

RELEASE IN PART B3 CIA  
PERS/ORG,B6

**From:** Sullivan, Jacob J <SullivanJJ@state.gov>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 4, 2011 3:18 PM  
**To:** H  
**Subject:** FW: Photos

FYI -- no photo release.

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Rhodes, Benjamin J. [mailto: [redacted]]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 04, 2011 2:46 PM

B6

**To:** Govashiri, Ferial; Hammer, Michael A; Smith, Dana S; [redacted]

[redacted] #PRESS: Carnev. Jay; [redacted] Sullivan, Jacob J;  
[redacted] McHale, Judith A

**Cc:** [redacted] Hopkins, Marissa C.; [redacted] Gent, Stephanie R; [redacted]

**Subject:** Photos

B3 CIA PERS/ORG

All -

See below the President's answer on photos to CBS. Jay read this at the top of the briefing, and it explains in some detail the rationale for not releasing. Thanks.

**Q** When did you start to feel comfortable that bin Laden had been killed?

**THE PRESIDENT:** When they landed we had very strong confirmation at that point that it was him. Photographs had been taken. Facial analysis indicated that, in fact, it was him. We hadn't yet done DNA testing, but at that point we were 95 percent sure.

**Q** Did you see the pictures?

**THE PRESIDENT:** Yes.

**Q** What was your reaction when you saw them?

**THE PRESIDENT:** It was him.

**Q** Why didn't you release them?

**THE PRESIDENT:** We discussed this internally. Keep in mind that we are absolutely certain this was him. We've done DNA sampling and testing, and so there is no doubt that we killed Osama bin Laden. It is important for us to make sure that very graphic photos of somebody who was shot in the head are not floating around as an incitement to additional violence, as a propaganda tool. That's not who we are. We don't trot out this stuff as trophies.

The fact of the matter is, this was somebody who was deserving of the justice that he received, and I think Americans and people around the world are glad that he is gone. But we don't need to spike the football. And I think that given the graphic nature of these photos it would create some national security risk, and I've discussed this with Bob Gates and Hillary Clinton and my intelligence teams, and they all agree.

Q There are people in Pakistan, for example, who say, look, this is all a lie -- Obama -- this is another American trick, Osama is not dead.

THE PRESIDENT: The truth is, is that we were monitoring worldwide reaction. There's no doubt that bin Laden is dead. Certainly, there is no doubt among al Qaeda members that he is dead. And so we don't think that a photograph in it of itself is going to make any difference. There are going to be some folks who deny it. The fact of the matter is, you will not see bin Laden walking on this Earth again.