

CLIVEN BUNDY

**American ~~Terrorist~~
PATRIOT**

Authorized Biography by:

MICHAEL L. STICKLER

[Handwritten signature]

This is the shocking, yet true story – as told to the author. With twists, turns, highs, lows, and intrigue, it explores the common-sense of the life of one man, his devoted family, and fellow patriots whose response to government overreach parallels the lives of the lives of the Founding Fathers of this great experiment known as the United States Of America.

It's a story not yet finished in its telling. It's a story every family should read and declare in their own voice! It's a story you must decide for yourself: Is Cliven Bundy an American Terrorist or an American Patriot?

Visit us at *ClivenBundy.net*



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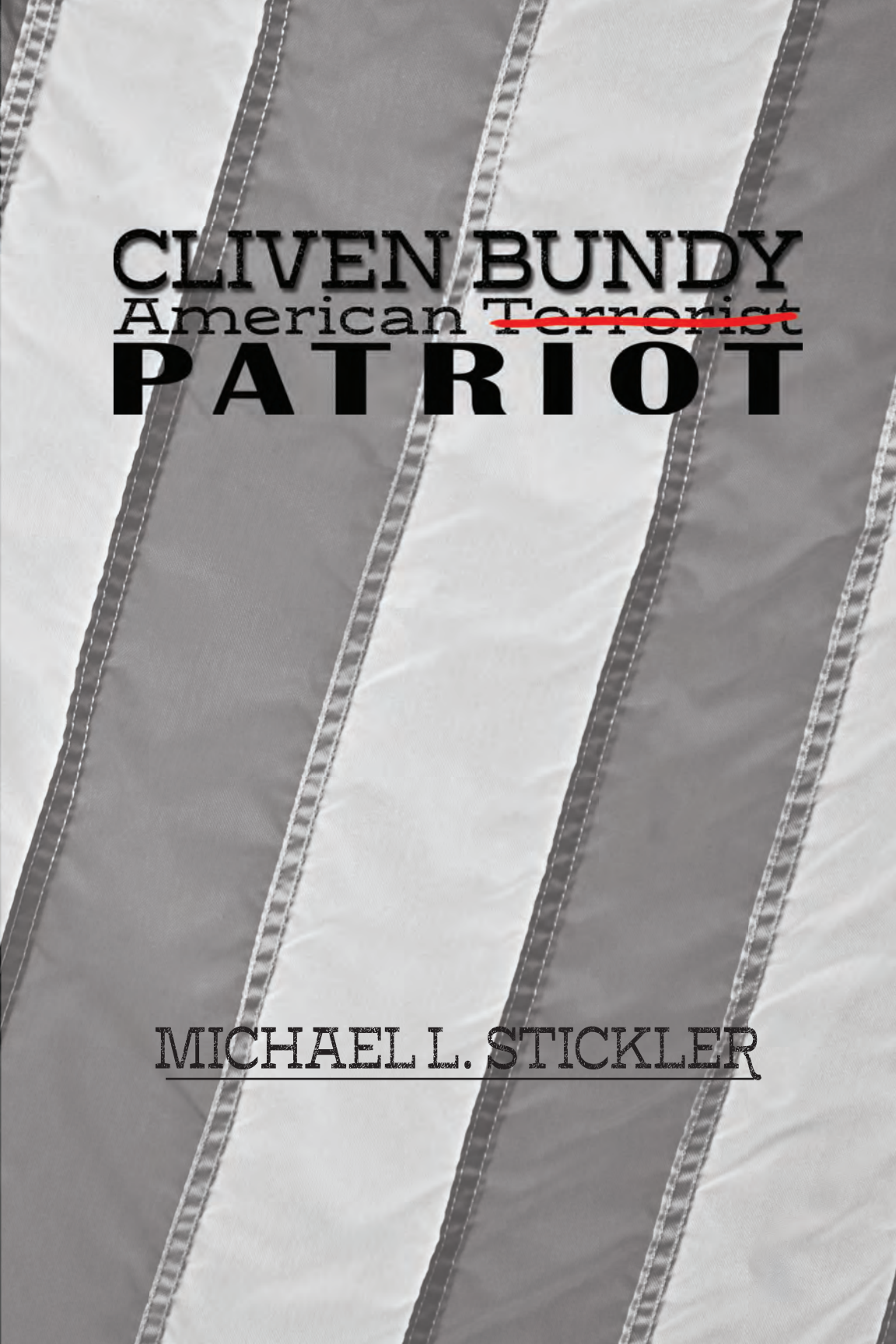






