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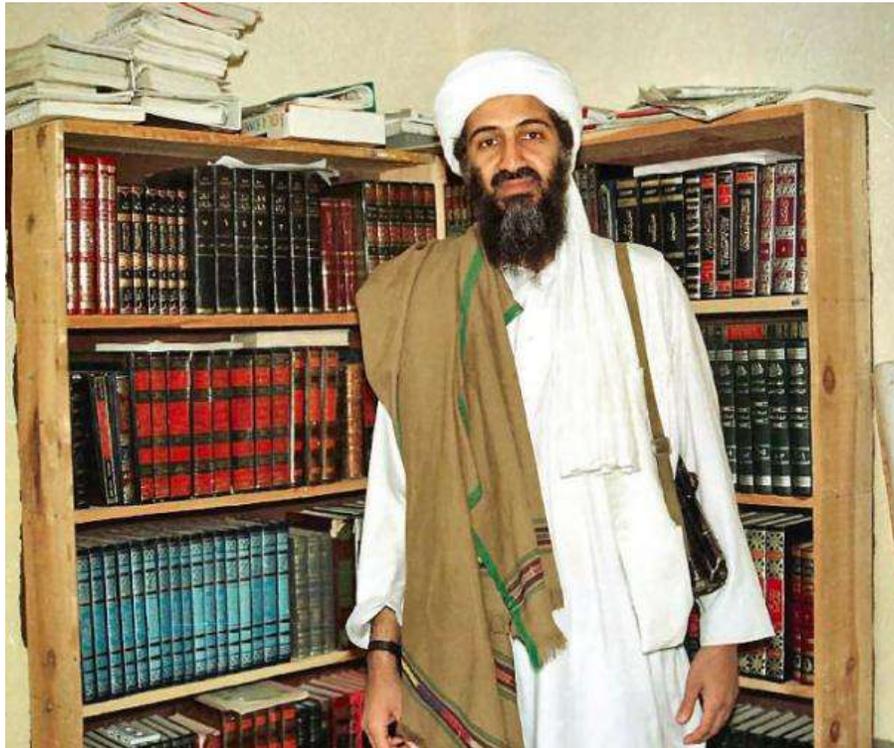
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Special Briefing

From the desk of Craig B Hulet?

The Red Line and the Rat Line / Report: Obama lied about bin Laden raid Seymour Hersh: Obama's Entire Account Of bin Laden's Death Is One Big Lie; This Is What Really Happened. Then Questions haunt the families of Extortion 17, the 2011 helicopter mission in Afghanistan that suffered the most U.S. military deaths in a single day in the war on terrorism and coincidentally killed 17 members of that same SEAL team 6 and silenced them forever.



Bin Laden's Library is a very small version of my own. Indeed, almost every book cited by the US Authorities I have and many I have recommended to audiences all across the entire world and specifically Americans to read while being interviewed by dozens of talk show hosts. Is this an indictment of my intent? Or is it evidence that we researchers, legitimate paid analysts, are simply as bright as Bin Laden himself?

Please find herein dozens of documents and articles going back a decade that puts the lie to the Obama Administrations version of his assassination. An assassination of one of the most wanted men in world history, whose capture *alive* would have been the most important intelligence capture in history, if he really was who America's elite said he was; but then this office knows he wasn't then nor ever was the perpetrator of 9/11 as all evidence points to Saudi Arabia!

The Red Line and the Rat Line

Seymour M. Hersh on Obama, Erdoğan and the Syrian rebels

In 2011 Barack Obama led an allied military intervention in Libya without consulting the US Congress. Last August, after the sarin attack on the Damascus suburb of Ghouta, he was ready to launch an allied air strike, this time to punish the Syrian government for allegedly crossing the 'red line' he had set in 2012 on the use of chemical weapons. Then with less than two days to go before the planned strike, he announced that he would seek congressional approval for the intervention. The strike was postponed as Congress prepared for hearings, and subsequently cancelled when Obama accepted Assad's offer to relinquish his chemical arsenal in a deal brokered by Russia. Why did Obama delay and then relent on Syria when he was not shy about rushing into Libya? The answer lies in a clash between those in the administration who were committed to enforcing the red line, and military leaders who thought that going to war was both unjustified and potentially disastrous.

Obama's change of mind had its origins at Porton Down, the defence laboratory in Wiltshire. British intelligence had obtained a sample of the sarin used in the 21 August attack and analysis demonstrated that the gas used didn't match the batches known to exist in the Syrian army's chemical weapons arsenal. The message that the case against Syria wouldn't hold up was quickly relayed to the US joint chiefs of staff. The British report heightened doubts inside the Pentagon; the joint chiefs were already preparing to warn Obama that his plans for a far-reaching bomb and missile attack on Syria's infrastructure could lead to a wider war in the Middle East. As a consequence the American officers delivered a last-minute caution to the president, which, in their view, eventually led to his cancelling the attack.

For months there had been acute concern among senior military leaders and the intelligence community about the role in the war of Syria's neighbours, especially Turkey. Prime Minister Recep Erdoğan was known to be supporting the al-Nusra Front, a jihadist faction among the rebel opposition, as well as other Islamist rebel groups. 'We knew there were some in the Turkish government,' a former senior US intelligence official, who has access to current intelligence, told me, 'who believed they could get Assad's nuts in a vice by dabbling with a sarin attack inside Syria – and forcing Obama to make good on his red line threat.'

The joint chiefs also knew that the Obama administration's public claims that only the Syrian army had access to sarin were wrong. The American and British intelligence communities had been aware since the spring of 2013 that some rebel units in Syria were developing chemical weapons. On 20 June analysts for the US Defense Intelligence Agency issued a highly classified five-page 'talking points' briefing for the DIA's deputy director, David Shedd, which stated that al-Nusra maintained a sarin production cell: its programme, the paper said, was 'the most advanced sarin plot since al-Qaida's pre-9/11 effort'. (According to a Defense Department consultant, US intelligence has long known that al-Qaida experimented with chemical weapons,

and has a video of one of its gas experiments with dogs.) The DIA paper went on: 'Previous IC [intelligence community] focus had been almost entirely on Syrian CW [chemical weapons] stockpiles; now we see ANF attempting to make its own CW ... Al-Nusra Front's relative freedom of operation within Syria leads us to assess the group's CW aspirations will be difficult to disrupt in the future.' The paper drew on classified intelligence from numerous agencies: 'Turkey and Saudi-based chemical facilitators,' it said, 'were attempting to obtain sarin precursors in bulk, tens of kilograms, likely for the anticipated large scale production effort in Syria.' (Asked about the DIA paper, a spokesperson for the director of national intelligence said: 'No such paper was ever requested or produced by intelligence community analysts.')

Last May, more than ten members of the al-Nusra Front were arrested in southern Turkey with what local police told the press were two kilograms of sarin. In a 130-page indictment the group was accused of attempting to purchase fuses, piping for the construction of mortars, and chemical precursors for sarin. Five of those arrested were freed after a brief detention. The others, including the ringleader, Haytham Qassab, for whom the prosecutor requested a prison sentence of 25 years, were released pending trial. In the meantime the Turkish press has been rife with speculation that the Erdoğan administration has been covering up the extent of its involvement with the rebels. In a news conference last summer, Aydin Sezgin, Turkey's ambassador to Moscow, dismissed the arrests and claimed to reporters that the recovered 'sarin' was merely 'anti-freeze'.

The DIA paper took the arrests as evidence that al-Nusra was expanding its access to chemical weapons. It said Qassab had 'self-identified' as a member of al-Nusra, and that he was directly connected to Abd-al-Ghani, the 'ANF emir for military manufacturing'. Qassab and his associate Khalid Ousta worked with Halit Unalkaya, an employee of a Turkish firm called Zirve Export, who provided 'price quotes for bulk quantities of sarin precursors'. Abd-al-Ghani's plan was for two associates to 'perfect a process for making sarin, then go to Syria to train others to begin large scale production at an unidentified lab in Syria'. The DIA paper said that one of his operatives had purchased a precursor on the 'Baghdad chemical market', which 'has supported at least seven CW efforts since 2004'.

A series of chemical weapon attacks in March and April 2013 was investigated over the next few months by a special UN mission to Syria. A person with close knowledge of the UN's activity in Syria told me that there was evidence linking the Syrian opposition to the first gas attack, on 19 March in Khan Al-Assal, a village near Aleppo. In its final report in December, the mission said that at least 19 civilians and one Syrian soldier were among the fatalities, along with scores of injured. It had no mandate to assign responsibility for the attack, but the person with knowledge of the UN's activities said: 'Investigators interviewed the people who were there, including the doctors who treated the victims. It was clear that the rebels used the gas. It did not come out in public because no one wanted to know.'

In the months before the attacks began, a former senior Defense Department official told me, the DIA was circulating a daily classified report known as SYRUP on all intelligence related to the Syrian conflict, including material on chemical weapons. But in the spring, distribution of the part of the report concerning chemical weapons was severely curtailed on the orders of Denis McDonough, the White House chief of staff. ‘Something was in there that triggered a shit fit by McDonough,’ the former Defense Department official said. ‘One day it was a huge deal, and then, after the March and April sarin attacks’ – he snapped his fingers – ‘it’s no longer there.’ The decision to restrict distribution was made as the joint chiefs ordered intensive contingency planning for a possible ground invasion of Syria whose primary objective would be the elimination of chemical weapons.

The former intelligence official said that many in the US national security establishment had long been troubled by the president’s red line: ‘The joint chiefs asked the White House, “What does red line mean? How does that translate into military orders? Troops on the ground? Massive strike? Limited strike?” They tasked military intelligence to study how we could carry out the threat. They learned nothing more about the president’s reasoning.’

In the aftermath of the 21 August attack Obama ordered the Pentagon to draw up targets for bombing. Early in the process, the former intelligence official said, ‘the White House rejected 35 target sets provided by the joint chiefs of staff as being insufficiently “painful” to the Assad regime.’ The original targets included only military sites and nothing by way of civilian infrastructure. Under White House pressure, the US attack plan evolved into ‘a monster strike’: two wings of B-52 bombers were shifted to airbases close to Syria, and navy submarines and ships equipped with Tomahawk missiles were deployed. ‘Every day the target list was getting longer,’ the former intelligence official told me. ‘The Pentagon planners said we can’t use only Tomahawks to strike at Syria’s missile sites because their warheads are buried too far below ground, so the two B-52 air wings with two-thousand pound bombs were assigned to the mission. Then we’ll need standby search-and-rescue teams to recover downed pilots and drones for target selection. It became huge.’ The new target list was meant to ‘completely eradicate any military capabilities Assad had’, the former intelligence official said. The core targets included electric power grids, oil and gas depots, all known logistic and weapons depots, all known command and control facilities, and all known military and intelligence buildings.

Britain and France were both to play a part. On 29 August, the day Parliament voted against Cameron’s bid to join the intervention, the *Guardian* reported that he had already ordered six RAF Typhoon fighter jets to be deployed to Cyprus, and had volunteered a submarine capable of launching Tomahawk missiles. The French air force – a crucial player in the 2011 strikes on Libya – was deeply committed, according to an account in *Le Nouvel Observateur*; François Hollande had ordered several Rafale fighter-bombers to join the American assault. Their targets were reported to be in western Syria.

By the last days of August the president had given the Joint Chiefs a fixed deadline for the launch. ‘H hour was to begin no later than Monday morning [2 September], a massive assault to neutralise Assad,’ the former intelligence official said. So it was a surprise to many when during a speech in the White House Rose Garden on 31 August Obama said that the attack would be put on hold, and he would turn to Congress and put it to a vote.

At this stage, Obama’s premise – that only the Syrian army was capable of deploying sarin – was unravelling. Within a few days of the 21 August attack, the former intelligence official told me, Russian military intelligence operatives had recovered samples of the chemical agent from Ghouta. They analysed it and passed it on to British military intelligence; this was the material sent to Porton Down. (A spokesperson for Porton Down said: ‘Many of the samples analysed in the UK tested positive for the nerve agent sarin.’ MI6 said that it doesn’t comment on intelligence matters.)

The former intelligence official said the Russian who delivered the sample to the UK was ‘a good source – someone with access, knowledge and a record of being trustworthy’. After the first reported uses of chemical weapons in Syria last year, American and allied intelligence agencies ‘made an effort to find the answer as to what if anything, was used – and its source’, the former intelligence official said. ‘We use data exchanged as part of the Chemical Weapons Convention. The DIA’s baseline consisted of knowing the composition of each batch of Soviet-manufactured chemical weapons. But we didn’t know which batches the Assad government currently had in its arsenal. Within days of the Damascus incident we asked a source in the Syrian government to give us a list of the batches the government currently had. This is why we could confirm the difference so quickly.’

The process hadn’t worked as smoothly in the spring, the former intelligence official said, because the studies done by Western intelligence ‘were inconclusive as to the type of gas it was. The word “sarin” didn’t come up. There was a great deal of discussion about this, but since no one could conclude what gas it was, you could not say that Assad had crossed the president’s red line.’ By 21 August, the former intelligence official went on, ‘the Syrian opposition clearly had learned from this and announced that “sarin” from the Syrian army had been used, before any analysis could be made, and the press and White House jumped at it. Since it now was sarin, “It had to be Assad.”’

The UK defence staff who relayed the Porton Down findings to the joint chiefs were sending the Americans a message, the former intelligence official said: ‘We’re being set up here.’ (This account made sense of a terse message a senior official in the CIA sent in late August: ‘It was not the result of the current regime. UK & US know this.’) By then the attack was a few days away and American, British and French planes, ships and submarines were at the ready.

The officer ultimately responsible for the planning and execution of the attack was General Martin Dempsey, chairman of the joint chiefs. From the beginning of the crisis, the former intelligence official said, the joint chiefs had been sceptical of the administration's argument that it had the facts to back up its belief in Assad's guilt. They pressed the DIA and other agencies for more substantial evidence. 'There was no way they thought Syria would use nerve gas at that stage, because Assad was winning the war,' the former intelligence official said. Dempsey had irritated many in the Obama administration by repeatedly warning Congress over the summer of the danger of American military involvement in Syria. Last April, after an optimistic assessment of rebel progress by the secretary of state, John Kerry, in front of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Dempsey told the Senate Armed Services Committee that 'there's a risk that this conflict has become stalemated.'

Dempsey's initial view after 21 August was that a US strike on Syria – under the assumption that the Assad government was responsible for the sarin attack – would be a military blunder, the former intelligence official said. The Porton Down report caused the joint chiefs to go to the president with a more serious worry: that the attack sought by the White House would be an unjustified act of aggression. It was the joint chiefs who led Obama to change course. The official White House explanation for the turnabout – the story the press corps told – was that the president, during a walk in the Rose Garden with Denis McDonough, his chief of staff, suddenly decided to seek approval for the strike from a bitterly divided Congress with which he'd been in conflict for years. The former Defense Department official told me that the White House provided a different explanation to members of the civilian leadership of the Pentagon: the bombing had been called off because there was intelligence 'that the Middle East would go up in smoke' if it was carried out.

The president's decision to go to Congress was initially seen by senior aides in the White House, the former intelligence official said, as a replay of George W. Bush's gambit in the autumn of 2002 before the invasion of Iraq: 'When it became clear that there were no WMD in Iraq, Congress, which had endorsed the Iraqi war, and the White House both shared the blame and repeatedly cited faulty intelligence. If the current Congress were to vote to endorse the strike, the White House could again have it both ways – wallop Syria with a massive attack and validate the president's red line commitment, while also being able to share the blame with Congress if it came out that the Syrian military wasn't behind the attack.' The turnabout came as a surprise even to the Democratic leadership in Congress. In September the *Wall Street Journal* reported that three days before his Rose Garden speech Obama had telephoned Nancy Pelosi, leader of the House Democrats, 'to talk through the options'. She later told colleagues, according to the *Journal*, that she hadn't asked the president to put the bombing to a congressional vote.

Obama's move for congressional approval quickly became a dead end. 'Congress was not going to let this go by,' the former intelligence official said. 'Congress made it known that, unlike the

authorisation for the Iraq war, there would be substantive hearings.’ At this point, there was a sense of desperation in the White House, the former intelligence official said. ‘And so out comes Plan B. Call off the bombing strike and Assad would agree to unilaterally sign the chemical warfare treaty and agree to the destruction of all of chemical weapons under UN supervision.’ At a press conference in London on 9 September, Kerry was still talking about intervention: ‘The risk of not acting is greater than the risk of acting.’ But when a reporter asked if there was anything Assad could do to stop the bombing, Kerry said: ‘Sure. He could turn over every single bit of his chemical weapons to the international community in the next week ... But he isn’t about to do it, and it can’t be done, obviously.’ As the *New York Times* reported the next day, the Russian-brokered deal that emerged shortly afterwards had first been discussed by Obama and Putin in the summer of 2012. Although the strike plans were shelved, the administration didn’t change its public assessment of the justification for going to war. ‘There is zero tolerance at that level for the existence of error,’ the former intelligence official said of the senior officials in the White House. ‘They could not afford to say: “We were wrong.”’ (The DNI spokesperson said: ‘The Assad regime, and only the Assad regime, could have been responsible for the chemical weapons attack that took place on 21 August.’)

The full extent of US co-operation with Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Qatar in assisting the rebel opposition in Syria has yet to come to light. The Obama administration has never publicly admitted to its role in creating what the CIA calls a ‘rat line’, a back channel highway into Syria. The rat line, authorised in early 2012, was used to funnel weapons and ammunition from Libya via southern Turkey and across the Syrian border to the opposition. Many of those in Syria who ultimately received the weapons were jihadists, some of them affiliated with al-Qaida. (The DNI spokesperson said: ‘The idea that the United States was providing weapons from Libya to anyone is false.’)

In January, the Senate Intelligence Committee released a report on the assault by a local militia in September 2012 on the American consulate and a nearby undercover CIA facility in Benghazi, which resulted in the death of the US ambassador, Christopher Stevens, and three others. The report’s criticism of the State Department for not providing adequate security at the consulate, and of the intelligence community for not alerting the US military to the presence of a CIA outpost in the area, received front-page coverage and revived animosities in Washington, with Republicans accusing Obama and Hillary Clinton of a cover-up. A highly classified annex to the report, not made public, described a secret agreement reached in early 2012 between the Obama and Erdoğan administrations. It pertained to the rat line. By the terms of the agreement, funding came from Turkey, as well as Saudi Arabia and Qatar; the CIA, with the support of MI6, was responsible for getting arms from Gaddafi’s arsenals into Syria. A number of front companies were set up in Libya, some under the cover of Australian entities. Retired American soldiers, who didn’t always know who was really employing them, were hired to manage procurement and shipping. The operation was run by David Petraeus, the CIA director who would soon resign

when it became known he was having an affair with his biographer. (A spokesperson for Petraeus denied the operation ever took place.)

The operation had not been disclosed at the time it was set up to the congressional intelligence committees and the congressional leadership, as required by law since the 1970s. The involvement of MI6 enabled the CIA to evade the law by classifying the mission as a liaison operation. The former intelligence official explained that for years there has been a recognised exception in the law that permits the CIA not to report liaison activity to Congress, which would otherwise be owed a finding. (All proposed CIA covert operations must be described in a written document, known as a ‘finding’, submitted to the senior leadership of Congress for approval.) Distribution of the annex was limited to the staff aides who wrote the report and to the eight ranking members of Congress – the Democratic and Republican leaders of the House and Senate, and the Democratic and Republican leaders on the House and Senate intelligence committees. This hardly constituted a genuine attempt at oversight: the eight leaders are not known to gather together to raise questions or discuss the secret information they receive.

The annex didn’t tell the whole story of what happened in Benghazi before the attack, nor did it explain why the American consulate was attacked. ‘The consulate’s only mission was to provide cover for the moving of arms,’ the former intelligence official, who has read the annex, said. ‘It had no real political role.’

Washington abruptly ended the CIA’s role in the transfer of arms from Libya after the attack on the consulate, but the rat line kept going. ‘The United States was no longer in control of what the Turks were relaying to the jihadists,’ the former intelligence official said. Within weeks, as many as forty portable surface-to-air missile launchers, commonly known as manpads, were in the hands of Syrian rebels. On 28 November 2012, Joby Warrick of the *Washington Post* reported that the previous day rebels near Aleppo had used what was almost certainly a manpad to shoot down a Syrian transport helicopter. ‘The Obama administration,’ Warrick wrote, ‘has steadfastly opposed arming Syrian opposition forces with such missiles, warning that the weapons could fall into the hands of terrorists and be used to shoot down commercial aircraft.’ Two Middle Eastern intelligence officials fingered Qatar as the source, and a former US intelligence analyst speculated that the manpads could have been obtained from Syrian military outposts overrun by the rebels. There was no indication that the rebels’ possession of manpads was likely the unintended consequence of a covert US programme that was no longer under US control.

By the end of 2012, it was believed throughout the American intelligence community that the rebels were losing the war. ‘Erdoğan was pissed,’ the former intelligence official said, ‘and felt he was left hanging on the vine. It was his money and the cut-off was seen as a betrayal.’ In spring 2013 US intelligence learned that the Turkish government – through elements of the MIT, its national intelligence agency, and the Gendarmerie, a militarised law-enforcement organisation

– was working directly with al-Nusra and its allies to develop a chemical warfare capability. ‘The MIT was running the political liaison with the rebels, and the Gendarmerie handled military logistics, on-the-scene advice and training – including training in chemical warfare,’ the former intelligence official said. ‘Stepping up Turkey’s role in spring 2013 was seen as the key to its problems there. Erdoğan knew that if he stopped his support of the jihadists it would be all over. The Saudis could not support the war because of logistics – the distances involved and the difficulty of moving weapons and supplies. Erdoğan’s hope was to instigate an event that would force the US to cross the red line. But Obama didn’t respond in March and April.’

There was no public sign of discord when Erdoğan and Obama met on 16 May 2013 at the White House. At a later press conference Obama said that they had agreed that Assad ‘needs to go’. Asked whether he thought Syria had crossed the red line, Obama acknowledged that there was evidence such weapons had been used, but added, ‘it is important for us to make sure that we’re able to get more specific information about what exactly is happening there.’ The red line was still intact.

An American foreign policy expert who speaks regularly with officials in Washington and Ankara told me about a working dinner Obama held for Erdoğan during his May visit. The meal was dominated by the Turks’ insistence that Syria had crossed the red line and their complaints that Obama was reluctant to do anything about it. Obama was accompanied by John Kerry and Tom Donilon, the national security adviser who would soon leave the job. Erdoğan was joined by Ahmet Davutoğlu, Turkey’s foreign minister, and Hakan Fidan, the head of the MIT. Fidan is known to be fiercely loyal to Erdoğan, and has been seen as a consistent backer of the radical rebel opposition in Syria.

The foreign policy expert told me that the account he heard originated with Donilon. (It was later corroborated by a former US official, who learned of it from a senior Turkish diplomat.) According to the expert, Erdoğan had sought the meeting to demonstrate to Obama that the red line had been crossed, and had brought Fidan along to state the case. When Erdoğan tried to draw Fidan into the conversation, and Fidan began speaking, Obama cut him off and said: ‘We know.’ Erdoğan tried to bring Fidan in a second time, and Obama again cut him off and said: ‘We know.’ At that point, an exasperated Erdoğan said, ‘But your red line has been crossed!’ and, the expert told me, ‘Donilon said Erdoğan “fucking waved his finger at the president inside the White House”.’ Obama then pointed at Fidan and said: ‘We know what you’re doing with the radicals in Syria.’ (Donilon, who joined the Council on Foreign Relations last July, didn’t respond to questions about this story. The Turkish Foreign Ministry didn’t respond to questions about the dinner. A spokesperson for the National Security Council confirmed that the dinner took place and provided a photograph showing Obama, Kerry, Donilon, Erdoğan, Fidan and Davutoğlu sitting at a table. ‘Beyond that,’ she said, ‘I’m not going to read out the details of their discussions.’)

But Erdoğan did not leave empty handed. Obama was still permitting Turkey to continue to exploit a loophole in a presidential executive order prohibiting the export of gold to Iran, part of the US sanctions regime against the country. In March 2012, responding to sanctions of Iranian banks by the EU, the SWIFT electronic payment system, which facilitates cross-border payments, expelled dozens of Iranian financial institutions, severely restricting the country's ability to conduct international trade. The US followed with the executive order in July, but left what came to be known as a 'golden loophole': gold shipments to private Iranian entities could continue. Turkey is a major purchaser of Iranian oil and gas, and it took advantage of the loophole by depositing its energy payments in Turkish lira in an Iranian account in Turkey; these funds were then used to purchase Turkish gold for export to confederates in Iran. Gold to the value of \$13 billion reportedly entered Iran in this way between March 2012 and July 2013.

The programme quickly became a cash cow for corrupt politicians and traders in Turkey, Iran and the United Arab Emirates. 'The middlemen did what they always do,' the former intelligence official said. 'Take 15 per cent. The CIA had estimated that there was as much as two billion dollars in skim. Gold and Turkish lira were sticking to fingers.' The illicit skimming flared into a public 'gas for gold' scandal in Turkey in December, and resulted in charges against two dozen people, including prominent businessmen and relatives of government officials, as well as the resignations of three ministers, one of whom called for Erdoğan to resign. The chief executive of a Turkish state-controlled bank that was in the middle of the scandal insisted that more than \$4.5 million in cash found by police in shoeboxes during a search of his home was for charitable donations.

Late last year Jonathan Schanzer and Mark Dubowitz reported in *Foreign Policy* that the Obama administration closed the golden loophole in January 2013, but 'lobbied to make sure the legislation ... did not take effect for six months'. They speculated that the administration wanted to use the delay as an incentive to bring Iran to the bargaining table over its nuclear programme, or to placate its Turkish ally in the Syrian civil war. The delay permitted Iran to 'accrue billions of dollars more in gold, further undermining the sanctions regime'.

The American decision to end CIA support of the weapons shipments into Syria left Erdoğan exposed politically and militarily. 'One of the issues at that May summit was the fact that Turkey is the only avenue to supply the rebels in Syria,' the former intelligence official said. 'It can't come through Jordan because the terrain in the south is wide open and the Syrians are all over it. And it can't come through the valleys and hills of Lebanon – you can't be sure who you'd meet on the other side.' Without US military support for the rebels, the former intelligence official said, 'Erdoğan's dream of having a client state in Syria is evaporating and he thinks we're the reason why. When Syria wins the war, he knows the rebels are just as likely to turn on him – where else can they go? So now he will have thousands of radicals in his backyard.'

A US intelligence consultant told me that a few weeks before 21 August he saw a highly classified briefing prepared for Dempsey and the defense secretary, Chuck Hagel, which described ‘the acute anxiety’ of the Erdoğan administration about the rebels’ dwindling prospects. The analysis warned that the Turkish leadership had expressed ‘the need to do something that would precipitate a US military response’. By late summer, the Syrian army still had the advantage over the rebels, the former intelligence official said, and only American air power could turn the tide. In the autumn, the former intelligence official went on, the US intelligence analysts who kept working on the events of 21 August ‘sensed that Syria had not done the gas attack. But the 500 pound gorilla was, how did it happen? The immediate suspect was the Turks, because they had all the pieces to make it happen.’

As intercepts and other data related to the 21 August attacks were gathered, the intelligence community saw evidence to support its suspicions. ‘We now know it was a covert action planned by Erdoğan’s people to push Obama over the red line,’ the former intelligence official said. ‘They had to escalate to a gas attack in or near Damascus when the UN inspectors’ – who arrived in Damascus on 18 August to investigate the earlier use of gas – ‘were there. The deal was to do something spectacular. Our senior military officers have been told by the DIA and other intelligence assets that the sarin was supplied through Turkey – that it could only have gotten there with Turkish support. The Turks also provided the training in producing the sarin and handling it.’ Much of the support for that assessment came from the Turks themselves, via intercepted conversations in the immediate aftermath of the attack. ‘Principal evidence came from the Turkish post-attack joy and back-slapping in numerous intercepts. Operations are always so super-secret in the planning but that all flies out the window when it comes to crowing afterwards. There is no greater vulnerability than in the perpetrators claiming credit for success.’ Erdoğan’s problems in Syria would soon be over: ‘Off goes the gas and Obama will say red line and America is going to attack Syria, or at least that was the idea. But it did not work out that way.’

The post-attack intelligence on Turkey did not make its way to the White House. ‘Nobody wants to talk about all this,’ the former intelligence official told me. ‘There is great reluctance to contradict the president, although no all-source intelligence community analysis supported his leap to convict. There has not been one single piece of additional evidence of Syrian involvement in the sarin attack produced by the White House since the bombing raid was called off. My government can’t say anything because we have acted so irresponsibly. And since we blamed Assad, we can’t go back and blame Erdoğan.’

Turkey’s willingness to manipulate events in Syria to its own purposes seemed to be demonstrated late last month, a few days before a round of local elections, when a recording, allegedly of a government national security meeting, was posted to YouTube. It included discussion of a false-flag operation that would justify an incursion by the Turkish military in

Syria. The operation centred on the tomb of Suleyman Shah, the grandfather of the revered Osman I, founder of the Ottoman Empire, which is near Aleppo and was ceded to Turkey in 1921, when Syria was under French rule. One of the Islamist rebel factions was threatening to destroy the tomb as a site of idolatry, and the Erdoğan administration was publicly threatening retaliation if harm came to it. According to a Reuters report of the leaked conversation, a voice alleged to be Fidan's spoke of creating a provocation: 'Now look, my commander, if there is to be justification, the justification is I send four men to the other side. I get them to fire eight missiles into empty land [in the vicinity of the tomb]. That's not a problem. Justification can be created.' The Turkish government acknowledged that there had been a national security meeting about threats emanating from Syria, but said the recording had been manipulated. The government subsequently blocked public access to YouTube.

Barring a major change in policy by Obama, Turkey's meddling in the Syrian civil war is likely to go on. 'I asked my colleagues if there was any way to stop Erdoğan's continued support for the rebels, especially now that it's going so wrong,' the former intelligence official told me. 'The answer was: "We're screwed." We could go public if it was somebody other than Erdoğan, but Turkey is a special case. They're a Nato ally. The Turks don't trust the West. They can't live with us if we take any active role against Turkish interests. If we went public with what we know about Erdoğan's role with the gas, it'd be disastrous. The Turks would say: "We hate you for telling us what we can and can't do."'"

Report: Obama lied about bin Laden raid

By Mark Hensch May 10, 2015, 03:37 pm

New report alleges that President Obama deceived Americans with his narrative of the 2011 assassination of Osama bin Laden.

Author Seymour Hersh accuses Obama of rushing to take credit for the al Qaeda leader's death.

This decision, Hersh argues in the *London Review of Books*, forced the military and intelligence communities to scramble and then corroborate the president's version of events.

"High-level lying nonetheless remains the modus operandi of U.S. policy, along with secret prisons, drone attacks, Special Forces night raids, bypassing the chain of command, and cutting out those who might say no," Hersh wrote of the Obama administration's counterterrorism policies.

Hersh based his report on a single, anonymous source. This individual, he said, is a "retired senior intelligence official who was knowledgeable about the initial intelligence about bin Laden's presence in Abbottabad."

Hersh's source alleged that the Pakistani government had an active role in approving and implementing the raid on bin Laden's compound.

In addition, the source said that the Obama administration originally agreed to announce bin Laden had been killed in a drone strike rather than shot during an active Special Forces mission.

“Obama’s speech was put together in a rush,” Hersh wrote of Obama’s announcement of Operation Neptune Spear to Americans.

“This series of self-serving and inaccurate statements would create chaos in the weeks following,” he added.

“This was not the fog of war,” Hersh quoted his anonymous source as saying.

“The fact that there was an agreement with the Pakistanis and no contingency analysis of what was to be disclosed if something went wrong – that wasn’t even discussed,” the source added.

“And once it went wrong, they had to make up a new cover story on the fly,” the source said of Obama’s advisers’ response to his speech on the raid, Hersh wrote.

Hersh’s report also accuses the Obama administration of embellishing the details of the raid itself and presenting al Qaeda as a bigger threat than it actually was before bin Laden’s death.

Hersh on Monday [defended the report](#) after a big blowback; critics have called the report thinly sourced and questions have been raised about inconsistencies within the piece.

The White House, for example, on Monday [panned the report](#).

"There are too many inaccuracies and baseless assertions in this piece to fact check each one," White House National Security Council spokesman Ned Price said in a statement shared with The Hill.

“Every sentence I was reading was wrong,” former acting CIA Director Michael Morell added Monday on “CBS This Morning.”

“The source that Hersh talked to has no idea what he’s talking about. The person obviously was not close to what happened," he added. "The Pakistanis did not know. The president made a decision not to tell the Pakistanis. The Pakistanis were furious with us. The president sent me to Pakistan after the raids to start smoothing things over.”

Investigative journalist Seymour Hersh on Monday defended his 10,000-plus-word expose alleging the Obama administration mischaracterized many details surrounding the death of Osama bin Laden.

"I've been around a long time," Hersh said on CNN's "New Day," adding, "I understand the consequences of saying what I'm saying."

"I'm waiting for the White House to deny the story," he added later.

Hersh's piece, [published Sunday](#) in the *London Review of Books*, alleges that the narrative pushed by the Obama administration following the 2011 death of bin Laden was mainly false.

The article alleged that Pakistan knew the whereabouts of the former al Qaeda mastermind and that U.S. leaders mischaracterized the raid leading to bin Laden's death as including a "firefight."

It also paints President Obama as rushing to take credit for the death of bin Laden a year before reelection, forcing the military and intelligence communities to offer complementing details to form the narrative.

Hersh based much of his account on a "retired senior intelligence official who was knowledgeable about the initial intelligence about bin Laden's presence in Abbottabad."

"I don't think that's correct to say one anonymous source," Hersh said on CNN. "The story says clearly that I was able to vet and verify information with others in the community. It's very tough for guys still inside to get quoted extensively."

CNN host Chris Cuomo challenged Hersh on many details in the account, such as the Navy SEALs who raided the Abbottabad compound training at a former nuclear test site in Utah, as originally suggested.

"If I'm wrong about Utah, that's just a mistake, because I know exactly where they were in Nevada. But sometimes, my geography gets lousy," Hersh said.

The story has since been updated to reflect that the SEALs trained in Nevada.

Cuomo also pushed Hersh for additional details of how a former senior Pakistani intelligence officer could simply walk into the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad and offer information on bin Laden's whereabouts.

"I don't know the details of how he walked in," Hersh said.

While the White House has not commented on the story, one former administration official has panned it.

"Every sentence I was reading was wrong," Michael Morell, the former, two-time acting director of the CIA, said Monday on "CBS This Morning."

"The source that Hersh talked to has no idea what he's talking about," Morell said. "The person obviously was not close to what happened. The Pakistanis did not know."

"The president made a decision not to tell the Pakistanis. The Pakistanis were furious with us. The president sent me to Pakistan after the raid to try to start smoothing things over," Morell added.

"Nobody's perfect. Of course everybody's done bad stories," Hersh, a regular contributor to *The New Yorker* who has won many journalism awards, said on CNN.

Hersh added, however, that he was "not out on a limb" on his most recent story.

