U.S. Department of Justice

Immigration and Naturalization Service

identifying data deleted to prevent clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy

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

[redacted]

FILE: [redacted] Office: Vermont Service Center Date: DEC 08 2002

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

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, Director
Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The application was denied by the Director, Vermont Service Center, and a subsequent appeal was dismissed by the Associate Commissioner for Examinations. The matter is before the Associate Commissioner on a motion to reconsider. The motion will be dismissed, and the order dismissing the appeal will be affirmed.

The applicant, a native and citizen of Jamaica, was admitted to the United States on September 21, 1985, as a lawful permanent resident. On May 9, 1988, the applicant was convicted in the District Court of Dorchester, Massachusetts, of knowingly or intentionally possessing with intent to manufacture, distribute or dispense a controlled substance (cocaine). He was sentenced to 3 months imprisonment.

Based on that conviction, the Service issued an Order to Show Cause charging the applicant with deportability under former section 241(a)(11) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. 1251(a)(11), recodified as section 241(a)(2)(B) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. 1251(a)(2)(B), and redesignated now as section 237(a)(2)(B) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. 1227(a)(2)(B).

Section 237(a)(2)(B) of the Act provides that any alien who is, or hereafter at any time after entry has been, a narcotic drug addict, or who at any time has been convicted of a violation of, or a conspiracy to violate, any law or regulation of a State, the United States, or a foreign country relating to a controlled substance (as defined in section 102 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 802)), other than a single offense involving possession for one's own use of 30 grams or less of marijuana, is deportable

On July 5, 1988, an immigration judge found the applicant deportable under former section 241(a)(11) of the Act. On May 11, 1991, that decision was reviewed by the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA), and the matter was remanded for further action.

On February 11, 1992, an immigration judge ordered the deportation proceedings terminated and the Order to Show Cause cancelled.

On June 3, 1992, the applicant was found guilty of a violation of laws relating to the unlawful possession of firearms and ammunition.

On May 27, 1993, a second Order to Show Cause was served on the applicant charging him with being subject to deportation under former section 241(a)(2)(C) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. 1251(a)(2)(C), now codified as section 237(a)(2)(C) of the Act, for having been convicted of a firearms violation. On June 30, 1994, an immigration judge ordered the applicant deported. On July 18, 1994, the applicant withdrew his appeal and requested the order of deportation to take effect. He was deported on July 28, 1994. 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 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 siblings.

The director noted that, although the applicant's drug charges in 1988 did not lead to his deportation, they show, in combination with the other charges, poor moral character. The director then determined that the unfavorable factors outweighed the favorable ones and denied the application accordingly. The Associate Commissioner affirmed that decision on appeal and determined that the applicant was mandatorily inadmissible due to the questionable conviction regarding a controlled substance.

On motion, counsel states that the Associate Commissioner's conclusion that the applicant had been convicted of a drug trafficking crime is incorrect.

Since the Service and the immigration judge chose not to directly enter the applicant's drug charges as a ground of deportability, instead choosing his firearms violations, the Associate Commissioner will withdraw the rationale used in rendering a decision in the previous order which was based primarily on the drug charges, and enter a new decision based on the rest of the applicant's record.

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) 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)(9)(A)(ii) of the Act provides that aliens who have been otherwise ordered removed, ordered deported under former

sections 242 or 217 of the Act, 8 U.S.C. 1252 or 1187, or ordered excluded under former section 236 of the Act, 8 U.S.C. 1226, and who have actually been removed (or departed after such an order) are inadmissible for 10 years unless the Attorney General has consented to the alien's reapplying for admission. The provision holding aliens inadmissible for 10 years after the issuance of an exclusion or deportation order applies to such orders rendered both before and after April 1, 1997.

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 guidelines for considering permission to reapply for admission applications were promulgated 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. 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).

On June 3, 1992, the applicant was convicted of two firearms violations, and he was sentenced to 1 year H of C, and 3 months H of C to be served concurrently.

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

The unfavorable factors in this matter include the applicant's criminal conviction, his involvement with controlled substance activities however direct or indirect, and his deportation.

The applicant's actions and serious disregard for law in this matter cannot be condoned. The applicant has not established by supporting evidence that the favorable factors outweigh the unfavorable ones.

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 order dismissing the appeal will be affirmed.

ORDER: The order of May 21, 2001, dismissing the appeal is affirmed.