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American Terrorist





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PATRIOT

MICHAEL L. STICKLER



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Arthur Ritter, the principle editor of this book.

My friend, mentor and the man God put in my life to make
me a better writer.





From the Author:

Most people would think a book is a lonely endeavor. For me it takes a team. The help of these people have made this work a collaborative effort.

Jerry Brewer, editor

Without whose story-telling expertise and personal encouragement, I would have never made sense of all the vast information and research.

Mariah Bliss, editor

Whose professionalism I admire.

Tom Clegg, Steve Wark, Wendy Gault, & Rob Boyland

Whose invaluable critiques and suggestions I greatly needed.

Of course my wife, **Kim**, who makes my life complete. Her encouragement makes me think I can do anything.



Cliven Bundy dedicates his story to his friends and
neighbors who were pushed out of the life they loved
by the United States Government

Dick Reid	Von Jones	Donnie Hughes
Arther Hughes	Nephi Johnson	Chuck Simmons
Mr. Frie	Johny Jensen	Slats Jacob
Jack Hardy	Melber Jensen	Kenny Sesrell
Kent Hardy	Kelley Jensen	Munt Perkins
Charels Hardy	Omer Jensen	Jimmy Hayworth
Abe Teerlink	Andrew Jensen	Frank Taylor
Carl Wyco	Jeff Jensen	Piute Indians
Fransus Myers	Richard Jensen	3 Sodoi Brothers
Mr. Lanely	Christeen Reber	Kenny Meyers
Jim Wittmore	Danks Adams	Fay Leavitt
Denies Wittmore	Calvin Adams	Arron Leavitt
Rallen Esplin	Harmen Witwer	Kelby Hughes
Hank Rice	Merel Witwer	Dale Hunt
Paul Lewies	Melvin Hughes	Kerry Woods
Bill Pulsipher	Dan Waite	Bruce Jensen
Billie Pulsipher	Von Leavitt	Theron Jensen
Howerd Pulsipher	Duddy Leavitt	Mr. Brummery
Rex Bell	David Bundy	Howard Hughes
Alen Nay	Newl Bundy	LDS Church
Keith Nay	Mr. Longreen	John Fru
Norm Tom	Mr. Larson	Mr. Nutter
Eddy Yates	Emer Leavitt	Mr. Hartmen
Max Laitton	Lowdy Leavitt	Harley Adams
Max Hafen	Archie Hughes	Bud Hardy
Mr. Hafen	George Allen	Larry Hardy
Miss Grup	Mr. Bingum	Harmon Witwer
Mr. Akins	Daniel Benilld	Dave Fisher
Don Whitney	Dale Allen	



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Remember
WHO YOU ARE AND THE
FAMILY NAME YOU BEAR
BUNDY
ABRAHAM * BOY * DAVE * CLYDE

Remember
WHO YOU ARE AND THE
FAMILY NAME YOU BEAR

Remember
WHO YOU ARE AND THE
FAMILY NAME YOU BEAR
BUNDY
ABRAHAM * BOY * DAVE * CLYDE

Forward

Ryan Bundy stepped purposefully to the podium. He carried a thick, yellow legal pad with the pages folded over, writing appeared on nearly every page. He cleared his throat and fumbled about for a few seconds. Then, looking directly at the jury, began his opening statement:

“This is my ID, not my driver’s license.” He shows a photo of his family on the big screen behind him. *“This is who I am: a man with a family and ‘I’ll do whatever it takes’ to provide for them.*

I want you to picture in your minds that you’re out on the land. I’ll take you to our ranch where you can see all the beauty of the land, the fresh air, sunsets and sunrises, the brush. You’re on a horse in front of the cattle – place yourself there and feel the freedom, out of the congestion of the city – that’s how I was raised. Playing in the river there, we called ourselves river rats. That is where my life began, and I hope ends.