Seymour Hersh: Obama's Entire Account Of bin Laden's Death Is One Big Lie; This Is What Really Happened

Submitted by [Tyler Durden](#) on 05/11/2015 10:23 -0400

The last time famed US investigative journalist [Seymour Hersh](#) made news in the global media was with his massive, 5000-word expose from December of 2013 "[Whose sarin?](#)" revealing the true motives behind the Syrian near-war of 2013 including what we had said from the very beginning: the very professionally created YouTube clips showing the consequences of what was said to have been an Assad poison gas attack, were nothing but a fake (subsequent reports identified the propaganda source as [Rami Abdul Rahman](#) of the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, whose entire operation has been funded by an unidentified European country.)

Fast forward to today when in a report whose word count doubles his previous record for the London Review of Books, Hersh targets a topic near and dear to the hearts of many Americans: the story of the capture and death of Osama bin Laden. Or rather the completely false and, according to Hersh, fabricated story, one made up entirely by the US president and spoon fed for popular consumption with the aid of a Hollywood blockbuster whose entire plot line is, if Hersh is correct, one big lie as well.

In a nutshell, and one really needs to read Hersh's magnum opus as no amount of abbreviation will do it justice, Hersh accuses Obama of not only taking credit for the al Qaeda leader's death, but fabricating the story that resulted from what has been widely reported to have been a Navy seal incursion into bin Laden's Abbottabad compound in Pakistan. As a result the military and intelligence communities were forced to scramble and then corroborate the president's version of events.

Hersh uses several sources for his refutation of the official narrative, including Asad Durrani, who was head of the Pakistani Inter-Service Intelligence agency in the early 1990s, as well as various American sources, of which the major source "is a retired senior intelligence official who was knowledgeable about the initial intelligence about bin Laden's presence in Abbottabad. He also was privy to many aspects of the Seals' training for the raid, and to the various after-action reports."

Hersh also uses two other US sources, who had access to corroborating information, have been longtime consultants to the Special Operations Command, and also had information "from inside Pakistan about widespread dismay among the senior ISI and military leadership – echoed later by Durrani – over Obama's decision to go public immediately with news of bin Laden's death."

Needless to say, the White House did not respond to Hersh's requests for comment.

Among the many allegations of Hersh's report are that:

- bin Laden had been a prisoner of the Pakistan intelligence at the Abbottabad compound since 2006 (something revealed previously in "[Osama bin Laden 'protected by Pakistan in return for Saudi cash'](#)")

- that the two most senior Pakistani military leaders knew of the raid in advance and had made sure that the two helicopters delivering the Seals to Abbottabad could cross Pakistani airspace without triggering any alarms;
- that the CIA did not learn of bin Laden's whereabouts by tracking his couriers, as the White House has claimed since May 2011, but from a former senior Pakistani intelligence officer who betrayed the secret in return for much of the \$25 million reward offered by the US,
- and that, while Obama did order the raid and the Seal team did carry it out, many other aspects of the administration's account were false.

Hersh notes that the Obama administration originally agreed to announce bin Laden had been killed in a drone strike rather than shot during an active Special Forces mission:

... a carefully constructed cover story would be issued: Obama would announce that DNA analysis confirmed that bin Laden had been killed in a drone raid in the Hindu Kush, on Afghanistan's side of the border. The Americans who planned the mission assured Kayani and Pasha that their co-operation would never be made public. It was understood by all that if the Pakistani role became known, there would be violent protests – bin Laden was considered a hero by many Pakistanis – and Pasha and Kayani and their families would be in danger, and the Pakistani army publicly disgraced.

It was clear to all by this point, the retired official said, that bin Laden would not survive: 'Pasha told us at a meeting in April that he could not risk leaving bin Laden in the compound now that we know he's there. Too many people in the Pakistani chain of command know about the mission. He and Kayani had to tell the whole story to the directors of the air defence command and to a few local commanders.

At the end bin Laden was murdered, plain and simple:

'Of course the guys knew the target was bin Laden and he was there under Pakistani control,' the retired official said. 'Otherwise, they would not have done the mission without air cover. It was clearly and absolutely a premeditated murder.' A former Seal commander, who has led and participated in dozens of similar missions over the past decade, assured me that *'we were not going to keep bin Laden alive – to allow the terrorist to live. By law, we know what we're doing inside Pakistan is a homicide. We've come to grips with that. Each one of us, when we do these missions, say to ourselves, "Let's face it. We're going to commit a murder."'* The White House's initial account claimed that bin Laden had been brandishing a weapon; the story was aimed at deflecting those who questioned the legality of the US administration's targeted assassination programme. **The US has consistently maintained, despite widely reported remarks by people involved with the mission, that bin Laden would have been taken alive if he had immediately surrendered.** Then the original plan was foiled, when Obama decided to make things up on the fly, not least of all because of the downed helicopter whose flaming end scuttled the original narrative: *Should Obama stand by the agreement with Kayani and Pasha and pretend a week or so later that bin Laden had been killed in a drone attack in the mountains, or should he go public immediately? The downed helicopter made it easy for Obama's political advisers to urge the latter plan. The explosion and fireball would be impossible to hide, and word of what had*

happened was bound to leak. Obama had to 'get out in front of the story' before someone in the Pentagon did: waiting would diminish the political impact.

Obama's speech was put together in a rush, the retired official said, and was viewed by his advisers as a political document, not a message that needed to be submitted for clearance to the national security bureaucracy. This series of self-serving and inaccurate statements would create chaos in the weeks following.

The widely distributed story involving the Navy seals was also fabricated:

*Obama also praised 'a small team of Americans' for their care in avoiding civilian deaths and said: 'After a firefight, they killed Osama bin Laden and took custody of his body.' Two more details now had to be supplied for the cover story: a description of the firefight that never happened, and a story about what happened to the corpse. Obama went on to praise the Pakistanis: 'It's important to note that our counterterrorism co-operation with Pakistan helped lead us to bin Laden and the compound where he was hiding.' That statement risked exposing Kayani and Pasha. The White House's solution was to ignore what Obama had said and order anyone talking to the press to insist that the Pakistanis had played no role in killing bin Laden. Obama left the clear impression that he and his advisers hadn't known for sure that bin Laden was in Abbottabad, but only had information 'about the possibility'. This led first to the story that the Seals had determined they'd killed the right man by having a six-foot-tall Seal lie next to the corpse for comparison (bin Laden was known to be six foot four); and then to the claim that a DNA test had been performed on the corpse and demonstrated conclusively that the Seals had killed bin Laden. **But, according to the retired official, it wasn't clear from the Seals' early reports whether all of bin Laden's body, or any of it, made it back to Afghanistan.***

As a result of Obama's rash decision to improvise lies, the seal had to be silenced:

*The White House's solution was to silence the Seals. On 5 May, every member of the Seal hit team – they had returned to their base in southern Virginia – **and some members of the Joint Special Operations Command leadership were presented with a nondisclosure form drafted by the White House's legal office; it promised civil penalties and a lawsuit for anyone who discussed the mission, in public or private.** 'The Seals were not happy,' the retired official said. But most of them kept quiet, as did Admiral William McRaven, who was then in charge of JSOC. 'McRaven was apoplectic. He knew he was fucked by the White House, but he's a dyed-in-the-wool Seal, and not then a political operator, and he knew there's no glory in blowing the whistle on the president. When **Obama went public with bin Laden's death, everyone had to scramble around for a new story that made sense, and the planners were stuck holding the bag.**'*

There is much more on how the White House and the Pentagon scrambled to make up a narrative that made sense in light of Obama's improvisation in Hersh's entire story below, and as Hersh notes, "**it was inevitable that the Obama administration's lies, misstatements and betrayals would create a backlash.**" But what about the CIA's report on torture and the resultant "transformations" in the US secret service? Well, simple: according to Hersh "the report was a victory for the CIA. Its major finding – that the use of torture didn't lead to discovering the truth – had already been the subject of public debate for more than a decade."

The Senate Intelligence Committee's long-delayed report on CIA torture, released last December, documented repeated instances of official lying, and suggested that the CIA's

knowledge of bin Laden's courier was sketchy at best and predated its use of waterboarding and other forms of torture. The report led to international headlines about brutality and waterboarding, along with gruesome details about rectal feeding tubes, ice baths and threats to rape or murder family members of detainees who were believed to be withholding information. Despite the bad publicity, the report was a victory for the CIA. Its major finding – that the use of torture didn't lead to discovering the truth – had already been the subject of public debate for more than a decade. Another key finding – that the torture conducted was more brutal than Congress had been told – was risible, given the extent of public reporting and published exposés by former interrogators and retired CIA officers. The report depicted tortures that were obviously contrary to international law as violations of rules or 'inappropriate activities' or, in some cases, 'management failures'. Whether the actions described constitute war crimes was not discussed, and the report did not suggest that any of the CIA interrogators or their superiors should be investigated for criminal activity. The agency faced no meaningful consequences as a result of the report.

*The retired official told me that the CIA leadership had become experts in derailing serious threats from Congress: **'They create something that is horrible but not that bad. Give them something that sounds terrible. "Oh my God, we were shoving food up a prisoner's ass!" Meanwhile, they're not telling the committee about murders, other war crimes, and secret prisons like we still have in Diego Garcia. The goal also was to stall it as long as possible, which they did.'***

Fast forwarding to Hersh's conclusion, none of it should come as a surprise to anyone who has put in more than a second of thought into the now daily lies spewed by the various US government branches in its endless attempt to preserve Pax American around the globe and Pax NSA within the US police state:

*Obama today is not facing re-election as he was in the spring of 2011. His principled stand on behalf of the proposed nuclear agreement with Iran says much, as does his decision to operate without the support of the conservative Republicans in Congress. **High-level lying nevertheless remains the modus operandi of US policy, along with secret prisons, drone attacks, Special Forces night raids, bypassing the chain of command, and cutting out those who might say no.***

No, Obama is not facing re-election. Unfortunately, the person under whose watch the bin Laden "raid" took place, Hillary Clinton, is facing election. And sadly for America, once she takes over Obama's throne, the surge in high-level lying, secret prisons, drone attacks, immunity from checks and balances and forced silencing of all naysayers, no matter the coast, will truly show the world what happens when a former superpower enters its terminal decline phase.



The Killing of Osama bin Laden

Seymour M. Hersh

It's been four years since a group of US Navy SEALs assassinated Osama bin Laden in a night raid on a high-walled compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan. The killing was the high point of Obama's first term, and a major factor in his re-election. The White House still maintains that the mission was an all-American affair, and that the senior generals of Pakistan's army and Inter-Services Intelligence agency (ISI) were not told of the raid in advance. This is false, as are many other elements of the Obama administration's account. The White House's story might have been written by Lewis Carroll: would bin Laden, target of a massive international manhunt, really decide that a resort town forty miles from Islamabad would be the safest place to live and command al-Qaida's operations? He was hiding in the open. So America said.

The most blatant lie was that Pakistan's two most senior military leaders – General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani, chief of the army staff, and General Ahmed Shuja Pasha, director general of the ISI – were never informed of the US mission. This remains the White House position despite an array of reports that have raised questions, including one by Carlotta Gall in the *New York Times Magazine* of 19 March 2014. Gall, who spent 12 years as the *Times* correspondent in Afghanistan, wrote that she'd been told by a 'Pakistani official' that Pasha had known before the raid that bin Laden was in Abbottabad. The story was denied by US and Pakistani officials, and went no further. In his book *Pakistan: Before and after Osama* (2012), Imtiaz Gul, executive director of the Centre for Research and Security Studies, a think tank in Islamabad, wrote that he'd spoken to four undercover intelligence officers who – reflecting a widely held local view – asserted that the Pakistani military must have had knowledge of the operation. The issue was raised again in February, when a retired general, Asad Durrani, who was head of the ISI in the early 1990s, told an al-Jazeera interviewer that it was 'quite possible' that the senior officers of the ISI did not know where bin Laden had been hiding, 'but it was more probable that they did [know]. And the idea was that, at the right time, his location would be revealed. And the right

time would have been when you can get the necessary quid pro quo – if you have someone like Osama bin Laden, you are not going to simply hand him over to the United States.’

This spring I contacted Durrani and told him in detail what I had learned about the bin Laden assault from American sources: that bin Laden had been a prisoner of the ISI at the Abbottabad compound since 2006; that Kayani and Pasha knew of the raid in advance and had made sure that the two helicopters delivering the Seals to Abbottabad could cross Pakistani airspace without triggering any alarms; that the CIA did not learn of bin Laden’s whereabouts by tracking his couriers, as the White House has claimed since May 2011, but from a former senior Pakistani intelligence officer who betrayed the secret in return for much of the \$25 million reward offered by the US, and that, while Obama did order the raid and the Seal team did carry it out, many other aspects of the administration’s account were false.

‘When your version comes out – if you do it – people in Pakistan will be tremendously grateful,’ Durrani told me. ‘For a long time people have stopped trusting what comes out about bin Laden from the official mouths. There will be some negative political comment and some anger, but people like to be told the truth, and what you’ve told me is essentially what I have heard from former colleagues who have been on a fact-finding mission since this episode.’ As a former ISI head, he said, he had been told shortly after the raid by ‘people in the “strategic community” who would know’ that there had been an informant who had alerted the US to bin Laden’s presence in Abbottabad, and that after his killing the US’s betrayed promises left Kayani and Pasha exposed.

The major US source for the account that follows is a retired senior intelligence official who was knowledgeable about the initial intelligence about bin Laden’s presence in Abbottabad. He also was privy to many aspects of the Seals’ training for the raid, and to the various after-action reports. Two other US sources, who had access to corroborating information, have been longtime consultants to the Special Operations Command. I also received information from inside Pakistan about widespread dismay among the senior ISI and military leadership – echoed later by Durrani – over Obama’s decision to go public immediately with news of bin Laden’s death. The White House did not respond to requests for comment.

It began with a walk-in. In August 2010 a former senior Pakistani intelligence officer approached Jonathan Bank, then the CIA’s station chief at the US embassy in Islamabad. He offered to tell the CIA where to find bin Laden in return for the reward that Washington had offered in 2001. Walk-ins are assumed by the CIA to be unreliable, and the response from the agency’s headquarters was to fly in a polygraph team. The walk-in passed the test. ‘So now we’ve got a lead on bin Laden living in a compound in Abbottabad, but how do we really know who it is?’ was the CIA’s worry at the time, the retired senior US intelligence official told me.

The US initially kept what it knew from the Pakistanis. ‘The fear was that if the existence of the source was made known, the Pakistanis themselves would move bin Laden to another location. So only a very small number of people were read into the source and his story,’ the retired official said. ‘The CIA’s first goal was to check out the quality of the informant’s information.’ The compound was put under satellite surveillance. The CIA rented a house in Abbottabad to use as a forward observation base and staffed it with Pakistani employees and foreign nationals. Later on, the base would serve as a contact point with the ISI; it attracted little attention because

Abbottabad is a holiday spot full of houses rented on short leases. A psychological profile of the informant was prepared. (The informant and his family were smuggled out of Pakistan and relocated in the Washington area. He is now a consultant for the CIA.)

‘By October the military and intelligence community were discussing the possible military options. Do we drop a bunker buster on the compound or take him out with a drone strike? Perhaps send someone to kill him, single assassin style? But then we’d have no proof of who he was,’ the retired official said. ‘We could see some guy is walking around at night, but we have no intercepts because there’s no comms coming from the compound.’

In October, Obama was briefed on the intelligence. His response was cautious, the retired official said. ‘It just made no sense that bin Laden was living in Abbottabad. It was just too crazy. The president’s position was emphatic: “Don’t talk to me about this any more unless you have proof that it really is bin Laden.”’ The immediate goal of the CIA leadership and the Joint Special Operations Command was to get Obama’s support. They believed they would get this if they got DNA evidence, and if they could assure him that a night assault of the compound would carry no risk. The only way to accomplish both things, the retired official said, ‘was to get the Pakistanis on board’.

During the late autumn of 2010, the US continued to keep quiet about the walk-in, and Kayani and Pasha continued to insist to their American counterparts that they had no information about bin Laden’s whereabouts. ‘The next step was to figure out how to ease Kayani and Pasha into it – to tell them that we’ve got intelligence showing that there is a high-value target in the compound, and to ask them what they know about the target,’ the retired official said. ‘The compound was not an armed enclave – no machine guns around, because it was under ISI control.’ The walk-in had told the US that bin Laden had lived undetected from 2001 to 2006 with some of his wives and children in the Hindu Kush mountains, and that ‘the ISI got to him by paying some of the local tribal people to betray him.’ (Reports after the raid placed him elsewhere in Pakistan during this period.) Bank was also told by the walk-in that bin Laden was very ill, and that early on in his confinement at Abbottabad, the ISI had ordered Amir Aziz, a doctor and a major in the Pakistani army, to move nearby to provide treatment. ‘The truth is that bin Laden was an invalid, but we cannot say that,’ the retired official said. “‘You mean you guys shot a cripple? Who was about to grab his AK-47?’”

‘It didn’t take long to get the co-operation we needed, because the Pakistanis wanted to ensure the continued release of American military aid, a good percentage of which was anti-terrorism funding that finances personal security, such as bullet-proof limousines and security guards and housing for the ISI leadership,’ the retired official said. He added that there were also under-the-table personal ‘incentives’ that were financed by off-the-books Pentagon contingency funds. ‘The intelligence community knew what the Pakistanis needed to agree – there was the carrot. And they chose the carrot. It was a win-win. We also did a little blackmail. We told them we would leak the fact that you’ve got bin Laden in your backyard. We knew their friends and enemies’ – the Taliban and jihadist groups in Pakistan and Afghanistan – ‘would not like it.’

A worrying factor at this early point, according to the retired official, was Saudi Arabia, which had been financing bin Laden’s upkeep since his seizure by the Pakistanis. ‘The Saudis didn’t

want bin Laden's presence revealed to us because he was a Saudi, and so they told the Pakistanis to keep him out of the picture. The Saudis feared if we knew we would pressure the Pakistanis to let bin Laden start talking to us about what the Saudis had been doing with al-Qaida. And they were dropping money – lots of it. The Pakistanis, in turn, were concerned that the Saudis might spill the beans about their control of bin Laden. The fear was that if the US found out about bin Laden from Riyadh, all hell would break out. The Americans learning about bin Laden's imprisonment from a walk-in was not the worst thing.'

Despite their constant public feuding, American and Pakistani military and intelligence services have worked together closely for decades on counterterrorism in South Asia. Both services often find it useful to engage in public feuds 'to cover their asses', as the retired official put it, but they continually share intelligence used for drone attacks, and co-operate on covert operations. At the same time, it's understood in Washington that elements of the ISI believe that maintaining a relationship with the Taliban leadership inside Afghanistan is essential to national security. The ISI's strategic aim is to balance Indian influence in Kabul; the Taliban is also seen in Pakistan as a source of jihadist shock troops who would back Pakistan against India in a confrontation over Kashmir.

Adding to the tension was the Pakistani nuclear arsenal, often depicted in the Western press as an 'Islamic bomb' that might be transferred by Pakistan to an embattled nation in the Middle East in the event of a crisis with Israel. The US looked the other way when Pakistan began building its weapons system in the 1970s and it's widely believed it now has more than a hundred nuclear warheads. It's understood in Washington that US security depends on the maintenance of strong military and intelligence ties to Pakistan. The belief is mirrored in Pakistan.

'The Pakistani army sees itself as family,' the retired official said. 'Officers call soldiers their sons and all officers are "brothers". The attitude is different in the American military. The senior Pakistani officers believe they are the elite and have got to look out for all of the people, as keepers of the flame against Muslim fundamentalism. The Pakistanis also know that their trump card against aggression from India is a strong relationship with the United States. They will never cut their person-to-person ties with us.'

Like all CIA station chiefs, Bank was working undercover, but that ended in early December 2010 when he was publicly accused of murder in a criminal complaint filed in Islamabad by Karim Khan, a Pakistani journalist whose son and brother, according to local news reports, had been killed by a US drone strike. Allowing Bank to be named was a violation of diplomatic protocol on the part of the Pakistani authorities, and it brought a wave of unwanted publicity. Bank was ordered to leave Pakistan by the CIA, whose officials subsequently told the Associated Press he was transferred because of concerns for his safety. The *New York Times* reported that there was 'strong suspicion' the ISI had played a role in leaking Bank's name to Khan. There was speculation that he was outed as payback for the publication in a New York lawsuit a month earlier of the names of ISI chiefs in connection with the Mumbai terrorist attacks of 2008. But there was a collateral reason, the retired official said, for the CIA's willingness to send Bank back to America. The Pakistanis needed cover in case their co-operation with the Americans in getting rid of bin Laden became known. The Pakistanis could say: "You're talking about me? We just kicked out your station chief."

The bin Laden compound was less than two miles from the Pakistan Military Academy, and a Pakistani army combat battalion headquarters was another mile or so away. Abbottabad is less than 15 minutes by helicopter from Tarbela Ghazi, an important base for ISI covert operations and the facility where those who guard Pakistan's nuclear weapons arsenal are trained. 'Ghazi is why the ISI put bin Laden in Abbottabad in the first place,' the retired official said, 'to keep him under constant supervision.'

The risks for Obama were high at this early stage, especially because there was a troubling precedent: the failed 1980 attempt to rescue the American hostages in Tehran. That failure was a factor in Jimmy Carter's loss to Ronald Reagan. Obama's worries were realistic, the retired official said. 'Was bin Laden ever there? Was the whole story a product of Pakistani deception? What about political blowback in case of failure?' After all, as the retired official said, 'If the mission fails, Obama's just a black Jimmy Carter and it's all over for re-election.'

Obama was anxious for reassurance that the US was going to get the right man. The proof was to come in the form of bin Laden's DNA. The planners turned for help to Kayani and Pasha, who asked Aziz to obtain the specimens. Soon after the raid the press found out that Aziz had been living in a house near the bin Laden compound: local reporters discovered his name in Urdu on a plate on the door. Pakistani officials denied that Aziz had any connection to bin Laden, but the retired official told me that Aziz had been rewarded with a share of the \$25 million reward the US had put up because the DNA sample had showed conclusively that it was bin Laden in Abbottabad. (In his subsequent testimony to a Pakistani commission investigating the bin Laden raid, Aziz said that he had witnessed the attack on Abbottabad, but had no knowledge of who was living in the compound and had been ordered by a superior officer to stay away from the scene.)

Bargaining continued over the way the mission would be executed. 'Kayani eventually tells us yes, but he says you can't have a big strike force. You have to come in lean and mean. And you have to kill him, or there is no deal,' the retired official said. The agreement was struck by the end of January 2011, and Joint Special Operations Command prepared a list of questions to be answered by the Pakistanis: 'How can we be assured of no outside intervention? What are the defences inside the compound and its exact dimensions? Where are bin Laden's rooms and exactly how big are they? How many steps in the stairway? Where are the doors to his rooms, and are they reinforced with steel? How thick?' The Pakistanis agreed to permit a four-man American cell – a Navy Seal, a CIA case officer and two communications specialists – to set up a liaison office at Tarbela Ghazi for the coming assault. By then, the military had constructed a mock-up of the compound in Abbottabad at a secret former nuclear test site in Nevada, and an elite Seal team had begun rehearsing for the attack.

The US had begun to cut back on aid to Pakistan – to 'turn off the spigot', in the retired official's words. The provision of 18 new F-16 fighter aircraft was delayed, and under-the-table cash payments to the senior leaders were suspended. In April 2011 Pasha met the CIA director, Leon Panetta, at agency headquarters. 'Pasha got a commitment that the United States would turn the money back on, and we got a guarantee that there would be no Pakistani opposition during the mission,' the retired official said. 'Pasha also insisted that Washington stop complaining about Pakistan's lack of co-operation with the American war on terrorism.' At one point that spring,

Pasha offered the Americans a blunt explanation of the reason Pakistan kept bin Laden's capture a secret, and why it was imperative for the ISI role to remain secret: 'We needed a hostage to keep tabs on al-Qaida and the Taliban,' Pasha said, according to the retired official. 'The ISI was using bin Laden as leverage against Taliban and al-Qaida activities inside Afghanistan and Pakistan. They let the Taliban and al-Qaida leadership know that if they ran operations that clashed with the interests of the ISI, they would turn bin Laden over to us. So if it became known that the Pakistanis had worked with us to get bin Laden at Abbottabad, there would be hell to pay.'

At one of his meetings with Panetta, according to the retired official and a source within the CIA, Pasha was asked by a senior CIA official whether he saw himself as acting in essence as an agent for al-Qaida and the Taliban. 'He answered no, but said the ISI needed to have some control.' The message, as the CIA saw it, according to the retired official, was that Kayani and Pasha viewed bin Laden 'as a resource, and they were more interested in their [own] survival than they were in the United States'.

A Pakistani with close ties to the senior leadership of the ISI told me that 'there was a deal with your top guys. We were very reluctant, but it had to be done – not because of personal enrichment, but because all of the American aid programmes would be cut off. Your guys said we will starve you out if you don't do it, and the okay was given while Pasha was in Washington. The deal was not only to keep the taps open, but Pasha was told there would be more goodies for us.' The Pakistani said that Pasha's visit also resulted in a commitment from the US to give Pakistan 'a freer hand' in Afghanistan as it began its military draw-down there. 'And so our top dogs justified the deal by saying this is for our country.'

Pasha and Kayani were responsible for ensuring that Pakistan's army and air defence command would not track or engage with the US helicopters used on the mission. The American cell at Tarbela Ghazi was charged with co-ordinating communications between the ISI, the senior US officers at their command post in Afghanistan, and the two Black Hawk helicopters; the goal was to ensure that no stray Pakistani fighter plane on border patrol spotted the intruders and took action to stop them. The initial plan said that news of the raid shouldn't be announced straightaway. All units in the Joint Special Operations Command operate under stringent secrecy and the JSOC leadership believed, as did Kayani and Pasha, that the killing of bin Laden would not be made public for as long as seven days, maybe longer. Then a carefully constructed cover story would be issued: Obama would announce that DNA analysis confirmed that bin Laden had been killed in a drone raid in the Hindu Kush, on Afghanistan's side of the border. The Americans who planned the mission assured Kayani and Pasha that their co-operation would never be made public. It was understood by all that if the Pakistani role became known, there would be violent protests – bin Laden was considered a hero by many Pakistanis – and Pasha and Kayani and their families would be in danger, and the Pakistani army publicly disgraced.

It was clear to all by this point, the retired official said, that bin Laden would not survive: 'Pasha told us at a meeting in April that he could not risk leaving bin Laden in the compound now that we know he's there. Too many people in the Pakistani chain of command know about the mission. He and Kayani had to tell the whole story to the directors of the air defence command and to a few local commanders.'

‘Of course the guys knew the target was bin Laden and he was there under Pakistani control,’ the retired official said. ‘Otherwise, they would not have done the mission without air cover. It was clearly and absolutely a premeditated murder.’ A former Seal commander, who has led and participated in dozens of similar missions over the past decade, assured me that ‘we were not going to keep bin Laden alive – to allow the terrorist to live. By law, we know what we’re doing inside Pakistan is a homicide. We’ve come to grips with that. Each one of us, when we do these missions, say to ourselves, “Let’s face it. We’re going to commit a murder.”’ The White House’s initial account claimed that bin Laden had been brandishing a weapon; the story was aimed at deflecting those who questioned the legality of the US administration’s targeted assassination programme. The US has consistently maintained, despite widely reported remarks by people involved with the mission, that bin Laden would have been taken alive if he had immediately surrendered.

At the Abbottabad compound ISI guards were posted around the clock to keep watch over bin Laden and his wives and children. They were under orders to leave as soon as they heard the rotors of the US helicopters. The town was dark: the electricity supply had been cut off on the orders of the ISI hours before the raid began. One of the Black Hawks crashed inside the walls of the compound, injuring many on board. ‘The guys knew the TOT [time on target] had to be tight because they would wake up the whole town going in,’ the retired official said. The cockpit of the crashed Black Hawk, with its communication and navigational gear, had to be destroyed by concussion grenades, and this would create a series of explosions and a fire visible for miles. Two Chinook helicopters had flown from Afghanistan to a nearby Pakistani intelligence base to provide logistical support, and one of them was immediately dispatched to Abbottabad. But because the helicopter had been equipped with a bladder loaded with extra fuel for the two Black Hawks, it first had to be reconfigured as a troop carrier. The crash of the Black Hawk and the need to fly in a replacement were nerve-wracking and time-consuming setbacks, but the Seals continued with their mission. There was no firefight as they moved into the compound; the ISI guards had gone. ‘Everyone in Pakistan has a gun and high-profile, wealthy folks like those who live in Abbottabad have armed bodyguards, and yet there were no weapons in the compound,’ the retired official pointed out. Had there been any opposition, the team would have been highly vulnerable. Instead, the retired official said, an ISI liaison officer flying with the Seals guided them into the darkened house and up a staircase to bin Laden’s quarters. The Seals had been warned by the Pakistanis that heavy steel doors blocked the stairwell on the first and second-floor landings; bin Laden’s rooms were on the third floor. The Seal squad used explosives to blow the doors open, without injuring anyone. One of bin Laden’s wives was screaming hysterically and a bullet – perhaps a stray round – struck her knee. Aside from those that hit bin Laden, no other shots were fired. (The Obama administration’s account would hold otherwise.)

‘They knew where the target was – third floor, second door on the right,’ the retired official said. ‘Go straight there. Osama was cowering and retreated into the bedroom. Two shooters followed him and opened up. Very simple, very straightforward, very professional hit.’ Some of the Seals were appalled later at the White House’s initial insistence that they had shot bin Laden in self-defence, the retired official said. ‘Six of the Seals’ finest, most experienced NCOs, faced with an unarmed elderly civilian, had to kill him in self-defence? The house was shabby and bin Laden was living in a cell with bars on the window and barbed wire on the roof. The rules of engagement were that if bin Laden put up any opposition they were authorised to take lethal

action. But if they suspected he might have some means of opposition, like an explosive vest under his robe, they could also kill him. So here's this guy in a mystery robe and they shot him. It's not because he was reaching for a weapon. The rules gave them absolute authority to kill the guy.' The later White House claim that only one or two bullets were fired into his head was 'bullshit', the retired official said. 'The squad came through the door and obliterated him. As the Seals say, "We kicked his ass and took his gas."'"

After they killed bin Laden, 'the Seals were just there, some with physical injuries from the crash, waiting for the relief chopper,' the retired official said. 'Twenty tense minutes. The Black Hawk is still burning. There are no city lights. No electricity. No police. No fire trucks. They have no prisoners.' Bin Laden's wives and children were left for the ISI to interrogate and relocate. 'Despite all the talk,' the retired official continued, there were 'no garbage bags full of computers and storage devices. The guys just stuffed some books and papers they found in his room in their backpacks. The Seals weren't there because they thought bin Laden was running a command centre for al-Qaida operations, as the White House would later tell the media. And they were not intelligence experts gathering information inside that house.'

On a normal assault mission, the retired official said, there would be no waiting around if a chopper went down. 'The Seals would have finished the mission, thrown off their guns and gear, and jammed into the remaining Black Hawk and di-di-maued' – Vietnamese slang for leaving in a rush – 'out of there, with guys hanging out of the doors. They would not have blown the chopper – no commo gear is worth a dozen lives – unless they knew they were safe. Instead they stood around outside the compound, waiting for the bus to arrive.' Pasha and Kayani had delivered on all their promises.

The backroom argument inside the White House began as soon as it was clear that the mission had succeeded. Bin Laden's body was presumed to be on its way to Afghanistan. Should Obama stand by the agreement with Kayani and Pasha and pretend a week or so later that bin Laden had been killed in a drone attack in the mountains, or should he go public immediately? The downed helicopter made it easy for Obama's political advisers to urge the latter plan. The explosion and fireball would be impossible to hide, and word of what had happened was bound to leak. Obama had to 'get out in front of the story' before someone in the Pentagon did: waiting would diminish the political impact.

Not everyone agreed. Robert Gates, the secretary of defence, was the most outspoken of those who insisted that the agreements with Pakistan had to be honoured. In his memoir, *Duty*, Gates did not mask his anger:

Before we broke up and the president headed upstairs to tell the American people what had just happened, I reminded everyone that the techniques, tactics and procedures the Seals had used in the bin Laden operation were used every night in Afghanistan ... it was therefore essential that we agree not to release any operational details of the raid. That we killed him, I said, is all we needed to say. Everybody in that room agreed to keep mum on details. That commitment lasted about five hours. The initial leaks came from the White House and CIA. They just couldn't wait to brag and to claim credit. The facts were often wrong ... Nonetheless the information just kept

pouring out. I was outraged and at one point, told [the national security adviser, Tom] Donilon, 'Why doesn't everybody just shut the fuck up?' To no avail.

Obama's speech was put together in a rush, the retired official said, and was viewed by his advisers as a political document, not a message that needed to be submitted for clearance to the national security bureaucracy. This series of self-serving and inaccurate statements would create chaos in the weeks following. Obama said that his administration had discovered that bin Laden was in Pakistan through 'a possible lead' the previous August; to many in the CIA the statement suggested a specific event, such as a walk-in. The remark led to a new cover story claiming that the CIA's brilliant analysts had unmasked a courier network handling bin Laden's continuing flow of operational orders to al-Qaida. Obama also praised 'a small team of Americans' for their care in avoiding civilian deaths and said: 'After a firefight, they killed Osama bin Laden and took custody of his body.' Two more details now had to be supplied for the cover story: a description of the firefight that never happened, and a story about what happened to the corpse. Obama went on to praise the Pakistanis: 'It's important to note that our counterterrorism co-operation with Pakistan helped lead us to bin Laden and the compound where he was hiding.' That statement risked exposing Kayani and Pasha. The White House's solution was to ignore what Obama had said and order anyone talking to the press to insist that the Pakistanis had played no role in killing bin Laden. Obama left the clear impression that he and his advisers hadn't known for sure that bin Laden was in Abbottabad, but only had information 'about the possibility'. This led first to the story that the Seals had determined they'd killed the right man by having a six-foot-tall Seal lie next to the corpse for comparison (bin Laden was known to be six foot four); and then to the claim that a DNA test had been performed on the corpse and demonstrated conclusively that the Seals had killed bin Laden. But, according to the retired official, it wasn't clear from the Seals' early reports whether all of bin Laden's body, or any of it, made it back to Afghanistan.

Gates wasn't the only official who was distressed by Obama's decision to speak without clearing his remarks in advance, the retired official said, 'but he was the only one protesting. Obama didn't just double-cross Gates, he double-crossed everyone. This was not the fog of war. The fact that there was an agreement with the Pakistanis and no contingency analysis of what was to be disclosed if something went wrong – that wasn't even discussed. And once it went wrong, they had to make up a new cover story on the fly.' There was a legitimate reason for some deception: the role of the Pakistani walk-in had to be protected.

The White House press corps was told in a briefing shortly after Obama's announcement that the death of bin Laden was 'the culmination of years of careful and highly advanced intelligence work' that focused on tracking a group of couriers, including one who was known to be close to bin Laden. Reporters were told that a team of specially assembled CIA and National Security Agency analysts had traced the courier to a highly secure million-dollar compound in Abbottabad. After months of observation, the American intelligence community had 'high confidence' that a high-value target was living in the compound, and it was 'assessed that there was a strong probability that [it] was Osama bin Laden'. The US assault team ran into a firefight on entering the compound and three adult males – two of them believed to be the couriers – were slain, along with bin Laden. Asked if bin Laden had defended himself, one of the briefers said yes: 'He did resist the assault force. And he was killed in a firefight.'

