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U.S. Department of Justice

Immigration and Naturalization Service

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

[redacted]

FILE [redacted] Office: Vermont Service Center Date: OCT 09 2001

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)

IN BEHALF OF APPLICANT:

[redacted]

Public Copy
Identifying data deleted to prevent clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy

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, Acting Director
Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The application was denied by the Director, Vermont Service Center, and is now before the Associate Commissioner for Examinations on appeal. The appeal will be dismissed.

The applicant is a native and citizen of Greece who was admitted to the United States on September 2, 1990, as a nonimmigrant visitor with authorization to remain for six months. The applicant remained longer than authorized. On May 10, 1994, he was ordered removed from the United States under sections 241(a)(1)(B) and 241(a)(2)(C) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C 1251(a)(1)(B) and 1251(a)(2)(C), for having remained longer than authorized and for having been convicted of a firearms violation. A Warrant of Deportation issued in his behalf was cancelled by the immigration judge on February 21, 1995, and he was granted a motion to reopen the proceedings against him.

On July 5, 1995, an immigration judge denied the applicant's application for adjustment of status, denied his application for waiver under section 212(h) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. 1182(h), and ordered him deported to Greece. The immigration judge noted that the applicant committed some very serious offenses in the United States, some of which were aggravated felonies, and he spent two years in a maximum security prison. The Board of Immigration Appeals dismissed the applicant's appeal on May 30, 1996, on other grounds. The applicant was removed to Greece on September 3, 1996, therefore he is inadmissible under section 212(a)(9)(A)(ii) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. 1182(a)(9)(A)(ii).

The applicant is also inadmissible under section 212(a)(2)(A)(i)(I) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. 1182(a)(2)(A)(i)(I), for having been convicted of committing a crime involving moral turpitude. The applicant 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), to rejoin his mother and sister in the United States.

The director determined that the unfavorable factors outweighed the favorable ones and denied the application accordingly.

The record reflects that the applicant was arrested while he was participating in the robbery of a jewelry store on February 2, 1993. He was convicted of 16 multiple violations including being armed with a dangerous weapon; armed robbery; kidnapping, threatening; assault and battery with a dangerous weapon, possession of a dangerous weapon and unlawful possession of ammunition. The applicant was sentenced to 3 to 5 years imprisonment for each count to be served concurrently.

On appeal, counsel states that the decision was in error, arbitrary and capricious. Counsel asserts that the applicant's one unfavorable factor is that he engaged in one incident from which there were several counts and this one incident resulted in his incarceration and deportation. Counsel argues that his family unity should be considered, he paid his debt to society, is crime free,

his family is affected by his absence and the applicant is taking medication for the emotional distress he is suffering.

Service instructions at O.I. 212.7 specify that a Form I-212 application will be adjudicated first when an alien requires both permission to reapply for admission and a waiver of grounds of inadmissibility. If the Form I-212 application is denied, then the Application for Waiver of Grounds of Inadmissibility (Form I-601) should be rejected, and the fee refunded.

Section 212(a)(9)(A) of the Act provides, in part, that:

> (i) Any alien who has been ordered removed under section 235(b)(1) or at the end of proceedings under section 240 initiated upon the alien's arrival in the United States and who again seeks admission within 5 years of the date of such removal (or within 20 years 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.
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> (ii) OTHER ALIENS.-Any alien not described in clause (i) who-
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> > (I) has been ordered removed under section 240 of the Act or any other provision of law, or
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> > (II) departed the United States while an order of removal was outstanding, 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.
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> (iii) 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 has consented to the alien's reapplying for admission.

Section 212(a)(6)(B) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. 1182(a)(6)(B), was amended by the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (IIRIRA) and is now codified as section 212(a)(9)(A)(i) and (ii). According to the reasoning in Matter of Soriano, 21 I&N Dec. 516 (BIA 1996, A.G. 1997), the provisions of any legislation modifying the Act must normally be applied to waiver applications adjudicated on or after the enactment date of that legislation, unless other instructions are provided. IIRIRA became effective on September 30, 1996.