My family has been on that land 141 years; my pioneer ancestors settled there in 1877. There was nothing there. They carved out a living; they brought a horse and wagon; some provisions.

This case, the government mentioned, is ‘not about rights.’ But it is. Those rights do mean something; rights are created through beneficial use. When my ancestors arrived, undoubtedly the horse would need a drink, so they lead him to the water. That is beneficial use. The horse and perhaps a cow that had been lead behind the wagon needed to eat some brush in the hills. That is beneficial use. That use established rights. The water rights are real! So real that the State of Nevada has a water rights registry, including livestock watering rights. The State of Nevada created a law to protect those rights. The water rights that my father owns were first registered in 1891 by this State. The State of Nevada is important; a sovereign state – its own unit – that entered the Union in 1864. It entered equal to the original states; it is its own entity and state laws are important.

My family and I are charged with some grievous things. They are not true and evidence will show they are not. Force, manipulation, extortion, violence – my family is not a violent family and I am not a violent man. For 20-plus years we turned to local law enforcement. Rights are real property. The fact is that ‘We The People’ create government to protect our rights.

To have rights you must claim, use, and defend them. Man only has rights he is willing to claim, use and defend.

There is a difference between rights and privileges.

Rights you own.

A privilege is afforded, like renting or owning a house. The Government asserts there are no rights – only privileges – and unless we pay, we can't be there. The State of Nevada says differently. These are my father's rights. Everything we have comes from the land. That is wealth, not the dollar bill. The things we use all come from the land and who controls the land, controls the wealth.

We create government to preserve and serve us. These are some of the beliefs of my family. That we have said "we will do whatever it takes" is not a threat; it is a statement. Being right here before you the jury today is part of 'doing whatever it takes.' The Founding Fathers pledged whatever it would take: their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor to defend rights. With the evidence you will see, that is what we were doing. There was no conspiracy to impede, to harm, but to protect our heritage that our pioneer ancestors established. We were attacked, surrounded by what appeared to be mercenaries, snipers pointed directly at me. You will hear a report from a sniper that he was keeping watch of me in my van with my wife and two of my daughters with me.

Our ranch – where children are always welcome – is a place to play, play in the river, the pond, chase or hunt rabbits, burn your toes in the hot sand in summer: always free. Never before did we feel like someone was always watching.

In early spring of 2014 we felt like someone was always watching. Our dogs were watching the hills. When you are always with a dog you get to know what they are saying with their bark. You can tell by their bark what they are seeing – surveillance cameras on one hill, but the dog looking at another and growling.

This is not what America is supposed to be. It's supposed to be a land of liberty. The Founding Fathers fought and bled so we wouldn't have to and now we find ourselves in a similar situation.

They say this issue is over grazing fees... "it's terrible, terrible, he must be a freeloader" – it's only rhetoric. I'll tell you why: You don't pay rent when you own your home! We own those rights! Not the land, I know we don't

own the land, but access. You and others have rights on that land. We own water and grazing rights.

We don't pay rent for something we own.

The BLM was formed in 1960. Our rights were established in 1877, long before BLM. The original states own 100% of their land and all states were to come in on equal footing. The crux of the issue is: Are we a state or not? They say grazing is a privilege they can revoke and charge fees. If it is only a matter of money it is no problem. In fact, Mr. Whipple," referring to his father's – Cliven Bundy – lawyer, "showed a copy of a check made out to Clark County. If the whole purpose is to show we owe a fee, then we'll pay to the proper owner of the land. That was not the only check written to Clark County, we sent several. Also, in Clark County there were 53 ranchers who owned rights. There is only a single one still out on the range. My father, Cliven Bundy.

