

IN THE
UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF OREGON

THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY LIGHT)	CV 08-3095-PA
OF THE QUEEN, et al.,)	
Plaintiffs)	
V.)	
)	
MICHAEL B. MUKASEY, et. al.,)	
Defendants)	

**AMENDED WITNESS STATEMENT
OF
ALEXANDRA BLISS YEAGER**

My name is Alexandra Bliss Yeager. I live in Portland Oregon.

I was born on September 16, 1973 in Houston, Texas.

I received a bachelor's degree in U.S. history from Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio in 1995. I received a Master's degree in Geography with a specialty in natural resource and community planning from Texas State University in San Marcos in 2002.

I have worked in environmental education, outdoor education, natural resource planning, and community planning.

I have lived in Portland since 2002. I live with my husband, Sky Yeager, whom I married in 2004. We both are members of the Santo Daime religion.

I am the leader of the Santo Daime Center in Portland and have held this position since 2003. The name of our center is Céu da Divina Rosa (The church of the Divine Rose).

I have been studying and practicing Santo Daime since 2001.

I became a Fardado (member) in March of 2003 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil at a church named Céu do Mar.

Since beginning my practice and study of the Santo Daime, I have visited Brazil to study with my elders on five occasions.

Our center was originally opened by Padrinho Paulo Roberto de Souza (Céu do Mar, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil) in 2002.

Our center was designated by Padrinho Alfredo Gregirio De Melo (the spiritual leader of Santo Daime) as an official center of CEFLURIS in 2005. We have a charter that indicates our clear association to CEFLURIS, headquartered in Mapiá, Amazonas. Céu do Mapiá is our mother church.

In CEFLURIS, being a Center is the intermediate stage in the path to becoming a church. There is a three-tiered system to receive accreditation from CEFLURIS. Groups begin as "points", then become "centers", and finally become "Churches." We will be recognized a full-fledged church when we begin to hold works for the entire official calendar as delineated by the Rituals of the Doctrine (a guide to the practice of Santo Daime). At that time we will petition our elders in Mapiá to become a full church.

In this path it is very important for practitioners to receive instruction from more experienced members and elders of the lineage. It is required for any person leading works to have permission as well as supervision. I was given permission to lead works by Padrinho Alfredo. I am in consistent communication with Padrinho Alex Polari de Alverga, Madrinha Sonia Palhares de Alverga, Padrinho Enio Staub, and Madrinha Beth Morreira for guidance and instruction. I also work closely with Jonathan Goldman in this

country.

Our center is in direct communication with CEFLURIS. Our fardados pay a monthly tithe. We send the tithe directly to CEFLURIS who issues us membership cards to the association. This tithe supports the administration of CEFLURIS, the continued propagation and sustainable harvest of our sacred plants, at least two reforestation projects in the Amazon, a pension for our elders who need medical care and are past working age, and continued collaboration and cooperation with the Brazilian government to maintain our legal status.

Our affiliation with CEFLURIS and our tithes entitle us to receive sacrament to do our spiritual work. CEFLURIS does not provide sacrament to non-members. There is a very clear understanding that all sacrament supplied for our Santo Daime center is for official works and supervised Santo Daime healing ceremonies. I am the only one in our church who can arrange for the procurement of sacrament. Daime is never given out to individuals for personal use.

We have a very clear and specific accounting system to manage our sacrament. CEFLURIS keeps a record of the amount of Daime it has given us and then we update a log, tracking when the Daime was used. All of our sacrament is used in accordance with the rituals of our doctrine with its intended purpose.

We have the same principle at work with our financial accountability. Our center does not profit from donations. Money is tracked and spent for the continued practice of our religion and the health of our community.

We recognize ourselves as upstanding citizens practicing our religion with integrity and commitment. We never seek to proselytize our faith to our surrounding

community as we feel our path is a calling. People find their own paths in their own time. We honor other paths that seek peace, light, love and healing through prayer.

The Santo Daime has had a tremendous effect upon my life. My work within the ritual of the Santo Daime has encouraged my own healing, the healing of my family, my marriage, and my community. The teachings of this path along with our sacrament have offered many insights into my higher purpose that I apply to my life with great effect.

I also feel in alignment with the teachings of environmental awareness that permeate the hymns. There are always reminders to take care of our natural environment and to take into consideration how our actions impact the health of our water and food.

It is inspiring to watch the effect that Santo Daime has upon our community. I have witnessed people pass through tremendous trials in their personal lives with the aid of the practice of our religion. They come through with grace and strength. Witnessing these powerful positive changes in others in this path is one of my greatest inspirations. It is clear to me that this is a path of healing.

The Santo Daime religion is an official recognized religion in Brazil and in Holland. We are now working for our recognition in the United States of America. It is a burden for me and as well as my family that our religion is not recognized in this country. We have to hold our services in secret. We are in constant fear that we will be found out by the authorities. We fear that our home will be confiscated and that the lives of the members of our community will be threatened. As the leader of our center in Portland, I feel a responsibility towards our members and their families.

I feel that my rights as an American citizen are compromised by my inability to practice my religion legally. This right is integral to the principles that founded this

country as it stands.


I am clear that that act of practicing my religion poses no threat upon my greater community or my country. We are pacifists. We gather together to pray and sing hymns two to three times a month. We pray for the healing and well being of ourselves and of the world.

It is my hope that my testimonial will support the liberation of our religion and our people in this country.

Pursuant to 28 USC Section 1746, I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on this 31st day of October, 2008.

Respectfully Submitted,


Alexandra Bliss Yeager

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that I served the foregoing AMENDED WITNESS STATEMENT
OF ALEXANDRA BLISS YEAGER on:

Eric Joseph Beane / Brigham J. Bowen / Julie Straus / Lily Farel
Civil Division, Federal Programs Branch
U.S. Department of Justice
P.O. Box 883, Room 7124
Washington, DC 20044
Attorneys for Defendants

by mailing a copy thereof in a sealed, first-class postage prepaid envelope,
addressed to each attorney's last-known address and depositing in the U.S. mail at Portland,
Oregon on the date set forth below;

by causing a copy thereof to be hand-delivered to said attorneys at each
attorney's last-known office address on the date set forth below;

by sending a copy thereof via overnight courier in a sealed, prepaid envelope,
addressed to each attorney's last-known address on the date set forth below;

by faxing a copy thereof to each attorney's last-known facsimile number on
the date set forth below; or

by filing electronically via the court's CM/ECF system.

DATED this 1st day of December, 2008.

TONKON TORP LLP

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