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U.S. Department of Homeland Security
20 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Rm. 3000
Washington, DC 20529



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

HL

PUBLIC COPY

[Redacted]

FILE:

[Redacted]

Office: VERMONT SERVICE CENTER

Date:

FEB 05 2008

[consolidated therein]
[consolidated therein]
[consolidated therein]

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, Chief
Administrative Appeals Office

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

The applicant is a native and citizen of El Salvador who entered the United States without inspection on July 23, 1988. On July 24, 1988, an Order to Show to Cause (OSC) was issued against the applicant. On August 8, 1988, the applicant filed a Request for Asylum in the United States (Form I-589). On April 25, 1990, an immigration judge ordered the applicant deported *in absentia* from the United States. The applicant failed to depart the United States. On January 13, 1991, the applicant's son, [REDACTED] was born in Virginia. On May 9, 1995, the applicant's son, [REDACTED] was born in Virginia. On June 26, 1995, the applicant filed another Form I-589. On June 2, 1997, the applicant's daughter, [REDACTED], was born in Virginia. On April 15, 1999, the applicant married [REDACTED] a native and citizen of El Salvador, in Virginia. On July 22, 1999, the applicant filed an Application to Register Permanent Residence or Adjust Status (Form I-485). On June 6, 2001, the applicant filed an Application for Suspension or Special Rule Cancellation of Removal (NACARA), which the Arlington Asylum Office dismissed. On August 2, 2001, the applicant's husband became a lawful permanent resident. On August 8, 2001, the Arlington, Virginia, District Director returned the applicant's Form I-485 to her because he lacked jurisdiction to adjudicate the application. On September 10, 2001, the applicant filed an Application for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) (Form I-821), which was approved on May 22, 2003. The applicant is inadmissible to the United States under sections 212(a)(9)(A)(ii)(I) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(9)(A)(ii), and 212(a)(9)(B) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(9)(B). She now 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 reside with her lawful permanent resident spouse and three United States citizen children.

The Director determined that the applicant is inadmissible pursuant to section 212(a)(9)(A)(ii) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(9)(A)(ii), for being ordered removed under section 240 or any other provision of law, and that the unfavorable factors in the applicant's case outweighed the favorable factors. The Director denied the applicant's Application for Permission to Reapply for Admission After Deportation or Removal (Form I-212) accordingly. *Director's Decision*, dated September 8, 2006.

Section 212(a)(9). Aliens previously removed.-

(A) Certain alien 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 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 continuous territory, the Attorney General [now, Secretary, Department of Homeland Security] has consented to the alien's reapplying for admission.

(B) Aliens unlawfully present.-

(i) In general.-Any alien (other than an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence) who-

. . . .

(II) has been unlawfully present in the United States for one year or more, and who again seeks admission within 10 years of the date of such alien's departure or removal from the United States, is inadmissible.

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, through counsel, contends that the applicant "has one immigration violation...[she was] deported in absentia, and never aware of the order of deportation until recently...[the] [a]pplicant has obeyed all laws while in the United States, and has never been arrested or convicted of any crime...[the] applicant's children are U.S. citizens, and her spouse is a L.P.R." *Form I-290B*, filed September 25, 2006. The applicant states she "didn't know that [she] was ordered deported until [her] lawyer got all [her] records from Immigration." *Applicant's Statement*, dated September 21, 2006. The AAO notes that the immigration judge's decision was mailed to the last known address for the applicant, and there is no documentation in the record that the applicant submitted a change of address before the order was sent. The applicant states that she has "tried to be a good wife, mother and citizen...[she has] always tried to do the best for [her] family, and regret that have [sic] this one blemish on [her] record." *Applicant's Statement, supra*. The AAO notes that 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's spouse and children, but it will be just one of the determining factors. The AAO notes that the applicant submitted numerous Wage and Tax Statements (Form W-2) and U.S Individual Income Tax Returns (Form 1040A) which establishes that the applicant's husband is the primary wage earner in the family.

The record of proceedings reveals that on April 25, 1990, an immigration judge ordered the applicant deported from the United States. The applicant failed to depart the United States. Based on the applicant's previous order of deportation, the applicant is clearly inadmissible under section 212(a)(9)(A)(ii)(I) of the Act.

