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Richard Clarke: Big Part of Moore's Movie 'a Mistake'

Former White House terrorism czar Richard Clarke, who served as a principal source for conspiracy filmmaker Michael Moore's movie "Fahrenheit 9/11," said this week that the central premise of the film is "a mistake."

In an interview with the Associated Press, Clarke took issue with Moore's criticism that President Bush allowed prominent Saudis, including members of Osama bin Laden's family, to fly out of the U.S. in the days after the 9/11 attacks. Saying Moore's version of the episode has provoked "a tempest in a tea pot," Clarke called his decision to make the bin Laden family flyout a big part of the film's indictment against Bush "a mistake."

"After 9/11, I think the Saudis were perfectly justified ... in fearing the possibility of vigilantism against Saudis in this country. When they asked to evacuate their citizens ... I thought it was a perfectly normal request," he explained.

In May, Clarke confessed that he and he alone made the decision to approve the flyouts.

"It didn't get any higher than me," he told The Hill newspaper. "On 9/11, 9/12 and 9/13, many things didn't get any higher than me. I decided it in consultation with the FBI."

Clarke told the 9/11 Commission the same thing in March, after first detailing the episode for Vanity Fair magazine last August - leaving plenty of time for Moore to adjust his film to the facts as recounted by his primary source.

Editor's note:

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