The next day John Brennan, then Obama's senior adviser for counterterrorism, had the task of talking up Obama's valour while trying to smooth over the misstatements in his speech. He provided a more detailed but equally misleading account of the raid and its planning. Speaking on the record, which he rarely does, Brennan said that the mission was carried out by a group of Navy SEALs who had been instructed to take bin Laden alive, if possible. He said the US had no information suggesting that anyone in the Pakistani government or military knew bin Laden's whereabouts: 'We didn't contact the Pakistanis until after all of our people, all of our aircraft were out of Pakistani airspace.' He emphasised the courage of Obama's decision to order the strike, and said that the White House had no information 'that confirmed that bin Laden was at the compound' before the raid began. Obama, he said, 'made what I believe was one of the gutsiest calls of any president in recent memory'. Brennan increased the number killed by the SEALs inside the compound to five: bin Laden, a courier, his brother, a bin Laden son, and one of the women said to be shielding bin Laden.

Asked whether bin Laden had fired on the SEALs, as some reporters had been told, Brennan repeated what would become a White House mantra: 'He was engaged in a firefight with those that entered the area of the house he was in. And whether or not he got off any rounds, I quite frankly don't know ... Here is bin Laden, who has been calling for these attacks ... living in an area that is far removed from the front, hiding behind women who were put in front of him as a shield ... [It] just speaks to I think the nature of the individual he was.'

Gates also objected to the idea, pushed by Brennan and Leon Panetta, that US intelligence had learned of bin Laden's whereabouts from information acquired by waterboarding and other forms of torture. 'All of this is going on as the SEALs are flying home from their mission. The agency guys know the whole story,' the retired official said. 'It was a group of annuitants who did it.' (Annuitants are retired CIA officers who remain active on contract.) 'They had been called in by some of the mission planners in the agency to help with the cover story. So the old-timers come in and say why not admit that we got some of the information about bin Laden from enhanced interrogation?' At the time, there was still talk in Washington about the possible prosecution of CIA agents who had conducted torture.

'Gates told them this was not going to work,' the retired official said. 'He was never on the team. He knew at the eleventh hour of his career not to be a party to this nonsense. But State, the agency and the Pentagon had bought in on the cover story. None of the SEALs thought that Obama was going to get on national TV and announce the raid. The Special Forces command was apoplectic. They prided themselves on keeping operational security.' There was fear in Special Operations, the retired official said, that 'if the true story of the missions leaked out, the White House bureaucracy was going to blame it on the SEALs.'

The White House's solution was to silence the SEALs. On 5 May, every member of the SEAL hit team – they had returned to their base in southern Virginia – and some members of the Joint Special Operations Command leadership were presented with a nondisclosure form drafted by the White House's legal office; it promised civil penalties and a lawsuit for anyone who discussed the mission, in public or private. 'The SEALs were not happy,' the retired official said. But most of them kept quiet, as did Admiral William McRaven, who was then in charge of JSOC. 'McRaven was apoplectic. He knew he was fucked by the White House, but he's a dyed-

in-the-wool Seal, and not then a political operator, and he knew there's no glory in blowing the whistle on the president. When Obama went public with bin Laden's death, everyone had to scramble around for a new story that made sense, and the planners were stuck holding the bag.'

Within days, some of the early exaggerations and distortions had become obvious and the Pentagon issued a series of clarifying statements. No, bin Laden was not armed when he was shot and killed. And no, bin Laden did not use one of his wives as a shield. The press by and large accepted the explanation that the errors were the inevitable by-product of the White House's desire to accommodate reporters frantic for details of the mission.

One lie that has endured is that the Seals had to fight their way to their target. Only two Seals have made any public statement: *No Easy Day*, a first-hand account of the raid by Matt Bissonnette, was published in September 2012; and two years later Rob O'Neill was interviewed by Fox News. Both men had resigned from the navy; both had fired at bin Laden. Their accounts contradicted each other on many details, but their stories generally supported the White House version, especially when it came to the need to kill or be killed as the Seals fought their way to bin Laden. O'Neill even told Fox News that he and his fellow Seals thought 'We were going to die.' 'The more we trained on it, the more we realised ... this is going to be a one-way mission.'

But the retired official told me that in their initial debriefings the Seals made no mention of a firefight, or indeed of any opposition. The drama and danger portrayed by Bissonnette and O'Neill met a deep-seated need, the retired official said: 'Seals cannot live with the fact that they killed bin Laden totally unopposed, and so there has to be an account of their courage in the face of danger. The guys are going to sit around the bar and say it was an easy day? That's not going to happen.'

There was another reason to claim there had been a firefight inside the compound, the retired official said: to avoid the inevitable question that would arise from an uncontested assault. Where were bin Laden's guards? Surely, the most sought-after terrorist in the world would have around-the-clock protection. 'And one of those killed had to be the courier, because he didn't exist and we couldn't produce him. The Pakistanis had no choice but to play along with it.' (Two days after the raid, Reuters published photographs of three dead men that it said it had purchased from an ISI official. Two of the men were later identified by an ISI spokesman as being the alleged courier and his brother.)

Five days after the raid the Pentagon press corps was provided with a series of videotapes that were said by US officials to have been taken from a large collection the Seals had removed from the compound, along with as many as 15 computers. Snippets from one of the videos showed a solitary bin Laden looking wan and wrapped in a blanket, watching what appeared to be a video of himself on television. An unnamed official told reporters that the raid produced a 'treasure trove ... the single largest collection of senior terrorist materials ever', which would provide vital insights into al-Qaida's plans. The official said the material showed that bin Laden 'remained an active leader in al-Qaida, providing strategic, operational and tactical instructions to the group ... He was far from a figurehead [and] continued to direct even tactical details of the group's management and to encourage plotting' from what was described as a command-and-control centre in Abbottabad. 'He was an active player, making the recent operation even more essential

for our nation's security,' the official said. The information was so vital, he added, that the administration was setting up an inter-agency task force to process it: 'He was not simply someone who was penning al-Qaida strategy. He was throwing operational ideas out there and he was also specifically directing other al-Qaida members.'

These claims were fabrications: there wasn't much activity for bin Laden to exercise command and control over. The retired intelligence official said that the CIA's internal reporting shows that since bin Laden moved to Abbottabad in 2006 only a handful of terrorist attacks could be linked to the remnants of bin Laden's al-Qaida. 'We were told at first,' the retired official said, 'that the Seals produced garbage bags of stuff and that the community is generating daily intelligence reports out of this stuff. And then we were told that the community is gathering everything together and needs to translate it. But nothing has come of it. Every single thing they have created turns out not to be true. It's a great hoax – like the Piltdown man.' The retired official said that most of the materials from Abbottabad were turned over to the US by the Pakistanis, who later razed the building. The ISI took responsibility for the wives and children of bin Laden, none of whom was made available to the US for questioning.

'Why create the treasure trove story?' the retired official said. 'The White House had to give the impression that bin Laden was still operationally important. Otherwise, why kill him? A cover story was created – that there was a network of couriers coming and going with memory sticks and instructions. All to show that bin Laden remained important.'

In July 2011, the *Washington Post* published what purported to be a summary of some of these materials. The story's contradictions were glaring. It said the documents had resulted in more than four hundred intelligence reports within six weeks; it warned of unspecified al-Qaida plots; and it mentioned arrests of suspects 'who are named or described in emails that bin Laden received'. The *Post* didn't identify the suspects or reconcile that detail with the administration's previous assertions that the Abbottabad compound had no internet connection. Despite their claims that the documents had produced hundreds of reports, the *Post* also quoted officials saying that their main value wasn't the actionable intelligence they contained, but that they enabled 'analysts to construct a more comprehensive portrait of al-Qaida'.

In May 2012, the Combating Terrorism Centre at West Point, a private research group, released translations it had made under a federal government contract of 175 pages of bin Laden documents. Reporters found none of the drama that had been touted in the days after the raid. Patrick Cockburn wrote about the contrast between the administration's initial claims that bin Laden was the 'spider at the centre of a conspiratorial web' and what the translations actually showed: that bin Laden was 'delusional' and had 'limited contact with the outside world outside his compound'.

The retired official disputed the authenticity of the West Point materials: 'There is no linkage between these documents and the counterterrorism centre at the agency. No intelligence community analysis. When was the last time the CIA: 1) announced it had a significant intelligence find; 2) revealed the source; 3) described the method for processing the materials; 4) revealed the time-line for production; 5) described by whom and where the analysis was taking

place, and 6) published the sensitive results before the information had been acted on? No agency professional would support this fairy tale.’

In June 2011, it was reported in the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post* and all over the Pakistani press that Amir Aziz had been held for questioning in Pakistan; he was, it was said, a CIA informant who had been spying on the comings and goings at the bin Laden compound. Aziz was released, but the retired official said that US intelligence was unable to learn who leaked the highly classified information about his involvement with the mission. Officials in Washington decided they ‘could not take a chance that Aziz’s role in obtaining bin Laden’s DNA also would become known’. A sacrificial lamb was needed, and the one chosen was Shakil Afridi, a 48-year-old Pakistani doctor and sometime CIA asset, who had been arrested by the Pakistanis in late May and accused of assisting the agency. ‘We went to the Pakistanis and said go after Afridi,’ the retired official said. ‘We had to cover the whole issue of how we got the DNA.’ It was soon reported that the CIA had organised a fake vaccination programme in Abbottabad with Afridi’s help in a failed attempt to obtain bin Laden’s DNA. Afridi’s legitimate medical operation was run independently of local health authorities, was well financed and offered free vaccinations against hepatitis B. Posters advertising the programme were displayed throughout the area. Afridi was later accused of treason and sentenced to 33 years in prison because of his ties to an extremist. News of the CIA-sponsored programme created widespread anger in Pakistan, and led to the cancellation of other international vaccination programmes that were now seen as cover for American spying.

The retired official said that Afridi had been recruited long before the bin Laden mission as part of a separate intelligence effort to get information about suspected terrorists in Abbottabad and the surrounding area. ‘The plan was to use vaccinations as a way to get the blood of terrorism suspects in the villages.’ Afridi made no attempt to obtain DNA from the residents of the bin Laden compound. The report that he did so was a hurriedly put together ‘CIA cover story creating “facts” in a clumsy attempt to protect Aziz and his real mission. ‘Now we have the consequences,’ the retired official said. ‘A great humanitarian project to do something meaningful for the peasants has been compromised as a cynical hoax.’ Afridi’s conviction was overturned, but he remains in prison on a murder charge.

In his address announcing the raid, Obama said that after killing bin Laden the Seals ‘took custody of his body’. The statement created a problem. In the initial plan it was to be announced a week or so after the fact that bin Laden was killed in a drone strike somewhere in the mountains on the Pakistan/Afghanistan border and that his remains had been identified by DNA testing. But with Obama’s announcement of his killing by the Seals everyone now expected a body to be produced. Instead, reporters were told that bin Laden’s body had been flown by the Seals to an American military airfield in Jalalabad, Afghanistan, and then straight to the USS *Carl Vinson*, a supercarrier on routine patrol in the North Arabian Sea. Bin Laden had then been buried at sea, just hours after his death. The press corps’s only sceptical moments at John Brennan’s briefing on 2 May were to do with the burial. The questions were short, to the point, and rarely answered. ‘When was the decision made that he would be buried at sea if killed?’ ‘Was this part of the plan all along?’ ‘Can you just tell us why that was a good idea?’ ‘John, did you consult a Muslim expert on that?’ ‘Is there a visual recording of this burial?’ When this last

question was asked, Jay Carney, Obama's press secretary, came to Brennan's rescue: 'We've got to give other people a chance here.'

'We thought the best way to ensure that his body was given an appropriate Islamic burial,' Brennan said, 'was to take those actions that would allow us to do that burial at sea.' He said 'appropriate specialists and experts' were consulted, and that the US military was fully capable of carrying out the burial 'consistent with Islamic law'. Brennan didn't mention that Muslim law calls for the burial service to be conducted in the presence of an imam, and there was no suggestion that one happened to be on board the *Carl Vinson*.

In a reconstruction of the bin Laden operation for *Vanity Fair*, Mark Bowden, who spoke to many senior administration officials, wrote that bin Laden's body was cleaned and photographed at Jalalabad. Further procedures necessary for a Muslim burial were performed on the carrier, he wrote, 'with bin Laden's body being washed again and wrapped in a white shroud. A navy photographer recorded the burial in full sunlight, Monday morning, May 2.' Bowden described the photos: One frame shows the body wrapped in a weighted shroud. The next shows it lying diagonally on a chute, feet overboard. In the next frame the body is hitting the water. In the next it is visible just below the surface, ripples spreading outward. In the last frame there are only circular ripples on the surface. The mortal remains of Osama bin Laden were gone for good.

Bowden was careful not to claim that he had actually seen the photographs he described, and he recently told me he hadn't seen them: 'I'm always disappointed when I can't look at something myself, but I spoke with someone I trusted who said he had seen them himself and described them in detail.' Bowden's statement adds to the questions about the alleged burial at sea, which has provoked a flood of Freedom of Information Act requests, most of which produced no information. One of them sought access to the photographs. The Pentagon responded that a search of all available records had found no evidence that any photographs had been taken of the burial. Requests on other issues related to the raid were equally unproductive. The reason for the lack of response became clear after the Pentagon held an inquiry into allegations that the Obama administration had provided access to classified materials to the makers of the film *Zero Dark Thirty*. The Pentagon report, which was put online in June 2013, noted that Admiral McRaven had ordered the files on the raid to be deleted from all military computers and moved to the CIA, where they would be shielded from FOIA requests by the agency's 'operational exemption'.

McRaven's action meant that outsiders could not get access to the *Carl Vinson*'s unclassified logs. Logs are sacrosanct in the navy, and separate ones are kept for air operations, the deck, the engineering department, the medical office, and for command information and control. They show the sequence of events day by day aboard the ship; if there has been a burial at sea aboard the *Carl Vinson*, it would have been recorded.

There wasn't any gossip about a burial among the *Carl Vinson*'s sailors. The carrier concluded its six-month deployment in June 2011. When the ship docked at its home base in Coronado, California, Rear Admiral Samuel Perez, commander of the *Carl Vinson* carrier strike group, told reporters that the crew had been ordered not to talk about the burial. Captain Bruce Lindsey, skipper of the *Carl Vinson*, told reporters he was unable to discuss it. Cameron Short, one of the crew of the *Carl Vinson*, told the *Commercial-News* of Danville, Illinois, that the crew had not

been told anything about the burial. ‘All he knows is what he’s seen on the news,’ the newspaper reported. The Pentagon did release a series of emails to the Associated Press. In one of them, Rear Admiral Charles Gaouette reported that the service followed ‘traditional procedures for Islamic burial’, and said none of the sailors on board had been permitted to observe the proceedings. But there was no indication of who washed and wrapped the body, or of which Arabic speaker conducted the service.

Within weeks of the raid, I had been told by two longtime consultants to Special Operations Command, who have access to current intelligence, that the funeral aboard the *Carl Vinson* didn’t take place. One consultant told me that bin Laden’s remains were photographed and identified after being flown back to Afghanistan. The consultant added: ‘At that point, the CIA took control of the body. The cover story was that it had been flown to the *Carl Vinson*.’ The second consultant agreed that there had been ‘no burial at sea’. He added that ‘the killing of bin Laden was political theatre designed to burnish Obama’s military credentials ... The Seals should have expected the political grandstanding. It’s irresistible to a politician. Bin Laden became a working asset.’ Early this year, speaking again to the second consultant, I returned to the burial at sea. The consultant laughed and said: ‘You mean, he didn’t make it to the water?’

The retired official said there had been another complication: some members of the Seal team had bragged to colleagues and others that they had torn bin Laden’s body to pieces with rifle fire. The remains, including his head, which had only a few bullet holes in it, were thrown into a body bag and, during the helicopter flight back to Jalalabad, some body parts were tossed out over the Hindu Kush mountains – or so the Seals claimed. At the time, the retired official said, the Seals did not think their mission would be made public by Obama within a few hours: ‘If the president had gone ahead with the cover story, there would have been no need to have a funeral within hours of the killing. Once the cover story was blown, and the death was made public, the White House had a serious “Where’s the body?” problem. The world knew US forces had killed bin Laden in Abbottabad. Panic city. What to do? We need a “functional body” because we have to be able to say we identified bin Laden via a DNA analysis. It would be navy officers who came up with the “burial at sea” idea. Perfect. No body. Honourable burial following sharia law. Burial is made public in great detail, but Freedom of Information documents confirming the burial are denied for reasons of “national security”. It’s the classic unravelling of a poorly constructed cover story – it solves an immediate problem but, given the slightest inspection, there is no back-up support. There never was a plan, initially, to take the body to sea, and no burial of bin Laden at sea took place.’ The retired official said that if the Seals’ first accounts are to be believed, there wouldn’t have been much left of bin Laden to put into the sea in any case.

It was inevitable that the Obama administration’s lies, misstatements and betrayals would create a backlash. ‘We’ve had a four-year lapse in co-operation,’ the retired official said. ‘It’s taken that long for the Pakistanis to trust us again in the military-to-military counterterrorism relationship – while terrorism was rising all over the world ... They felt Obama sold them down the river. They’re just now coming back because the threat from Isis, which is now showing up there, is a lot greater and the bin Laden event is far enough away to enable someone like General Durrani to come out and talk about it.’ Generals Pasha and Kayani have retired and both are reported to be under investigation for corruption during their time in office.

The Senate Intelligence Committee's long-delayed report on CIA torture, released last December, documented repeated instances of official lying, and suggested that the CIA's knowledge of bin Laden's courier was sketchy at best and predated its use of waterboarding and other forms of torture. The report led to international headlines about brutality and waterboarding, along with gruesome details about rectal feeding tubes, ice baths and threats to rape or murder family members of detainees who were believed to be withholding information. Despite the bad publicity, the report was a victory for the CIA. Its major finding – that the use of torture didn't lead to discovering the truth – had already been the subject of public debate for more than a decade. Another key finding – that the torture conducted was more brutal than Congress had been told – was risible, given the extent of public reporting and published exposés by former interrogators and retired CIA officers. The report depicted tortures that were obviously contrary to international law as violations of rules or 'inappropriate activities' or, in some cases, 'management failures'. Whether the actions described constitute war crimes was not discussed, and the report did not suggest that any of the CIA interrogators or their superiors should be investigated for criminal activity. The agency faced no meaningful consequences as a result of the report.

The retired official told me that the CIA leadership had become experts in derailing serious threats from Congress: 'They create something that is horrible but not that bad. Give them something that sounds terrible. "Oh my God, we were shoving food up a prisoner's ass!" Meanwhile, they're not telling the committee about murders, other war crimes, and secret prisons like we still have in Diego Garcia. The goal also was to stall it as long as possible, which they did.' The main theme of the committee's 499-page executive summary is that the CIA lied systematically about the effectiveness of its torture programme in gaining intelligence that would stop future terrorist attacks in the US. The lies included some vital details about the uncovering of an al-Qaida operative called Abu Ahmed al-Kuwaiti, who was said to be the key al-Qaida courier, and the subsequent tracking of him to Abbottabad in early 2011. The agency's alleged intelligence, patience and skill in finding al-Kuwaiti became legend after it was dramatised in *Zero Dark Thirty*.

The Senate report repeatedly raised questions about the quality and reliability of the CIA's intelligence about al-Kuwaiti. In 2005 an internal CIA report on the hunt for bin Laden noted that 'detainees provide few actionable leads, and we have to consider the possibility that they are creating fictitious characters to distract us or to absolve themselves of direct knowledge about bin Ladin [sic].' A CIA cable a year later stated that 'we have had no success in eliciting actionable intelligence on bin Laden's location from any detainees.' The report also highlighted several instances of CIA officers, including Panetta, making false statements to Congress and the public about the value of 'enhanced interrogation techniques' in the search for bin Laden's couriers. Obama today is not facing re-election as he was in the spring of 2011. His principled stand on behalf of the proposed nuclear agreement with Iran says much, as does his decision to operate without the support of the conservative Republicans in Congress. High-level lying nevertheless remains the modus operandi of US policy, along with secret prisons, drone attacks, Special Forces night raids, bypassing the chain of command, and cutting out those who might say no.

A GALLERY OF FAKE DEAD BIN LADENS

By Michael Rivero

First off, whoever was killed in that house was not shot by any US forces!

[Pakistan actually shot the man claimed to be bin Laden.](#)

At about 1:20 a.m. local time a Pakistani helicopter was shot down by unknown people in the Sikandarabad area of Abbotabad. The Pakistani forces launched a search operation in the nearby area and encountered with a group of unknown armed people. A fire exchange followed between the two sides.

When the fire exchange ended, the Pakistani forces arrested some Arab women and kids as well some other armed people who later confessed to the Pakistani forces they were with someone they thought was Osama Bin Laden when the fire was exchanged and "Bin Laden" was killed in the firing.

What appears to have happened is that President Obama tried to steal the Pakistanis' thunder by sending in the SEAL team to capture the body, then claim victory for the US. But as the "victory" was leaked to the press, word finally reached the White House from Abbotabad that the dead man wasn't the real Osama Bin Laden (who had died of Marfan Syndrome in December of 2001), so the body was dumped into the ocean and a flurry of hastily made (and very sloppy) fake photos leaked to the internet and members of Congress to cover up the latest monumental goof!

UPDATE: Sy Hersh has published an article confirming the above attempt by Obama to grab the glory for the death of "Osama." But the story is even more interesting in that the man who was killed was not Osama Bin Laden to begin with! The first fake photo, used by Reuters' and the British Press.

[US Senator Scott Brown confirmed that this was the image he was shown as part of an official US government briefing to the Senate Armed Services Committee.](#)

Brown, a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, suggested he had viewed them as part of an official briefing, and he argued that they were too graphic to be released to the public and could enflame terrorists.

Oops.

Brown later acknowledged that he had fallen victim to a hoax, apparently the same doctored images that were making the rounds on the Internet.



And here is how the fake was made!



The mouth and beard from a photo of the real Bin Laden in the mid 80s was photoshopped onto the head of another dead man.

"If at first you don't succeed, lie, lie again!" -- Motto of the White House



Another photo that was leaked onto the net following the collapse of the first fake. The White House strategy appears to have been to "test" the fakes with leaks, then go with the first image that appeared to fool everyone. This one did not.

Ignoring the bullet hole this guy looks very healthy for ten years of dialysis. The nose is also too narrow. But the main reason to disregard this as another likely fake is simple. This image is tainted green to make it look like a night vision image, yet the soldier at right is looking off left, apparently able to see just fine without night vision goggles. And finally, there is something missing from this image that should be there (besides night vision goggles).



There is an illumination source to the upper right of the camera taking this image. You can see the resulting shadows on the jaw line and cheek of the soldier. More to the point, there is clearly a shadow from the soldier's face extending left from his face and falling on the floor and the side of "Osama's" face. Yet there is no trace of a similar shadow from the face of "Osama" above the beard near the right eye. And didn't the White House say "Osama" was shot above the LEFT eye?

Source image for the second fake is found; a clip from the movie "Blackhawk Down."



Flipped left to right



And merged with another fake bin Laden.



Third fake!

The people who want to send your children off to die in wars on Israel's enemies are nothing if not persistent. After the above Blackhawk Down failed, they tried once more.



This is a simple morph, again exposed when the original source image was located by a WRH reader.

The real Osama Bin Laden ...



... died of natural causes, specifically Marfan Syndrome, in December 2001.

أنباء عن وفاة بن لادن

وتشييع جنازته منذ ١٠ أيام

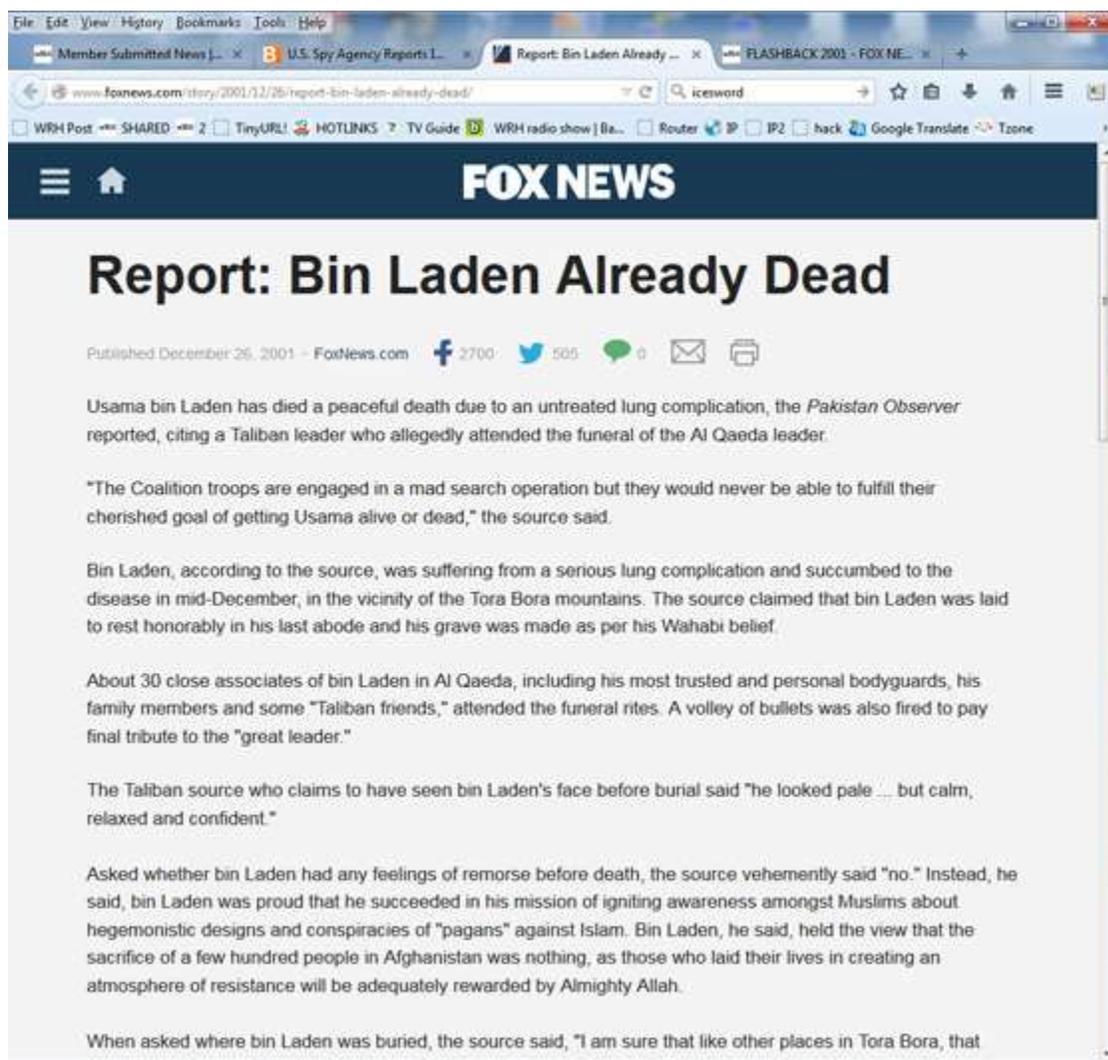
إسلام آباد - أ. ش. أ:

أعلن مسئول بارز في حركة طالبان الأفغانية أمس عن وفاة أسامة بن لادن زعيم تنظيم القاعدة وأشار الي أن «بن لادن» كان يعاني من مضاعفات خطيرة بالرئة ومات بشكل طبيعي وهادئ. أكد المسئول الذي رفض ذكر اسمه في تصريحات لصحيفة «أبوزوفر» الباكستانية انه حضر جنازة بن لادن بنفسه ورأى وجه بن لادن قبل الدفن في تورا بورا منذ ١٠ أيام. وأشار الي أن الجنازة حضرها ٣٠ من مقاتلي القاعدة وأفراد الأسرة وبعض الأصدقاء من طالبان. وتم اطلاق وابل من الأعيرة النارية لتوديعه الي مثواه الأخير. وأكد المسئول صعوبة تحديد المكان الذي دفن فيه «بن لادن» لأن قبره سوي بالأرض طبقاً للمذهب الوهابي الذي ينتمي اليه. وأكد احتمال طمس مكان الدفن بسبب القصف الجوي المستمر منذ أسبوعين لمنطقة تورا بورا. واستبعد أن تنجح القوات الأمريكية في العثور علي أثر «بن لادن».

News of Bin Laden's Death and Funeral 10 days ago

Islamabad - A prominent official in the Afghan Taliban movement announced yesterday the death of Osama bin Laden, the chief of Al-Qaeda organization, stating that bin Laden suffered serious complications in the lungs and died a natural and quiet death. The official, who asked to remain anonymous, stated to The Observer of Pakistan that he had himself attended the funeral of bin Laden and saw his face prior to burial in Tora Bora 10 days ago. He mentioned that 30 of Al-Qaeda fighters attended the burial as well as members of his family and some friends from the Taleban. In the farewell ceremony to his final rest guns were fired in the air. The official stated that it is difficult to pinpoint the burial location of bin Laden because according to the Wahhabi tradition no mark is left by the grave. He stressed that it is unlikely that the American forces would ever uncover any traces of bin Laden.

[Even Fox News reported Bin Laden was dead in 2001 ... until it was decided that a live Bin Laden was more useful to the war hawks than a dead one!](#)



The image is a screenshot of a web browser displaying a Fox News article. The browser's address bar shows the URL: www.foxnews.com/story/2001/12/26/report-bin-laden-already-dead/. The article's title is "Report: Bin Laden Already Dead". Below the title, it says "Published December 26, 2001 - FoxNews.com" and shows social media sharing icons for Facebook (2700), Twitter (505), and others. The main text of the article reads: "Usama bin Laden has died a peaceful death due to an untreated lung complication, the *Pakistan Observer* reported, citing a Taliban leader who allegedly attended the funeral of the Al Qaeda leader. 'The Coalition troops are engaged in a mad search operation but they would never be able to fulfill their cherished goal of getting Usama alive or dead,' the source said. Bin Laden, according to the source, was suffering from a serious lung complication and succumbed to the disease in mid-December, in the vicinity of the Tora Bora mountains. The source claimed that bin Laden was laid to rest honorably in his last abode and his grave was made as per his Wahabi belief. About 30 close associates of bin Laden in Al Qaeda, including his most trusted and personal bodyguards, his family members and some 'Taliban friends,' attended the funeral rites. A volley of bullets was also fired to pay final tribute to the 'great leader.' The Taliban source who claims to have seen bin Laden's face before burial said 'he looked pale ... but calm, relaxed and confident.' Asked whether bin Laden had any feelings of remorse before death, the source vehemently said 'no.' Instead, he said, bin Laden was proud that he succeeded in his mission of igniting awareness amongst Muslims about hegemonistic designs and conspiracies of 'pagans' against Islam. Bin Laden, he said, held the view that the sacrifice of a few hundred people in Afghanistan was nothing, as those who laid their lives in creating an atmosphere of resistance will be adequately rewarded by Almighty Allah. When asked where bin Laden was buried, the source said, 'I am sure that like other places in Tora Bora, that

[Click for larger image](#)

In 2007, shortly before her own assassination, Benazir Bhutto confirmed that Osama Bin Laden was dead.



The above is from the last known video of the real Bin Laden, just weeks before his death. Note the indications on his skin of the effects from dialysis.

Every Bin Laden shown on TV since then has been a phony to justify wars, TSA, and the loss of your civil protections.



10/30/2004 "Osama"

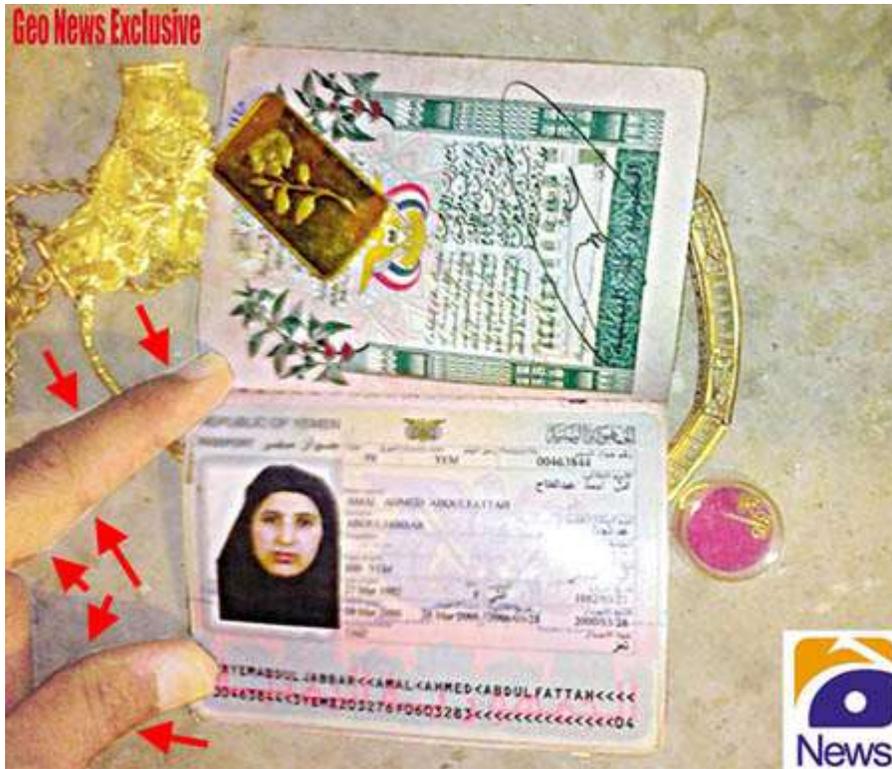




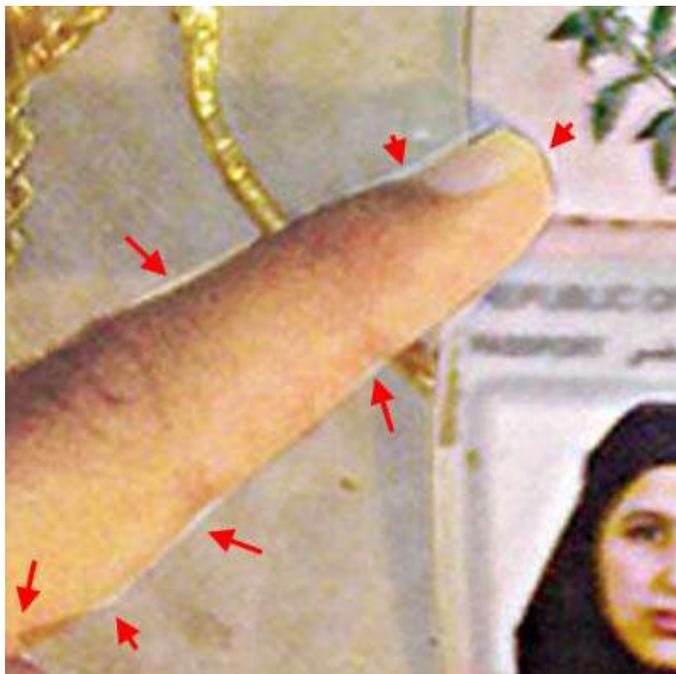
In one notorious case, the FBI simply took the face from a Spanish politician, photoshopped it, and claimed it was Bin Laden.

[In another case, the CIA openly admitted making fake Bin Laden videos.](#)

Finally, a photo used to support the claim that a 24 (or 29; the story kept changing) year old woman was Bin Laden's wife, the [Daily Mail](#) published the following photo.



Take a close look at the fingers in the [Daily Mail photo of the passport](#). This is another photoshop creation and a very clumsy one at that. The face seems to be an overlay as well and not part of the actual image of the passport.