The BLM is not gaining revenue; it's not important to them. My father could see they were there to manage him out of business. It's not about grazing fees. In the BLM office there were signs that read: No More Moo by '92 and Cattle Free by '93! If it were only about the grazing fees, the fees would have been under \$100,000 over 25 years. It is rumored – it may not be seen in evidence – but it is rumored that they spent \$6 million on the operation. Who spends that and court costs rumored to be over \$100 million to collect \$100,000?

What is this about? The court orders! They say my father had an opportunity in the courts. The court wouldn't consider states rights. They have forgotten they are servants of the people. 'We the People' are the sovereign and, ultimately, 'We the People' are the government formed to meet needs that are better met by a group than by individuals. We are not slaves; we need to remember that. I think that's forgotten. The definition of freedom is lost in America. When we have to have a license or ask permission to do everything, we are subjects to a ruler.

Back to the charges... They claimed I went to Richfield, Utah, and that the sheriff had to be called because we were causing such a ruckus – evidence will show otherwise. We boycott to influence to change ways; we protest to cause a change. These are first amendment rights! We that should be called the prohibition of government. We have freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of religion, freedom of assembly. We can petition for a redress of grievances: rights we don't want the government to mess with.

A redress is to find an answer, find a solution – one way to protest. The BLM

put up first amendment zones – not much bigger than this courtroom and we called them “pigpens” – and by creating that area, they were denying our right everywhere else. That’s what they used to arrest my brother; he was outside the pigpens. The First Amendment has been protected over and over again in our history. There’s lots of media here in the gallery today; they wouldn’t be happy to have their right to free speech taken. The First Amendment was put in the Supreme Law of the land, the Constitution – they shall make no law restricting these things. As you saw in the video yesterday, my brother was not impeding, was not blocking, he was on a state road, on its right of way, simply to take pictures with his iPad of them stealing our cattle. The BLM attacked him, threw him to the ground, rubbed his face in the ground.

The American public saw this and came not to impede or do harm. They came because they felt the Spirit of the Lord, spirit of freedom and felt “we the people are not going to put up with that behavior.” It was not pointed out there were snipers on the hill. I witnessed that through binoculars and the evidence will show this.”

Ryan paused for several seconds and flipped back through his notes. Then continued.

“Back to Richfield, Utah... Evidence and witness testimony will show there was not a ruckus there that disrupted or shut down that auction. I called the sheriff – that’s the pattern – the local law enforcement and state brand inspectors in Nevada, Arizona and Utah and I had contact with the highway patrol, county commissioners in several counties and state officials – not all face to face, but some through phone calls. Is this what a criminal does? No. We were there protecting life, liberty, property.

You saw the video of the officer hip chucking my Aunt Margaret, 50 plus years and just finished with cancer treatments, the mother of 11 children. They call these BLM guys law enforcement, but they are just BLM employees. All authority comes from ‘We the People;’ we delegate authority to the county sheriff, who we elect, and he hires deputies. And we then have a sheriff’s department to protect our life, our liberty, our property. Choosing for yourself is freedom and we have no right to impede or harm others. That’s God’s law. Man-made law is to follow that. Man is supposed to be free, not controlled, serfs, or slaves. Government is to be our servant. The government went in and shut down 600,000 acres.

Not one of us ever went into their enclosed area and never impeded them. Even my brother driving into the dump truck; isn’t that impediment? The court order did not allow destruction of water infrastructure. What was

a dump truck doing out there? Since that was beyond the scope of the supposed court order, we had a right to know. They could have stopped and answered our questions. But no, they set out attack dogs and Tasers and threw Aunt Margaret to the ground.

Every incident they are charging us with happened on property that belonged to the State of Nevada. Even if BLM had authority to close public land, they have no authority to close State of Nevada public land. The fence was on the State of Nevada land. Except by invitation, you will not see one of us breach that fence or impede the gather of cattle. We did not violate the court order. Dave (Ryan's Brother) went over the fence by the invitation of BLM officers. And then the sheriff took over and asked for our help to take down the fence. Then the cowboys, led by sheriff's squad cars, went to release the cattle. The sheriff honored his oath and did his job.

