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## More Than Bin Laden Died

Bob Bauman (May 4, 2011)

*"Science may have found a cure for most evils; but it has found no remedy for the worst of them all — the apathy of human beings."*  
**Helen Keller**

Osama bin Laden is dead, perhaps, as one commentator [observed](#) "...learning whether his cruel version of Deity was at all accurate."

But in too many ways, **Osama bin Laden** died victorious.



When he caused those airplanes to kill civilians ten years ago, he took a lot more from the United States of America than the lives of more than 3,000 of our fellow citizens and residents.

Within a matter of days, if not hours, eager American politicians adopted fear as their continuing motif, justifying the sacrifice of our constitutional rights and liberties as the price of alleged safety.

The centerpiece of their opportunistic politics is the grotesquely named [PATRIOT Act](#) that has destroyed personal and financial privacy in America, rendering meaningless much of the hard won Bill of Rights we had honored for two centuries.

### **Fear and Safety**

President **George W. Bush**, as well as succeeding congresses controlled by both parties, ignored the sound advice of Founding Father, **Benjamin Franklin**. As a member of the Pennsylvania Assembly on Nov. 11, 1755 in a letter to the governor he wrote: *"Those who would give up essential liberty, to purchase a little temporary safety, deserve neither liberty nor safety."*

Yet as we have been stripped our freedoms one principal reason has been that the great mass of Americans have preferred that apathy about which Helen Keller warned.

Put aside the horrendous PATRIOT Act and its evil consequences; secret police spying on our finances and banking; arrest and detention for years of U.S citizens without charges filed or right to counsel. Put aside the secret, Bush-Obama approved NSA wiretapping and FBI searches without warrants required by federal law, suspension of habeas corpus.

Perhaps you can even ignore the confiscation and forfeiture of hundreds of millions in [private bank accounts](#), based on nothing more than a presidential directive and suspicion by federal money police, with their victims allowed no due process or appeal.

## Presidential Power

In 2007 The Cato Institute published a study, *Power Surge: The Constitutional Record of George W. Bush*. They noted that the president claimed "...the authority to lock up American citizens on American soil and hold them without charges or trial for the duration of the war on terror and the power to bypass validly enacted statutes that interfere with whatever the president wants.

### Justice?

In justifying and explaining U.S. anti-terrorism policies our leaders have used the concept of *justice*.



Since 9/11, 2001, the meaning of "justice" has been stretched to include revenge, retaliation, punishment and even healing. President Bush said repeatedly that the U.S. purpose of war in Afghanistan and Iraq was to bring the enemy to justice. In Sunday night's statement, [President Obama labeled the killing of bin Laden](#) as a moment of justice as healing.

And what about that *safety* the politicians have promised? It took ten years and billions of tax dollars to find a man who was "hiding in plain sight" right next door to a country we have invaded. What does that say about government's ability to keep us safe?

Americans even have surrendered to ever more insulting and intrusive searches at airports, carried out largely to create the illusion that we are being protected.

And then there was the cost; trillions spent in Iraq and Afghanistan — and no end in sight.

## Hollow Victory

In light of such a "victory" should not we ask when the civil liberties and financial privacies that have been taken since 9/11 will be reinstated? Of course it's easier to celebrate in the streets than to ask questions about America's lost freedoms.

What one writer has described "a grotesque symbol of evil has been put down like a mangy dog." No doubt that is a cathartic moment for most Americans, myself included, but there should be no celebrations about what Bin Laden has caused to be taken from us by our own "leaders".

It was the loss of America's liberties, the sacrifice of individual freedom, and the breakdown of the rule of law that was bin Laden's greatest and most harmful triumph.

The so-called "war on terror" unending and unlimited must undoubtedly will go on. Yes, we must continue our vigilance against the madmen who plot our individual and national demise.

But this is a good time to ask for more than pictures of a dead body. We need concrete proof that those in power realize what has been lost and are willing to restore our constitutional rights.

That's the way that it looks from here.

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## About the Author

Robert E. "Bob" Bauman, legal counsel to The Sovereign Society, serves on its board of directors and was the founding editor of The Sovereign Society Offshore A-Letter, more than a decade ago.

Society members and many others know Bob as the prolific author of many articles, reports and books. His writings have appeared in The Wall Street Journal, the New York Times, National Review, Human Events and many other publications.

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