An appeal must be decided according to the law as it exists on the date it is before the appellate body. In the absence of explicit statutory direction, an applicant's eligibility is determined under the statute in effect at the time his or her application is finally considered. If an amendment makes the statute more restrictive after the application is filed, the eligibility is determined under the terms of the amendment. Conversely, if the amendment makes the statute more generous, the application must be considered by more generous terms. Matter of George, 11 I&N Dec. 419 (BIA 1965); Matter of Leveque, 12 I&N Dec. 633 (BIA 1968).

In IIRIRA, Congress imposed restrictions on benefits for aliens, enhanced enforcement and penalties for certain violations, eliminated judicial review of certain judgements or decisions under certain sections of the Act, created a new expedited removal proceeding, and established major new grounds of inadmissibility. Nothing could be clearer than Congress's desire in recent years to limit, rather than to extend, the relief available to aliens who have violated immigration law. Congress has almost unfettered power to decide which aliens may come to and remain in this country. This power has been recognized repeatedly by the Supreme Court. See Fiallo v. Bell, 430 U.S. 787 (1977); Reno v. Flores, 507 U.S. 292 (1993); Kleindienst v. Mandel, 408 U.S. 753, 766 (1972). See also Matter of Yeung, 21 I&N Dec. 610, 612 (BIA 1997).

Although the Service promulgated guidelines for considering permission to reapply for admission applications in Matter of Tin, 14 I&N Dec. 371 (Reg. Comm. 1973), and in Matter of Lee, 17 I&N Dec. 275 (Comm. 1978), these holdings were rendered long before Congress amended the Act from 1981 through the present 1996 IIRIRA amendments and beyond. Even though these decisions have not been overruled, Congress and the courts following the 1981 amendments and onward have clearly shown in the legislation and in their decisions that individuals who violate immigration law are viewed unfavorably. The later statutes and judicial decisions have effectively negated most precedent case law rendered prior to 1981. Such case law is still considered but less weight is given to favorable factors gained after the violation of immigration laws following statutory changes and judicial decisions.

After reviewing the 1996 IIRIRA amendments to the Act and prior statutes and case law regarding permission to reapply for admission, and after noting that Congress has increased the bar to admissibility from 5 to 10 years, has also added a bar to admissibility for aliens who are unlawfully present in the United States, and 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.

It is appropriate to examine the basis of a removal as well as an applicant's general compliance with immigration and other laws. Evidence of serious disregard for law is viewed as an adverse factor. Matter of Lee, 17 I&N Dec. 275 (Comm. 1978). Family ties in the United States are an important consideration in deciding whether a favorable exercise of discretion is warranted. Matter of Acosta, 14 I&N Dec. 361 (D.D. 1973).

The favorable factors in this matter are the applicant's family ties, his alleged rehabilitation, and the approved petition for alien relative.

The unfavorable factors in this matter include the applicant's remaining longer than authorized, his criminal record, his deportation, and his lack of good moral character.

The applicant's actions in this matter cannot be condoned. His criminal convictions, although a result of one major incident, are very serious and include aggravated felonies which were committed while he was out of lawful status. The applicant has not established by supporting evidence that the favorable factors outweigh the unfavorable ones. Even the immigration judge stated on July 5, 1995, that she would deny his section 212(h) waiver and application for adjustment of status as a matter of discretion because the applicant is not a person of good moral character.

In discretionary matters, the applicant bears the full burden of proving eligibility in terms of equities in the United States which are not outweighed by adverse factors. See Matter of T-S-Y-, 7 I&N Dec. 582 (BIA 1957); Matter of Ducret, 15 I&N Dec. 620 (BIA 1976). After a careful review of the record, it is concluded that the applicant has failed to establish he warrants the favorable exercise of the Attorney General's discretion. Accordingly, the appeal will be dismissed.

ORDER: The appeal is dismissed.