MATTER OF COLLEGE OF THE SCRIPTURES

Petition for Approval of School

CIN 214F.119

Decided by Regional Commissioner April 22, 1965

Petitioning college, established for the training and education of ministers for Churches of Christ, is denied approval for attendance by nonimmigrant students since petitioner has failed to submit, in compliance with the requirement of 8 CFR 214.3(b), satisfactory certification by the appropriate official authorized to do so that the school is licensed, approved, or accredited, and the U.S. Office of Education, after consultation, recommended denial of the petition.

Discussion: The petition was denied by the District Director at Cleveland, Ohio, on February 2, 1965. It is now considered on appeal.

The College of the Scriptures was incorporated on May 9, 1945, as a nonprofit organization with stated purposes to establish and maintain an academy, college and graduate seminary for the training and education of ministers for Churches of Christ and to conduct correspondence courses and classroom study to educate persons as ministers for Churches of Christ. The college has enjoyed a measure of success and now has three buildings. One is a chapel building which includes classrooms. Another is a combination classroom and dormitory building. The third building is a house which is some distance from the campus and is used as a dormitory.

The petitioner states that a petition was submitted in December 1952 for approval of the college as a school for foreign students. No record of approval of the college at that time is found and since the college was not included in a consolidated list of approved schools of April 30, 1954, it is concluded that the college has not previously been approved.

Section 101(a)(15)(F) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as amended, provides that in considering the approval of schools there be consultation by this Service with the Office of Education of the United States. In this case the file was submitted to that office

and their views expressed in a letter dated December 9, 1964, are as follows:

On the basis of the material submitted with the Petition for Approval of School for Nonimmigrant Students, we do not find the College of the Scriptures to qualify as "an established educational institution or other recognized place of study" at the level at which it purports to offer programs and degrees. There is considerable question about its certification by the Kentucky Department of Adult Education, current approval for the training of veterans, and acceptance of credits by accredited institutions. There is no evidence that its high school department prepares students for entering accredited institutions of higher education. There are conflicting reports about the size of faculty and considerable doubt as to faculty qualifications for the level of program advertised. The Office of Education recommends that the Attorney General deny the Petition for Approval of School for Nonimmigrant Students submitted by the College of the Scriptures.

A 1964 publication submitted with the petition shows the College of the Scriptures as having 13 undergraduates and 2 graduate students taking 8 or more semester hours; also 10 students are shown as taking less than 8 semester hours, making a total of 25 students. The faculty is shown as four full-time and six part-time members. The college awards the associate arts degree, bachelor of sacred arts (ministerial), bachelor of sacred literature, bachelor of theology, a two-year missionary certificate, and a high school diploma.

The petition was filed to enable the petitioning college to enroll eight students from Jamaica. Such of these students as have a deficiency in pre-college level study would be provided with remedial high school subjects. Those taking high school subjects would be 19 years of age or older.

It is stated in 8 CFR 214.3(b) that, except for public, private, and parochial elementary and secondary schools, a "petitioning school shall submit a certification by the appropriate licensing, approving or accrediting official who shall certify that he is authorized to do so to the effect that it is licensed, approved, or accredited. In lieu of such certification, a school which is recognized by a state approving agency as an 'educational institution' for study for veterans under the provisions of P.L. 550 (82nd Congress) may submit a statement of recognition signed by the appropriate official of the state approving agency who shall certify that he is authorized to do so. A charter shall not be considered a license, approval or accreditation." The petitioner has been unable to satisfactorily comply with this requirement. The petitioner concedes that the program offered is not on a level with recognized liberal arts colleges, junior colleges or universities, but argues that the credits are transferable to other theological institutions which have been approved by this Service for foreign students.

The evidence submitted in support of the petition has been carefully considered. However, on the basis of the unfavorable recommendation by the Office of Education, as well as the fact that the petitioner has failed to submit the documentation required by 8 CFR 214.3(b), it is concluded that the decision of the District Director must be affirmed.

ORDER: The decision of the District Director of Cleveland, Ohio is affirmed, and the appeal of the appellant is hereby dismissed.