He should have done it sooner.

I love my family. I love them. I love this land. I love freedom. I am from the State of Nevada. I'm a true Nevadan. I mentioned before that Nevada became a state on October 31st and we always got out of school on that day. I always thought we got out because it was my birthday. I'm a true Nevadan. I believe you are, too, and love freedom as much as I do.

Our freedom's not being lost overseas; it's lost right here at home in our backyards, our front yards. Until we are willing to "do whatever it takes," liberty will be – is being – lost.

We are not anti-government! Government has its proper place and duties to perform. I want government to do its job. Nothing more. Nothing less. When government does more or less than its job, it becomes the criminal. When government damages our rights, it becomes the criminal. When someone harms or damages another's life, liberty or property that is the definition of a criminal. Extortion, violence, pointing guns – everything we are charged with, they were doing and thousands of people came running – the world knew about this – China, Ireland (they sent us a flag), New Zealand and other countries. Why? Because America stood for freedom and has for years and the world is interested in seeing how America will deal with its freedom. The world wants to know. The American people said, 'Yes, we will stand for freedom. Government, you've gone too far and we will put a stop to it.'

The courts have a place. It is said that 'We the People' are the fourth branch of government. I say we are the first. The legislature to make laws, the executive to execute laws and the judicial to judge. All three branches are to

protect your rights, our rights, freedom, liberty.

Government does not have the authority in and of itself – man creates government to fulfill and protect our rights. ‘We the People’ give government the authority through the Constitution. The Tenth Amendment insures state’s rights.

Evidence will show my father and my brothers are innocent men. We need you to put on that paper that we are not guilty. You are the twelve to represent us: peers, equals, people ... We the People.

Guns ... lots of guns ... scary ... camo ... freedom of speech ... also, the right to bear arms, the Second Amendment ... a militia was necessary. What is a militia? It is defined in the law. U.S. Code defines militia: “all able-bodied men 17-45 years of age”. How many of you are a member of the militia? State of Nevada extended that and includes men up to the age of 64. How many of you now are a member of the Nevada militia? There is the organized militia, the National Guard and the unorganized militia – everyone else.

Why did the Founding Fathers include the Second Amendment? Was it for duck hunting? No ... no! Militia is mentioned six times in the Constitution. Such a small document and few things are mentioned more than the militia; the central government of this union and yet media or whoever wants to put a bad face on militia.

Why did militia come to Bundy Ranch? To peacefully assemble, redress of grievances. No one was harmed except Davey, Ammon and Margaret. You will not see in evidence that we ever harmed anyone! They attack and we turned the other cheek. We were peaceful. Insistent? Yes! And, yes, demanding. These men, these people did not come to seek an opportunity to point guns at government. Hundreds, even thousands of people we didn’t know. That’s exemplary. These people came to do good: to protect me; to save my life. I had a sniper pointing at me, 200 armed men surrounding my home, my family. Ryan Payne has been portrayed as a bad man. Evidence will show otherwise. He saved my life. He saved my life. Others came. I didn’t even meet most of them until I was in jail with them. May have seen them in passing, but I didn’t know them until jail. I honor and thank them now! I thank all who came. We only have rights we are willing to fight for.

You’ll see evidence that I was nearly always with the sheriff or a deputy – always in communication with them – I was side-by-side with (Sheriff) Lombardo.

*Thank you for coming, for being here. I will still “do whatever it takes.”
This is not a threat; it is a statement of determination.*

I love my freedom. Listen to the still small voice to discern between truth and error. The indictment and grand jury testimony is full of lies. Truth has been blocked in previous trials. Listen closely – we will try to get you the truth. The truth will set me free and I’m counting on you to help me see that.

*I invite you to our ranch.
I recognize your right to use the land.
We want you to come and enjoy it.*

I thank you for this time. Please find me not guilty and these other men not guilty. Stand up for freedom.

Thank you.”