Fool me once ...

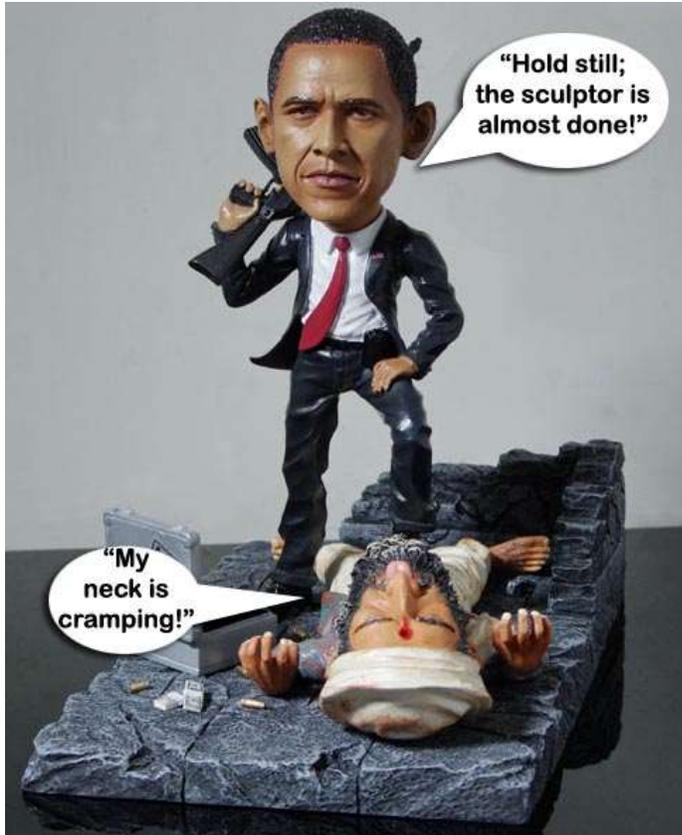
Common sense will tell you that if you have real evidence of a real event, you do not need, nor would you risk, using a fake piece of evidence, because if the fake is exposed, doubt is cast on the real evidence. So, if the US Government is showing phony bin Laden photos to the Senate Armed Services Committee, it means all the evidence must be fake.



The above photo is supposedly of the White House staff deep in concentration while watching the execution of Bin Laden. But it is a posed and staged shot. Nobody bothered to turn on the laptop computers on the table!

Defenders of the official story have written in to claim that the laptops have privacy screens so that only the person directly in front can read the screens, and this is why they all appear black. But I took a photo of a computer with a privacy screen and the screens blur the image when viewed from the side, but still allow light through.





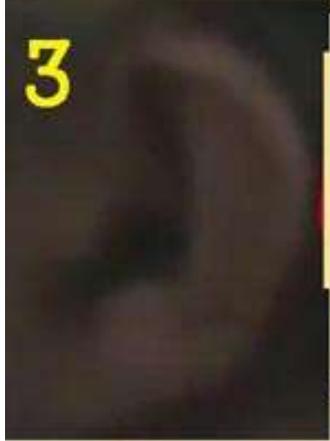
Pathetic attempt by Obama to take credit for 'getting' Bin Laden.

Sent in by a reader! It is known that ears are as unique as fingerprints. NO two are exactly the same and ears are used for identification on photos where fingerprints are not available.





IT IS ALL IN
THE EARS



Picture
3 and 4
are from
the same
man.
And they
are not
like no 2





Read more: whatreallyhappened.com

<http://whatreallyhappened.com/WRHARTICLES/galleryoffakebinladens.php#ixzz3ZrZ9XVsC>

US Establishment Press Dismiss, Shrug Off Seymour Hersh's Story on Killing of bin Laden



[May 10, 2015](#) [May 11, 2015](#) [Kevin Gosztola](#) [Uncategorized](#) [24 Comments](#)

Most distressing about investigative journalist Seymour Hersh's story on the lies President Barack Obama's administration reportedly told about the killing of Osama bin Laden is the general reaction of the United States establishment press.

Hersh is an award-winning journalist best known for exposing the My Lai massacre in the Vietnam War. It earned him a Pulitzer Prize. He also did stellar reporting on the abuse and torture of detainees at the infamous Abu Ghraib prison. Yet, most establishment press seem to be shrugging at Hersh's latest 10,000-word feature story published by the London Review of Books or they are snidely dismissing it altogether.

Is it because most in the US press wholly accept the narrative put forward by the Obama administration around the raid that killed bin Laden? Is it because they have moved on and no longer find it worthy to investigate what really happened? Is it because they do not want to believe what Hersh is alleging because it amounts to a major international espionage conspiracy if it all happens to be true?

Christopher Frizzelle of The Stranger already went to the trouble to list off each allegation against the Obama administration that is made in Hersh's story. So, courtesy of Frizzelle:

- Pakistani officials knew about the raid and even helped the US pull it off.
- There never was a firefight, neither in the yard outside the house nor once the Seals got inside.
- The story of the courier whom the reportedly CIA traced, leading them to bin Laden, was a fabrication.
- The story of the courier dying in the firefight was a cover-up “because he didn’t exist and we couldn’t produce him,” a retired senior intelligence official told Hersh.
- The way the CIA actually found out where bin Laden was is that a “Pakistani walk-in” who wanted the \$25 million reward came in and told the CIA about it.
- Osama bin Laden was not armed, contrary to reports that he had a machine gun and was killed in a firefight, and he was not killed with just one or two bullets but “obliterated.”
- “Seals cannot live with the fact that they killed bin Laden totally unopposed, and so there has to be an account of their courage in the face of danger. The guys are going to sit around the bar and say it was an easy day? That’s not going to happen,” that same retired senior intelligence official said.
- “Despite all the talk” about what the Seals collected on site, the retired official said there were “no garbage bags full of computers and storage devices. The guys just stuffed some books and papers they found in his room in their backpacks.”
- The story about bin Laden’s sea burial may be a fabrication.
- The retired official told Hersh that bin Laden’s “remains, including his head... were thrown into a body bag and, during the helicopter flight back to Jalalabad, some body parts were tossed out over the Hindu Kush mountains—or so the Seals claimed.”
- Obama was going to wait a week until after bin Laden’s death to announce it, and he was going to tell the American people that bin Laden had been killed by a drone, but after the Seals had to blow up their malfunctioning helicopter onsite, attracting attention locally, everything changed.
- The story about the vaccination program carried out locally in an attempt to get bin Laden’s DNA—a story that “led to the cancellation of other international vaccination programmes that were now seen as cover for American spying”—wasn’t true.
- Retired official again: “It’s a great hoax.”

What are Hersh’s sources for these claims against the Obama administration?

Hersh relies on a “major US source” who is not named in the story. The person is described as a “retired senior intelligence official who was knowledgeable about the initial intelligence about bin Laden’s presence in Abbottabad.” He also sources his claims to two additional unnamed US sources, “who had access to corroborating information” and have been “longtime consults to the Special Operations Command.”

He writes that he received information from “inside Pakistan” that indicates “senior ISI and military leadership” were upset with Obama’s decision to immediately go public with the news that bin Laden was killed. He also quotes Asad Durrani, who was the head of Pakistan’s spy agency, the ISI, in the 1990s.

One of the key criticisms of Hersh’s story is that it relies on anonymous sources. However, should this criticism be allowed to invalidate the claims put forward by Hersh?

I have zealously criticized the frequent use of anonymous sources by journalists. It happens quite often at the New York Times and The Washington Post. However, as Times public editor Margaret Sullivan has articulated:

For many journalists, they can be a necessity. And that necessity is increasing — especially for stories involving national security — now that the Obama administration’s crackdown on press leaks has made news sources warier of speaking on the record. (Leonard Downie Jr. , a former executive editor of The Washington Post, has written revealingly about this for the Committee to Protect Journalists.)

“It’s almost impossible to get people who know anything to talk,” Bill Hamilton, who edits national security coverage for The Times, told me. Getting them to talk on the record is even harder. “So we’re caught in this dilemma.”

There is a tradition in journalism of using anonymous—or confidential sources—to expose scandal. Watergate and warrantless wiretapping were both revealed in this manner.

Which ultimately leads one to conclude that the problem members of the establishment press and others reflexively have with Hersh is not that he uses anonymous sources but that he uses these anonymous sources to challenge a narrative they have already decided to accept as truth. If that narrative is wrong, they have to seriously rethink what they have been doing as journalists, especially if they report on war or national security matters.

For example, Noah Schachtman, Daily Beast executive editor, tweeted:

That a bunch of unnamed Pakistani and US special operations sources dismiss Hersh’s story as pure bunk does not really disprove anything in his story. What if these sources are somehow invested in the narrative of events that players involved in the raid. What if they are somehow wedded to the statements of officials deployed to sell Americans a certain story about the operation?

It should be noted that many of these same journalists reacting to Hersh's story also dismissed his latest investigative journalism on Turkey's potential role in the Syria chemical attack that nearly sparked US attacks and the Obama administration's "cherry-picking" of intelligence to justify launching a war after the chemical attack.

Members of the US establishment press are not generally opposed to the use of anonymous sources in national security reporting. They just are collectively only comfortable with telling certain stories with anonymous sources, and, in this case, it is clear one of those stories will never be about how the Obama administration and CIA were in on an international espionage conspiracy to kill bin Laden.

*

Unquestionably, if Hersh's story is the truth, which is entirely possible, then *Zero Dark Thirty* is an even greater masterpiece of propaganda. CIA officers on contract developed a cover story that would help the CIA publicly defend its torture program. Officials would say that information used to catch bin Laden came from "enhanced interrogation." (Press in Washington, DC, were mostly positive about the film initially.)

If it is truth, it also means that journalists fell victim to a grand disinformation campaign perpetrated by the Obama administration. It may not be as embarrassing and troubling as what happened around the march to war in Iraq, but it still demonstrates how easily officials can manipulate the press to tell the story they want told about the "War on Terrorism." And, generally, it is a key example of how the Obama administration packaged an assassination operation and slickly exploited it to ensure Obama's re-election campaign went smoothly.

Rather than mocking Hersh's story, a better response for skeptics would be to actually prove Hersh wrong through journalism. The only problem is no journalist is likely to spend time digging to prove Hersh wrong if they already think they know what exactly occurred—and many US journalists seem to think they know what happened so there is no need to pursue this story any further.

What this means is Americans are likely to be left with a fascinating counter-history to the Obama administration's official story of events that becomes a Rorschach test. It is true if you doubt most of what the government tells you about the "war on terrorism," and it is false if you believe the government is mostly right to be waging the "war on terrorism." But no one will ever quite know.

Judging the reaction of establishment journalists, it also is a Rorschach test for them too. His sourcing is flawed because they have decided these are anonymous sources they would never rely on for a story as damning as this one. But, if Hersh had uncovered an angle to the story that added details but did not challenge the Obama administration, Special Operations Command and the CIA, they might think his anonymous sources were worth believing.

Update – 10:15 am ET

Max Fisher of Vox's initial reaction to Hersh's story was the following:

Fisher now has [a post](#) at Vox on Hersh's "conspiracy theory."

I'll only focus on the last paragraph for now because it is perfectly in line with what I argued in this post:

Maybe there really is a vast shadow world of complex and diabolical conspiracies, executed brilliantly by international networks of government masterminds. And maybe Hersh and his handful of anonymous former senior officials really are alone in glimpsing this world and its terrifying secrets. Or maybe there's a simpler explanation.

That is essentially the attitude I suggested journalist critics are exhibiting and will continue to exhibit toward Hersh. Someone like Fisher is not opposed to anonymous sources. He just does not like what Hersh's anonymous sources are alleging about the world.

Creative Commons Licensed Photo on Flickr of Seymour Hersh by [Marjorie Lipan](#)

[NYT corroborates part of Seymour Hersh's Bin Laden story.](#)

http://www.reddit.com/r/inthenews/comments/35ts9i/nyt_corroborates_part_of_seymour_hersh_bin_laden/

[Seymour Hersh says](#), "it's been four years since a group of US Navy Seals assassinated Osama bin Laden, in a night raid on a high walled compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan."

Below is a list of links that decry the SEAL Team 6 story as untrue, that present evidence OBL died of renal failure in 2001..

- [Timeline: Osama Bin Laden Died on December 14, 2001.](#)
- [Official Story Of Osama Bin Laden's Death A Hoax.](#)
- [Navy Seals Ensnared In Bin Laden Death Hoax.](#)
- [A Gallery of Fake Dead bin Ladens.](#)

Merely a week after President Obama announced the death of Osama Bin Laden, there is literally a deluge of evidence that clearly indicates the whole episode has been manufactured for political gain. [Paul Joseph Watson](#) @ Infowars.com, May 9, 2011.

Politico Gives CIA's Worst WMD Liar a Platform to Slam Seymour Hersh

By [Jon Schwarz @tinyrevolution](#) 05/14/2015



It's hard for anyone to judge the accuracy of Seymour Hersh's [blockbuster story](#) on the killing of Osama bin Laden, given its reliance on unnamed sources. I personally would trust him more than most people stuck in the oozing miasma that is Washington, D.C., but he does ask readers to rely completely on his judgment. So it's certainly appropriate and useful for other journalists to provide context on whether Hersh's previous reporting has proven correct.

What's neither appropriate nor useful is to give former government officials the chance to attack Hersh's story without giving readers the context of *their* track record of veracity. But that's exactly what *Politico* did in this piece, "[U.S. officials fuming over Hersh account of Osama bin Laden raid](#)":

"If you were to believe Sy, you would have to believe this massive conspiracy that President Obama, Robert Gates, Leon Panetta and Mike Morell were all lying to you," said Bill Harlow, the [CIA]'s former top spokesman, referring to two recent secretaries of defense and a former acting CIA director. "It makes absolutely no sense."

The next paragraph would have been the right place for *Politico* to say this:

In 2003, Harlow himself participated in a massive conspiracy to lie to you about Iraq's purported WMD. Indeed, he personally engaged in some of most egregious government dishonesty on the issue when he [blatantly lied](#) about a *Newsweek* story published just before the war that strongly

suggested Iraq had no remaining banned weapons. Since leaving the CIA, Harlow has co-written three books with former top CIA officials, all of which defend the agency's use of torture, and Sen. Dianne Feinstein [recently accused Harlow](#) of making "false charges" about the Senate's torture investigation.

That would have provided a real service: readers would have heard what Harlow had to say about a specific news article, but also learned that Harlow has a history of dishonesty when he wants to discredit accurate reporting. After all, "history matters," as Harlow himself said in *At the Center of the Storm*, his book co-written with former CIA director George Tenet.

But *Politico* didn't say that. What it did go on to say was that "In recent years ... Hersh's reporting has increasingly been called into question," and that a 2013 piece by Hersh "was turned down by both *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*." In other words, it provided negative context for Hersh, but not Harlow. Then it quoted Harlow again, on how talking to Hersh is "a psychedelic experience."

Bryan Bender, one of the authors of the *Politico* piece, responded to my questions, for which I give him credit. Bender writes:

I felt burned by it at the time [in 2003] as a reporter asking questions about the case for war against Saddam. But a spotty record on the WMD facts or not, Bill Harlow remains a conduit to agency officials — current and former. He helped former acting CIA director Mike Morell write his new book. Given the assertions in the Hersh piece we were interested in the Intelligence Community's reaction. Which is why we talked to him. ...

If the alternative is to never talk to officials in the spy community who have made misleading public statements but continue to be consulted by agency leaders then how would we ever catch them if they mislead the public again?

Bender also makes the fair point that spokespersons like Harlow "are usually the least informed in the spy world" and in 2003 was possibly just "regurgitating what others on the inside were telling [him]."

And in fact, that was Harlow's position when I asked him about his false 2003 statements on Iraq. "[I] was misinformed on that one question," Harlow said, "but to judge all of [my] other comments going forward based on that single media inquiry response would be just as unfair as to judge Seymour Hersh's credibility as outlined in [this Newsweek](#) article from 1997 which details how Hersh was pushing a book and television project which involved at one point documents which turned out to be apparent forgeries." (Hersh never published anything based on the forged documents.)

Asked who had provided him with the misinformation in 2003, Harlow responded: "I genuinely do not recall" and "I have no intention to engage in an exchange about that single answer to one of the thousands of questions I handled in that job more than a decade ago." However, Harlow said, he is not misinformed about Hersh's bin Laden story because "The information on the bin Laden case is based not only on Mr. Morell's participation in nearly every meeting at the CIA

and White House leading up to the raid — but also detailed accounts from others like Leon Panetta, Robert Gates, and many others.”

The website of 15 Seconds, Harlow’s communications consulting firm, [states](#) that it can give clients advice on “Methods of deflecting difficult questions designed to bait you.”

Photo: Seymour Hersh accepts the LennonOno Grant for Peace (Brad Barket/Getty Images)

Terror Files: What’s on Osama Bin Laden’s Private Bookshelf

May 20, 2015, 10:11 AM ET

By [LUIS MARTINEZ](#), [ELY BROWN](#) and [LEE FERRAN](#)

[LUIS MARTINEZ MORE FROM LUIS »](#)

Producer

[LEE FERRAN MORE FROM LEE »](#)

Investigative Reporter

Osama's Last Days: Frustrated, Impotent

The U.S. government today released dozens of documents recovered from the special operations raid that killed [al Qaeda](#) leader [Osama bin Laden](#), including now declassified correspondences from bin Laden and 39-English language books in which the terror leader apparently took interest.

The Office of the Director of National Intelligence released the documents online today, calling them "Bin Laden's Bookshelf," after what it called a “rigorous interagency review” in an effort to “align[] with the President’s call for increased transparency...”

The material includes think tank reports, software and technical manuals for computer programs, and Arabic-language letters to bin Laden’s apparent associates, including other suspected terrorists wanted by the U.S. In releasing the documents, the ODNI said they are only publishing those which “will not hurt ongoing operations against al-Qa‘ida [al Qaeda] or their affiliates.” For documents in Arabic, the ODNI posted English translations of the documents alongside the originals.

Carrying Out Terror Attacks, Avoiding Detection

One document is a kind of bureaucratic application manual for new would-be jihadists that includes the question “Do you wish to execute a suicide operation?”

In the case when such operations failed, bin Laden took note of how and why in another document in which it is noted how the aspiring bombers were caught or killed.

Some documents show how security-conscious the al Qaeda leader and his followers were. In one letter, an individual identified as “brother Azmarai” writes that “we should be careful not to send big secrets by email.”

“We should assume that the enemy can see these emails and only send through email information that can bring no harm if the enemy reads it,” the letter says. “Computer science is not our science and we are not the ones who invented it.”

Azmarai goes on to advise the recipient to only change houses on cloudy days – possibly to avoid detection by overhead surveillance.

Bin Laden Saw Opportunity in Arab Spring

In one letter, bin Laden appeared to cheer on the Arab Spring as it was erupted across the Middle East and north Africa. The movement began in late 2010 and continued through 2011 -- well past bin Laden's death in May of that year.

“I believe that the end is going to be for the benefit of Muslims soon,” he purportedly wrote. “These events are very great and grand... Things are moving in the direction of getting the land of the Muslims out from under the dominance of the U.S. Americans are very worried about successive revolutions.”

In that letter, bin Laden writes to a man identified as Shaykh Mahmud that “our [the mujahideen’s] greatest duty is to provide guidance.”

“We should also be gentle and compassionate toward those who were misguided for many decades,” he writes.

Former CIA Deputy Director Michael Morrell recently wrote in a new book that the CIA **badly underestimated** al Qaeda’s ability to take advantage of the chaos and power vacuum caused by the Arab Spring.

Reading About Himself: Bin Laden Had Think Tank Reports on Terror

Portions of the bin Laden document trove have previously been released, once by the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point and once through a terror trial in New York. When bin Laden was killed in May 2011, officials described recovering a “treasure trove” of material on al Qaeda from its late leader.

Think tank reports from groups like West Point’s Combating Terrorism Center, Chatham House and the Jamestown Foundation were also discovered – almost all apparently focusing on terrorism.

Religious texts include a copy of the Koran and other Islamic texts, but also “Profiles of bishops in the Church of England.” A few maps recovered from the compound show bin Laden had an apparent interest in Iran, especially Iranian nuclear sites.

The English-Language Books

Among the books recovered from the Abbottabad compound were non-fiction works about the CIA, terrorism and U.S. military history and politics, including Bob Woodward’s “Obama’s Wars”. Bin Laden appeared to read what Western analysts thought about al Qaeda and some conspiracy theory-themed works about 9/11. In the mid-2000s Bin Laden was also apparently a reader of Western current events magazines such as Foreign Policy and Newsweek, especially when cover articles focused on al Qaeda and America’s response.

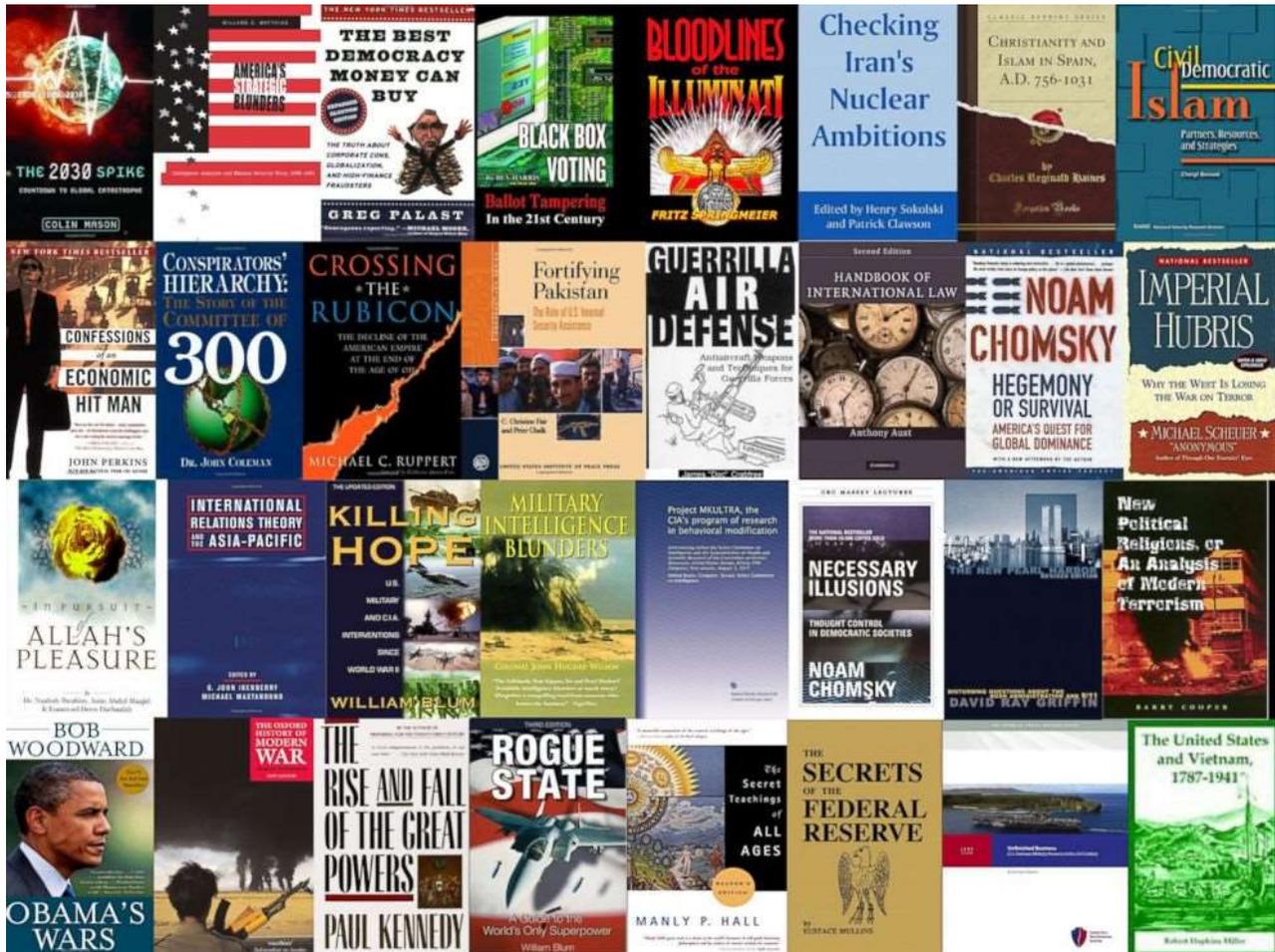


PHOTO: On May 20, 2015, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence released a list of 39 English-language books recovered during the raid that killed Osama bin Ladin.

The full list of books:

- The 2030 Spike by Colin Mason
- A Brief Guide to Understanding Islam by I. A. Ibrahim
- America’s Strategic Blunders by Willard Matthias
- America’s “War on Terrorism” by Michel Chossudovsky
- Al-Qaeda’s Online Media Strategies: From Abu Reuter to Irhabi 007 by Hanna Rogan
- The Best Democracy Money Can Buy by Greg Palast
- The Best Enemy Money Can Buy by Anthony Sutton
- Black Box Voting, Ballot Tampering in the 21st Century by Bev Harris
- Bloodlines of the Illuminati by Fritz Springmeier

- Bounding the Global War on Terror by Jeffrey Record
- Checking Iran's Nuclear Ambitions by Henry Sokolski and Patrick Clawson
- Christianity and Islam in Spain 756-1031 A.D. by C. R. Haines
- Civil Democratic Islam: Partners, Resources, and Strategies by Cheryl Benard
- Confessions of an Economic Hit Man by John Perkins
- Conspirators' Hierarchy: The Committee of 300 by John Coleman
- Crossing the Rubicon by Michael Ruppert
- Fortifying Pakistan: The Role of U.S. Internal Security Assistance (only the book's introduction) by C. Christine Fair and Peter Chalk
- Guerilla Air Defense: Antiaircraft Weapons and Techniques for Guerilla Forces by James Crabtree
- Handbook of International Law by Anthony Aust
- Hegemony or Survival: America's Quest for Global Dominance by Noam Chomsky
- Imperial Hubris by Michael Scheuer
- In Pursuit of Allah's Pleasure by Asim Abdul Maajid, Esaam-ud-Deen and Dr. Naahah Ibrahim
- International Relations Theory and the Asia-Pacific by John Ikenberry and Michael Mastandano
- Killing Hope: U.S. Military and CIA Interventions since World War II by William Blum
- Military Intelligence Blunders by John Hughes-Wilson
- Project MKULTRA, the CIA's program of research in behavioral modification. Joint hearing before the Select Committee on Intelligence and the Subcommittee on Health and Scientific Research of the Committee on Human Resources, United States Senate, Ninety-fifth Congress, first session, August 3, 1977. United States. Congress. Senate. Select Committee on Intelligence.
- Necessary Illusions: Thought Control in Democratic Societies by Noam Chomsky
- New Pearl Harbor: Disturbing Questions about the Bush Administration and 9/11 by David Ray Griffin
- New Political Religions, or Analysis of Modern Terrorism by Barry Cooper
- Obama's Wars by Bob Woodward
- Oxford History of Modern War by Charles Townsend
- The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers by Paul Kennedy
- Rogue State: A Guide to the World's Only Superpower by William Blum
- The Secret Teachings of All Ages by Manly Hall (1928)
- Secrets of the Federal Reserve by Eustace Mullins
- The Taking of America 1-2-3 by Richard Sprague
- Unfinished Business, U.S. Overseas Military Presence in the 21st Century by Michael O'Hanlon
- The U.S. and Vietnam 1787-1941 by Robert Hopkins Miller
- "Website Claims Steve Jackson Games Foretold 9/11," article posted on ICV2.com (this file contained only a single saved web page)

AFGHANISTAN - AUGUST 8: Undated file picture of Saudi dissident Ossama Bin Ladin in an undisclosed place inside Afghanistan. Ossama Bin Ladin speaks while sitting in front of a banner inscribed with basic Islamic tenets in Afghanistan. The billionaire Bin Ladin, member of a family of wealthy Saudi construction tycoon, is blamed for two bomb blasts in his home country in 1995-96 that killed 24 US servicemen. AFP PHOTO (Photo credit should read AFP/AFP/Getty)

Images)" class="media__image"
src="http://i2.cdn.turner.com/cnnnext/dam/assets/120317102406-osama-bin-laden-large-169.jpg">

Axelrod: Bin Laden report 'just plain wrong'

Did torture help find bin Laden?

U.S. releases unprecedented number of Osama bin Laden documents from 2011 raid

Documents show bin Laden's correspondence with family and al Qaeda associates

Material paints complex portrait of the world's most wanted man in years before his death

Peter Bergen is CNN's national security analyst, a vice president at New America and a professor of practice at Arizona State University. He is the author of "Manhunt: The Ten-Year Search for bin Laden -- From 9/11 to Abbottabad."

(CNN)In his final years hiding in a compound in Pakistan, Osama bin Laden was a man who at once showed great love and interest in his own family while he coldly drew up quixotic plans for mass casualty attacks on Americans, according to documents seized by Navy SEALs the night he was killed.

On Wednesday morning, the U.S. Office of the Director of National Intelligence released an unprecedented number of documents from what U.S. officials have described as the treasure-trove picked up by the SEALs at bin Laden's compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan, on May 2, 2011.

Totaling 103 documents, they include the largest repository of correspondence ever released between members of bin Laden's immediate family and significant communications between bin Laden and other leaders of al Qaeda as well as al Qaeda's communications with terrorist groups around the Muslim world.

Also released was a list of bin Laden's massive digital collection of English-language books, think tank reports and U.S. government documents, numbering 266 in total.

To the end bin Laden remained obsessed with attacking Americans. In an undated letter he told jihadist militants in North Africa that they should stop "insisting on the formation of an Islamic state" and instead attack U.S. embassies in Sierra Leone and Togo and American oil companies. Bin Laden offered similar advice to the al Qaeda affiliate in Yemen, telling it to avoid targeting Yemeni police and military targets and instead prioritize attacks on American targets.

Much of bin Laden's advice either didn't make it to these groups or was simply ignored because al Qaeda affiliates in Yemen and North Africa continued to attack local targets.



Author on bin Laden's shelf: We interfere in Muslim world 02:52

Bin Laden hikes alone at the base of a mountain. As U.S. troops closed in on Tora Bora in late 2001, bin Laden escaped. A decade later, U.S. Navy SEALs killed him at his next hideout in Abbottabad, Pakistan. EXPAND GALLERY





Some of the documents paint an organization that understood it was under significant pressure from U.S. counterterrorism operations. One undated document explained that CIA drone attacks "led to the killing of many jihadi cadres, leaders and others," and noted, "(T)his is something that is concerning us and exhausting us." Several documents mention the need to be careful with operational security and to encrypt communications and also the necessity of making trips around the Afghan-Pakistan border regions only on "cloudy days" when American drones were less effective.

Al Qaeda members knew they were short on cash, with one writing to bin Laden, "Also, there is the financial problem."

Some of the documents have nothing to do with terrorism. One lengthy memo from bin Laden worried about the baleful effects of climate change on the Muslim world and advocated not depleting precious groundwater stocks. Sounding more like a World Bank official than the leader of a major terrorist organization, bin Laden fretted about "food security." He also gave elaborate instructions to an aide about the most efficacious manner to store wheat.

Family concerns

Many of the documents concern bin Laden's sprawling family, which included his four wives and 20 children. Bin Laden took a minute interest in the marriage plans of his son Khalid to the daughter of a "martyred" al Qaeda commander, and he exchanged a number of letters with the mother of the bride-to-be. Bin Laden excitedly described the impending nuptials, "which our hearts have been looking forward to."

Bin Laden corresponded at length with his son Hamza and also with Hamza's mother, Khairiah, who had spent around a decade in Iran under a form of house arrest following the Taliban's fall in neighboring Afghanistan during the winter of 2001.

Hamza wrote a heartfelt letter to bin Laden in 2009 in which he recalled how he hadn't seen his father since he was 13, eight years earlier: "My heart is sad from the long separation, yearning to meet with you. ... My eyes still remember the last time I saw you when you were under the olive tree and you gave each one of us Muslim prayer beads."

In 2010 the Iranians started releasing members of the bin Laden family who had been living in Iran. Bin Laden spent many hours writing letters to them and to his associates in al Qaeda about how best he could reunite with them.



Bin Laden watches TV at his Abbottabad, Pakistan, compound in a frame grab from an undated video from the Pentagon.

In a letter to his wife Khairiah, he wrote tenderly, "(H)ow long have I waited for your departure from Iran."

Bin Laden was paranoid that the Iranians -- who he said were "not to be trusted" -- might insert electronic tracking devices into the belongings or even the bodies of his family as they departed Iran. He told Khairiah that if she had recently visited an "official dentist" in Iran for a filling that

she would need to have the filling taken out before meeting with him as he worried a tracking device might have been inserted inside.

U.S. intelligence officials have a theory that bin Laden might have been grooming Hamza eventually to succeed him at the helm of al Qaeda because the son's relative youth would energize al Qaeda's base. But Hamza never made it to his father's hiding place in Abbottabad. When the SEALs raided bin Laden's compound, they assumed Hamza would likely be one of the adult males living there, but he wasn't.

U.S. intelligence officials say they don't know where Hamza, now in his late 20s, is today.

'In case you became a martyr'

As is typical for any bureaucratic organization there was considerable discussion in the documents about which al Qaeda personnel might be suitable for promotion and also documentation of cash flows moving in and out of the organization, in amounts in the tens of thousands of euros.

There is even an al Qaeda application form that included standard questions such as what "hobbies" the applicant might have, but also less standard ones such as, "Who should we contact in case you became a martyr?"

Under pressure from bin Laden, leaders of al Qaeda in Yemen noodled with the idea that they might negotiate some kind of truce with the Yemeni government so the group could focus exclusively on attacking American targets. It's not clear if anything came of this.



Similarly, al Qaeda members reached out to leaders of the Pakistani Taliban who maintain contacts with Pakistan's military intelligence service, ISI, to see if they could negotiate a similar truce with the Pakistani government. The deal would be that the Pakistanis would leave al Qaeda alone and vice versa and then al Qaeda would be able to focus on attacking American targets. However, the al Qaeda leader who was leading this effort told bin Laden, "As you know, this is just talk!" and nothing came of these discussions.

There is no evidence in the newly released documents that the Pakistanis had any idea bin Laden was living in Pakistan or indeed he was even alive.

The new documents also do nothing to substantiate investigative journalist's Seymour Hersh's recent well-publicized claims that the raid that killed bin Laden was not a firefight in which the SEALs went into a dangerous and unknown situation, but a setup in which Pakistan's military

had been holding bin Laden prisoner in Abbottabad for five years and simply made him available to the SEALs when they flew in helicopters to the compound on the night of the raid.

White House rejects Hersh's 'baseless assertions'

On the first anniversary of bin Laden's death in May 2012, the Obama administration released a first tranche of 17 documents from the treasure-trove. Those documents also underlined how much al Qaeda feared the CIA drone campaign as well as bin Laden's obsessive interest in attacking the United States.



Bergen: Hersh's account of bin Laden raid is nonsense

Hersh seems to believe that any documents released by the Obama administration that were discovered during the bin Laden raid have been faked by the CIA. Readers can judge for themselves by examining the English-language translations of the new documents and also the original Arabic documents here.

According to U.S. intelligence officials, in October seven U.S. intelligence agencies began the process of clearing for public release the documents that came out Wednesday.

Bergen: Was there a cover-up in bin Laden killing?

