

DEATH OF OSAMA? Judge Denies Request For Release Of Bin Laden Death Pictures

By [Global Research](#)

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A federal judge has denied a request by Judicial Watch for the government to release photographs or video of Osama bin Laden taken during or after the Special Forces raid that resulted in the death of the al Qaeda leader last year.

“A picture may be worth a thousand words. And perhaps moving pictures bear an even higher value. Yet, in this case, verbal descriptions of the death and burial of Osama bin Laden will have to suffice, for this court will not order the release of anything more,” U.S. District Judge James Boasberg wrote in an opinion filed today in a D.C. federal court, denying Judicial Watch’s request.

Judicial Watch sent a Freedom of Information Act request to the Department of Defense on May 2, 2011, the day after President Obama announced bin Laden’s death to the world, and sent a similar request to the CIA a few days later. Both agencies responded that they would not be able to process the request under the time allowed under FOIA rules (within a maximum of 30 days for the DOD), so on May 13, Judicial Watch filed a lawsuit.

“This is arguably as important as any lawsuit we’ve filed,” Judicial Watch President Tom Fitton [said](#) at a press conference at the time.

In his ruling, Boasberg wrote that the Department of Defense “turned up nothing responsive” to Judicial Watch’s request, while the CIA found 52 “responsive records,” but claimed they were all exempt from disclosure. In siding with the government, Boasberg wrote, “[t]he Court declines Plaintiff’s invitation to substitute its own judgment about the national-security risks inherent in releasing these records for that of the executive-branch officials who determined that they should be classified.”

“The Court is also mindful that many members of the public would likely desire to see images of this seminal event,” Boasberg wrote. “Indeed, it makes sense that the more significant an event is to our nation — and the end of Bin Laden’s reign of terror certainly ranks high — the more need the public has for full disclosure. Yet, it is not this Court’s decision to make in the first instance.”

Judicial Watch has already appealed the decision.

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