Act of November 2, 1966. This Act provides, in pertinent part:

[T]he status of any alien who is a native or citizen of Cuba and who has been inspected and admitted or paroled into the United States subsequent to January 1, 1959 and has been physically present in the United States for at least one year, may be adjusted by the Attorney General, in his discretion and under such regulations as he may prescribe, to that of an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence if the alien makes an application for such adjustment, and the alien is eligible to receive an immigrant visa and is admissible to the United States for permanent residence.

The district director determined that the applicant was not eligible for adjustment of status under section 1 of the Cuban Adjustment Act because she failed to establish that she is a citizen of Cuba. The district director, therefore, denied the application.

In response to the notice of certification, counsel asserts that although the applicant was born in Venezuela, she is a Cuban citizen from birth because she is the daughter of Cuban-born parents. She further asserts that the applicant is a citizen of Cuba pursuant to Article 29 of the Cuban Constitution, and she has been issued a Cuban birth certificate not only by the Cuban Embassy in Venezuela, but also by the Cuban Ministry of Justice in Havana, Cuba. Counsel contends that the district director has erred as a matter of law when holding that two birth certificates from the Government of Cuba are not enough proof to establish that the applicant is a Cuban citizen.

The record reflects that the applicant was born on May 7, 1962, in Caracas, Venezuela, to a Cuban father and a Cuban mother. The applicant last entered the United States with her Venezuelan passport on October 9, 1994, as a B-2 visitor.

The applicant subsequently obtained a Cuban birth certificate issued in Cuba on April 18, 2000, and a Cuban birth certificate issued by the Cuban Embassy in Venezuela on August 7, 1996. The district director determined that the birth certificate is not acceptable evidence of Cuban citizenship as it does not state that the applicant is a citizen of Cuba. He further determined that the

applicant had not provided any official document from the appropriate Cuban authorities, such as a passport or certificate of citizenship, recognizing her as a Cuban citizen.

Article 29 of the Constitution of the Republic of Cuba reads, in part:

Those considered Cuban citizens by birth are:

(c) those born outside of Cuba of Cuban father or mother, provided that they comply with the formalities of the law.

Article 32 of the Constitution of the Republic of Cuba reads, in part:

Those who lose their Cuban citizenship:

(ch) are those naturalized Cubans who reside in the country of their birth, unless they express and present themselves every three (3) years before the corresponding consular authority, their wish to preserve their Cuban citizenship.

(d) are those naturalized citizens who would accept a dual citizenship.

Guidance received from the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., in a similar case regarding the citizenship of an individual born in Venezuela to Cuban parents found that:

Under Venezuelan law (Constitucion de la Republica de Venezuela), those born on Venezuelan territory are Venezuelans by birth. One of the grounds for losing Venezuelan citizenship by birth is the option for or voluntary adoption of another citizenship.

Therefore, according to the National Constitution, Venezuelan citizenship by birth may be lost only if the Venezuelan native voluntarily adopts another nationality. Venezuela does not allow dual citizenship.

....The mere fact of obtaining a Cuban birth certificate does not amount to an express act of relinquishing the Venezuelan citizenship, since the person in this instance has been living as a Venezuelan citizen holding and using only Venezuelan documents.

Therefore, even though under Cuban law he might be considered to be a Cuban citizen by application of the principle of "jus sanguinis"--that is because his parents

were native Cubans--under Venezuelan law he is still a Venezuelan citizen since Venezuela does not recognize dual citizenship and according to the information provided, the individual in question has not relinquished his Venezuelan citizenship. It may then be concluded that in this case the individual is still Venezuelan unless he can prove that he has expressly given up his right thereto.

The record, as presently constituted, is devoid of evidence to prove that the applicant has expressly given up her right to Venezuelan citizenship. Nor is there evidence that the applicant is a naturalized Cuban citizen and therefore falls under Article 32. In fact, the applicant holds a Venezuelan passport in which it is stated that she is a Venezuelan citizen. Thus, as stated above, the applicant is a citizen of Venezuela and does not meet the requirements of section 1 of the Act.

Pursuant to section 291 of the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. 1361, the burden of proof is upon the applicant to establish that she is eligible for adjustment of status. She has failed to meet that burden.

The applicant is ineligible for adjustment of status to permanent resident pursuant to section 1 of the Act of November 2, 1966. The decision of the district director to deny the application will be affirmed.

ORDER: The district director's decision is affirmed.