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.*

Where an applicant is seeking discretionary relief from removal or deportation and the courts are required to weigh favorable equities or factors against unfavorable factors, many have repeatedly upheld the general principal that less weight is given to equities acquired by an alien after an order of deportation or removal has been issued. The AAO notes that the applicant's Form I-212 involves a similar weighing of equities or favorable factors against unfavorable factors in order to determine whether to grant discretionary relief.

In *Garcia-Lopez v. INS*, 923 F.2d 72 (7th Cir. 1991), for example, the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals (Seventh Circuit) reviewed a Board of Immigration Appeals (Board) denial of an alien's request for discretionary voluntary departure relief. The Seventh Circuit found that the Board's denial rested on discretionary grounds, and that the Board had weighed all of the favorable and unfavorable factors and stated the reasons for its denial of relief. The Seventh Circuit affirmed the general principle that less weight may be accorded to equities acquired after an order of deportation is issued, and the Seventh Circuit concluded that the Board had not abused or exercised its discretion in an arbitrary or capricious manner.

In *Bothyo v. Moyer*, 772 F.2d 353, 357 (7th Cir. 1985), the Seventh Circuit reviewed a discretionary stay of deportation case that weighed and balanced favorable and unfavorable factors. The Seventh Circuit stated that an alien's marriage to a lawful permanent resident did not necessitate the granting of a stay of deportation because the marriage occurred after deportation proceedings had commenced and after an OSC had been issued against the alien. The Seventh Circuit then affirmed the general principle that an "after-acquired

equity” need not be accorded great weight by a district director in his or her consideration of discretionary weight.

In *Carnalla-Munoz v. INS*, 627 F.2d 1004, 1006 (9th Cir. 1980), the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals (Ninth Circuit) reviewed a discretionary suspension of deportation case. The Ninth Circuit affirmed the principle that post-deportation equities are entitled to less weight in determining hardship. In doing so, the Ninth Circuit referred to the 1980 decision, *Wang v. INS*, 622 F.2d 1341, 1346 (9th Cir. 1980) (overruled on unrelated grounds). In *Wang*, the alien sought discretionary relief and a finding of extreme hardship through a motion to reopen deportation proceedings. The Ninth Circuit held in *Wang*, that “[e]quities arising when the alien knows he is in this country illegally, e.g. after a deportation order is issued, are entitled to less weight than equities arising when the alien is legally in this country.”

In *Ghassan v. INS*, 972 F.2d 631, 634-35 (5th Cir. 1992), the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals (Fifth Circuit) reviewed a section 212(c) waiver of deportation discretionary relief case that involved the balancing of favorable and unfavorable factors. The Fifth Circuit found no abuse of discretion in the Board’s weighing of equitable factors against unfavorable factors in the alien’s case, and the Fifth Circuit affirmed the principle that as an equity factor, it is not an abuse of discretion to accord diminished weight to hardship faced by a spouse who entered into a marriage with knowledge of the alien spouse’s possible deportation.

The AAO finds that the above-cited precedent legal decisions establish the general principle that “after-acquired equities” are accorded less weight for purposes of assessing hardship to a spouse and for purposes of assessing favorable equities in the exercise of discretion.

The favorable factors in this matter are the applicant’s family ties to a lawful permanent resident and United States citizens, her husband and children, general hardship they may experience, letters of reference, payment of taxes, no criminal record, and her numerous attempts over the years to legitimize her status through TPS, asylum, and NACARA. While the applicant has been unable to adjust her status to a lawful permanent resident, her various legitimately filed applications have afforded her a status which allowed her to live and work in the United States. The AAO notes that the applicant’s marriage to her husband occurred after her order of deportation and is an after-acquired equity. As an after-acquired equity this factor will be given less weight.

The AAO finds that the unfavorable factors in this case include the applicant’s initial entry without inspection and her failure to abide by an order of removal.

While the applicant’s actions cannot be condoned, the AAO finds that given all the circumstances of the present case, the applicant has established that the favorable factors outweigh the unfavorable factors, and that a favorable exercise of the Secretary’s discretion is warranted. Accordingly, the appeal will be sustained and the application approved.

ORDER: The appeal is sustained and the application approved.