Digital library

Among the most interesting windows in to the mind of al Qaeda's leader are the contents of his massive digital library, which was painstakingly assembled. Because of security concerns, bin Laden's compound had no connection to the Internet so any books or reports that bin Laden had an interest in were assembled painstakingly by making PDFs of each page. They were then put on to a thumb drive and delivered to bin Laden by one of his two bodyguards, according to U.S. intelligence officials.

Strangely, one of the books in bin Laden's digital library was a suicide prevention manual. Senior U.S. intelligence officials do not believe that bin Laden was suicidal.

Bin Laden was interested in books with a conspiratorial bent, and he had tomes about the Illuminati and the Freemasons and even, somewhat ironically, a book that asserted 9/11 was an "inside job."

Bin Laden also collected reports by leading American counterterrorism experts such as Bruce Hoffman and Paul Pillar as well as papers about al Qaeda by West Point's Combating Terrorism Center, RAND Corp. and the Congressional Research Service. (He even possessed congressional testimony by this author titled, "Reassessing the Evolving al Qaeda threat to the Homeland.")

Bin Laden collected indictments from American terrorism cases that he found of interest, such as that of David Coleman Headley from Chicago, who al Qaeda had tasked to plan an attack against a Danish newspaper that had published cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed.

During the almost six years bin Laden lived in the Abbottabad compound, he had a great deal of time on his hands, which was partly consumed by reading the many holdings in his digital library and also composing the memos and letters that are now becoming public.

Bin Laden was deeply aware that as the 10th anniversary of 9/11 approached his central goal of attacking the United States again had failed. Many of the documents reference his plans for some kind of major public statement to mark the anniversary. Bin Laden was killed three months before he could deliver this statement.

A gripping glimpse into bin Laden's decline and fall

The US just declassified al-Qaeda's job application form. It's bizarrely corporate.

Updated by Amanda Taub on May 20, 2015, 2:40 p.m. ET @amandataub

Who knew good penmanship was a requirement for joining al-Qaeda?

The US government recently released a slew of **documents** recovered from Osama bin Laden's compound in Abbottabad, and among them was **this application** to join the terrorist organization.

The application is surprising in its banality. It instructs applicants to "please write clearly and legibly," before proceeding with a series of questions that are bizarrely similar to those found in any ordinary job or college application. It reads as if it were created by management consultants — jhiring by way of McKinsey-optimized hiring processes.

Instructions to Applicants

Document

Pages

Zoom

CLOSE

(Fully Translated)

(TN: Each page has a watermark that reads as follows, "The Security Committee - al-Qa'ida Organization" "O ye people of faith, be vigilant.")

In the name of Allah the compassionate and merciful

Important remarks before you fill in the application:

1. Please answer the required information accurately and truthfully.
2. Please write clearly and legibly.
3. If you do not speak Arabic, please answer in the language you know.
4. Please refrain from sharing the information you provide on the application with each other because it is a trust to Almighty Allah.
5. You should know that the review of this application form is limited to the concerned individuals only.
6. If you would like to discuss any further issue, please tell your direct brother supervisor.

(TN: The following is a blank form:)

Personal Information:

- Name:
- Today's Date (Hijri):.....Today's Date (A.D.):
- Nickname/Alias:
- First Name:
- Father's Name:
- Grandfather's Name:
- Family Name:
- Father's Occupation:
- Number of Family Members:
- Age:
- Marital status:
- Country:
- Profession:
- Address:.....Country:.....City:.....Street:.....

- Date of your arrival in the land of Jihad:.....

- How long do you plan to stay in the (jihadi) theater?.....

Education Level:

Primary.....Elementary.....Secondary.....College.....

When did Almighty Allah bless you with this gift?.....

How much of the holy Qur'an have you memorized? Did you study Shari'a? Who was your instructor?.....

Which shaykhs do you listen to or read often?.....

Which shaykhs or Muslim dignitaries do you know?.....

Have you invented or researched anything in any domain?.....

Any hobbies or pastimes?.....

What other languages do you speak and at what level?.

Language:.....Read:.....Write:.....Speak:.....

What is your fluency in these foreign language(s)?

Poor.....Good.....Excellent.....

List the countries to which you have traveled and the purpose of the trip(s):.....

Do you know anyone who travels to Western countries?.....

What is your favorite material: science or literature?:.....

List the experience or expertise that you have in any area:.....

Do you know any workers or experts in chemistry, communications, or any other field?.....

Do any of your family or friends work with the government? If so, would he/she be willing to cooperate with or help us?.....

How many trips have you taken to Pakistan and for what reason(s)?.....

Were you previously been affiliated to any group(s)?
.....

Are you currently a member in a group?.....

Have you been ever convicted by any court? When, and who
convicted you? What was the offense?.....

Have you ever been in jail or prison?.....

List your previous occupations:.....

Have you received military training?.....

Have you ever joined the Afghanistan theater? If so, what year
and which group?.....

Are any of your relatives or friends in the jihad theater?
.....

List the types of passports you possess. Did you use a real or
forged passport for your current travel?.....

Provide details on how you arrived here:.....

Did you encounter any difficulties on the road to this place?
.....

Do you wish to execute a suicide operation?.....

What objectives would you would like to accomplish on your jihad
path?.....

What ideas and views do you, your family, and your other
acquaintances have about jihad in Allah's sake here?.....
Family members:.....Other acquaintances:.....

Do you have any chronic or hereditary disease(s)?.....

Who should we contact in case you became a martyr?.....
- Address:.....
- Phone numbers:.....

Praise Allah, Lord of all worlds

Contents

Contributed by: Anand Katakam, Vox.com

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To print the document, click the "Original Document" link to open the original PDF. At this time it is not possible to print the document with annotations.

Applicants apparently needed to be goal-oriented: "What objectives would you would like to accomplish on your jihad path?"

And they should also be well-rounded: "Do you have any hobbies or pastimes?"

The application even manages to make suicide bombings seem like just another rung on the corporate ladder. "Do you wish to become a suicide bomber?" it asks casually, after a series of questions about travel methods. And later it asks whom the organization should contact "in case you become a martyr," providing blanks for an address and telephone number, with all the offhand ease of any workplace asking employees to provide an emergency contact.

The corporate tone of the application is jarringly amusing, but it also hints at a larger truth: a terrorist organization like al-Qaeda *is* a large bureaucratic organization, albeit one in the "business" of mass-murdering innocent people. Given bin Laden's brutality, it's easy to imagine him as nothing more than an ultra-violent supervillain, but the documents released today suggest he was often more like a harried CEO, focused on recruitment, strategic partnerships with other groups, and "lessons learned" following failed operations.



On May 20, 2015, the ODNI released a sizeable tranche of documents recovered during the raid on the compound used to hide Usama bin Ladin. The release, which followed a rigorous interagency review, aligns with the President's call for increased transparency—consistent with national security prerogatives—and the 2014 Intelligence Authorization Act, which required the ODNI to conduct a review of the documents for release.

The release contains two sections. The first is a list of non-classified, English-language material found in and around the compound. The second is a selection of now-declassified documents.

The Intelligence Community will be reviewing hundreds more documents in the near future for possible declassification and release. An interagency taskforce under the auspices of the White House and with the agreement of the DNI is reviewing all documents which supported disseminated intelligence cables, as well as other relevant material found around the compound. All documents whose publication will not hurt ongoing operations against al-Qa'ida or their affiliates will be released.

Now Declassified

Material (103 items)

▶ **[Publicly Available U.S. Government Documents](#)** (75 items)

▶ **[English Language Books](#)** (39 items)

▶ **[Material Published by Violent Extremists & Terror Groups](#)** (35 items)

▶ **[Materials Regarding France](#)** (19 items)

▶ [Media Articles](#) (33 items)

▶ [Other Religious Documents](#) (11 items)

▶ [Think Tank & Other Studies](#) (40 items)

▶ [Software & Technical Manuals](#) (30 items)

▶ [Other Miscellaneous Documents](#) (14 items)

▶ [Documents Probably Used by Other Compound Residents](#) (10 items)

Wednesday, May 20, 2015

Osama Bin Laden was Reading 'Confessions of an Economic Hit Man'

Newly released government documents claim numerous books were found in Bin Laden's compound when it was raided by U.S. Navy Seals. They include: [Confessions of an Economic Hit Man](#) by John Perkins, [The Best Enemy Money Can Buy](#) by Anthony Sutton, [Hegemony or Survival: America's Quest for Global Dominance](#) by Noam Chomsky, [Imperial Hubris](#) by Michael Scheuer, [New Pearl Harbor: Disturbing Questions about the Bush Administration and 9/11](#) by David Ray Griffin, [The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers](#) by Paul Kennedy

Here's the full list put out by the U.S. government:

The 2030 Spike by Colin Mason
A Brief Guide to Understanding Islam by I. A. Ibrahim
America's Strategic Blunders by Willard Matthias
America's "War on Terrorism" by Michel Chossudovsky

Al-Qaeda's Online Media Strategies: From Abu Reuter to Irhabi 007 by Hanna Rogan
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Conspirators' Hierarchy: The Committee of 300 by John Coleman
Crossing the Rubicon by Michael Ruppert
Fortifying Pakistan: The Role of U.S. Internal Security Assistance (only the book's introduction)
by C. Christine Fair and Peter Chalk
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Handbook of International Law by Anthony Aust
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contained only a single saved web page)

Families suspect SEAL Team 6 crash was inside job on worst day in Afghanistan

By Rowan Scarborough - The Washington Times - Sunday, October 20, 2013

Questions haunt the families of Extortion 17, the 2011 helicopter mission in Afghanistan that suffered the most U.S. military deaths in a single day in the war on terrorism.

The investigative file made available to The Washington Times shows that the helicopter's landing zone was not properly vetted for threats nor protected by gunships, while commanders criticized the mission as too rushed and the conventional Chinook chopper as ill-suited for a dangerous troop infiltration.

Every day, Charlie Strange, the father of one of the 30 Americans who died Aug. 6, 2011, in the flash of a rocket-propelled grenade, asks himself whether his son, Michael, was set up by someone inside the Afghan government wanting revenge on Osama bin Laden's killers — SEAL Team 6.

PHOTOS: Families suspect SEAL Team 6 crash was inside job

“Somebody was leaking to the Taliban,” said Mr. Strange, whose son intercepted communications as a Navy cryptologist. “They knew. Somebody tipped them off. There were guys in a tower. Guys on the bush line. They were sitting there, waiting. And they sent our guys right into the middle.”

Doug Hamburger's son, Patrick, an Army staff sergeant, also perished when the CH-47D Chinook descended to a spot less than 150 yards from where armed Taliban fighters watched from a turret.

He asks why the command sent his son into Tangi Valley toward a “hot landing zone” in a cargo airship instead of a special operations helicopter. The souped-up choppers — the MH-47 and the MH-60 Black Hawk, which SEAL Team 6 rode the stealth version of to kill bin Laden — are flown by Night Stalker pilots skilled in fast, ground-hugging maneuvers to avoid detection.

“When you want to fly them into a valley, when you've got hillsides on both sides of it with houses built into sides of the valley, that is an extremely dangerous mission,” Mr. Hamburger said. “The MH, the new model, they've got radar that will pick up an incoming missile or incoming RPG. They're faster. They're quicker on attack. They're more agile. So there was every reason in the world to use the MH that night.”

Sith Douangdara, whose 26-year-old son, John, was a Navy expeditionary specialist who handled warrior dog Bart, said he has lots of unanswered questions.

“I want to know why so many U.S. servicemen, especially SEALs, were assembled on one aircraft,” he said. “I want to know why the black box of the helicopter has not been found. I want to know many things.”

Not all families believe the fact-finding investigation, conducted by Army Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Colt covered all issues. Gen. Colt, who has since been promoted to major general, told commanders that his job was not to find fault and his report did not criticize any person or decision.

“I want people held accountable,” said Mr. Strange, a former union construction worker who deals blackjack in a Philadelphia casino.

A spokesman for U.S. Central Command, which oversees the war and conducted the probe, declined to answer the families’ questions and referred a reporter to Gen. Colt’s report.

Congress gets involved

More than two years later, more answers may be forthcoming.

The House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, led by Rep. Darrell E. Issa, California Republican, is making inquiries after meeting with some families.

Larry Klayman, who runs the nonprofit watchdog group Freedom Watch, has filed suit in U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia against the Pentagon, as well as the Air Force, Army and Navy. He wants a judge to order the military to turn over an array of documents under the U.S. Freedom of Information Act. He said the Defense Department stonewalled his written requests, so Freedom Watch went to court last month and succeeded in forcing the government to turn over records.

For the first time, Mr. Klayman allowed The Washington Times to view the military’s investigative files turned over to family members two years ago.

“The families of our fallen heroes, who I am proud to represent, need closure to this tragedy,” Mr. Klayman said. “There are many unanswered questions and the military’s explanations of the causes of the crash do not add up.”

He said families also want changes to the military’s restrictive rules of engagement that made it more difficult for U.S. helicopter pilots to fire back at the Taliban fighters they believed brought down the Chinook.

“The families also want our military’s rules of engagement to be changed, as a testament to and in honor of their dead sons,” Mr. Klayman said. “When our nation enters into battle, it must be to win the battle, not the ‘hearts and minds’ of the Islamic jihadist enemy and the Muslim civilian population it uses as human shields.”

He also wants to know the identities of Afghan soldiers onboard, and why the aircraft’s black box, washed away in a fierce rainstorm, was never found — even though it has a homing device.

“We want to make sure our fallen heroes are respected and that answers are provided,” he said.

About an possible insider betrayal, he says: “We’re not saying that happened, but it needs to be explored because increasingly Americans are being killed at the hands of Afghans.”

Even some military personnel involved that night questioned the operations afterward.

The navigator aboard the AC-130 gunship that loitered for three hours over Tangi Valley expressed in 2011 what the families are thinking today.

“One of the other things that we did talk about — kind of what you’re hitting on, sir, is about the fact that, you know, for three hours we had been burning holes in the sky,” the officer told Gen. Colt’s team. “You’ve got [Apaches] flying around, so there’s a lot of noise going on and, basically, this entire valley knows that there’s something happening in this area. So, to do an infil on the X or Y, you know, having that element of surprise in the beginning of an operation is good, but by the time we’ve been there for three hours, and the party’s up, bringing in another aircraft like that, you know, may not be the most tactically sound decision.”

The mission

After Gen. Colt’s report became public in September 2011, the military arranged for him to brief next of kin Oct. 12 in Little Creek, Va., home to Naval Special Warfare Development Group, popularly called SEAL Team 6. The crash took the lives of 17 SEALs and five special warfare development group operators, making it the worst one-day loss in the history of U.S. naval special operations.

The chopper’s manifest included five Army soldiers, three Air Force airmen, seven Afghan soldiers and one Afghan interpreter. All 38 died. Twenty-two of them, such as Petty Officer Strange, were thrown from the aircraft. The rest died inside the fireball.

The military morgue at Dover Air Force Base in Delaware reported that all succumbed within seconds. Gen. Colt said they were “most likely rapid fatalities.”

President Obama went to Dover to receive the fallen and console the families.

“Your son changed America,” Mr. Strange said the president told him. “I grabbed the president by the shoulders and said, ‘I don’t need to know about my son. I need to know what happened.’”

The nation mourned as 30 funerals were held across the country, many in small-town America.

The public was transfixed by the service in Rockford, Iowa, for Petty Officer 1st Class Jon Tumilson, a SEAL. His beloved Labrador, Hawkeye, stayed loyal to the end, lying at the casket as more than 50 SEALs sat in attendance.

The military probe

Gen. Colt had the right experience to lead the probe: He is a decorated Iraq and Afghanistan veteran and career helicopter pilot, including time in the storied 160th Special Operations Regiment. He is now deputy commander of Fort Bragg, N.C.

For the families on Oct. 12, he went over his main conclusions, then his staff handed out DVDs.

But the questions the next of kin have today did not materialize until they began poring over 1,300 pages of maps, charts, briefings and interview transcripts of task force commanders and planners connected to the incident.

The tragedy unfolded at 10:55 p.m. on Aug. 5, 2011, when 47 Army Rangers set down in two CH-47 Chinooks in high ground overlooking Afghanistan’s Tangi Valley. The mission was part of an intensified campaign to kill or capture Taliban leaders, a drive that put tremendous demands on the helicopter fleet and left newer special “ops” models in short supply.

That night, the quarry was Qari Tahir, identified as the top leader in that critical area south of Kabul where the enemy moved in and out of Pakistan.

The Rangers raided a house thought to hold Tahir. The fleeing enemy — the military calls them “squirters” — escaped through a back door. The Rangers’ leader then made a pivotal decision: He asked the special operations task force to send an immediate reaction force to help catch the squirters, though whether any of them was Tahir was not known. It turned out he was in another village.

Commanders assembled the reaction force in 50 minutes and loaded them on one conventional CH-47, call sign Extortion 17, for the brief flight piloted by a seasoned National Guardsman and a younger reservist.

At that point, it was a far more risky flight than the insertion of Rangers 3 hours earlier. The Rangers had the benefit of surprise. Extortion 17 did not. It was flying into a firefight, with the noise of Apache attack helicopters, AC-130 gunships and drones above telling everyone in the valley that a military operation was underway.

It lifted off a forward operating base at 2:22 a.m., held for several minutes at one point, then announced it was one minute out at 2:38. At that moment, Extortion 17 slowed to 58 mph, at no more than 150 feet, approaching a spot framed by trees and mud-brick huts, and “sparkled” by the infrared designator on an AC-130 gunship.

In darkness, the Taliban fired two or three rocket-propelled grenades, a Soviet-designed OG-7 anti-personnel version that is accurate inside 170 yards. The shooter had positioned himself well within the weapon’s effective range.

One of the rocket-propelled grenades clipped a rotor blade and sent the Chinook into a violent spin, then fiery crash. Within 30 minutes, bragging about the hit from Taliban fighters started appearing on communications nets.

The command press office in Kabul at first told reporters that Extortion 17 was on a rescue mission. But the Rangers did not need rescuing. They had secured the target compound and were chasing squirters.

“A reactionary force is usually sent in as a rescue, meaning our guys are in trouble and you send them in,” Mr. Hamburger said. “You don’t send a reaction force to stop a group of the enemy escaping out the back side of the village, especially in a dangerous valley in a dangerous entry like they were doing.”

The Colt report supports Mr. Hamburger’s position. The special operations command in Afghanistan rarely assembled a reaction force, much less the elite SEAL Team 6, for the chore of chasing fleeing Taliban fighters.

A Colt investigator asked the task force operations officer, “How often do [you] employ the [immediate reaction force] on a target?”

“Rarely sir,” he answered. “It is rare to have a separate IRF element that is planned like this one.”

Likewise, an officer in the combat aviation brigade that provided Extortion 17 said he knew of no previous mission to send a reaction force to catch squirters.

“It has not happened sir,” he told Gen. Colt.

This officer said Extortion 17 already had taken off before he had a chance to tell the brigade’s top officer. There was little intelligence information about the landing area, except that it was 2.5 miles from the compound raided by the Rangers.

“I think he [the commander] called directly to try to get more information,” the officer told Gen. Colt.

The officer then acknowledged that the brigade never fully assessed the possible dangers that could await Extortion 17.

“But the immediacy of it, we didn’t delve as much as we needed to into the threat at that location,” he said.

Betrayal?

Some family members believe the Americans were betrayed by the Afghan government, that someone tipped off the Taliban.

One reason they cite is that the Taliban had begun planting loyalists inside the international security force to kill Americans, a practice known as “green on blue” assassinations.

They say SEAL Team 6 had a target on its back since it became known through various Obama administration leaks to the press that the unit killed bin Laden three months earlier.

Commanders told Gen. Colt’s investigation team that the Taliban put 100 fighters into Tangi Valley for the express purpose of bringing down U.S. aircraft. A flight with 17 SEALs would be a coveted target.

Then there is the fact that a group of Taliban fighters, equipped with hand-held radios, shifted positions and gathered near Extortion 17’s landing zone — a spot never before used by the Americans.

Two Taliban fighters armed with rocket-propelled grenades just happened to be stationed in a high turret less than 150 yards from Chinook’s “hot landing zone,” or (HLZ).

One paragraph in the Colt report grabbed the families’ attention. In it, crash investigators were interviewing the top leadership of the joint special operations task force that put together the mission. One of them was asked about a manifest.

“Yes, sir,” a commander answered. “And I’m sure you know by now the manifest was accurate with the exception of the [redacted] personnel that were on. So the [redacted] personnel, they were incorrect — all seven names were incorrect. And I cannot talk to the back story of why.”

The “seven,” family members say, refers to the Afghan soldiers. The open Colt report makes no reference about why the manifest was inaccurate. Military censors redacted any reference to the Afghans. Some families believe the task force at the last moment was forced to remove seven Afghans whose names remained on the manifest and replace them with seven others.

Senior Afghans had been aware of the mission because each operation must be approved by a joint operational coordination group made up of Americans and Afghan national security forces.

A Central Command spokesman declined to discuss the issue.

“My thought is they were being set up by the Afghanistan military,” Mr. Hamburger said. “I really have a feeling that is why the Afghans were switched at the last minute. That is why they were not on the manifest. I think that our military discovered that and did not want to disclose that truth to the families. I don’t know that for sure, but you just add everything up that wasn’t right with the mission that night, it really worries you.”

Gen. Colt wrote that he believes the Taliban stood ready to fire for one simple reason: The 3-hour Ranger operation, with aircraft continually buzzing overhead, alerted every enemy in the area that more helicopters might be on the way.

“The [Apache helicopters’] early arrival at both HLZ [redacted] coupled with earlier kinetic engagements of enemy elements, likely provided early warning to Taliban fighters that additional helicopters may be inboard to the area,” he wrote.

The wrong aircraft

Family members also believe the SEALs took off in the wrong aircraft.

The CH-47D, a conventional helicopter flown by a non-special operations pilot and co-pilot, is fine for ferrying cargo and troops to uncontested areas.

But to insert commandos into a “hot” zone, specialized choppers such as the MH-47 and MH-60 flown by special operations pilots should have been used, family members say. Army Special Operations Aviation aircraft fly fast and low, while the CH-47D descends to a landing zone from a significant height, making it an easy target.

A special operations commander told Gen. Colt that, of the CH-47D, his “comfort level is low because they don’t fly like ARSOA. They don’t plan like ARSOA. They don’t land like ARSOA. They will either, you know, kind of do a runway landing. Or if it’s a different crew that trains different areas, they will do the pinnacle landing.”

The officer said conventional choppers make commandos less effective.

“It’s tough,” he told Gen. Colt. “I mean, and I gave them guidance to make it work. And they were making it work. But it limited our effectiveness. It made our options and our tactical flexibility — our agility was clearly limited by our air platform infil — where we could go. How quickly we could get there.”

Unlike the MH models, the CH-47D was not equipped with any defensive alert system against rocket-propelled grenades.

Gen. Colt’s own final report shows that MHs have a better track record, at least in the 45 days before the shoot-down.

On June 6, two CH-47s inserting troops into Tangi Valley aborted the mission after encountering fire from rocket-propelled grenades. Later that night, an ARSOA MH-47G encountered the fire while inserting troops to the same landing zone and reported no damage.

It is notable that the command sent the combat rescue, and ordnance disposal teams, to the crash site in MH-47s, not CHs, and that the 47 Rangers left the Tangi Valley in special operations choppers.

Mr. Hamburger said he was told that no MH models were available when Extortion 17 was tapped for its doomed flight.

The Colt report states that surveillance aircraft, likely a Predator drone, stayed fixed on the squirts and did not shift to 17's landing spot to look for the enemy.

But Mr. Hamburger said a soldier told him he watched a Predator video feed of the shoot-down at a nearby base. If true, the father wants Central Command to turn over the video.

Mr. Hamburger cites as another motive for his push to obtain more information the rules of engagement for U.S. troops. He wants them changed.

Gunship crews cannot fire on fleeing Afghans before confirming they are carrying weapons, even though they obviously are Taliban fighters.

Such rules inhibited the Apaches and the C-130 gunship that night. The special operations commander in Kabul wanted to authorize a strike on the squirts, "but was unable to determine whether the group was armed," the Colt report says. The commander then ordered the ill-fated SEAL mission to help the Rangers round up every one. More aggressive rules of engagement might have removed any need for the mission.

Moments after the shoot-down, an Apache pilot pinpointed the source of the rocket-propelled grenade, but could not fire.

"Due to [rules of engagement] and tactical directives, I couldn't fire at the building where I thought the [shooter] was, so I aimed directly to the west of the building," the pilot told Gen. Colt.

Mr. Hamburger also said the mission did not follow protocol. The flight included no "stacked" escort of Apaches and a C-130 gunship that would put more eyes on the landing zone to look for shooters. The command relied on the gunships that had been sent with the Ranger team, but they had two tasks and paid more attention to the first — watching the squirts.

There appears to be a discrepancy between Gen. Colt's public 27-page report and what Apache pilots told him during his probe.

The AH-64 Apaches serve as the Chinooks' bodyguards during a typical troop insertion, escorting them to the landing zone and then targeting enemy on the ground.

But Extortion 17 had no Apache escorts.

Gen. Colt's report said that special operations commander at headquarters did not order the Rangers' two Apaches, equipped with night-vision goggles and night-gun sights, to move to Extortion 17's landing zone. A Ranger commander on the ground took it on himself to issue that order, he wrote.

But the interview transcripts show a more complete story, one that troubles the families who believe Gen. Colt left the wrong impression.

During his investigation, Gen. Colt himself told the special operations commander: “I’m just going to give you the feedback. The [Apache] guys, they really thought that their primary task was continuing to monitor these guys. That’s where their focus was. And as far as the amount of attention that they paid to the [hot landing zone] and the [infiltration] route, it was a secondary task to them.”

The pilot of one of two Apaches, called Gun 1 and Gun 2, assigned to protect the Rangers told Gen. Colt they never broke off to inspect the landing zone for threats as Extortion 17 got closer — until it was just three minutes out.

“Honestly, sir, I don’t think anybody had really looked at the LZ,” said the pilot of Gun 1. “I mean, at any time if we would have found these squirters, or they would have found weapons, we were — the way I was understanding it, we were going to be clear to engage due to the fact that they had weapons, but we had to [positively identify] them first.

“So we hadn’t started looking at the LZ yet, just due to there was so much more of a threat to the east with the squirters,” the pilot said. “I would say that on the three-minute call is when Gun 2 started. looking at the LZ, giving an LZ brief op. I would say that was the first time that we really had eyes on the LZ.”

Planning for an immediate reaction force is supposed to be in conjunction with the main mission. It was not. Planning began at shortly after 1 a.m. and lasted less than an hour.

The AC-130 commander said no one properly coordinated who would watch the squirters on the valley’s east side and who would move west to watch Extortion 17’s back.

“That coordination probably could have gone better, could have been better and, I think, I’m not sure, it just appeared to us the whole plan for getting into this area was rushed, I guess,” he said. “I don’t know if that’s the case, but that’s kind of one thing that I thought might have been done a little bit better.”

The gunship’s sensor operator said, “It just didn’t feel comfortable to us to bring another helo in, especially not having a ground team down there securing an LZ for them.”

Assessment

In the families’ eyes, the mission was snakebit from the start: using the wrong aircraft; flying into an uninspected and unwatched landing zone infested with Taliban fighters assembling a plan and a reaction team in minutes for an action that should have been conducted hours earlier.

The Times asked a special operations officer for his opinion. He is on active duty and cannot speak on the record.

“In this case, the CH-47 was used in a completely inappropriate manner given its design and the result was the deaths of everyone aboard,” the officer said.

“Tier 1 personnel must be employed with careful planning,” he added. “The cost and time to train them means that using them in such a haphazard manner as a reaction force in this context places critical personnel at too great a risk, especially in this concentration on such a noncritical mission.”

SEAL Team 6 and Army Delta Force are considered Tier 1 personnel as the armed forces' most elite counterterrorism units.

Asked how a Taliban at night could hit the 98-foot-long Chinook, he said, "I never questioned how he could aim. There's is no such thing as 'pitch black' and the CH-47 airframe is a loud, enormous target."

Gen. Colt's legal adviser began one interview session with ground troops by saying, "Obviously, we got a general officer appointed duty investigation by CENTCOM to make sure we have all the i's dotted and the t's crossed and our report is going to be as accurate and complete and unlikely to be second-guessed by a bunch of folks outside the military."

A month after the worst day in the war, the U.S. gained revenge of a sort. The NATO command in Kabul announced that it had killed Tahir with a precise airstrike as he stood outside with a fellow terrorist.

NAVY SEAL'S DAD: OBAMA SENT MY SON TO HIS DEATH 'they knew something was up'

Published: 07/25/2013 at 10:26 PM

The father of one of the 22 Navy SEALs killed in August 2011 when their Chinook helicopter was shot down by the Taliban in Afghanistan, told [talk-host Michael Savage](#) he believes the U.S. government sent his son and his colleagues to their deaths.

After Vice President Joe Biden revealed that SEAL Team 6 carried out the operation that killed Osama bin Laden in May 2011, Strange said the members of his son's team gave startling indications to their families they were about to meet their demise.

Charles Strange, the father of slain SEAL Michael Strange, told Savage Wednesday night that in June 2011, on at least three separate occasions his son grabbed him by the bicep and announced that he had prepared his will.

The bewildered father finally was able to find out what it all meant.

Michael Strange, his father recalled, said, "Something's going on with the team. Somebody's leaking things out. Something's going on."

Savage, reacting with emotion, asked: "Your son knew he was being sent to his death?"

"They knew," Strange replied. "They knew something was up. Every one of them."

Other families of the victims have reported similar experiences with their sons the last time they saw them, Strange said.

Strange said documents related to the crash that he obtained show that, among other anomalies, the rescue team was held back.

“This was all planned,” he said. “I have it in the paperwork.”

Strange affirmed that there was no chase helicopter or any other kind of support for the team.

“So, you’re saying they planned to execute your son and the others on purpose?” Savage asked.

“One hundred percent, sir,” Strange replied.

Investigation

Prompted by the concerns expressed by family members, Rep. Jason Chaffetz, R-Utah, said his subcommittee on the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee is investigating the crash.

As [WND reported in May](#), Strange recalled to the National Press Club in Washington his experience with President Obama at Dover Air Force Base in Delaware Aug. 9, 2011, when the remains of 30 U.S. troops were brought home from Afghanistan.

He leaned over to whisper into President Obama’s ear to ask if there would be a congressional investigation into the death of his son.

President Obama whispered back, “We will look very, very, very deep into this.”

But Strange said he hadn’t heard a word since that encounter.

The families have filed a lawsuit against President Obama, Vice President Biden, the Taliban, the governments of Afghanistan and Iran, because the Islamic regime promises to pay \$10,000 for every dead U.S. service member.

Among their many suspicions, the families question the sudden replacement of seven Afghan commandos on board the helicopter just before takeoff. The seven who died in the attack are not the seven listed in the flight manifest. The families say that to this day, they don’t know the identities of the dead Afghans.

Strange noted that the chopper’s black box was never recovered and doubts the explanation that it was washed away in a flash flood.

Read more at <http://www.wnd.com/2013/07/navy-seals-father-obama-sent-my-son-to-his-death/#m3vt9FE0TYDWTSR7.99>

What happened to 17 members of SEAL Team 6? Will a House Committee further torch the legacy of SEAL Team 6?

The crash was the costliest in the history of U.S. Naval Special Warfare, but what really happened to 17 members of U.S. Navy SEAL Team 6? Is Congress really going to investigate?

These nagging questions are part of a scheduled U.S. House of Representatives probe in January, that may be nothing but smoke and mirrors.

This brings little solace to the families of warriors who were credited with capturing and killing bin Laden.

The truth about their reported fiery death that resulted from a "lucky" strike from a Taliban rocket launcher may be the last thing Congress wants to expose.

As the Western Center for Journalism reports, "After the families attended a several hour military briefing about this 'lucky shot,' describing what happened and why their sons died, they smelled a rat and started digging around." 1

Charlie Strange is the father of Navy SEAL Michael Strange, who lost his life on that tragic day, along with 16 other members of SEAL Team 6 and air crew members from the U.S. Army.

He told me that after the families were gathered by the government after the incident to hear the "details" of their son's deaths, U.S. officials delivered the most stunning blow... *the families were told their sons were all cremated immediately due to the severe burns suffered in the crash.*

Understanding that many families are very remote from the process of handling military dead, let's just say it is one of the most emotionally taxing missions that can be assigned. In the movie "Taking Chance," Kevin Bacon plays a Marine lieutenant colonel who escorts the remains of a 19-year old Marine back to his family in Wyoming. The emphasis on the handling of the bodies is enormous and overwhelming. Each aspect, from the uniform to the handing of the casket, is taken seriously. They don't take the fallen and toss them in an oven 2.

The mortal remains of all sailors and soldiers aboard the ill-fated helicopter, named "Extortion 17" were immediately cremated without permission from the families. Families were told this happened because the bodies were badly burned in the crash. But Charles Strange calls foul. *In fact he says the story is a complete lie. Taliban on the ground in fact found the bodies of the crew. The Obama administration cremated everyone in order to cover up something,* Western Center for Journalism writes.

No matter what the government tries to say, protocol was totally violated in the handling of the remains of SEAL Team 6 and the aviation soldiers. Charlie Strange discovered the truth of his son's death when he requested a copy of the autopsy report, and unexpectedly received a CD with a photo of his son's body on the ground in Afghanistan. This shocking image shattered the false U.S. claim of the SEALs dying in an aircraft crash and fire. His son's body had damage to one leg but no burns at all.

According to funeralwise.com, the process for returning remains from the war involves ice, not fire:

"The service member's remains are packed in ice inside an aluminum, flag-draped "transfer case" and transported by military cargo plane. When fallen troops return home, they enter the

U.S. through Dover Air Force Base in Dover, Del. Upon arrival they are greeted and transferred with great dignity by hearse to the Air Force Mortuary Affairs Operations center at Dover, a short distance away. Those in attendance, including the carry guard, chaplain, and any family members, VIPs, or journalists, follow on foot. The remains undergo all of the necessities of burial preparation at this time, including being clothed in full dress uniform." 3

Where is the part about burning bodies? How do you put a dress uniform on a pile of ashes? "By tradition, the remains travel feet-first whenever they must be moved, and there are military personnel on hand to render honors—standing at attention and saluting—at each transfer point," funeralwise.com further reports.

But how can you tell where the feet are pointing if the fallen servicemember has been reduced to a can of ash?

Most religions call for intact remains to be buried in the ground. This most basic right was denied. The practice of returning *intact* military remains began during the first two World Wars.

According to *The Wall Street Journal*, during WWII, almost 80,000 Americans died fighting in the Pacific. 65,000 bodies first buried in almost 200 battlefield cemeteries, were returned home, and they weren't burned. "Once the fighting ended, the bodies were dug up and consolidated into larger regional graveyards," *WSJ* explains, "Eventually, 171,000 of the roughly 280,000 identified remains were brought back to the U.S." 4

The National Funeral Director's Association writes of the critical handling of remains, "After preliminary identification is made, the bodies will be transported to Dover Air Force Base in Delaware where final identification and preparation will take place. At Dover, embalming, dressing, and casketing will occur. Bodies released from Dover will be rendered safe." 5

Embalming? Shouldn't the paragraph begin with, "Unless the remains of the soldier are cremated against the wishes of the family...?" No, of course not, because the remains of fallen U.S. military are brought home intact.

