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U.S. Department of Homeland Security
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Washington, DC 20529

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

PUBLIC COPY

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[redacted]

DEC 30 2004

FILE: [redacted] Office: CALIFORNIA SERVICE CENTER Date:

IN RE: Applicant: [redacted]

APPLICATION: Application for Permission to Reapply for Admission into the United States after Deportation or Removal under section 212(a)(9)(A)(iii) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(9)(A)(iii)

ON BEHALF OF APPLICANT:

[redacted]

INSTRUCTIONS:

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

Robert P. Wiemann, Director
Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The application for permission to reapply for admission after removal was denied by the Director, California Service Center, and is now before the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO) on appeal. The appeal will be dismissed.

The applicant is a native and citizen of Mexico who entered the United States without inspection on or about February 25, 1995. On August 17, 1995, the applicant was ordered deported by an Immigration Judge pursuant to section 241(a)(1)(B) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act). On January 9, 2001, the applicant appeared at a Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS) office. The applicant admitted having reentered the United States in September 1995 without a lawful admission or parole, and without permission to reapply for admission in violation of section 276 the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1326. On the same day his prior deportation order was reinstated pursuant to section 241(a)(5) of the Act and the applicant was removed to Mexico. The applicant is inadmissible under § 212(a)(9)(A)(ii) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(9)(A)(ii) and seeks permission to reapply for admission into the United States under section 212(a)(9)(A)(iii) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. 1182(a)(9)(A)(iii) in order to travel to the United States to reside with his U.S. citizen spouse.

The Director determined that section 241(a)(5) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. 1231(a)(5) applies in this matter and the applicant is not eligible and may not apply for any relief and denied the Application for Permission to Reapply for Admission After Removal (Form I-212) accordingly. *See Director Decision* dated June 2, 2004.

On appeal, counsel states that the Director misinterpreted or misapplied section 241(a)(5) of the Act. Counsel states that section 241(a)(5) of the Act applies only to those individuals who are still in the United States and are seeking relief under the Act. In the present case the applicant has been removed from the United States and has not reentered after his removal.

Section 241(a) detention, release, and removal or aliens ordered removed.-

> (5) reinstatement of removal orders against aliens illegally reentering.- if the attorney General finds that an alien has reentered the United States illegally after having been removed or having departed voluntarily under an order of removal, the prior order of removal is reinstated from its original date and is not subject to being reopened or reviewed, the alien is not eligible and may not apply for any relief under this Act [chapter], and the alien shall be removed under the prior order at any time after reentry.

The AAO concurs with counsel's argument on appeal and finds that the Director erred in finding that section 241(a)(5) of the Act applies in this case. A straight reading of the statute leads to the interpretation as noted by counsel: it applies to aliens illegally present in the United States after removal. Once the order of removal has been reinstated and the alien removed, he or she is no longer subject to this provision. The record of proceedings does not reflect that the applicant re-entered the United States after the reinstatement of his removal order and his second removal on January 9, 2001. The applicant states that he lives in Mexico and there is no documentary evidence to show otherwise.

Although the applicant is not subject to section 212(a)(5) of the Act, he is clearly inadmissible under section 212(a)(9)(A) of the Act.

Section 212(a)(9)(A) of the Act states in pertinent part:

(A) Certain aliens previously removed.-

. . . .

(ii) Other aliens.-Any alien not described in clause (i) who-

(I) has been ordered removed under section 240 or any other provision of law . . . [and who seeks admission within 10 years of the date of such alien's departure or removal (or within 20 years of such date in the case of a second or subsequent removal or at any time in the case of an alien convicted of an aggravated felony) is inadmissible.]

(iii) Exception.-Clauses (i) and (ii) shall not apply to an alien seeking admission within a period if, prior to the date of the alien's reembarkation at a place outside the United States or attempt to be admitted from foreign contiguous territory, the Attorney General [now Secretary, Homeland Security, "Secretary"] has consented to the alien's reapplying for admission.

