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U.S. Department of Homeland Security
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U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

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FILE:



Office: CALIFORNIA SERVICE CENTER

Date: **NOV 06 2006**

IN RE:

Applicant:



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:

SELF-REPRESENTED

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, Chief
Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The Application for Permission to Reapply for Admission into the United States after Deportation or Removal (Form I-212) 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 Honduras who entered the United States without a lawful admission or parole on or about February 3, 1989. On November 27, 1992, the applicant filed a Request for Asylum in the United States (Form I-589) with the Immigration and Naturalization Service (now Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS)). On April 20, 1993, the applicant was interviewed for asylum status. On May 9, 1994, her Form I-589 was denied and an Order to Show Cause (OSC) for a hearing before an immigration judge was issued. On August 28, 1995, an immigration judge found the applicant deportable pursuant to section 241(a)(1)(B) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act) for having entered the United States without inspection and granted her voluntary departure until February 28, 1996, in lieu of deportation. The applicant failed to surrender for removal or depart from the United States on or before February 28, 1996. The applicant's failure to depart the United States on or before February 28, 1996, changed the voluntary departure order to an order of deportation. On May 3, 1996, a Warrant of Removal/Deportation (Form I-205) was issued, and a Notice to Deportable Alien (Form I-166) was forwarded to the applicant requesting that she appear at the Los Angeles District Office in order to be removed from the United States. The applicant failed to surrender for removal or depart from the United States. The record reflects that on August 15, 2003, the applicant was convicted of the offense of petty theft in violation of section 484(a) of the California Penal Code. The applicant applied for and received Temporary Protected Status (TPS), and was issued Employment Authorization Cards (EAD) from 1993 to 1995, and from 1999 to date. The applicant is the beneficiary of an approved Petition for Alien Relative (Form I-130) filed by her Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR) spouse. The applicant is inadmissible pursuant to section 212(a)(9)(A)(ii) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(9)(A)(ii). She 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 remain in the United States to reside with her LPR spouse and U.S. citizen children.

The Director determined that the unfavorable factors in the applicant's case outweighed the favorable factors, and denied the Form I-212 accordingly. *See Director's Decision* dated December 8, 2005.

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, or

(II) departed the United States while an order of removal was outstanding, and 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 aliens 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 Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (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 in 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 deterring aliens from overstaying their authorized period of stay and from being present in the United States without lawful admission or parole.

On appeal, the applicant submits an affidavit and copies of her medical history. In her affidavit, the applicant states that did not knowingly nor intentionally violate the law in 2003 but did so because of her "immaturity and lack of knowledge, guidance and understating of the law." In addition, she states that separation from her family would not only cause extreme hardship to her spouse, her children and herself, but would have an economic, psychological and emotional impact as well. Additionally, the applicant states that she needs constant medical treatment because of her medical condition, which she will not be able to receive if she is removed from the United States. Finally, she states that she has remorse for all her mistakes and has been obedient and respectful of the law and constitution of the United States. The applicant submits medical records showing that she suffers from "hydrocephalus." The applicant's doctor submits a letter which states: "I believe that moving to another country, away from the facilities and specialists available here would be detrimental to the patient's health and would endanger her life."

Unlike sections 212(g), (h), and (i) of the Act (which relate to waivers of inadmissibility for prospective immigrants), section 212(a)(9)(A)(iii) of the Act does not specify hardship threshold requirements which must be met. An applicant for permission to reapply for admission into the United States after deportation or removal need not establish that a particular level of hardship would result to a qualifying family member if the application were denied. The AAO will consider the hardship to the applicant and her family, but it will be just one of the determining factors.

There is no independent corroboration that shows that the applicant's medical condition cannot be treated in any other country except the United States nor that her life would be jeopardized if she were removed to Honduras. In addition, it has not been shown that adequate medical facilities are unavailable in Honduras.

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 for deportation; recency of deportation; length of residence in the United States; applicant's moral character; his respect for law and order; evidence of reformation and rehabilitation; family responsibilities; any inadmissibility under other sections of law; hardship involved to himself and others; and the need for his services in the United States.

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 condone the alien's acts and could encourage others to enter the United States to work unlawfully. *Id.*

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.*

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 her LPR spouse on December 14, 1994, over seven months after she was placed in deportation proceedings. The applicant's spouse should reasonably have been aware, at the time of their marriage, of the applicant's immigration violations and the possibility of her being removed. She now seeks relief based on that after-acquired equity. Therefore, hardship to her spouse will not be accorded great weight.

The AAO finds that the favorable factors in this case are the applicant's family ties in the United States, her LPR spouse and U.S. citizen children, an approved Form I-130, and the prospect of general hardship to herself and her family.

The AAO finds that the unfavorable factors in this case include the applicant's initial illegal entry into the United States, her failure to depart the United States after she was granted voluntary departure and after her voluntary departure order became a final order of deportation, her conviction of a crime involving moral turpitude, (petty theft), her periods of employment without authorization and her extended periods 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. Her equity, marriage to an LPR, gained after she was placed in deportation proceedings, 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 eligibility 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.