This is a scandalous story as is the death of the Navy SEAL Team in the first place. I have read before that these SEAL's are trained to a cost of \$1.5 million each. yet they were loaded into a pre-Vietnam War CH-47 helicopter and flown into the most dangerous part of Afghanistan without a gunship escort? Many speculate that the SEAL team credited with the killing of bin Laden have been played.

My regular readers know I don't believe anything to do with the story of bin Laden living in Abbottabad, Pakistan. There is strong evidence indicating that Osama bin Laden was suffering end stages of kidney failure as far back as 2000. People have no problem believing politicians lie about so many things, yet they knee jerk react to any idea of the U.S. govt. lying about bin Laden's role in the 11 September 2001 attacks. Regardless of what people would like to believe, bin Laden fiercely denied involvement in 9/11 and it isn't likely that he received kidney dialysis in a Middle Eastern cave.

He was never listed by the FBI as a suspect in the 11 Sept. attacks. His *alleged* claims of having attacked the United States were delivered by former U.S. President George W. Bush.

In fact on the same exact days that bin Laden's denials were being printed in world newspapers everywhere, Bush was on American TV saying bin Laden claimed credit. He never did, and since we know that, we also have to believe that the most painful terrorist attacks on U.S. soil were the work of a man who would deny it all afterward, that does not make sense.

I have been writing about this for years, citing CNN and AP articles that verify my statements, and lo and behold, the U.S. government has obviously been pressuring these agencies, the U.S. versions are all leading to dead links now, but the powers are ineffective with groups like The BBC and *The Telegraph* in the UK.

A BBC article that is still online states, "The reclusive Taleban leader, Mullah Mohammad Omar, said Mr Bin Laden could not have masterminded the attacks because he lacked the capacity do so."

In his statement from 2001, bin Laden said: "The U.S. government has consistently blamed me for being behind every occasion its enemies attack it.

"I would like to assure the world that I did not plan the recent attacks, which seems to have been planned by people for personal reasons."

"I have been living in the Islamic emirate of Afghanistan and following its leaders' rules. The current leader does not allow me to exercise such operations."

From: Bin Laden says he wasn't behind attacks - CNN

(In keeping with their role as a mainstream U.S. news agency, oops I mean mainstream news organization, CNN has removed the link to the article featured above. The original link was http://articles.cnn.com/2001-09-16/us/inv.binladen.denial_1_bin-laden-taliban-supreme-leader-mullah-mohammed-omar?_s=PM:US)

The U.S. govt. needs an honest member to push this into public view. Glenn Beck has written about it on The Blaze but Beck and his followers adamantly refuse to believe that bin Laden was not behind the attacks that led the U.S. into a series of unending wars in the Middle East.

Ask the question, "Why would anyone attack the United States, of all places, with a hot button president like George W. Bush in office?"

[1 Western Center for Journalism - Obama's SEAL Team 6 Coverup](#)

[2 IMDB - Taking Chance](#)

[3 funeralwise.com](#)

Did Part of SEAL Team Six Die in a Helicopter Explosion During the Bin Laden Raid?

OCTOBER 18, 2013 BY [21WIRE](#) [21 COMMENTS](#)

21st Century Wire says...

What the public were told by the US government via the corporate media, and what actually happened during the White House's much-celebrated "Bin Laden Raid" in 2011 - *are not the same.*



One thing which becomes clearer by the day about the fabled '*Bin Laden Raid*' which took place in Abbotabad, Pakistan, is that the US government has intentionally deceived the public about what happened. In other words, what President Obama described when he addressed the American people following "the raid" – was a work of pure fiction.

The following interview appeared on Pakistani broadcast channel, **Sama TV**, and includes a translation in English from an eye witness on the scene. If the translation is accurate, then this eye witness blows the lid off of another plank in the White House's fictional drama.

The following is an interview with **Muhammad Bashir**, who lives next door to the alleged "compound" of Osama bin Laden. He claims that the first US helicopter suffered an explosion, which killed all of its US military occupants, somewhere between 10 and 20 men.

Based on this man's testimony, we have to ask the question: did the White House cover this up in order to protect the Dear Leader from a devastating "Jimmy Carter moment" (1979 Iran hostage rescue cock-up). That's certainly what this looks like at first glance. Would Obama lie to protect his and his party's political legacy? We'll let the readers answer that question.

"It seems that although initially, the TV station was overjoyed with this interview, they changed their tune, twenty four hours later (for some unknown reason)". You decide why...

So the original lie, the **9/11 Operation**, was covered up by the next lie – the **Bin Laden Raid**. Following on to this, it only stands to reason that the Abbotabad lie should be concealed by *the next lie*. The next lie is that no one knows where *Bin Laden's* body is. In stark contrast to President Obama's declaration that bin Laden was "buried at sea", US Navy Sailors on the USS Carl Vinson have stated on record did not witness an at-sea burial of Osama bin Laden. Therefore, someone is lying. Did Barack Obama chop down the cherry tree?

So if Osama bin Laden was not at Abbotabad, or on the USS Carl Vinson – as the evidence, and lack thereof, dictates, then where is he? More than likely, he was dead years before Obama's glorious raid, but it served two US Administrations to keep his image alive in order to justify the unprecedented military, and security police state build-up which ensued following 9/11. In case readers aren't aware, there are [many high ranking official statements that back up this claim](#), and at least one of those who spoke of this in public, **Benazir Bhutto**, was assassinated shortly after saying it.

Hollywood even made [a blockbuster propaganda film to back-up the US government's tall tale](#). It was called *Zero Dark Thirty*, and it was a big money maker too. So everyone is happy, right? No really, as the can must be kicked down the road one more time...

One more lie, before we wrap this up. According to the same government sources from the first two lies listed, on August 6, 2011, a U.S. Boeing CH-47 Chinook helicopter, with the call sign *Extortion 17*, was shot down in Wardak province, west of Kabul, Afghanistan, amazingly, killing all 38 people on board including 25 American special operations personnel. The US claimed that the bodies were so badly burnt that they were forced to cremate them immediately, as if on some sort of deadline to make them disappear. Again, and with both 9/11 and the Bin Laden raid, there are no survivors, no bodies, no photos, and no real evidence available that prove the government's creative version of events. How do we even know those men actually died in that same Chinook crash? *Will we ever know?* Not if the US government is allowed to tell its people endless lies, all in the name of *national security*.

After viewing Pakistani TV interview (above), former Assistant US Treasury Secretary **Paul Craig Roberts** explains, "I am confident that no news organization believes that it could confront such an important US national myth in this way. The killing of bin Laden satisfies the emotional need for revenge and justice. In the least, a news organization that challenged the government's story would be cut off from all government sources and be denounced by politicians and a large percentage of the gullible US population as an anti-American terrorist-serving organization."

Read **full transcript** of the Pakistani news translation [here](#).

By the way, no one in Abbotabad, or in Pakistan it seems, actually believes the fictional Bin Laden raid drama either. *Watch:*

Digging up the Dead: Bin Laden raid files ‘buried’ by CIA to avoid public scrutiny

JULY 8, 2013 BY [SHAWN HELTON](#) [2 COMMENTS](#)

[21st Century Wire](#) says...

The Osama Bin Laden raid documents are under lock and key, as the CIA quietly obtained them from the U.S. State Department, almost ensuring they’ll never see the light of day. It remains to be seen if we will ever know the full details of the largest ‘theatrical’ man-hunt for a fugitive in the modern era.

Understanding the history of Bin Laden leads us to the secrets of 9/11...

We must remember crucial details about Bin Laden’s back ground, below is a quote from **Prince Bandar** Bin Sultan during an interview on CNN with **Larry King** on October 1st 2001, shortly after 9/11. Bandar discussed the support that Bin Laden received from America, during the proxy war involving the Mujahadeen and Soviet Russian forces:

This is ironic. In the mid-’80s, if you remember, we and the United — Saudi Arabia and the United States were supporting the Mujahideen to liberate Afghanistan from the Soviets. He came to thank me for my efforts to bring the Americans, our friends, to help us against the atheists, he said the communists.

Bandar, the director general of the Saudi intelligence Agency, is the face of the Saudi Arabia lobby. [It is no secret he has been linked to the CIA.](#) Bandar was doing damage control after 9/11 on Larry King Live, after it was revealed that 15 of the 19 hijackers on 9/11 were Saudi citizens. Looking back, it seems that Bandar may have been given the go ahead to blow Bin Laden’s cover as a CIA asset to deflect Saudi involvement on that dark September day.

There are those of us who believe [the ‘real’ Bin Laden perished long ago, ironically, including the mainstream media...](#)

The files on the Bin Laden raid will join the files on 9/11, redacted and buried.



IMAGE: (Associated Press) a film still from the 'Hollywood' version of the Bin Laden raid – Zero Dark Thirty

Bin Laden raid files secretly moved to CIA to avoid public disclosure

[Russia Today](#)

Military files detailing the Navy SEAL raid which killed Osama bin Laden in 2011 were removed from Defense Department computers and sent to the CIA, in an effort to make the documents harder for the general public to access.

The secret move, ordered by Adm. William McRaven, was mentioned in a draft report by the Pentagon's inspector general, which was acquired by AP.

McRaven, who oversaw the bin Laden raid, expressed his concerns in the report about possible disclosure of the identities of the SEALs. He ordered that names and photographs associated with Operation Neptune Spear not be released.

"This effort included purging the combatant command's systems of all records related to the operation and providing these records to another government agency," the draft report said.



Admiral William McRaven (Chip Somodevilla / Getty Images / AFP)

But that sentence was removed from the final version of the document, which was released several weeks ago. Unnamed current and former Defense Department officials confirmed to AP that “another government agency” mentioned in the report was code for the CIA.

McRaven’s spokesman declined to comment on the issue when he was approached by AP. Meanwhile, the CIA explained that the SEALs involved in the bin Laden raid were effectively assigned to work temporarily for the CIA, which has presidential authority to conduct covert operations.

“Documents related to the raid were handled in a manner consistent with the fact that the operation was conducted under the direction of the CIA director (Leon Panetta),” agency spokesman Preston Golson said in an emailed statement.

“Records of a CIA operation such as the (bin Laden) raid, which were created during the conduct of the operation by persons acting under the authority of the CIA Director, are CIA records,” he added.

Golson said that it is “*absolutely false*” that records were moved to the CIA to avoid the legal requirements of the Freedom of Information Act.



Pakistani children playing near demolition works on the compound where Osama bin Laden was killed on May 2, 2011 / Pakistani security personnel sitting in a cordoned-off street in front of bin Laden's final hideout in Abbottabad (AFP Photo / Aamir Qureshi)

Under US federal rules, transferring government records from one executive agency to another must be approved in writing by the National Archives and Records Administration. But according to AP, the respective authorities weren't notified that the bin Laden raid files were being moved.

The Pentagon told AP that it couldn't find any documents on bin Laden's killing inside the Defense Department. The response came after the news agency requested to see the documents in 20 separate applications – most of which were submitted in May 2011.

The CIA has special authority to prevent the release of "operational files" in ways that can't effectively be challenged in federal court, while a judge has the power compel the Pentagon to turn over non-sensitive portions of their military records.

AP expressed concern that the relocation of Operation Neptune Spear files "could represent a new strategy for the US government to shield even its most sensitive activities from public scrutiny."

IN DEATH, AS IN LIFE, BIN LADEN CONTINUES TO SERVE HIS CIA MASTERS

MAY 6, 2011 BY [21WIRE](#) [3 COMMENTS](#)

Patrick Henningsen
21st Century Wire
May 6, 2011

As Washington and the CIA scramble to shore-up their official narrative this week, it is reported that “Al-Qaeda” has confirmed the death of its leader Osama Bin Laden, according to a statement attributed to the group.

Following predictable intelligence agency protocol, this scripted statement was posted on a series of seemingly random “Jihadist” internet forums.

This latest dubious Al Qaeda broadcast is timed to perfection and reads like a bookend to the White House’s grand proclamation earlier this week. [Their statement said](#) that Osama bin Laden’s blood would not be “wasted” and that al-Qaeda would continue attacking the US and allies.

In addition, the alleged Al Qaeda message goes on to say that Bin Laden’s death would be a “curse” for the US and urged an uprising in Pakistan. As is the case with most western manufactured Al Qaeda messages, this one should also be read as a hint to a future move on the part of the **Washington-London-Tel Aviv Axis**, one which may see Pakistan as a new potential NATO military conflict opponent.

Assumptions, layered on top of lies, layered on top of more assumptions. Welcome to the illustrious *War on Terror*...

The fiction now surrounding the life and death of Osama Bin Laden has reached epidemic proportions, and now Washington is scrambling to hold its fragile story together. So it’s time to ask ourselves, what do we actually know about him, and what is pure fiction?

Firstly, what we know, undisputed and documented by public sources:

1) Osama bin Laden was a well known, well paid CIA intelligence asset used over a long period by more than one US administration to fight their proxy wars. Originally he was recruited during the end of the Carter administration to fight the Soviets in Afghanistan, he was subsequently used and armed to bolster the Muslim cause where it could be applied as a proxy force in civil wars, including Bosnia in the 1990’s.



NOT-SO-STRANGE BEDFELLOWS: Osama bin Laden and Zbigniew Brzezinski in Afghanistan.

2) On several occasions in the 1990's (by which time his name was increasingly linked to, but never proven to be responsible for several terrorist attacks), there were opportunities to arrest him, and on each occasion intelligence services interceded on his behalf either directly, or as was the case during the Clinton administration, the case against him was dropped due to a *lack of evidence*.

3) Though he was claimed by Washington to have “gone rogue”, the rest of his family remain as one of the best established and most westernised of the super-elite Saudi families who have married into British high society. The bin Ladens are linked to the Bushes and have been majority share holders in world foremost transnational arms and development consortiums of the **Carlyle Group**, whose directors include former US President George Bush Sr and former British PM John Major.

4) There have been numerous reports of Osama bin Laden's death, including announcements by Heads of State on several occasions. On December 26, 2001, [Fox News reported](#) on a Pakistan Observer story that the Afghan Taliban had officially pronounced Osama Bin Laden dead earlier that month. According to the report, he was buried less than 24 hours later in an unmarked grave in accordance with Wahabbist Sunni practices. On January 18, 2002, Pakistani President [Pervez Musharraf announced](#) quite bluntly: “I think now, frankly, he is dead”. In October 2002, Afghan President [Hamid Karzai](#) told CNN that “I would come to believe that (Bin Laden) probably is dead”. [A number of other official admissions can be found here](#). In total, this latest announcement by Obama would be [the ninth time bin Laden has been pronounced dead](#).

5) Al Qaeda is not a genuine organisation, as it was invented by the FBI, CIA and promoted by

western governments to sell their global war on terror.

Video: How enemies Bin Laden and Al Qaeda were invented by the West.

What we DON'T know:

- 1) There is no evidence, other than anecdotal and innuendo, whatsoever linking him directly with 9/11.
- 2) No evidence exists that he has been alive since late 2001. Although a number of videos and audio message have been released by CIA and Pentagon-run media offices, namely [Intel Center](#) and [SITE](#), all subsequently [proven to be poorly crafted fakes](#), no real evidence has ever surfaced. The most infamous of these fake tapes was the one which appeared just before the 2004 election, one that both Bush and Kerry attributed to George W. Bush gaining re-election that year.
- 3) There is no evidence he was ever in the 'compound' building in Pakistan's Abbottabad Valley on May 1, 2011. Certainly, there is no evidence, other than the official statement from Washington this week, that he was killed then and there.

A likely version of events

As a long time western intelligence asset, Osama agreed to be the fall guy for 9/11 in exchange for safe passage and the continued patronage of his family which include a number of multi-billion dollar contracts from major Anglo-American-Saudi contractors. In death, as in life, he continues to do the bidding for his intelligence Puppet Masters, who still continue to use the utterly meaningless, catch-all term "Al Qaeda" to justify imperialist, dictatory and globalist policies, and subsequently announcing their endless agenda of grotesque plans.

Critically acclaimed author and former US intelligence operative **Steve Pieczenik**, [gives a complete analysis on the legend of Al Qaeda and Osama Bin Laden here](#). Washington's announcement this week that it *will not* be releasing bin Laden photos is simply down to the fact that there are no genuine photos of his alleged assassination by US forces. To make this tale even more incredible, President Obama claims that Osama's body was dumped into the Arabian Sea ten hours after he will killed.

The ruling elite are promoting the irrational fear of terrorism to control populations.

what do we have? No body, no photos, no video... no evidence. But the official narrative moves forward like a Hollywood script, "a brave team of Navy SEALs carried out a daring operation to capture and kill the world's number one terrorist". And for the first night in ten years, Americans can go to bed feeling proud and safe.

White House using the Bin Laden story

Clearly, a fictional character like Osama bin Laden was worth more alive than he was dead, which explains the lengths which Washington was willing to go in order keep his presence in play. The decision by the White House to cash in their big chip this week is likely due to a dire need for domestic approval in the run-up to the 2012 election, bury the birth certificate problem, re-spin unpopular foreign occupations in Afghanistan and Iraq, and to help sustain an expensive and ultimately useless hyper-security state. Obama's latest propaganda stunt is the equivalent of the *Holy Grail* in terms of 21st century Anglo-American politics. But as well packaged as his delivery of this event appeared on Sunday evening, the fairy tale of bin Laden appears to be unravelling faster than his relatively inexperienced White House spin doctors can manage.

The **Bin Laden-Al Qaeda-911** Psy-Op which began under George Bush Jr and the Neo-Con establishment was inherited by the current administration, who are struggling to streamline their complex story well enough for the public to resubscribe to it.

Perhaps the best strategy for the Obama Administration would have been that of the Bush Administration- to leave the major fictional villain of our epoch, Osama bin Laden... *safely buried in the closet*. Wheeling him out now will mostly certainly start of chain of events that even the most skilled White House media minions will find difficult to patch up. The damage that this fairy tale has done to the US- and continues to do, threatens a number of major fundamental pillars and institutions domestically and overseas.

The official narrative is easy to believe if you choose to switch off your critical faculties, and allow the Washington spokespeople and media moguls to take over, directing you what to think and when to think it.

Conversely, sifting between the truth and the lies... requires effort.

READ MORE NAVY SEAL NEWS AT: [21st Century Wire SEAL Files](#)

Smoke and Mirrors: Was Seymour Hersh's 'Bin Laden Raid' Report a Red Herring?

MAY 13, 2015 BY [21WIRE](#) [3 COMMENTS](#)

21WIRE + RT | Was Hersh's bin Laden report just another variation of the official story?

FILED UNDER: [FEATURED](#), [INTERNATIONAL NEWS](#), [MIDDLE EAST](#), [SHAWN HELTON](#)
TAGGED WITH: [AL QAEDA](#), [NAVY SEALS](#), [OSAMA BIN LADEN](#), [SEAL TEAM 6](#), [SEYMOUR HERSH](#), [WAR ON TERROR](#)

EXCLUSIVE: CIA Spent \$40 million, Hacked Senate Computers to Suppress Torture Report

DECEMBER 9, 2014 BY [21WIRE](#) [13 COMMENTS](#)

Patrick Henningsen | Senator: "The CIA pulled out all the stops to prevent this from coming out."

FILED UNDER: [FEATURED](#), [PATRICK HENNINGSEN](#), [US NEWS](#) TAGGED WITH: [BIN LADEN](#), [CIA](#), [GEORGE W BUSH](#), [IRAQ](#), [NAVY SEALS](#), [TOTURE](#)

Episode #23 – SUNDAY WIRE SHOW: ‘Regime Change for Beginners’ with guests Dean Henderson, Shawn Helton and Basil Valentine

MARCH 2, 2014 BY [21WIRE](#) [5 COMMENTS](#)

SUNDAY WIRE RADIO SHOW | CIA Heroin Import/Export, Curse of Captain Phillips Ship, and the Rape of the Ukraine – all in one show.

FILED UNDER: [FEATURED](#), [INTERNATIONAL NEWS](#), [SUNDAY WIRE RADIO SHOW](#) TAGGED WITH: [CAPTAIN PHILLIPS](#), [CIA](#), [HEROIN](#), [MAERSK ALABAMA](#), [NAVY SEALS](#), [RUSSIA](#), [UKRAINE](#)

Curse of the Maersk: Suspicions Rise After Preliminary Autopsy of Ex-SEALS is Revealed

FEBRUARY 28, 2014 BY [SHAWN HELTON](#) [28 COMMENTS](#)

Shawn Helton | Suspicion seems to be rising over the questionable deaths of two former SEALS found aboard the cursed Captain Phillips ship, Maersk Alabama.

FILED UNDER: [FEATURED](#), [INTERNATIONAL NEWS](#), [SHAWN HELTON](#) TAGGED WITH: [AFRICOM FOR DUMMIES](#), [CAPTAIN PHILLIPS](#), [LLOYD'S OF LONDON](#), [MAERSK ALABAMA](#), [MAERSK LINE](#), [NAVY SEALS](#), [SOMALI PIRATES](#), [TRIDENT GROUP](#)

Ex-Navy SEALS Found Dead on ‘Captain Phillips Ship’ Points to Maritime Piracy Scam

FEBRUARY 21, 2014 BY [SHAWN HELTON](#) [12 COMMENTS](#)

Shawn Helton | Is this latest incident another seal conspiracy that the system will try to bury?

FILED UNDER: [FEATURED](#), [INTERNATIONAL NEWS](#), [SHAWN HELTON](#) TAGGED WITH: [AFRICOM FOR DUMMIES](#), [CAPTAIN PHILLIPS](#), [HOLLYWOOD](#), [LLOYD'S OF LONDON](#), [MAERSK ALABAMA](#), [MAERSK LINE](#), [NAVY SEALS](#), [SOMALI PIRATES](#), [TRIDENT GROUP](#)

US Navy SEALS Trained to Use ‘Backpack Nukes’ As Nuclear First Strike Option

FEBRUARY 16, 2014 BY [21WIRE](#) [24 COMMENTS](#)

21WIRE + RT | Still, many Americans are in denial that their own country has already developed – and deployed, smaller tactical ‘battlefield nukes’.

FILED UNDER: [FEATURED](#), [US NEWS](#) TAGGED WITH: [NAVY SEALS](#), [NUCLEAR](#), [SAMD](#), [SPECIAL ATOMIC DEMOLITION MUNITION](#), [WMD](#)

NSA spying, the NDAA & other ‘revelations’ in the wake of Snowden

DECEMBER 19, 2013 BY [SHAWN HELTON](#) [0 COMMENTS](#)

Shawn Helton | US repeal of the Smith-Mundt Act has led to an unprecedented level of daily propaganda.

FILED UNDER: [FEATURED](#), [INTERNATIONAL NEWS](#), [SHAWN HELTON](#), [US NEWS](#)
TAGGED WITH: [DON LEMON](#), [ED SNOWDEN](#), [EDWARD SNOWDEN](#), [GCHQ](#), [GLENN GREENWALD](#), [LARRY KLAYMAN](#), [METADATA](#), [NATE WESSLER](#), [NAVY SEALS](#), [NDDA](#), [NDDA 2014](#), [NSA](#), [OBAMA](#), [PANDA](#), [PAYMENT GATEWAY](#), [PAYPAL](#), [PROJECT MOCKINGBIRD](#), [PROPAGANDA](#), [SEAL TEAM 6](#), [SMITH MUNDT](#), [SNOWDEN](#), [WIKILEAKS](#)

Did Part of SEAL Team Six Die in a Helicopter Explosion During the Bin Laden Raid?

OCTOBER 18, 2013 BY [21WIRE](#) [21 COMMENTS](#)

21WIRE + Saama TV | A string of lies, beginning with 9/11, and ending with Navy SEAL Team Six.

FILED UNDER: [FEATURED](#), [INTERNATIONAL NEWS](#), [US NEWS](#) TAGGED WITH: [NAVY SEALS](#), [SEAL TEAM 6](#)

UN ‘War on Terror’ in Africa: Ban Ki-Moon wants new troops and arms ‘surge’ into Somalia

OCTOBER 17, 2013 BY [21WIRE](#) [3 COMMENTS](#)

21WIRE + WP | Another ill-conceived debacle waiting to happen in East Africa...

FILED UNDER: [FEATURED](#), [INTERNATIONAL NEWS](#) TAGGED WITH: [AFRICA](#), [AFRICOM FOR DUMMIES](#), [AL SHABAB](#), [KENYA](#), [NAVY SEALS](#), [SOMALIA](#), [UN TROOP SURGE](#)

The Idiot Savant Speaks: Kerry insists latest US raid in Libya is ‘legal’, and will ‘do it again’

OCTOBER 7, 2013 BY [21WIRE](#) [3 COMMENTS](#)

21WIRE + RT | Kerry reacted to the ‘kidnapping’ complaint from the Libyan government by recommending more operations.

FILED UNDER: [FEATURED](#), [INTERNATIONAL NEWS](#), [US NEWS](#) TAGGED WITH: [ABDEL HAKIM BELHADJ](#), [JOHN KERRY](#), [LIBYA](#), [NAVY SEALS](#), [NAZIH ABDUL-HAMED RUQAI](#), [SYRIA](#)

Digging up the Dead: Bin Laden raid files ‘buried’ by CIA to avoid public scrutiny

JULY 8, 2013 BY [SHAWN HELTON](#) [2 COMMENTS](#)

21WIRE+RT | The files of the Bin Laden raid will join the files of 9/11, redacted and buried.

FILED UNDER: [FEATURED](#), [INTERNATIONAL NEWS](#) TAGGED WITH: [911](#), [BANDAR](#), [BIN LADEN](#), [CIA](#), [NAVY SEALS](#), [SAUDI PRINCE BANDAR](#), [ZERO DARK THIRTY](#)

Why did FBI fake Boston Bomber surveillance video?

APRIL 19, 2013 BY [21WIRE](#) [60 COMMENTS](#)

BIN | FBI have tried to hide those in the photograph as being part of a for hire black-ops mercenary squad known as Tradecraft.

FILED UNDER: [INTERNATIONAL NEWS](#) TAGGED WITH: [A FAKE](#), [BOSTON BOMBER](#), [BOSTON BOMBING](#), [BOSTON MARATHON](#), [DIGITALLY ALTERED](#), [FALSE FLAG](#), [FBI](#), [FBI SURVEILLANCE](#), [ISRAELI](#), [MERCENARY](#), [NAVY SEALS](#), [SUSPECT](#), [TRADE CRAFT](#), [TRADECRAFT](#), [VIDEO](#)

Zero Dark Thirty wins ‘Albert Speer Oscar’ for Best Propaganda Film

FEBRUARY 24, 2013 BY [21WIRE](#) [5 COMMENTS](#)

Patrick Henningsen | There’s an obvious problem with Kathryn Bigelow’s latest film, so it’s no surprise that it’s bagged this year’s Speer Prize.

FILED UNDER: [FEATURED](#), [PATRICK HENNINGSEN](#), [UNCATEGORIZED](#), [US NEWS](#) TAGGED WITH: [911](#), [ALBERT SPEER](#), [ARGO](#), [BARRY SEAL](#), [BENAZIR BHUTTO](#), [BIN LADEN CORPSE](#), [CHARLIE WILSON'S WAR](#), [CIA](#), [COCIANE](#), [FILM](#), [FLIGHT 93](#), [HOLLYWOOD](#), [HOLLYWOOD HISTORY](#), [HURT LOCKER](#), [ISIS](#), [JESSICA CHASTAIN](#), [KATHRYN BIGELOW](#), [LENI RIEFENSTAHL.](#), [NAVY SEALS](#), [NAZI](#), [PROPAGANDA](#), [RENDITION](#), [SEAL TEAM 6](#), [USS CARL VINSON](#), [WINS BEST PICTURE](#), [ZERO DARK THIRTY](#)

Naval SEAL Author Chris Kyle ‘Lies Then Dies’: What Next For Jesse Ventura?

FEBRUARY 3, 2013 BY [21WIRE](#) [7 COMMENTS](#)

Greg Fernandez Jr | Ventura vehemently denying the incident in question ever took place. The question now is: will Ventura continue with the libel suit that is due up in court later this year?

FILED UNDER: [FEATURED](#), [UNCATEGORIZED](#), [US NEWS](#) TAGGED WITH: [AMERICAN SNIPER](#), [CHRIS KYLE](#), [CORONADO](#), [EDDIE ROUTH](#), [JESSE VENTURA](#), [LIBEL](#), [MARINE](#), [MC P’S](#), [NAVY SEALS](#), [PTSD](#), [UDT](#)

Another Bin Laden Scoop for Alternative Media: “No photos or video will be released.”

MAY 5, 2011 BY [21WIRE](#) [6 COMMENTS](#)

21WIRE | 21st Century Wire calls out the White House on the bin Laden fairy tale.

FILED UNDER: [MIDDLE EAST](#), [PATRICK HENNINGSEN](#), [UNCATEGORIZED](#) TAGGED WITH: [2011](#), [21ST CENTURY WIRE](#), [911](#), [AFGHANISTAN](#), [AHMED OMAR SAEED SHEIKH](#), [BENAZIR BHUTTO](#), [CIA](#), [DAVID FROST](#), [DRUG TRAFFICKING](#), [LACK OF EVIDENCE](#), [LEON PANETA](#), [MADELEINE ALBRIGHT](#), [NAVY SEALS](#), [OBAMA](#), [OSAMA BIN LADEN](#), [PATRICK HENNINGSEN](#), [PHOTOSHOP](#), [RUSSIA TODAY](#), [SEAL TEAM 6](#), [WAR ON TERROR](#)

Patrick Henningsen on RT: Bin Laden is “busiest corpse in show business”

MAY 3, 2011 BY [21WIRE 1 COMMENT](#)

21WIRE + RT | US might move away from Al-Qaeda as its chief enemy in “The War on Terror”, and refocus on nation state enemies, namely Libya, Syria and Iran.

FILED UNDER: [PATRICK HENNINGSEN](#), [UNCATEGORIZED](#) TAGGED WITH: [2011](#), [911](#), [AFGHANISTAN](#), [AHMED OMAR SAEED SHEIKH](#), [BENAZIR BHUTTO](#), [BUSH](#), [CIA](#), [DAVID FROST](#), [DEAD](#), [DRUG TRAFFICKING](#), [FAKE](#), [IMAGES](#), [LEON PANETA](#), [MADELEINE ALBRIGHT](#), [MONEY LAUNDERING](#), [NAVY SEAL](#), [NAVY SEALS](#), [OBAMA](#), [OSAMA BIN LADEN](#), [PATRICK HENNINGSEN](#), [PHOTOSHOP](#), [RUSSIA TODAY](#), [SEAL TEAM 6](#), [WAR ON DRUGS](#), [WAR ON TERROR](#)

Obama’s Announcement Only Fuels the Mythology of Bin Laden

MAY 3, 2011 BY [21WIRE 1 COMMENT](#)

Patrick Henningsen | The alleged mastermind of the 9/11 attacks is said to have warned that al-Qaeda has hidden a nuclear bomb “somewhere in Europe” .

MAKING OF A MYTH: The Official Bin Laden Story Remains Unbelievable

MAY 11, 2011 BY [21WIRE 0 COMMENTS](#)

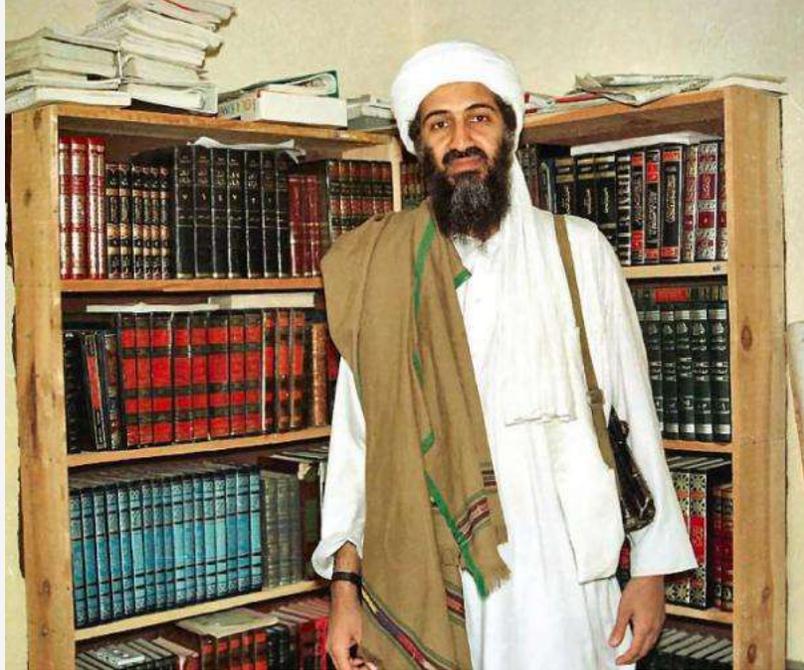
Kurt Nimmo

Infowars.com

May 10, 2011

“Maybe they had some guy there that looked like Bin Laden and did him in,” said Jesse Ventura.

Appearing on the Alex Jones Show today, the former governor of Minnesota Jesse Ventura said he is skeptical of the government claim [it killed Osama bin Laden](#). Ventura told Alex Jones and his audience he will have to do more research before he declares the story a fabrication.



LONG TIME DEAD: Keeping in character, the official story of Bin Laden's death remains unbelievable.

However, due primarily to repeated government lies – from the [Gulf of Tonkin](#) to [WMDs in Iraq](#) – Jesse said he questions the official version of events. He also said the mainstream media is in bed with the government and also cannot be trusted to tell the truth. Ventura specifically mentioned government lies and propaganda in the case of **Pat Tillman** and **Jessica Lynch** who were shamelessly exploited as war heroes by Pentagon neocons and the Bush administration. In 2007, U.S. House committee announced it would hold hearings on [misleading military statements](#) that followed the death of Pat Tillman in Afghanistan and the rescue of Pfc. Jessica Lynch in Iraq.

Lynch [gave testimony](#) before a House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform in 2007 that the Pentagon had erroneously portrayed her as a “Rambo from the hills of West Virginia.” It was later discovered she never fired a shot after her truck was ambushed by Iraqi insurgents.

The Army at first reported that Tillman had been killed by enemy fire, but later said his death was the result of [friendly fire](#). Medical evidence, however, [did not match up](#) with the government's scenario. It revealed that the Army Ranger was cut down by an M-16 fired from approximately 10 yards away, leading many to conclude the former NFL star was [assassinated](#) to prevent him from going public with his anti-war political views.

Ventura said he cannot fathom Navy SEALs participating in the Osama bin Laden assassination fraud, although he did admit that as soldiers they would likely follow orders if instructed. Jesse also questioned [the claim that Osama bin Laden was still alive](#). The Saudi suffered renal failure and was [undergoing dialysis](#) prior to the attacks of September 11, 2011. In addition, he mentioned a statement made by the late [Benazir Bhutto](#) in an interview with David Frost in 2007 where she said Osama Bin Laden had been murdered by Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh, who is one of the men convicted of kidnapping and killing U.S. journalist Daniel Pearl.

Numerous others over the years have stated [Osama suffered from severe health problems](#).

On December 26, 2001, the Egyptian newspaper [al-Wafd](#) reported that Bin Laden had died in mid-December of that year, according to Taliban officials...

Meet 'Seal Team 6,' The Guys Who Killed Osama Bin Laden — And Whose Members Are Now Going Public

[Business Insider](#) Nov. 14, 2014,



After last week's [Fox News interview](#) with Robert O'Neill, two of the members of SEAL Team 6 involved in the raid that killed Osama Bin Laden have gone public with their stories of what's already one of the most legendary US military operations in history.