A review of the 1996 IIRIRA amendments to the Act and prior statutes and case law regarding permission to reapply for admission, reflects that Congress has (1) increased the bar to admissibility and the waiting period from 5 to 10 years in most instances and to 20 years for others, (2) has added a bar to admissibility for aliens who are unlawfully present in the United States, and (3) has imposed a permanent bar to admission for aliens who have been ordered removed and who subsequently enter or attempt to enter the United States without being lawfully admitted. It is concluded that Congress has placed a high priority on reducing and/or stopping aliens from overstaying their authorized period of stay and/or from being present in the United States without a lawful admission or parole.

On appeal counsel asserts that since the applicant is not subject to section 241(a)(5) of the Act his Form I-212 should be approved so he would be able to resume his role as husband and the head and nucleus of the family.

In *Matter of Tin,* 14 I&N Dec. 371 (Reg. Comm. 1973), the Regional Commissioner listed the following factors to be considered in the adjudication of a Form I-212 Application for Permission to Reapply After Deportation:

> The basis of deportation; the recency of the deportation; the length of legal residence in the U.S.; the applicant's moral character and his respect for law and order; evidence of reformation and rehabilitation; the applicant's family responsibilities; and hardship to if the applicant were not allowed to return to the U.S.

Matter of Lee, 17 I&N Dec. 275 (Comm. 1978) further held that a record of immigration violations, standing alone, did not conclusively support a finding of a lack of good moral character. *Matter of Lee* at 278. *Lee* additionally held that,

> [T]he recency of deportation can only be considered when there is a finding of poor moral character based on moral turpitude in the conduct and attitude of a person which evinces a callous conscience [toward the violation of immigration laws] . . . . In all other instances

> when the cause of deportation has been removed and the person now appears eligible for issuance of a visa, the time factor should not be considered. *Id.*

In *Tin,* the Regional Commissioner noted that the applicant had gained an equity (job experience) while being unlawfully present in the U.S. The Regional Commissioner then stated that the alien had obtained an advantage over aliens seeking visa issuance abroad or who abide by the terms of their admission while in this country, and he concluded that approval of an application for permission to reapply for admission would be a condonation of the alien's acts and could encourage others to enter without being admitted to work in the United States unlawfully. *Id.*

The court held in *Garcia–Lopes v. INS*, 923 F.2d 72 (7th Cir. 1991), that less weight is given to equities acquired after a deportation order has been entered. Further, the equity of a marriage and the weight given to any hardship to the spouse is diminished if the parties married after the commencement of deportation proceedings, with knowledge that the alien might be deported. It is also noted that the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, in *Carnalla-Nunoz v.INS,* 627 F.2d 1004 (9th Cir. 1980), held that an after-acquired equity, referred to as an after-acquired family tie in *Matter of Tijam*, 22 I&N Dec. 408 (BIA 1998) need not be accorded great weight by the district director in considering discretionary weight. Moreover, in *Ghassan v. INS,* 972 F.2d 631, 634-35 (5th Cir. 1992), the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals held that giving diminished weight to hardship faced by a spouse who entered into a marriage with knowledge of the alien's possible deportation was proper.

The applicant in the present matter married his U.S. citizen spouse on July 7, 1999, approximately four years after the applicant's deportation and after his illegal reentry into the United States. He now seeks relief based on that after-acquired equity.

The favorable factors in this matter are the applicant's family tie to a U.S. citizen, his spouse and an apparently clean criminal record.

The unfavorable factors in this matter include the applicant's initial illegal entry into the United States on or about February 25, 1995, his illegal re-entry subsequent to his deportation, his employment without authorization and his lengthy presence in the United States without a lawful admission or parole. The Commissioner stated in *Matter of Lee, supra,* that residence in the United States could be considered a positive factor only where that residence is pursuant to a legal admission or adjustment of status as a permanent resident. To reward a person for remaining in the United States in violation of law would seriously threaten the structure of all laws pertaining to immigration.

The applicant's actions in this matter cannot be condoned. His equity, marriage to a U.S. citizen, gained after his illegal re-entry subsequent to his deportation, can be given only minimal weight. The applicant has not established by supporting evidence that the favorable factors outweigh the unfavorable ones.

Section 291 of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1361, provides that the burden of proof is upon the applicant to establish that he is eligible for the benefit sought. After a careful review of the record, it is concluded that the applicant has failed to establish that a favorable exercise of the Secretary's discretion is warranted. Accordingly, the appeal will be dismissed.

ORDER: The appeal is dismissed.