Ryan folded his papers back neatly, smiled to the jury and walked quietly back to his seat in the courtroom. The courtroom remained silent and the halls of justice became hallowed halls, all due to the words of a simple rancher’s son.

***Ryan Bundy’s opening statement in the criminal trial of his brother Ammon, his father Cliven, Ryan Payne and himself, Las Vegas, Nevada, 15 November 2017.
(Edited lightly for readability.)***



Chapter 1

– THE AMBUSH – *Cliven Bundy's Arrest*

It was a cool, clear winter day on the ranch. Cliven Bundy, farmer, rancher, (and, some would say – rabble-rouser) was bouncing down the dusty ranch road in his ol' ranch pickup.

As his cell phone rang, Cliven wrestled to pull it from his front shirt pocket, the seatbelt pinning it in his pocket as it crossed over his chest. All the while he was thinking to himself that driving, bouncing, and answering the phone was not so easy anymore for a man sixty-nine years old. Persevering through the frustration of the struggle in the lurching vehicle, he finally got the phone to his ear. The words that came through its speaker were nothing any father would ever want to hear.

“Cliven, Ryan has been shot.” There’s a long pause. “He’s dead.”

Not quite grasping what he had just heard, Cliven asked the only thing he could, “What happened?”

The voice on the other end told a tale that was like something out of a blockbuster movie. Two of his boys – and others – had taken over the Harney County Resource Center in Oregon to focus attention on the plight of two local-area ranchers who had been abused by the government. Ammon and Ryan Bundy, along with a group of others including LaVoy Finicum, Shawna Cox, Ryan Payne, and several others, decided to occupy the Center some 35 miles outside of the little town of Burns, Oregon – hoping to get both the media and the public’s attention to the governmental abuses of ranchers in the west.

During the “Take Over,” as the media portrayed it, Ryan and Ammon often traveled to surrounding counties to speak at various events and to local officials about this subject.



What had happened?

On the afternoon of January 26, 2016, a two-vehicle caravan departed the Harney County Resource Center and passed through the nearby

mountain range on the road to John Day, Oregon. They were headed out to meet with the local Sheriff, Glenn Palmer, and a group of about 400 citizens to speak with them about the purpose of the occupation at the resource center.

The occupants of the lead truck were Robert “LaVoy” Finicum, accompanied by Ryan Bundy, Shawna Cox, and Ryan Payne. A young woman who had just turned 18 years-old the day before, singer, Victoria Sharp, at the last minute decided to come along in LaVoy’s truck. She caught a ride with LaVoy because there was an extra seat, her mom and the remainder of her family’s music group having gone on ahead. The Sharp Family Singers had joined the others at the Resource Center only the day before.

As Ryan Bundy held the door for Victoria to climb into the back seat of the four-door pick-up, he noticed a plane circling above his head. He didn’t give it much thought as it or some other plane had been overhead day and night since they all had moved into the Resource Center. He glanced back at the vehicle behind them; there was something not right in Ryan’s spirit about the driver. He paused and wondered, then chose to ignore his intuition.

Mark McConnell drove the second vehicle, a Jeep with passengers Ammon Bundy and Bryan “Buddha” Cavalier. To the public, Mark portrayed himself as Ammon’s security guard. It would turn out later that Mark was an FBI confidential informant and he had already notified his FBI handler of their route and departure time.

This FBI para-military unit’s task was to preclude another ‘Bundy ranch incident’ from happening, an incident that, two-years prior, that had made world news, deeply humiliating the Federal Government. Still stinging from the last time, this time the FBI brought in this highly trained team of operators, determined that the embarrassment from two years ago would not be repeated. They had planned to ‘cut the head off’ the leadership of this unfolding Harney County Resource Center “Take Over” – Ryan and Ammon Bundy.

Ryan and Ammon were unaware of the FBI’s plan. In fact, they were on relatively friendly terms with the FBI agents there, regularly speaking to them during the preceding weeks. As recently as the night before, Ammon had asked if the FBI leadership wanted to come

with them to see what they were doing at their various speaking engagements.

