

Michael Springmann

J. Michael Springmann was the former head of the American visa bureau in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, in the Reagan and former Bush administrations, from September 1987 through March 1989.^[1] While stationed in Saudi Arabia, Springmann was “ordered by high level State Dept officials to issue visas to unqualified applicants”. Springmann states that these applicants were terrorist recruits of Osama Bin Laden, who were being sent to the United States in order to obtain training from the C.I.A..^[2] Springmann has issued complaints to “higher authorities at several agencies”, but they’ve been unanswered.^[3] The State Department has stated that the consular officer had final authority in issuing the visas, not Springmann.^[4]

From cited CBC Interview:

CBC: And when you questioned them, what would they say were their reasons for expecting to get a visa with such slight credentials?

Springman: There was one instance of two Pakistanis who came to me, and they wanted to get to an American auto parts trade show. They couldn't name the show, and they couldn't name the city in which it was going to be held. And then the case officer came over and called me on the phone, and said, “Give them a visa”. I said “No, it doesn't wash”. “Well, we need it, I'm sorry.” Then he went to the head of the consular section and got me overruled, and they got their visas. But when I complained to the powers in the consulate, and the people in Riyadh, I was told to keep quiet, that there was reasons for doing this, that it wasn't a case of my poor judgment, it was this and it was that. This simply fueled my suspicions that something untoward was going on.

Following Springmann’s complaints, he was fired by the State Department.^[5]

1 References

[1] Freedberg, Sydney P. (November 25, 2001), *Loopholes leave U.S. borders vulnerable*, St. Petersburg Times, Michael Springmann, a consular officer in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, from 1987 to 1989, said he issued more than 100 visas to unqualified applicants after pressure from his State Department bosses. “Keep the Saudis happy,” Springmann said he was told, apparently because they are America’s biggest supplier of crude oil. He said he later learned that visas went to terrorists recruited by the CIA and bin Laden to train in the United States for the war against the then-Soviet Union in Afghanistan.

[2] “Newsnight - Has someone been sitting on the FBI?”. BBC News. November 8, 2001. Archived from the original on October 11, 2002.

[3] *Reflections on the 911 Terrorist Attacks*, Washington Examiner, September 10, 2011, Michael Springmann , former head of the Visa Bureau at the U.S. Consulate in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia said that he was repeatedly ordered by high-level State Department officials to issue visas to unqualified applicants. His complaints to higher authorities at several agencies went unanswered. In a CBC interview, he indicated that the CIA was indeed complicit in the attacks.

[4] Gedda, George (July 21, 2002). “Did U.S. train Arabs to help Afghans oust Soviets?”. *Deseret News*. Associated Press. Archived from the original on January 7, 2013.

[5] “Michael Springmann CBC Interview”. CBC News. July 3, 2002. Archived from the original on January 1, 2003.

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2.1 Text

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