This public profile goes against decades of SEAL culture. Before O'Neill's interview and Matt Bissonnette's [best-selling book](#) partly about the raid, the SEALs — and Team 6 in particular — were known for being highly secretive.

Officially, the team's name is classified and not available to the public. Technically, there is no Team 6.

A Tier-One counter-terrorism force similar to the Army's elusive Delta group, Team 6's missions rarely become public. The Fox interview with O'Neill, who claims to have killed Bin Laden, is a major break with decades of SEAL protocol.

But so is the government's entire handling of the Bin Laden raid, the details of which have been widely disseminated in the three years since. It shows how important the publicity about Bin Laden's killing is to the US that Team 6 was [front-page news](#), or that a movie like "Zero Dark Thirty" was ever made — the latter [thanks to a series of leaks](#) by top defense and intelligence officials.

The members of Team 6 are all "black" operatives. They exist outside military protocol, engaging in operations that are at the highest level of classification — and often outside the boundaries of international law. To maintain plausible deniability in case they are caught, records of black operations are rarely, if ever, kept.



Joe Skipper/Reuters U.S. Navy SEAL Team 18 members with a multi-purpose dog take part in a demonstration of combat skills at the National Navy UDT-SEAL Museum in Fort Pierce, Florida on November 11, 2011.

The development of SEAL Team 6 was in direct response to [the botched 1980 attempt](#) to rescue the American hostages held in Iran. The failure of a US mission to extract the hostages illustrated the need for a dedicated counter-terrorist team capable of operating with the utmost secrecy.

The Team was labeled 6 at the time to confuse Soviet intelligence about the number of SEAL teams in operation when the team was formed. There were only two others.



ReutersFour US Navy seals jog at the Philippine Navy headquarters in Zamboanga City, in the southern Philippines on June 17, 2002.

Team 6 poached the top operatives from other SEAL units and trained them even more intensely from there.

Even among proven SEALs the attrition rate for Team 6 is reported to be [nearly half](#). The CIA also recruits heavily from their numbers for their Special Operations Group.

Team 6 is normally devoted to missions with maritime authority: ship rescues, or raids on oil rigs, naval bases or land bases accessible by water. O'Neill was also [involved in the Mearsk Alabama raid in 2009](#), the daring hostage rescue at sea that was turned into the film "Captain Philips."



ReutersA US Navy SEAL member provides cover for his teammates advancing on a suspected location of al-Qaeda and Taliban forces, January 26, 2002.

When a former Navy SEAL was called for a comment about this article all he could say was: "You know I'd love to help you man, but I can't say a word about Team 6. There is no Team 6."

Read more: <http://www.businessinsider.com/meet-seal-team-6-2014-11#ixzz3au18sVT9>

The Navy SEAL Who Says He Shot Bin Laden Responds To People Who Say He's Lying

- [Hunter Walker](#) and [Amanda Macias](#) Nov. 13, 2014, 12:38 AM



[Robert](#)

[O'Neill/RobertJOneill.com](#) Former Navy SEAL Robert O'Neill.

Robert O'Neill, the former Navy SEAL who says he shot Osama Bin Laden, has an answer for his critics.

In the second half [of his exclusive interview with Fox News](#), which was broadcast Wednesday, O'Neill discussed the possibility people might question his story.

Since the Fox News special was filmed, [sources with knowledge of the 2011 raid on Bin Laden's compound in Pakistan have reportedly questioned O'Neill's claim he fired the fatal shot at the Al Qaeda leader](#). O'Neill told Fox News he was aware people might be skeptical of his story and pre-emptively offered a rebuttal.

"It's one of those things where, you know, I heard from a guy, that heard from a guy, that heard from a guy, and then, it's all of a sudden, it turns into a different story," said O'Neill. "Again, it doesn't bother me, because, you know, there were two people that were there. Unless you were in the room at the time, you only know what you were told,"

He told Fox News he confronted Bin Laden directly and shot him three times. O'Neill's story is slightly different from the one presented in a 2012 book about the raid by another former SEAL, Matt Bissonette.

In his book, Bissonette wrote that he was the number two person in line as the U.S. soldiers entered the room where Bin Laden was. Bissonette also said he fired shots at Bin Laden when the Al Qaeda leader was on the ground.

However, O'Neill said he was the second SEAL into the room after another one of his colleagues cleared people out of the way. He also said he killed Bin Laden after shooting him in the head multiple times.

O'Neill addressed the discrepancy between his story and Bissonette's book in his interview with Fox News.

"I think that war is foggy and I think that the author is telling the story as he saw it and also based on the debrief that he heard," said O'Neill.

O'Neill told Fox News the military debriefing Bissonette and other SEAL team members heard was "fairly accurate."

"The debrief was just cleaned up, it was missing a few details," he explained.

O'Neill also insisted the bullets from his gun unquestionably killed Bin Laden whether or not other SEALs fired their own shots before or after he hit the Al Qaeda leader.

"When I went in the room, I can't say for 100% that he was hit when I went in the room, he could have been," said O'Neill of Bin Laden. "He was definitely on two feet and he was definitely moving. So, you know, he was there and I'll take ten lie detectors on that one."

Currently, both Bissonette and O'Neill face scorn from their Navy SEAL counterparts for not only violating non-disclosure agreements but for pursuing public attention on the backs of what was a team effort.

"I don't feel like the Navy owes me anything. I don't feel like I owe the Navy anything. My only regret is that, I miss my guys," O'Neill said. After the Bin Laden raid, O'Neill went on his 12th and final deployment with the Navy SEALs and decided he wanted "a clean break" from the military community. O'Neill has been touring the nation as a motivational speaker.

Read more: <http://www.businessinsider.com/seal-who-says-he-shot-osama-responds-to-reports-hes-lying-2014-11#ixzz3au1qOUiz>

NATO Helicopter Crash: Statement Released On Crash Of Chopper Carrying Navy SEALs (VIDEO)

The Huffington Post | By [Dean Praetorius](#) Posted: 08/08/2011



NATO has released a statement on the downing of a helicopter on Saturday that took the lives of 30 Americans, including [22 members of the now-fabled SEAL Team Six](#).

In [the official statement](#), NATO officials confirmed that the helicopter, which was manned with troops who were to serve as reinforcements to those engaged in a firefight on the ground, was brought down after being "reportedly fired on by an insurgent rocket-propelled grenade." Ground fighting began earlier between U.S. troops and insurgents armed with rocket-propelled grenades and AK-47 assault rifles, requiring the need for further coalition assistance.

The crash of the CH-47 Chinook marked the largest single-day loss of life for U.S. troops since the war in Afghanistan began, [according to CNN](#).

However, the downing of the CH-47 Chinook helicopter does not seem to be the result of newer, more sophisticated weaponry. [CNN reports](#) that Brigadier General Carsten Jacobsen told reporters in Kabul that rumors stating Taliban insurgents may have benefitted from better technology during the exchange were untrue.

While the latest statement from NATO may shed light on what actually happened, [the families of those lost](#) in the attack are starting to cope with their losses.

Kimberly Vaughn, whose husband, Aaron Vaughn, was among those killed in the crash, [spoke to the Today Show this morning](#), appearing grateful for the short time she had with her husband. The two were briefly reunited in June for the birth of their daughter, Chamberlyn.

Vaughn's passion for the SEALs was apparently ignited by the September 11 attacks. "After 9/11, Aaron told me and his mother he wanted to be a SEAL, and he said he wanted to ever since he was a little boy," [his father told Today](#).

NATO: Downed chopper reportedly fired on by rocket-propelled grenade

By **David Ariosto**, CNN August 9, 2011



- The remains of the 38 U.S. and Afghan personnel killed are en route to Delaware
- Obama: "We will press on and we will succeed"
- Coalition forces waiting for help on the ground raced to the scene of the crash
- Insurgents were armed with RPG launchers and AK-47 assault rifles

Kabul, Afghanistan (CNN) -- Coalition forces embroiled in a firefight with insurgents in eastern Afghanistan on Saturday had called for assistance but instead had to race to the crash scene of a downed NATO helicopter carrying their reinforcements, officials said Monday. Everyone inside the CH-47 Chinook was killed, marking the worst single-day loss of American life since the beginning of the Afghan war, NATO reported.

The inbound helicopter -- loaded with 30 U.S. service members, a civilian interpreter and seven Afghan troops -- crashed after being "reportedly fired on by an insurgent rocket-propelled grenade," the statement said.

Twenty-five of those on board were U.S. special operations forces, including 22 Navy SEALs. Five air crew members were also on board.

Two military transport aircraft carrying the remains of the 38 U.S. and [Afghan](#) personnel have departed Bagram, Afghanistan, and are headed to Dover Air Force Base in Delaware, Pentagon spokesman Col. David Lapan said Monday. The flights are expected to arrive on Tuesday.

"In life they were comrades in arms, and in death they are bound forever in this vital cause. We cherish this selfless sacrifice," Gen. John R. Allen, International Security Assistance Force commander, said in a statement. He pledged to continue the fight in Afghanistan.

"Today, as we pay our respects to these magnificent troops, we recommit ourselves for the future and for the freedom, peace and stability of Afghanistan," he said.

Their loss is a stark reminder of the risks that our men and women in uniform take every single day on behalf of their country
--U.S. President Barack Obama

Because the catastrophic nature of the crash made the remains difficult to identify, all 38 sets are being taken to the United States. The Afghan remains will be returned to their families once identifications can be made.

"Their loss is a stark reminder of the risks that our men and women in uniform take every single day on behalf of their country," U.S. President Barack Obama said Monday. "Day after day, night after night, they carry out missions like this in the face of enemy fire and grave danger."

Obama said he has spoken with U.S. military officials in the field and with Afghan President Hamid Karzai. "We will press on and we will succeed," he said. But the president added that "now is also a time to reflect on those we lost" and on the sacrifices of all who have served, as well as their families.

The president discussed the incident at the end of televised remarks focused on the economy.

U.S. Defense Secretary Leon Panetta, speaking earlier, said, "The thoughts and prayers of the entire nation are with the families and with the loved ones of those we lost in Afghanistan over the weekend. They were far from home, but we know that they were also where they wanted to be.

"As heavy a loss as this was, it would even be more tragic if we allowed it to derail this country from our efforts to defeat al Qaeda and deny them a safe haven in Afghanistan," Panetta added. "Instead, we will send a strong message of American resolve from this tragedy, we draw even greater inspiration to carry on the fight."

Until Monday, military officials had been largely tight-lipped about the circumstances surrounding the crash, which occurred in the rugged Tangi Valley area of Wardak province, about 60 miles southwest of Kabul.

The events leading up to the crash began when insurgents -- armed with rocket-propelled grenade launchers and AK-47 assault rifles -- engaged in small-arms fire with coalition forces on the ground, [NATO](#) reported. ISAF forces were carrying out an operation targeting a known Taliban leader in the area.

Several militants were killed in the gun battle, officials said. Coalition troops called in additional forces to assist in the operation as the firefight continued.

"Those additional personnel were inbound to the scene when the CH-47 carrying them crashed, killing all on board," NATO said.

The troops on the ground immediately left the scene of the insurgent firefight "to secure the scene and search for survivors."

NATO spokesman Brig. Gen. Carsten Jacobsen said the crash site has been cordoned off, while recovery efforts continue.

An investigation is under way, he said.

"The recent fighting season has not materialized as the insurgents had predicted," Jacobsen told reporters in Kabul. "But the insurgents are resilient and far from defeated."

Jacobsen told reporters there was no indication of newer, more sophisticated weapons, responding to rumors that Taliban insurgents may have been the beneficiaries of better equipment during the exchange.

Saturday's crash represents the second downed NATO helicopter by insurgent fire in recent weeks. A helicopter was shot down in eastern Afghanistan in July, though no casualties were reported.

Despite Saturday's loss, Afghan and NATO operations do not appear to have relented.

On Monday, more than 100 demonstrators in Ghazni province protested what they say is the killing of two people during a NATO raid, according to provincial council chief Hamid Ullah Nawroz.

ISAF spokesman Capt. Justin Brockhoff confirmed that there was a joint Afghan-NATO raid late Sunday evening in the area that killed two insurgents, uncovered a munitions cache and detained "numerous suspected insurgents."

Meanwhile, NATO says one of its helicopters made a hard landing Monday in southeastern Afghanistan.

The Navy transport helicopter went down in Paktika province, though "initial reporting indicated there was no enemy activity."

No casualties were reported.

Osama Bin Laden killed in Abbottabad near Islamabad of Pakistan

13:08, May 02, 2011   

A TV grab from CNN shows Abbottabad, where al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden was killed in Pakistan, May 1, 2011. U.S. President Barack Obama announced Sunday night that a U.S.

operation had killed al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden in Pakistan and put his body in U.S. custody. (Xinhua)

Pakistani Urdu TV channel Geo News quoted Pakistani intelligence officials as saying that the world's most wanted terrorist Osama Bin Laden was killed in a search operation launched by the Pakistani forces after a Pakistani army helicopter was shot down in the wee hours of Monday in Abbotabad, a mountainous town located some 60 kilometers north of Pakistan's capital city of Islamabad.

At about 1:20 a.m. local time a Pakistani helicopter was shot down by unknown people in the Sikandarabad area of Abbotabad. The Pakistani forces launched a search operation in the nearby area and encountered with a group of unknown armed people. A fire exchange followed between the two sides.

When the fire exchange ended, the Pakistani forces arrested some Arab women and kids as well some other armed people who later confessed to the Pakistani forces they were with Osama Bin Laden when the fire was exchanged and Bin Laden was killed in the firing.

Local media reported that after the dead body of Bin Laden was recovered, two U.S. helicopter flew to the site and carried away the dead body of Bin Laden. Initial reports said that at least one was killed and two others were injured in the crash.

At least two houses were engulfed by the huge fire caused by the crashed chopper. Rescue team rushed to the site shortly after the crash was reported and the armed forces cordoned off the area and launched a search operation there.

Sources of Xinhua said they tried to enter the area after the incident took place, but no media people were allowed inside. "No one knows in that helicopter crash Bin Laden was killed," said the sources.



Obama's SEAL Team 6 Coverup

[Kris Zane](#) May 30, 2013 at 10:39am

[On August 6, 2011](#), a military helicopter— Extortion 17— carrying thirty-eight men (including twenty-five of the elite SEAL Team 6, five National Guard and Army Reserve, and eight Afghan commandos) was shot down over Taliban-controlled territory in eastern Afghanistan. They had been on a top secret mission to take out a high-value target.

It was the worst loss of life in a single day since the war in Afghanistan began. Per a 1250-page military report, it was simply the result of a “lucky shot” by Taliban soldiers perched on top of a building. Per families of those killed and military experts at a [press conference held on May 9, 2013](#), this is a lie among a host of other lies.

After the families attended a several hour military briefing about this “lucky shot,” describing what happened and why their sons died, they smelled a rat and started digging around.

Billy and Karen Vaughn, parents of Navy SEAL Aaron C. Vaughn, started poking around at the “official” story and found not a rat, but a stinking swamp, a coverup that went all the way to the top.

When the Vaughns began trying to drain the swamp, they received what the Obama administration is famous for: the shakedown. None other than one of the highest ranking officers in the nation—Admiral William McRaven, commander at U.S. Special Operations Command—paid the Vaughns a little visit, in essence telling them to keep their mouths shut.

What exactly happened on August 6, 2011? What went wrong—or in this case went *right* that has the Obama administration dispatching high-ranking officers as thugs?

There are two possibilities, according to information revealed at the press conference:

1. The Obama administration sent American soldiers on a suicide mission, or
2. Someone set up our American heroes—that is, had them murdered—that may include the Afghan government—or *shockingly may include Barack Hussein Obama himself*.

We learned seven major facts at the press conference:

1. Thirty SEAL Team 6, National Guard, and Army Reserve were packed into a decrepit 1960s era CH-47 helicopter (something, according to military experts, that was unheard of.) Per military experts, special operations were *always* conducted with the state-of-the-art MH-47 helicopter—the helicopter SEAL Team 6 *exclusively trained in*. Further, never—*ever*—were that many special operations personnel packed into a single helicopter. *They were always split up into small groups with multiple MH-47s.*
2. Although the military could have easily taken out the Taliban positions with a drone strike prior to the operation, as the families were later told, this was not done because there were possible “friendlies” among the Taliban; the United States wanted to “*win the minds and hearts of the enemy.*”

Billy Vaughn, father of Navy SEAL Aaron Vaughn, speaking at the press conference with rage in his voice, [blasted this ludicrousness](#):

Aaron did not become a Navy SEAL Team 6 Gold Squad to win the hearts and minds of the Islamic jihadists. He became a Navy SEAL to fight for this republic and defeat the enemy!

3. Although the military had intel that the Taliban were planning on firing on a helicopter, although an intense battle had been raging for several hours, and although normal protocol *mandated* that the CH-47 required at least one gunship escort, *all normal rules of war were suspended.*

But now for the *real* coverup by the Obama administration:

4. There were eight nameless Afghan commandos onboard the CH-47. Eight Afghan commandos were loaded onto the CH-47 along with their American counterparts; but at the last minute, they were replaced without changing the manifest. *It was as if someone knew they were going on a suicide mission and pulled them out.* The official in charge of the investigation (General Jeffrey Colt), in his 1250-page report, did not address this fact and *did not even mention it.* In fact, it is likely these original Afghan commandos contacted the Taliban, telling them the CH-47 was on its way. It appears the Taliban knew the exact time and route the CH-47 would be using; *that the only way the “lucky shot” would have been possible with the helicopter thousands of feet in the air in cover of darkness would have been if the Taliban had been tipped off.*

5. Everyone on Extortion 17 was immediately cremated without permission from the families, supposedly because the bodies were so badly burned in the crash. According to Charles Strange, father of Navy SEAL Michael Strange, *this need to immediately cremate everyone aboard is a complete lie.* Taliban on the ground in fact found the bodies of the crew. *The Obama administration cremated everyone in order to cover up something.*

6. The CH-47 black box was “lost” according to the military investigation—“washed away by an Afghan flood.” As most know, aircraft black boxes don’t get “lost”; they are virtually indestructible and carry a tracking device that makes them easy to locate. *It was “lost” in order to cover up something the Obama administration wants to keep hidden.*

7. Probably one of the most shocking revelations in the SEAL Team 6 coverup, something that was first brought out during the press conference that shows Obama is no Christian but is in fact a closet Muslim, is that *Barack Hussein Obama [disallowed the name of Jesus](#) to be spoken during the initial military memorial service in Kabul and permitted a radical Islamic imam to curse our dead heroes.*

Let every American demand that whatever Barack Obama is hiding, whatever the military brass is hiding, that it be revealed. America must demand that a Congressional investigation drain the swamp of the Obama administration in order to reveal exactly what sickening secret Barack Hussein Obama is covering up. Not next month. Not next week. Not tomorrow. But today.

Demand an investigation, America.

Pakistan TV Exposes Osama bin Laden Killing Hoax, Documentary Debunks 9/11

Official Story

By Dr. Paul Craig Roberts Global Research, October 18, 2013 paulcraigroberts.org

Original Bashir interview that contradicts Washington's account of killing bin Laden

A website in the UK, themindrenewed.com, that downloaded the video from the link in my original report of the Pakistani TV interview with Mohammad Bashir has posted the interview with the original English subtitles. You can view it here:

This interview of an eyewitness to the entire event is powerful evidence that the Obama regime's story of the killing of Osama bin Laden and his burial at sea is a hoax and a lie. Pakistani Samaa TV confirms that Bashir is who he says he is and that he lives next to the alleged bin Laden compound. Samaa TV also confirms that neighbors knew the residents of the "compound." There has never been any mention of the Bashir interview in the pressstitute media.

<http://themindrenewed.com/interviews/2013/334-int-32> ^[2]

Published on Oct 16, 2013

Mohammad Bashir, Abbottabad resident and neighbour to the alleged "compound" of Osama bin Laden, gives his eyewitness account of what he saw happen on 2 May 2011 (local time), when – according to the official story – US Navy SEALs assassinated Osama bin Laden. In this interview, soon after the event, with a Pakistan national TV station (Samaa.tv), Bashir gives an account which fundamentally contradicts the official story.

For a transcript of the interview, please see: <http://paulcraigroberts.org/2013/09/16/pakistani-national-tv-reveals-that-obamas-claim-to-have-killed-osama-bin-laden-is-an-american-hoax-paul-craig-roberts/>

For a detailed interview with Dr. Paul Craig Roberts, former Assistant Secretary to the US Treasury for Economic Policy, who obtained the translation, please see: www.themindrenewed.com ^[3]

This video is being made public for the purposes of education. It provides documentary evidence with respect to the transcript and interview mentioned above; it is thus posted here in the spirit of Fair Use.

Massimo Mazzucco's 9/11 Documentary

The extraordinary 5-hour film by Massimo Mazzucco exposing the 9/11 official explanation is now available (see below). Information and documentation continue to pile up that 21st century history is largely an orchestrated disinformation event.

Review of “September 11 – The New Pearl Harbor.” A documentary by Massimo Mazzucco.

by David Ray Griffin

There have been several good films and videos about 9/11. But the new film by award-winning film-maker Massimo Mazzucco is in a class by itself.

For those of us who have been working on 9/11 for a long time, this is the film we have been waiting for.

Whereas there are excellent films treating the falsity of particular parts of the official account, such as the Twin Towers or WTC 7, Mazzucco has given us a comprehensive documentary treatment of 9/11, dealing with virtually all of the issues.

There have, of course, been films that treated the fictional official story as true. And there are films that use fictional stories to portray people’s struggles after starting to suspect the official story to be false.

But there is no fiction in Mazzucco’s film – except in the sense that it clearly and relentlessly exposes every part of the official account as fictional.

Because of his intent at completeness, Mazzucco has given us a 5-hour film. It is so fascinating and fast-paced that many will want to watch it in one sitting. But this is not necessary, as the film, which fills 3 DVDs, consists of 7 parts, each of which is divided into many short chapters.

These 7 parts treat Air Defence, The Hijackers, The Airplanes, The Pentagon, Flight 93, The Twin Towers, and Building 7. In each part, after presenting facts that contradict the official story, Mazzucco deals with the claims of the debunkers (meaning those who try to debunk the evidence provided by the 9/11 research community).

The Introduction, reflecting the film’s title, deals with 12 uncanny parallels between Pearl Harbor and September 11.

The film can educate people who know nothing about 9/11 (beyond the official story), those with a moderate amount of knowledge about the various problems with the official story, and even by experts. (I myself learned many things.)

Mazzucco points out that his film covers 12 years of public debate about 9/11. People who have been promoting 9/11 truth for many of these years will see that their labors have been well-

rewarded: There is now a high-quality, carefully-documented film that dramatically shows the official story about 9/11 to be a fabrication through and through.

This is truly the film we have been waiting for.

Availability: The film is freely available to the world at:

1. The film-maker's own website, complete with detailed index:
<http://www.luogocomune.net/site/modules/sections/index.php?op=viewarticle&artid=167> ^[4]

2. On YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O1GCeuSr3Mk> (Preview) ^[5]

Pakistan's Musharraf: Bin Laden probably dead

January 18, 2002 Posted: 10:34 PM EST (0334 GMT)

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (CNN) -- Pakistan's president says he thinks Osama bin Laden is most likely dead because the suspected terrorist has been unable to get treatment for his kidney disease.

"I think now, frankly, he is dead for the reason he is a ... kidney patient," Gen. Pervez Musharraf said on Friday in an interview with CNN.

Musharraf said Pakistan knew bin Laden took two dialysis machines into Afghanistan. "One was specifically for his own personal use," he said.

"I don't know if he has been getting all that treatment in Afghanistan now. And the photographs that have been shown of him on television show him extremely weak. ... I would give the first priority that he is dead and the second priority that he is alive somewhere in Afghanistan."

U.S. officials skeptical

In Washington, a senior Bush administration official said Musharraf reached "reasonable conclusion" but warned it is only a guess.

"He is using very reasonable deductive reasoning, (but) we don't know (bin Laden) is dead," said the official, who requested anonymity. "We don't have remains or evidence of his death. So it is a decent and reasonable conclusion -- a good guess but it is a guess."

The official said U.S. intelligence is that bin Laden needs dialysis every three days and "it is fairly obvious that that could be an issue when you are running from place to place, and facing the idea of needing to generate electricity in a mountain hideout."

Other U.S. officials contradicted the reports of bin Laden's health problems, saying there is "no evidence" the suspected terrorist mastermind has ever suffered kidney failure or required kidney dialysis. The officials called such suggestions a "recurrent rumor."

Gen. Tommy Franks, the commander of U.S. forces in central and southwest Asia, said Friday that he had not seen any intelligence confirming or denying Musharraf's statements on bin Laden's condition.

The United States has said that bin Laden is the prime suspect in the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon that killed about 3,000 people.

Hunt for bin Laden

The United States launched its campaign in Afghanistan after the country's ruling Taliban refused to turn over bin Laden.

Earlier this week U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said he believed bin Laden and Taliban spiritual leader Mullah Mohammed Omar were inside Afghanistan but "we are looking at some other places as well from time to time."

Rumsfeld noted there were dozens of conflicting intelligence reports each day and said most of them were wrong. Most of the reports are based on sightings by local Afghans that cannot be verified.

There are reports that bin Laden and his convoys have been sighted recently by a Predator unmanned aerial vehicle.

A senior Defense Department source said the lack of credible information about the two was so severe that many officials believe the U.S. would catch bin Laden or Omar only through pure luck, or an "intelligence break" -- essentially one of their associates turning them in.

Top CIA analysts who track bin Laden and Omar have been asked for their best assessment on the two men's whereabouts. That has led to a variety of thoughts, placing bin Laden in Afghanistan, in Pakistan or Iran, on the open ocean onboard a ship, or headed north through Tajikistan or Uzbekistan -- if he is still alive.

 **VIDEO**

Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf gives an exclusive interview with CNN's Tom Mintier



Part 1 | 2 | 3
(QuickTime, Real or Windows Media)

The videotape seen worldwide several weeks ago of bin Laden talking about the September 11 attacks was made in Kandahar. He then apparently disappeared -- possibly going north to Tora Bora. Franks said there was evidence bin Laden was in Tora Bora but he gave no indication of when that might have been. In October, intelligence officials thought they had bin Laden pinned down to a 10-square-mile area in the eastern central mountains of Afghanistan.

Two senior military officers told CNN it would not have been hard for bin Laden to change location several times because vast areas of Afghanistan are virtually unseen by the U.S. military, and he would have been even harder to spot if he moved without his telltale large security contingent.

Even before the war, bin Laden moved around frequently, making it difficult for the United States to determine his location and launch an attack against him.

Dr. Paul Craig Roberts: Pakistani National TV Reveals That Obama's Claim to Have Killed Osama Bin Laden is "An American HOAX!"

The screenshot shows the CNN.com website interface. At the top, the logo reads "CNN.com / WORLD". Below the logo is a search bar with "SEARCH" and "GO" buttons. A navigation menu on the left lists various sections: MAIN PAGE, EUROPE, WORLD (highlighted), WEATHER, BUSINESS, BIZ TRAVELLER, SCI-TECH, ENTERTAINMENT, SPECIAL REPORTS, and SPORT at 5L.com. Below the menu are links for SERVICES, E-MAIL SERVICES, CNN MOBILE, CNN AVANT GO, DESKTOP TICKER, ABOUT US, and AD INFO. The main content area features a blue header for "WAR AGAINST TERROR" with sub-links for COMPLETE COVERAGE, FRONT LINES, AMERICA AT HOME, and INTERACTIVES. The article title is "Pakistan's Musharraf: Bin Laden probably dead", dated January 18, 2002, posted at 10:34 PM EST (0334 GMT). The article text includes a quote from Gen. Pervez Musharraf: "Musharraf: I would give the first priority that he is dead" and "ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (CNN) -- Pakistan's president says he thinks Osama bin Laden is most likely dead because the suspected terrorist has been unable to get treatment for his kidney disease." Other quotes include: "I think now, frankly, he is dead for the reason he is a ... kidney patient," Gen. Pervez Musharraf said on Friday in an interview with CNN. and "Musharraf said Pakistan knew bin Laden took two dialysis machines into Afghanistan. 'One was specifically for his own personal use,' he said." At the bottom, there are links for "I don't know if he has been getting all that treatment in Afghanistan now. And the photographs that have been shown of him on television show him extremely weak. ... I would give the first priority that he is dead and the second priority that he is alive somewhere in Afghanistan." and utility links: SAVE THIS, EMAIL THIS, PRINT THIS, and MOST POPULAR. A "Languages" dropdown menu is visible at the bottom left.

Osama died in December 2001 of kidney failure!

- Osama Bin Laden, the CIA asset, most likely died in Dec 2001 due to complications which arose from his kidney failure. His death was widely documented (see below also)!
—
- **PAKISTANI NATIONAL TV REVEALS THAT OBAMA’S CLAIM TO HAVE KILLED OSAMA BIN LADEN IS “AN AMERICAN HOAX.” — Paul Craig Roberts!**
by <http://www.paulcraigroberts.org/>

By readers’ request, this is a reposting of a Pakistani National TV interview with an eyewitness to the alleged SEAL Team Six attack that allegedly killed Osama bin Laden. I made the translation available two years ago in an article prior to the creation of this website.

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Before you believe “your” government’s lies about Syria, remember “your” government’s lies about Saddam Hussein’s “weapons of mass destruction.” Remember Washington’s lies about the Gulf of Tonkin that unleashed the Vietnam war. Remember the lies about Gaddafi and Libya. Remember the lies about 9/11, the lies about the murders of JFK, Robert Kennedy, and Martin Luther King. Remember the Northwoods Project that the Joint Chiefs of Staff wanted President John F. Kennedy to embrace.

—
The Northwoods project called for shooting down US airliners, shooting down people on the streets of Miami and Washington, D.C., and strafing Cuban refugee boats in order to blame Castro and build public support for regime change in Cuba.

—
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Northwoods

—
Sound familiar? Sound like regime change in Iraq, Libya, Syria?

—
The top secret Operation Northwoods plot against Cuba and the American people was officially released and is available online, as are numerous histories of the proposal by the US Joint Chiefs of Staff to kill Americans in order to create support for invading Cuba. Keep this established fact in mind before you again repeat the gullible and reassuring statement: “our government wouldn’t kill its own people.”

—
Try to find any of Washington’s agendas about which the government spoke truthfully. The US government is so enamored of its secret agendas that Washington never speaks truth. Keep in mind that Washington’s 12 years of wars, which have doubled the US national debt and left the federal government without the means to help the rising number of Americans whose jobs have been given to foreigners and whose homes are foreclosed, have their origin in 9/11, the investigation of which was prevented by the White House.

—
After resisting for one year the pressure from 9/11 family members for an investigation, the White House created a political panel to listen to the government’s line and to write it down in the 9/11 Commission Report, a report promptly disavowed by both co-chairmen of the commission and the chief legal advisor, all of whom described the 9/11 commission as “set up to fail.”

—
The Obama regime has shown no interest in investigating how the most powerful national security state of all time, a Stasi police state that spies on the entire world, could be defeated by a few Saudi Arabians, who had no support from any government or any intelligence service, or why instead of a real investigation, the Bush White House chose an orchestrated cover-up.

—
The US government's claim to have killed bin Laden has a zero probability of being true. According to Pakistani eye witnesses to the attack on the alleged Osama bin Laden compound in Pakistan, the Obama regime's claim is simply more theater, more lies.

—
In this interview from Pakistani National TV you can learn about your government's lies about killing Osama bin Laden.

—
Pakistan TV Report Contradicts US Claim of Bin Laden's Death — Paul Craig Roberts

—
<http://www.globalresearch.ca/pakistan-tv-report-contradicts-us-claim-of-bin-laden-s-death/25915> August 6, 2011

—
In my article, "Creating Evidence Where There Is None," <http://www.paulcraigroberts.org/2011/08/05/creating-evidence-where-there-is-none/> about the alleged killing of Osama bin Laden by a commando team of US Seals in Abbottabad, Pakistan, I reported a Pakistani National TV interview with Muhammad Bashir, who lives next door to the alleged "compound" of Osama bin Laden. I described the story that Bashir gave of the "attack" and its enormous difference from the story told by the US government. In Bashir's account, every member of the landing party and anyone brought from the house died when the helicopter exploded on lift-off. I wrote that a qualified person could easily provide a translation of the interview, but that no American print or TV news organization had reported or investigated the interview of Muhammad Bashir by Pakistani National TV.

—
An attorney with a British Master of Laws degree in international law and diplomacy, who was born in Pakistan, provided the translation below. He writes: "I have no problem with being identified as the translator, but would prefer to remain anonymous."

—
The translator provides these definitions and clarifications:

—
"Gulley" is generally referred (in Urdu) to a sidewalk or pavement. Also for the space between two houses.

—
"kanal" is a traditional unit of land area, so that one kanal equals exactly 605 square yards or 1/8 Acre; this is equivalent to about 505.857 square meters.

—
Muhammad Bashir refers to himself as "We". This is common respectable language for the self; to use the plural term instead of singular. The English language equivalent would be the "Royal, We".

—

Urdu is the national language and lingua franca of Pakistan. The translator:

—

I have translated the entire text of the video.

I have tried my best to keep words in a chronological order, but in some cases this is not possible, as in translation words must be replaced in reverse order to make sense! However, I have had to put a few words in brackets to clarify meaning. If you want to ask about any section—please supply time stamp and I will supply a contextual text.

—

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Is Osama bin Laden Dying ... Again?

By MASSIMO CALABRESI / WASHINGTON Monday, June 30, 2008

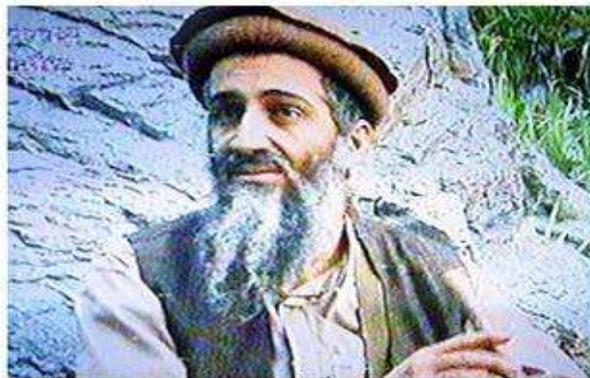
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Bin Laden
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Trust me in 2008, Elvis was more alive than Osama!

Report: Bin Laden Already Dead

Wednesday, December 26, 2001

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FOX NEWS

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Usama bin Laden has died a peaceful death due to an untreated lung complication, the *Pakistan Observer* reported, citing a Taliban leader who allegedly attended the funeral of the Al Qaeda leader.

"The Coalition troops are engaged in a mad search operation but they would never be able to fulfill their cherished goal of getting Usama alive or dead," the source said.

Bin Laden, according to the source, was suffering from a serious lung complication and succumbed to the disease in mid-December, in the vicinity of the Tora Bora mountains. The source claimed that bin Laden was laid to rest honorably in his last abode and his grave was made as per his Wahabi belief.

About 30 close associates of bin Laden in Al Qaeda, including his most trusted and personal bodyguards, his family members and some "Taliban friends," attended the funeral rites. A volley of

Yes, he has been dead for some time now!