No one had any idea whatsoever what was about to happen ... except, of course, the FBI.

As the truck traveled up the winding mountain road, Ryan Bundy decided he would call ahead to advise Sheriff Palmer of their estimated time of arrival. As he lifted his cell phone to his ear ... nothing. He was distracted for a moment as he looked out the left passenger window and noticed the same plane was paralleling them, miles from the Resource Center and a bit lower this time.

“Darn, I’m out of range,” he uttered in frustration.

Simultaneously, LaVoy remarked, “We have company!”

As they passed an intersecting dirt road, he’d noticed a dozen black vans and trucks in a line with blacked-out windows, the only distinguishable item being the flashing red and blue lights glaring out the front grill of the engine compartment as they pulled out behind the Jeep behind LaVoy’s truck.

In the Jeep, in a tone much too calm for the situation at hand, Mark added, “What should we do?”

“Pull over,” Ammon simply replied.

While they talked, LaVoy’s truck slowed down and stopped just in front of them in the middle of the road about 100 yards ahead of the Jeep.

As soon as LaVoy’s pickup stopped, Ryan Payne put both his hands out its front passenger window showing them he had no weapon. Immediately they heard a CRACK from behind them shattering the right passenger mirror. Ryan Payne jerked his hands back inside, realizing from his military experience that he was being shot at.

LaVoy wasn’t having any of it. He leaned his head out the driver’s window and peered back at the ominous-looking black vehicles behind them. He began shouting at them.

“Shoot me, you shoot me. I’m going to meet the Sheriff; the Sheriff is waiting for us. So, you do as you damn well please; but, I’m not going anywhere. Here I am.”

“Right there,” pointing directly at the cowboy hat he was wearing. Continuing, he yelled, “Right there – put a bullet through it.”

“You understand? I’m gonna go meet the Sheriff. You back down or you kill me now.”

Then again, he motioned to his head, “Go ahead, put the bullet through me. I don’t care.”

“I’m gonna go meet the sheriff. You do as you damn well please,” LaVoy hollered out again.

From a distance, a voice from behind them again shouted the command to exit their vehicle.

“What for?” Shawna questioned, somewhat indignant.

“Well I’m gonna ask them if they wanna get out,” LaVoy yells back at the officers.

“What for? Why are we getting out?” Shawna frantically asked again, still not seeming to fully understand the gravity of the situation.

LaVoy turned his head back to the remaining passengers, “You want out?”

“What for?” Shawna exclaimed in frustration. “Why are we getting out?”

“Who are you?!” Ryan Bundy bellowed out the left side passenger window. “Yeah, who are you? Who are you? Who are you?!”

“Oregon State Police,” was shouted back.

Well, now they knew.

“Okay, well I’m goin’ over to meet the Sheriff in John Day,” LaVoy

snapped loudly in response. “You come along with us and you talk with us over there.”

Again, the command to exit the vehicle was voiced from one of the two vehicles leading that unmarked dirty dozen now positioned on the road behind them.

Carefully, Ryan Payne opened the door to exit the truck with his hands up and started walking to the rear. Shawna looked out the rear window as Payne was arrested, “Is Ryan okay?” she mutters.

“You can go ahead and shoot me. Put the laser right there, put the bullet through the head. Okay boys? This is gonna get real. You want my blood on your hands? Get it done because we got people to see and places to go,” LaVoy reiterated his position. “You’re wasting oxygen, son. I’m goin’ into Grant County to see the Sheriff.”

Each time LaVoy or Ryan Bundy stuck their head out of the truck to communicate, a red dot from a laser-targeting weapon had appeared on their forehead.

Then Shawna proposed, “Well, if we duck and you drive what are they gonna do? Try to knock us out?”

There ensued a flurry of discussion between the occupants, and then LaVoy leaned out the window again.

“Boys! You better realize, we got people on the way. You want a blood bath, it’s gonna be on your hands. You got we’re gonna go see the Sheriff? Better understand how this things gonna end. Gonna be laying down here on the ground with my blood on the street or I’m gonna go see the Sheriff.” LaVoy was bluffing.

