

Herbalist found not guilty in 'fake' healing case

HAROLD L. JAMISON

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By HAROLD L. JAMISON
In a historical decision in Brooklyn Supreme Court Monday, a jury of six men and six women found Alfredo Bowman not guilty on two counts of practicing medicine without a license.

Bowman, affectionately known as Dr. Sebi, director of USHA Herbal Research Institute, 616 Pacific St., Brooklyn, was arrested Feb. 10, 1987, by Attorney General Robert Abrams' office because ads placed in the *Village Voice* and the *Amsterdam News*, claimed a cure for AIDS.

Simeon Greenaway, Sebi's attorney stated this was the first case of its kind in Brooklyn Supreme Court.

"What was significant about

the verdict," Greenaway stated, "is the fact that USHA's African Bio-Mineral Balance will now be recognized throughout the world."

Sebi described the African Bio-Mineral Balance "as a dietary program that is consistent with the African genetic structure."

The dietary program consists of natural herbal compounds, fresh fruits, vegetables and juices.

According to Sebi's testimony, "the compounds change the environment of the body through intra-cellular cleansing and replenish the cells by causing cell proliferation, wherein new cells push out the old cells."

This process enables the body



"DR. SEBI"

to heal itself.

Greenaway described USHA's concept of natural healing as one "on a collision course with the medical establishment."

Objections to the views being expressed by Sebi prompted the attorney general to wage a "fear and smear" campaign to discredit the reputation of Sebi and the USHA Institute, according to Greenaway.

Abrams proceeded with the case on the "erroneous assumption" that the compounds being marketed were medicinal. However, no attempt was made to ascertain the contents of the herbal compounds before or after the arrest.

During the trial Assistant General Barclay revealed that two undercover agents were sent to the institute on two separate occasions in an attempt "to entrap Sebi into making medical diagnoses." After being briefed by a medical doctor as to the symptoms of a urinary infection and herpes, the under-

cover agents Gail Malis and Michael Colon were wired with a small tape recorder. The tape recording, submitted into evidence by Barclay, failed to convince the jury that Sebi did in fact make a medical diagnosis. One agent's testimony, under cross examination by Greenaway, clearly stated that he did not receive the response from Sebi that would constitute a medical diagnosis.

A questionnaire used by Sebi to ascertain the health of clients was submitted in evidence by the prosecution to support its contentions that Sebi and the

institute were practicing medicine. However, this was dispelled by testimony of Marjorie Thorne-Puckerin, a former USHA employee who testified that individuals were required to fill out the questionnaires to enable the institute to monitor clients health conditions, diet and collect data for research purposes.

Harry Dickson, Roger Marshall, Naimah Fuller, Zedias Ife and Karen Selby, witnesses for the defense, unequivocally testified to their improved health as a result of USHA's dietary program.

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