Osama Bin Laden Obituary 26 Dec 2001
Egyptian Newspaper: Al-Wafd



Osama bin Laden, A.K.A. CIA Asset "Tim Osman"

Tim Osman (Ossman) has recently become better known as Osama Bin Laden. "Tim Osman" was the name assigned to him by the CIA for his tour of the U.S. and U.S. military bases, in search of political support and armaments. [...] There is some evidence that Tim Osman ... visited the White House. There is certainty that Tim Osman toured some U.S. military bases, even receiving special demonstrations of the latest equipment. Why hasn't this been reported in the major media? [\[Full article\]](#)



http://whatreallyhappened.com/WRHARTICLES/binladen_cia.html

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"What use is democracy when the masses don't think?"

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9/11: bin Laden 'confession' video mistranslated and manipulated by the CIA

11 MAY 2011 532 VIEWS ONE COMMENT

Mistranslated Osama bin Laden Video – the German Press Investigates

By Craig Morris, December 23, 2001.

A GERMAN TV show found that the White House's translation of the "confession" video was not only inaccurate, but even "manipulative".

ON December 20, 2001, German TV channel "Das Erste" broadcast its analysis of the White House's translation of the OBL video that George Bush has called a "confession of guilt". On the show *Monitor*, two independent translators and an expert on oriental studies found the White House's translation not only to be inaccurate, but "manipulative".



Another CIA psyop propaganda for war!



Throughout the 80s he (Osama Bin Laden) was armed by the CIA and funded by the Saudis to wage jihad against the Russian occupation of Afghanistan. Al-Qaida, literally "the database", was originally the computer file of the thousands of mujahideen who were recruited and trained with help from the CIA to defeat the Russians.

- Robin Cook former UK Foreign Secretary wrote in a Guardian UK article 2005



Brzezinski and Tim Osman (Osama bin Laden) discuss the string of Jihads that Zbigniew never regrets



Osama the CIA asset appeared to be getting younger!

The story behind the shoot down of 'Extortion 17' – Part 1

Grae Stafford Multimedia Producer 11:42 AM 03/09/2014

Most people know SEAL Team 6 killed Osama bin Laden, but few know what happened afterwards, and why.

On Aug. 6 2011, members of SEAL Team 6 engaged in another covert raid in Afghanistan. As they approached the drop zone, Taliban forces attacked using rocket propelled grenades. The CH-47 carrying the SEALs with the call-sign "Extortion 17" was hit by one of the rockets tearing off ten and a half feet of one of its main rotor blades. Extortion 17 crashed, killing 30 Americans and eight Afghans. It is the single largest one day loss of life in the history of Naval Special Warfare division and of the entire 12-year Afghanistan campaign. One of those aboard was US Navy SEAL Aaron Vaughn.



Now his parents Karen and Billy Vaughn are speaking out about what happened and the catalog of errors that led to the downing of Extortion 17.

“On May 1, SEAL Team 6, as we know now unfortunately, killed Osama bin Laden. On May 2, Joe Biden, in an unprecedented act, no let’s just call it what it is, in a breach of national security, outed the SEALs as the ones who took down bin Laden. It had never been done.”

Karen explains that after the Vice President made his statement their son called home, very concerned about their safety.

“Within twenty four hours Aaron called home and said, ‘Mom, you need to wipe your social media clean. I mean, you need to get everything off of it.’ My son was never nervous. He was a fearless warrior. He was worried that day. Not for himself he was nervous for his loved ones, who couldn’t defend themselves.”

According to Karen, based on written testimony that the Vaughns now have in their possession, after the Biden made his statement, increased chatter from the Taliban showed they were devoting their efforts to downing a NATO chopper.

The Vaughns argue that administration officials, including Central Intelligence Agency Director Leon Panetta, was so keen to garner good publicity from the SEALs' operations that operational security was jeopardized in favor of sympathetic coverage. This included revealing classified details including the names of the SEALs involved to Hollywood director Kathryn Bigelow to assist in the making of the movie "Zero Dark Thirty."

"The special forces community went crazy in fear for their families," Karen said. The Vaughns believe that the laissez faire approach to operational security in Afghanistan, including the sharing of tactical information with unsecure Afghan forces, led to the Taliban being able to accurately target the forces of SEAL Team 6.

"They knew who was on that chopper that night," Aaron's father said. "By 2009, our ambassador had made a statement that the American government believed that at least 25 percent of the Afghan national Army was infiltrated by the Taliban."

Watch part two of the interview with Karen and Billy Vaughn [here](#).

Family speaks out about Navy SEAL's death aboard Extortion 17, part 2

On Aug. 6, 2011, Navy SEAL Team Six member Aaron Vaughn and 29 other American soldiers perished when the Taliban shot down a Chinook helicopter in an ambush in Afghanistan. The chopper's call name was Extortion 17. Two-and-a-half years later, Vaughn's parents Karen and Billy are still searching for answers and accountability to make sense of the loss. They love their country dearly and despite personal pain were willing to speak with The Daily Caller about the single largest catastrophic loss in the history of Navy Special Warfare.

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Lessons From the Thinnest of Seymour Hersh's Thinly Sourced Claims

Greg Grandin on May 20, 2015 - 8:51 AM ET



[Greg Grandin](#)



In a televised address, Nixon announced the attack on Cambodia in 1970. (National Archives and Records Administration)

Meet Colonel Ray Sitton, the single source in one of the thinnest of Seymour Hersh's thinly sourced claims: that Henry Kissinger had not only presided over the secret and illegal carpet bombing of Cambodia but also organized a vast conspiracy—what participants described as an elaborate “double bookkeeping” protocol—designed to keep the bombing hidden from Congress and the public.

Here's Sitton's description of being tracked down by Hersh, in the early 1980s:

One day 2 years or so ago, I had a call from Seymour Hersh on leave from *The New York Times*, the guy who blew the whistle on My Lai. Seymour Hersh said, “I would like you to have breakfast with me in the dining room of the Hyatt Arlington, where I was staying at the time, ‘tomorrow morning.’ Could you do that? I have something I need to discuss with you?” Yes, I could. I went down to breakfast with him. We chatted for a while. He brought in a huge sheaf of papers. He said, ‘In case you wonder how I found your name and your identity, here.’ He picked up that stack of papers and put it on top of the breakfast table. He had a copy of every piece of

paper I ever generated on this project that he had obtained under the Freedom of Information Act and, of course, on the bottom of every one of them, the drafter's name was Col Ray B. Sitton. That's how he found me. I was in shock. I couldn't believe he had been able to get those things."

Before getting into what "those things" were, some background: the US bombed Cambodia, a sovereign nation Washington was not at war with, from 1965 to 1973. When Nixon and Kissinger entered the White House in early 1969, they greatly intensified (in terms of bombing rate and amount of munitions dropped) and expanded (in terms of extent of territory targeted) the air assault. They did so both because Cambodia reportedly housed the headquarters of the National Liberation Front and because they wanted to send a message to Hanoi that Nixon was "mad" and unpredictable. Between 1969 and 1973, the US dropped at least 500,000 tons of bombs on Cambodia, killing over 100,000 Khmer civilians, according to Ben Kiernan, the founding director of Yale's Cambodian Genocide Program. Broadly speaking, Nixon's and Kissinger's Cambodia bombing comprised two named operations. The first, Operation Menu, ran from March 18, 1969, to May 1970. The second, Operation Freedom Deal, ran from May 1970 to August 1973. Menu was the phase that was most secret, carried out with the deception protocol put into place by Kissinger. Freedom was less covert, justified by requests for support from the Cambodian government to fight the growing insurgency. Still, the extent and intensity of Freedom Deal was under-reported in the US press, which was often fed confusing and mixed messages by the administration.

It wasn't until 1973 that Congress and journalists began to investigate Operation Menu, around the same moment that the Watergate scandal was unfolding. At the time, some members of Congress were "convinced that the secret bombing of Cambodia will emerge as another, perhaps more dangerous, facet of the Watergate scandal," as Hersh, then a *New York Times* reporter, wrote in July of that year.

But investigators couldn't identify the person (it was Kissinger) in Nixon's staff that presided over the cover-up nor find the link (Sitton) connecting the conspiracy to the White House. "Who ordered the falsification of the records?" one senator asked General Creighton Abrams, the commander of military operations in Vietnam. "I just do not know," he answered.

Hersh didn't give up. Nixon resigned, Ford finished his term, and Kissinger left office in 1977 having largely escaped association with Watergate. Compared to the preverbal thuggery of the rest of Nixon's inner circle—Haldeman, Ehrlichman, Mitchell—not to mention actual thugs like G. Gordon Liddy, Kissinger's reputation was intact: "prodigiously intelligent, articulate, talented, witty, captivating and imposing man.... he is not mean-spirited, he seems drawn to telling the truth, and he wants to serve his country well. He also appears to have a historical vision," as none other than *The New Yorker's* William Shawn wrote (in 1973).

Hersh, though, kept digging, researching a book that still remains the defining portrait of Kissinger. As Colonel Sitton, recalling his encounter with Hersh, said: Hersh "was so upset with Kissinger's first book he had decided to write an exposé, a counter if you will." Sitton here is referring to Kissinger's *The White House Years*. Published in 1979, that first volume of Kissinger's memoirs won the National Book Award for history. Today, most honest historians would place it in the category of fantasy. In it, Kissinger devotes, as he does in nearly every

subsequent book he's written, a good many pages distorting the catastrophe he helped visit on Cambodia.

Hersh "countered" in 1983 with *The Price of Power: Kissinger in the Nixon White House*. An "authorized" biography of Kissinger will be out soon, but Hersh's Kissinger is still the one to top. He gives us the defining portrait of the man as a preening paranoid, tacking between ruthlessness and sycophancy to advance his career, cursing his fate and letting fly the B-52s. Small in his vanities and shabby in his motives, Kissinger, in Hersh's hands, is nonetheless Shakespearean, because the pettiness gets played out on a world stage with epic consequences. *The Price of Power* covers all of Kissinger's many transgressions—from Bangladesh to Chile, from wiretapping his own staff to giving Suharto the greenlight to invade Timor.

But the secret bombing of Cambodia is the book's centerpiece, fueling the paranoia that drives Nixon's downfall.

Many of the recent criticisms that have been leveled at Hersh's reporting on the killing of Osama bin Laden have revolved around how difficult it would be to keep elaborate "conspiracies" secret. "Hersh's stories seem to become more spectacular, more thinly sourced, and more difficult to square with reality as we know it," writes one critic at Vox.

But the cover-up of the bombing of Cambodia is as spectacular as it gets. And Hersh's 1983 accurate claim that it was Kissinger who presided over the conspiracy comes from one single source: Ray Sitton.

In researching my own forthcoming book on Kissinger (*Kissinger's Shadow*, out in August but available for [preorder!](#)) I came across a hitherto unknown interview Sitton, now deceased, did with an Air Force historian. The interview (the source of the above block quote) was conducted not long after Sitton's woke up to find Hersh in the Hyatt's breakfast room.

Here's how the conspiracy worked: shortly after Nixon's inauguration, on February 24, 1969, Kissinger and his military aide Alexander Haig held the first in a series of meetings with Sitton, who was an expert on B-52s assigned to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to work up a "duel reporting system," a way to bomb Cambodia and keep it secret from Congress, while accounting for the use of spare parts, fuel and munitions.

Kissinger pushed Sitton to come up with a plan that would keep even the pilots of the B-52s in the dark as to where they were bombing. Sitton, though, told him that would not be feasible. Instead, they decided to "swear" the flight crew "to secrecy" (which means that as many, perhaps more, military personnel were involved in this conspiracy than the one Hersh is today derided for believing in).

Kissinger, Haig, and Sitton came up with a simple but comprehensive protocol. Sitton would work up a number of targets in Cambodia to be struck. Then he would bring them to Kissinger and Haig in the White House for approval. Kissinger was very hands on, revising some of Sitton's work. "I don't know what he was using as his reason for varying them," Sitton recalled in his Air Force interview. "Strike here in this area," Kissinger would tell him, "or strike here in that area." Once Kissinger was satisfied with the proposed target, Sitton would use a special backchannel set up to send the coordinates to Saigon, and from there a special courier would be

used to pass them on to the appropriate radar stations, where an officer would at the last minute switch out the official targets in South Vietnam for the covert ones in Cambodia. When the bombing was complete, he'd burn whatever documents—maps, computer print outs, radar reports, messages, and so on—that might reveal the true target and write up false “post strike” paperwork, indicating that the South Vietnam sortie was flown as planned. There was “a whole special furnace” set up in Saigon, along with others in the forward radar locations, for that job. “We burned probably 12 hours a day,” General Creighton Abrams (who, as one of the top military officers in Vietnam, recommended targets to Sitton) would testify before the Senate. The Senate would be provided “phony target coordinates” and other forged data. That way, it was possible to account for expenditures—fuel, bombs, spare parts—to Congress without Congress ever knowing Cambodia was being bombed.

Haig and Sitton were military men. But Haig worked for Kissinger, a civilian running an agency, the National Security Council, not subject to congressional oversight (since it wasn't a cabinet-level office). As to Sitton, he did often wonder what he was doing participating in a shadow chain of command, bypassing superiors in the Department of Defense, plotting bombing targets in a vaulted room deep in the bowels of the Pentagon and then secreting them into Kissinger's office for approval. As he put it in his Air Force interview: “I kind of felt I was way out on a limb and skating on some pretty thin ice with all my trips to the west basement of the White House.” But whenever he expressed these concerns to higher-ups, he was told: “Whatever you are doing, keep on doing it. It seems to be working. Do just what you are doing. When you get a call to go to the White House, go, because you don't really have any choice.”

In Saigon, a whole “special furnace” was set up for the job. “Every piece of paper, including the scratch paper, the paper that one of our computers might have done some figuring on, every piece of scrap paper was gathered up,” Major Hal Knight, who in 1973 testified to Congress that he had carried out the falsification (out of all the hundreds, perhaps more, of military personnel who participated in this cover-up, Knight is the *only* one who turned whistleblower), said: “I would wait until daylight, and as soon as that time came, I would go out and burn that.” Knight went on:

I destroyed the papers that had the target coordinates on them. I destroyed the paper that came off the plotting boards that showed the track of the aircraft I destroyed the computer tape that took the target coordinates, UTM coordinates and translated them into information that the bombing computers could use. Then I also destroyed any scrap paper that went with that, and the brushgraph recording.

The secret illegal bombing of Cambodia entailed the creation of an elaborate, covert parallel chain of command stretching from the White House basement to radar stations in South Vietnam. “Maybe,” as Vox [wrote](#) in its bid to take down Hersh, “there really is a vast shadow world of complex and diabolical conspiracies, executed brilliantly by international networks of government masterminds. And maybe Hersh and his handful of anonymous former senior officials really are alone in glimpsing this world and its terrifying secrets.”

Maybe.

No reporter followed up Hirsh's Sitton scoop, that Kissinger both designed and ran the covert bombing from the White House basement. By the time Hersh's book appeared in the first term of the Reagan administration, Cambodia had become a minor historical footnote and Kissinger was well on his way to becoming one of the richest and most influential (through his consulting firm Kissinger Associates) former secretaries of state in US history.

The above description of the cover-up drew from Hersh's *Price of Power* and Knight's testimony, as well as from Sitton's Air Force interview, which confirms in nearly every detail Hersh's reporting.

Here's what Sitton says about Hersh: There were some technical "inaccuracies" in his account, but "they aren't all that important." What did Sitton think of Hersh? "He made a lot of assumptions, thinking that he was so smart he knew that much about it. He didn't do too badly."

Read Next: [Greg Grandin on how to how to discredit Seymour Hersh](#)

Unnamed informant in Seymour Hersh's report revealed: Senior citizen in London alleged to have revealed bin Laden's location to the U.S.

[Alia Waheed and Colin Freeman, The Telegraph](#) | May 20, 2015



AUSAF NEWS PAPERF / AFP / Getty Images // MATT DELLINGER / EPA Osama bin Laden in Afghanistan in 2001, left, and Seymour Hersh in 2004, right. Hersh has called into question the official account of the American raid that killed bin Laden.

A U.K.-based former senior officer in the Pakistan army has been named as being a supergrass that sold the secret location of Osama bin Laden to the CIA.

Usman Khalid, a brigadier who claimed asylum in London 35 years ago and became a British citizen, was allegedly the informant whose tip-off led to the assassination of the world's most wanted man in 2011.

His family told of their anger that their father – who died a year ago – has been publicly identified as the source of the leak.

And they have denied that Brigadier Khalid was the man responsible.

Speculation about the identity of the unnamed informant has been rife following the publication of an article by Seymour Hersh, the Pulitzer Prize-winning U.S. journalist, in the *London Review of Books* earlier this month.

Related

- [Seymour Hersh drops startling report claiming U.S. lied about how it killed Osama bin Laden](#)
- [Seymour Hersh defends report claiming U.S. lied about Osama bin Laden's death: 'I am not backing off anything'](#)
- [Why it matters how bin Laden was killed](#)

Hersh claimed that, contrary to the US government's version of events, bin Laden was being held prisoner by the Pakistani intelligence agency – the ISI – in the Pakistani city of Abbottabad.

The White House and CIA have always maintained that their own intelligence agents pieced together the information that led to the Navy Seals raid on the bin Laden compound.

However, Hersh claimed that an unnamed senior officer in the Pakistani army had been the “walk-in” who provided details of the secret hideout in exchange for a substantial amount of a \$25 million bounty.

According to Hersh's account, the supergrass was supposed to also have been rewarded with U.S. citizenship and to be alive and well in America. In a bizarre twist, the unnamed officer has now been identified in Pakistani media – citing military sources – as Brigadier Khalid.

However, his family believe he has been wrongly implicated because of his outspoken views on Pakistani politics.

The retired brigadier claimed political asylum in Britain after resigning from a 25-year career in the army in protest at the execution in 1979 of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the former prime minister and father of Benazir Bhutto, who was assassinated in 2007.

Brigadier Khalid died last year of cancer at the age of 79.

His son, Abid Khalid said, “It simply doesn’t make sense. At the time that this was supposed to have happened, he was suffering from cancer and in and out of hospital.”

My father was an honourable and patriotic man. He would have been devastated to have been linked to anything which would put the lives of innocent people, especially children at risk, especially in the country he loved.

“My father hadn’t visited the USA since 1976 and had lived in the UK since 1979 so there was no question of him or his family getting American citizenship. He had no contact with the CIA and knew nothing about Osama bin Laden, other than what he read in the newspapers, just like everyone else.”

“He was politically very vocal, so he was an easy target.”

The family also denied claims that their father had played a role in persuading a Pakistan doctor – Dr Shakhil Ahmed – to set up a fake polio vaccination drive as part of a CIA ploy to surreptitiously acquire DNA evidence of bin Laden’s presence in Abbottabad.

“My father was an honourable and patriotic man,” said Abid Khalid. “He was also a caring, family man and would be horrified to be linked to the fake polio vaccination programme.”

“He would have been devastated to have been linked to anything which would put the lives of innocent people, especially children at risk, especially in the country he loved.”

Critics have accused Hersh – the investigative journalist who uncovered the My Lai massacre during the Vietnam War and the Abu Ghraib Iraqi prison scandal – of allowing himself to be used to vent conspiracy theories. They have also queried the quality of his reporting, saying that has relied too much on one U.S. intelligence source, whom they say appears to have known little about the inner workings of the operation to find bin Laden.

Since the publication of the article, further allegations have emerged to support at least some of his assertions

The White House described his claims that Pakistan co-operated with the U.S. to kill the former al-Qaeda leader as “inaccurate and baseless.”

However, since the publication of the article, further allegations have emerged to support at least some of his assertions.

On Sunday it was reported that Germany's foreign intelligence agency helped the CIA to track down bin Laden.

The BND spy service – the German equivalent of MI6 – was said to have provided a tip-off that he was hiding in Pakistan, with the knowledge of Pakistani security services.

Hersh declined to comment on the comments by Brigadier Khalid's family. It is understood that he claims the source of the tip-off about bin Laden's whereabouts was not the same person identified by the Pakistani newspaper, the *News*.

In 2013, the *London Review of Books* published another widely contested article by Hersh, in which he cited anonymous intelligence sources blaming the Nusra Front jihadist group rather than the Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad for the August 2013 sarin gas attack in Ghouta, Damascus.

It's a Conspiracy! How to Discredit Seymour Hersh

Greg Grandin on May 12, 2015



Seymour Hersh (Photo by Giorgio Montersino, CC BY-NC 2.0)

Max Fisher, now at Vox, learned well during his apprenticeship under Marty Peretz at *The New Republic*. This week, he was among the [first](#) to try to smear Seymour Hersh's [piece](#) in the *London Review of Books*, which argued that pretty much everything we were told about the killing of Osama bin Laden was a lie. Most importantly, Hersh's report questions the claim that

Washington learned of OBL's whereabouts thanks to torture—a claim popularized in the film *Zero Dark Thirty*.

There's a standard boiler plate now when it comes to going after Hersh, and all Fisher, in "The Many Problems with Seymour Hersh's Osama bin Laden Conspiracy Theory," did was fill out the form: establish Hersh's "legendary" status (which Fisher does in the first sentence); invoke his reporting in My Lai and Abu Ghraib; then say that a number of Hersh's recent stories—such as his 2012 *New Yorker* piece that the United States was training Iranian terrorists in Nevada—have been "unsubstantiated" (of course, other reporters never "substantiated" Hersh's claim that Henry Kissinger was directly involved in organizing the cover-up of the fire-bombing of Cambodia for years—but that claim was true); question Hersh's sources; and then, finally, suggest that Hersh has gone "off the rails" to embrace "conspiracy theories."

For Fisher, the "many problems" with Hersh's report are its "contradictions"—the fact that the Pakistani ISI or the US CIA acted, if we believe what Hersh writes, incoherently. "When fact seem to squarely contradict his claims," Fisher writes—though he should have written, when facts seem to contradict how I, Fisher, believe intelligence agencies should act—Hersh's "answer is that this only goes to show how deep the rabbit hole goes."

Fisher was too quick by half. For the rabbit hole indeed goes deep. Just after he posted his piece, NBC news—not just "mainstream" but solidly in the Obama White House camp—confirmed one key claim in Hersh's report: "Two intelligence sources tell NBC News that the year before the U.S. raid that killed Osama bin Laden, a 'walk in' asset from Pakistani intelligence told the CIA where the most wanted man in the world was hiding—and these two sources plus a third say that the Pakistani government knew where bin Laden was hiding all along." Other sources likewise confirmed at least the broad outlines of Hersh's counter-narrative, and as they did, the pushback against Hersh went, as Adam Johnson at FAIR put, from "this is a lie" to "what's the big deal, we knew this all along" (everybody should follow Johnson's twitter feed).

Fisher's not alone in accusing Hersh of frivolity (I had hopes for Fisher, who after the *New Republic* implosion wrote a thoughtful reflection on that magazine's racism. But he's since done one of the stupider pieces I've read on Ecuador's Rafael Correa; Vox seems to be trying to fill the vacuum left by *The New Republic* when it comes to writing silly things about Latin America). To accuse Hersh of falling under the thrall of "conspiracy theory" is to repudiate the whole enterprise of investigative journalism that Hersh helped pioneer. What has he written that wasn't a conspiracy? But Fisher, and others, believe Hersh went too far when in a 2011 speech he made mention of the Knights of Malta and Opus Dei, tagging him as a Dan Brown fantasist. Here's Fisher, in his debunking of Hersh's recent essay: "The moment when a lot of journalists started to question whether Hersh had veered from investigative reporting into something else came in January 2011. That month, he spoke at Georgetown University's branch campus in Qatar, where he gave a bizarre and rambling address alleging that top military and special forces leaders 'are all members of, or at least supporters of, Knights of Malta.... many of them are members of Opus Dei.'"

But here's Steve Coll, a reporter who remains within the acceptable margins, writing in *Ghost Wars* about Reagan's CIA director, William Casey: "He was a Catholic Knight of Malta educated by Jesuits. Statues of the Virgin Mary filled his mansion.... He attended Mass daily and

urged Christian faith upon anyone who asked his advice.... He believed fervently that by spreading the Catholic church's reach and power he could contain communism's advance, or reverse it." Oliver North, Casey's Iran/Contra co-conspirator, worshiped at a "charismatic' Episcopal church in Virginia called Church of the Apostles, which is organized into cell groups."

Not too long ago, Ben Bradlee Jr. (son of no less an establishment figure than the editor of *The Washington Post*), could draw the connections between the shadowy national security state and right-wing Christianity: Iran/Contra was about many things, among them a right-wing Christian reaction against the growing influence of left-wing Liberation Theology in Latin America. Likewise, the US's post-9/11 militarism was about many things, among them the reorganization of those right-wing Christians against what they identified as a greater existential threat than Liberation Theology: political Islam. Fisher should know this, as it was reported [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#), among many other places.

Eager to debunk Hersh, it's Fisher who has fallen down the rabbit hole of imperial amnesia.

Taleban to decide Bin Laden fate

Monday, 17 September, 2001,

Afghan refugees face closed borders

The leader of Afghanistan's ruling Taleban has announced that a decision on whether Osama Bin Laden can remain in the country will be taken at a meeting on Tuesday, official Taleban radio reported.

Mullah Mohammed Omar said the decision on Bin Laden, identified by the US as the chief suspect in last Tuesday's suicide attacks, would be made by Islamic leaders from all over the country.

High-ranking officials from Pakistan have been holding talks with Mullah Omar in the southern city of Kandahar in an effort to persuade him to hand over the Saudi-born millionaire.

Pakistan's Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar has warned that time is running out and has called on the Taleban to make a sober and dispassionate decision.

Pakistan has already pledged to provide the US with support and, although the government will not spell out exactly what this means, Mr Sattar said he could not rule out the idea of basing foreign troops in Pakistan if the delegation failed.

Close ties

Pakistan has close ties with the Taleban, but the BBC Islamabad correspondent, Susannah Price, says this is testing its influence to the limit.

Time is of the essence. There is no ultimatum, but time is definitely running out

Pakistan Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar

[Click here to see map of Afghanistan](#)

The Pakistan-based Afghan Islamic Press (AIP) quoted Taliban spokesman Abdul Hai Mutamaen as saying that, while the talks so far had been largely positive, the key issue of handing over Bin Laden had not been resolved.

"There was no clear discussion on this particular topic," he reportedly said.

Missiles moved

The Pakistan delegation is understood to have warned that Bin Laden will have to be handed over within three days if US military strikes are to be averted.

"Time is of the essence. There is no ultimatum, but time is definitely running out," Mr Sattar said.

The Taliban have until now refused all demands to hand over Bin Laden, first demanding proof of his involvement in the terror attacks on the US.

As the consultations went ahead, Reuters news agency quoted a Pakistani army captain as saying the Taliban had moved a large number of weapons, including missiles, to positions near the Pakistani border.

The Afghan rulers have warned that they might attack any country that offers assistance to the United States.

Flights ban

The Pakistani army captain also said that Islamabad had reinforced its troops along the frontier with Afghanistan.

UN officials meanwhile said that tens of thousands of Afghans, fearing US strikes, were streaming out of cities - including up to half the population of Kandahar - and heading towards the borders with Pakistan and Iran.

In another development, the Taliban shut down Afghanistan's airspace on Monday.

An estimated 110 flights that cross Afghanistan every day will now have to make an expensive diversion.

The US is pointing the finger at me, but I categorically state that I have not done this

Osama Bin Laden



Afghanistan had already been moving in this direction, warning two weeks ago that it might shut down the airspace if UN sanctions were not lifted.

Bin Laden denial

Bin Laden on Sunday issued his first personal denial of involvement in the attacks.

"The US is pointing the finger at me but I categorically state that I have not done this," he said in a statement faxed to the Pakistan-based Afghan Islamic Press (AIP) news agency.

The opposition alliance to the Taleban, which has been pushed back into the north of Afghanistan, has said it could provide invaluable help in hunting down Bin Laden.

The ousted Afghan president Burhanuddin Rabbani told the BBC his fighters were well acquainted with the hostile terrain, which has long been seen as a real obstacle to any foreign army trying to move in the country.



Bin Laden - the Taleban has refused to hand him over before



Pakistan military officials admit defector's key role in Bin Laden operation

[AFP](#) — Updated May 12, 2015 10:59pm

ISLAMABAD: Two former senior Pakistan military officials told AFP on Tuesday that a 'defector' from country's intelligence agency did assist the US in its hunt for Osama bin Laden but denied the two countries had officially worked together.

The officials' accounts came after the publication of a *controversial news report by US journalist Seymour Hersh* in which he claimed to have uncovered a 'secret deal' between Washington and Islamabad that reportedly resulted in the killing of Al-Qaeda chief in 2011.

The *White House has flatly rejected Hersh's claims* that Pakistan was told in advance about the May 2 special forces raid in Abbottabad.

A source — who was a serving senior military official at the time of the raid — told AFP that the defector was a “resourceful and energetic” mid-ranking intelligence officer whose efforts were critical to the operation's success.

Hersh's report quoted a senior US source as saying a “walk-in” approached the then-Islamabad station chief for the American Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in 2010 promising to lead them to bin Laden, who according to the journalist had been imprisoned by Pakistani authorities at the Abbottabad compound since 2006.

However, the Pakistani military source told AFP the defector had no knowledge that his target was bin Laden, but he was instead given a task that would help verify the Al-Qaeda chief's identity.

The source declined to elaborate on what that task was, but a Pakistani investigation found that the CIA had run a fake vaccination programme with the help of physician Dr Shakeel Afridi who obtained DNA samples.

Qazi Khalilullah, Pakistan's foreign ministry spokesman, meanwhile said the government was investigating Hersh's account and would announce its reaction soon. “We are looking into the matter and will give our reaction soon,” he said.

Verification task

On the defector's role, the source said: “This guy was inducted at a much later stage only to carry out the ground confirmation.” He added that the defector did not belong to the Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) but another branch, and was now residing in the United States.

Another former official, ex-ISI chief Hamid Gul, told AFP he was also aware of the defector. “That is in my knowledge, that someone defected,” he said.

“There was too big a reward, he became a mole and agent to put in practice their plan.” The US had placed a \$25-million-dollar bounty on information leading to the capture or killing of bin Laden — a sum Washington has said it never paid because no human informants were used.

According to Hersh's report, the US learned that Pakistani authorities had bin Laden in their custody and were hoping to use him as a shield against Al-Qaeda and Taliban attacks.

Later, Hersh reported, the US convinced Pakistan to stage a fake raid to kill bin Laden, providing a boost for US President Barack Obama — then in his first term — while also allowing the Pakistanis to deny having anything to do with the killing.

No deal made

Both former Pakistani officials, however, and several other serving officials, have dismissed the allegation that such a deal had been brokered.

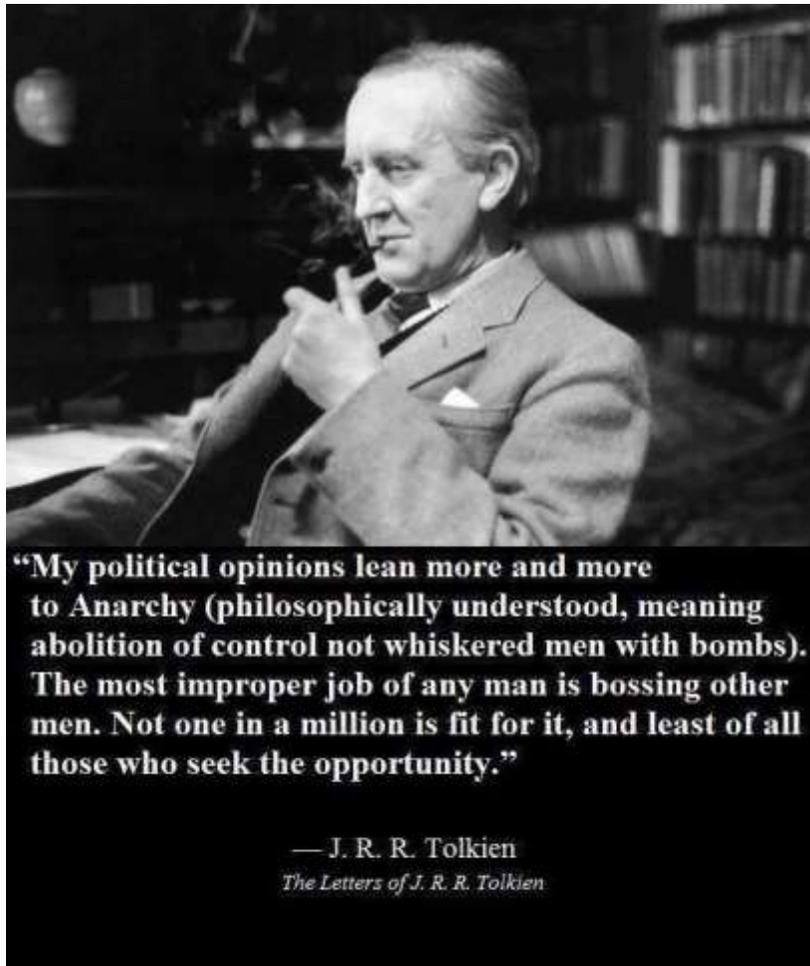
The then-serving senior military official said that in the aftermath of the raid, “the mood here and the reaction here was of great frustration even at the top level.

“If the top guys had been part of the plan — they were the worst hit. They were almost forced to resign.

“With the kind of bad name and reputation that came with such a great risk, it wasn't worth it. “A leaked Pakistani government report in 2013 said bin Laden arrived in Pakistan in the spring or summer of 2002 — after the 2001 US-led invasion of Afghanistan — and settled in Abbottabad in August 2005.

The report, which coined the term “governance implosion syndrome” to explain the extent of official failures to detect him, said he was once stopped for speeding and enjoyed wearing a cowboy hat.

Hersh's report has been met with some scepticism, but *Dawn's editorial* argued that it should force the government to officially release the findings of the 2013 investigation, and bring the country's powerful military-run intelligence agencies under civilian supervision.



“My political opinions lean more and more to Anarchy (philosophically understood, meaning abolition of control not whiskered men with bombs). The most improper job of any man is bossing other men. Not one in a million is fit for it, and least of all those who seek the opportunity.”

— J. R. R. Tolkien
The Letters of J. R. R. Tolkien

Craig B Hulet was both speech writer and *Special Assistant for Special Projects* to Congressman Jack Metcalf (Retired); he has been a consultant to federal law enforcement DEA, ATF&E of Justice/Homeland Security for over 25 years; he has written four books on international relations and philosophy, his latest is *The Hydra of Carnage: Bush’s Imperial War-making and the Rule of Law - An Analysis of the Objectives and Delusions of Empire*. He has appeared on over 12,000 hours of TV and Radio: *The History Channel “De-Coded”*; He is a regular on *Coast to Coast AM w/ George Noory*; *“Coffee Talk” Doug McDowell, KBKW*; *Mills Crenshaw KTALK SLC*; *The Carl Nelson Show live in DC and Trending with Carl Nelson syndicated live*: Hulet has appeared on *The History Channel, CNN, C-Span* ; *European Television “American Dream”*, *Press TV, Entertainment News and The Arsenio Hall Show*; he has written for *Soldier of Fortune Magazine, International Combat Arms, Financial Security Digest, etc.*; Hulet served in Vietnam 1969-70, 101st Airborne, C Troop 2/17th Air Cav and graduated 3rd in his class at *Aberdeen Proving Grounds Ordnance School MOS 45J20 Weapons*. He remains a paid analyst and consultant in various areas of geopolitical, business and security issues: terrorism and military affairs. Hulet lives in the ancient old growth *Quinalt Rain Forest*.