

Tourist who claimed he was banned entry to US because of a JD Vance meme on his phone was actually denied for a different reason, Homeland reveal

A Norwegian tourist who claimed he was denied entry to the United States after immigration officers found a meme of **JD Vance** on his phone was actually turned away for a different reason, U.S. officials have revealed.

Mads Mikkelsen, 21, was sent away after arriving at **New Jersey's** Newark Airport on June 11 for a holiday.

He told Norwegian outlet **Nordlys** that he had been pulled aside by border control and put in a cell.

'They asked questions about drug trafficking, terrorist plots and right-wing extremism totally without reason,' he alleged in an interview with the outlet.

Mr **Mikkelsen** claimed that the officers then threatened him with a \$5,000 fine or five years in prison if he refused to give the password to his mobile phone.

The guards were said to have found a meme on the device's camera roll showing an edit of US vice president JD Vance with a bald, egg-shaped head. **Mikkelsen** said after discovering the image the authorities sent him home to Norway the same day.

The U.S. Customs and Border Protection, operating under the Department of Homeland Security, has since clarified that 'Mads Mikkelsen was not denied entry for any memes or political reasons'.

It comes after an Australian writer claimed he was turned away from the US border after being grilled on his views on the Gaza conflict and articles he wrote about pro-Palestinian protests.

Alistair Kitchen, 33, boarded a flight from Melbourne to New York to visit friends on June 12 when he was pulled to one side by a Customs and Border Protection officer during a layover in Los Angeles.

He was detained for 12 hours at Los Angeles International Airport before being put on a flight back to Melbourne.

Mr Kitchen said he was refused entry to the US because of his political beliefs, but the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has since said this is 'unequivocally false'.

The writer lived in the US for six years before moving back home to Castlemaine, in regional Victoria, last year, and between 2022 and 2024 he studied at Columbia University.

Mr Kitchen claimed a customs officer told him he was being detained because of his views on the pro-Palestinian rallies that took place on campus at the New York university last year.

'I was interrogated about my beliefs on the crisis in Gaza. I told him what I believe: that the war is a tragedy in which all parties have blood on their hands, but which can and must come to an immediate end,' he wrote in The Sydney Morning Herald.

'One party is dominant, and that party can end the death and destruction today.'