PARSLEY BREAD

2 packs of active dry yeast
1¾ cups warm water
6 tablespoons honey
7 to 8 cups (or more) unbleached white wheat flour
6 small whole eggs plus one yolk
2/3 cup currants, softened in warm water 1 2/3 tablespoon melted butter or oil
1½ teaspoon dried rosemary
1½ teaspoon dried basil
2/3 cup finely chopped fresh parsley
1½ teaspoon cinnamon
Several drops green vegetable color
Butter for greasing bowls and cookie sheet

Sprinkle yeast on ½ cup of the warm water; stir in honey. Let proof for 5 minutes.

Add remaining warm water; beat in about 2½ to 3 cups of flour. Beat with wooden spoon for about 200 strokes.

Cover with damp towel, put in warm place, and allow this sponge to rise for 30-45 minutes, or until doubled.

Stir down.

Beat 5 whole eggs plus one yolk. Stir in currants. Beat in salt and melted butter or oil. Mix into the dough.

In a mortar crush the dried herbs and chopped parsley to a paste. Mix in cinnamon. Add to batter and beat well. (Bread should be a delicate green hue. If color from parsley isn't strong enough, add green food color - sparingly.) Add remaining flour first with a spoon, then with hands, until dough comes away from the side of the bowl.

Turn out onto lightly floured board or marble and knead until smooth, shiny, and elastic, about 10-12 minutes, adding small amounts of flour if necessary.

Place in buttered bowl; cover with damp towel. Let rise in warm place until doubled in bulk, about 50 minutes.

Punch down. Cover; let rise again until doubled in bulk, about 30 minutes. (This rise, though unnecessary, gives the bread a finer texture.)

Punch down. Turn out onto floured surface. Let rest for five minutes. Shape into one or two free-form curls or twists. Place on buttered cookie sheet. Cover lightly with damp towel and let rise in warm place to double, about 25 minutes.

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Brush loaf or leaves with remaining whole egg, beaten. Bake for about 50 minutes, or until nicely browned and loaf sounds hollow when rapped on top and bottom. Cool on rack.