



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on May 2, 2011

Obama Says U.S. Killed Osama bin Laden, but Questions Remain

“Tonight I can report to the American people and to the world, that the United States has conducted an operation that has killed Osama bin Laden — the leader of al Qaeda and a terrorist who is responsible for the murder of thousands of innocent men, women, and children,” Obama [claimed](#) during a press conference from the White House, followed by colorful language about a “cloudless September sky” and “black smoke” billowing from the Pentagon almost a decade ago.



Huge crowds gathered outside to wave flags and celebrate the news. And across the Internet, the story sparked a tidal wave of reactions and reports.

But numerous inconsistencies have already become apparent. China's official press agency, for example, is [reporting](#) that — contrary to Obama's assertions — bin Laden was actually killed in an operation by Pakistani security forces. U.S. personnel, according to the Xinhua wire report, only arrived later to pick up the body.

Other analysts are claiming — [citing](#) obituaries and official statements published around the world — that bin Laden has actually been dead for years. Countless [Internet postings](#) appeared following Obama's announcement calling the news a “lie” or “hoax.”

Radio host Michael Rivero, for example, [ridiculed](#) the President's claims — essentially calling them lies with a hidden agenda. Rivero has maintained for years that [bin Laden was dead](#) and that there are still [questions](#) surrounding the September 11 terror attacks and al Qaeda that need to be addressed.

“Obama's announcement of Bin Laden's death is a desperation ploy either to start WW3, distract from the crashing economy, or simply to revive his failing chances at a second term,” [wrote](#) Rivero on his a popular news-aggregating service. “In any event, Obama is full of crap claiming credit for ‘getting’ Bin Laden when he has in fact been dead for almost ten years.”

Similarly, *InfoWars* [published a red alert](#) claiming that Obama's announcement is a “propaganda stunt.” The piece also claimed bin Laden had been dead for many years, [citing](#) assassinated Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and other high-level sources. “Obama's announcement follows the release of a highly suspicious birth certificate last week,” wrote Kurt Nimmo in the article. “Both events represent psychological operations that possibly portend more significant events in the days ahead as the U.S. dollar continues to lose its reserve status, the economy fails to recover as promised, and wars expand in Libya, Pakistan, and Afghanistan.”

Senior editor Gordon Duff of *Veterans Today* [wrote](#) that he was “highly skeptical” about news reports parroting the President's speech, saying his media organization had received information about the



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planned announcement nearly a week before it was made. He also called bin Laden a “patsy” and noted that the reputed terror mastermind had been intimately involved with the U.S. government while consistently denying any involvement in the September 11 attacks.

“Tonight I saw those I find less than credible using wild and speculative words as fact, tying bin Laden to 9/11, something no court, no intelligence agency, no law enforcement group ever did,” [wrote](#) Duff in the piece. “Tonight I heard many things I knew were untrue to help sell the import of bin Laden’s death, a death reported long ago by Benazir Bhutto.”

Some establishment media organs have also raised questions. MSNBC, for example, noted that an image circulated around the world by news outlets and television stations as a supposed photo of a dead bin Laden is almost certainly fake. Authorities have not yet commented on the picture.

The private intelligence firm Stratfor, based in Texas, [commented](#) on the announcement by highlighting its “symbolic” value to the U.S. government and the al-Qaeda organization. “Bin Laden had become the symbol of al Qaeda, even though the degree to which he commanded the organization was questionable,” its analysts [noted](#) in a Red Alert announcement. “The symbolic value of his death is obvious. The United States can claim a great victory. Al Qaeda can proclaim his martyrdom.”

The Federal Bureau of Investigation’s [most wanted profile for bin Laden](#) — which notes that bin Laden was sought in connection with two U.S. embassy bombings in Africa, but not the September 11 attacks — had not been updated as of this writing. A reward of up to \$25 million for information leading to his capture was still being offered on Monday morning.

During the press conference announcing the news, Obama said that upon taking office, he ordered his C.I.A. boss to make capturing or killing bin Laden his “top priority” in the “war” against al-Qaeda. Former President George W. Bush had [said](#) in 2006 that capturing or killing bin Laden was not a priority — “if he’s alive at all.”

After gathering “enough” intelligence, Obama said he had determined that the government had indeed tracked down Osama’s hideout. And so, the President said, he authorized an operation “to get Osama bin Laden and bring him to justice.”

According to Obama and some news reports, a small team of Americans tracked bin Laden to a large, fortified compound north of Islamabad, Pakistan with the assistance of local authorities. A fire fight ensued when bin Laden resisted, and he was supposedly shot in the head. Obama said no U.S. personnel were harmed and that the team hunting bin Laden “took care” to avoid civilian casualties.

“The death of bin Laden marks the most significant achievement to date in our nation’s effort to defeat al Qaeda,” the President asserted during his speech. “Yet his death does not mark the end of our effort. There is no doubt that al Qaeda will continue to pursue attacks against us.”

Obama also said that the U.S. must remain “vigilant” at home and abroad, while reaffirming that the American government “is not, and never will be, at war with Islam.” But, bin Laden’s death “should be welcomed by all who believe in peace and human dignity,” he said.

“Tonight, let us think back to the sense of unity that prevailed on 9/11,” Obama suggested, calling the killing of bin Laden “a testament to the greatness of our country.” America can do “whatever we set our mind to,” he declared, citing “the struggle for equality for all our citizens” and “our sacrifices to make the world a safer place.”

Whether the reported killing of bin Laden will cause a backlash remains to be seen, but analysts argue



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that it might. Just last week it was [reported](#) that a senior al Qaeda leader said a nuclear bomb had been hidden somewhere in Europe — set to detonate if bin Laden was ever captured or killed. It is unclear whether the assertion, based on government documents put out by WikiLeaks, is cause for concern.

But American officials are reportedly taking some precautions. "In the wake of this operation, there may be a heightened threat to the U.S. homeland," an unidentified U.S. official [told](#) MSNBC. The American military has [placed](#) its bases on high alert. The U.S. State Department, meanwhile, urged Americans abroad in volatile areas to "avoid mass gatherings and demonstrations" and limit travel outside of their homes.

But despite the reported killing of bin Laden, the U.S. government [continues to arm various al-Qaeda elements](#) in its United Nations-backed effort to overthrow the government of Libyan dictator Muammar Khadafy — its former ally in the "War on Terror." Al-Qaeda — [a successor to the U.S.-backed Mujahedin in Afghanistan](#) — has been a [vocal supporter](#) of the uprising in Libya from the beginning.

A former U.S. Guantanamo detainee who was assessed as a "probable" member of the terror organization is [now leading a U.S.-backed group](#) in the Libyan rebellion. Another leaked document recently [revealed](#) that a senior al Qaeda leader was simultaneously working for various Western governments during the time he allegedly blew up churches in Pakistan.

The implications of Obama's announcement are still developing. Some pundits wondered whether it was finally time to bring the troops home, while others claimed the next phase in the terror war was just beginning. [Questions are also being raised](#) about what role, if any, Pakistani officials may have had in helping bin Laden hide for so long in an area known as a military hub.

A DNA sample of bin Laden's body was reportedly taken before disposing of his body. Some news reports said results should be available in a few days, while others reported that his identity had already been verified. According to the [New York Times](#), al Qaeda sources had not independently confirmed bin Laden's assassination.

Photo of Osama bin Laden: AP Images



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