Now frantic, Shawna tried to dial some numbers on her cell phone to get some help. “They know it, there’s no service here,” she mumbled to no avail.

“We should never have stopped. We should never have stopped.” Ryan stressed to LaVoy.

“I’m gonna keep goin’.” LaVoy avowed.

Shawna glanced at Victoria. “Then we’re gonna have to duck, you know what I’m saying? Because of Ryan. We need to get Ryan back.” “Okay. You ready?” Looking back over his right shoulder LaVoy cried out, “They gotta stop, you can’t get around it. I’m gonna go. You guys ready?”

“Okay get... get down.” Ryan snapped at the two women.

Ryan was concerned about his brother and the other vehicle. “But what about Ammon and those guys?”

“They can’t, we can’t get around them. I’m gonna go get help.” LaVoy said, now fired up.

“Okay!” Ryan agreed.

“Okay. Stay down, stay down, stay down!” screamed Shawna.

LaVoy jammed the truck into gear and it lurched forward, speeding off. The black vehicles didn’t follow ... at first. Instead, they opened fire, hitting the fleeing truck three or four times.

But the attempted getaway only lasted for a few seconds.

Just ahead, around a long bend in the highway, a roadblock awaited with a dozen or more of the FBI’s Hostage Rescue Team (HRT) members and the Oregon State Police. Their vehicles and barricade materials blockaded the road surface, the armed HRT and State Police positioned behind and among them, forming an ambush of sorts.

Viewed from the approach, across the full width of the roadway and its shoulder to the right, stood the barricades and more black vehicles, all of which were blocking the road and its right shoulder. But this deployment left open the narrow, soft shoulder between a large snow bank on the road’s left embankment and the last roadblocking vehicle on the roadway surface – a space barely wide enough for a vehicle to pass through; but, a thin path of escape.

Well to the left of that snow bank, and hidden in the tree line, were armed men in tactical dress. Shooting gun supports were set up by cutting the branches off the trees, leaving just four or five inches upon which to brace their rifles.

The trap was set. Its victims lured in. The dozen unmarked, black and windows-blacked-out vehicles revving in behind, slamming that door shut behind them.

LaVoy, however, pointed his truck at that narrow, soft shoulder on the left, figuring that he could just barely fit the truck in between the barricade and the snow bank.

“Hang on!” LaVoy shouted.

Nearly simultaneously Ryan barked, “Hey!” as he was startled by a muzzle flash from around the roadblock. Two bullets pierced the cab of the truck at the window and roof line. Others were hitting the front grill of the truck. The subsequent shots missed.

Shawna cried out, “Okay, they’re shooting.”

Again, LaVoy shouted, “Hang on!” as he steered the truck for the opening at the embankment, nearly missing an FBI agent momentarily flushed from his cover position.

Startled by LaVoy’s truck’s abrupt leap toward the barricade truck that covered his position, an agent who had been behind the barricade-truck next to the narrow shoulder had sprinted toward the snowbank, away from his cover that he feared would have soon be hit and crush him – but actually into the real path of the LaVoy’s truck. LaVoy jerked the steering wheel to the left, just missing him. But instantly, his truck was buried in the snowbank, tilting to the right in response to its snap-left turn, the wheels spinning helplessly in the snow.

Bullets riddled the truck compartment. Everyone but LaVoy had dropped to their knees on the floorboards.

As the truck careened to a stop, LaVoy tried to push the driver’s side door open; but the truck was buried in snow and leaning to the right. The door was heavy. It took a few seconds; but he finally jumped out the driver’s door – the truck still under fire

“Go ahead and shoot me!” he yelled as he walked slowly, with his hands raised, to the middle of the snow-covered embankment between the truck and the tree line. “Go ahead and shoot me,” he yelled again.

“Get on the ground!” one of the State Police commanded.

“Go ahead and shoot me,” shouted back LaVoy, continuing to move away from the truck, trying to draw the fire from the truck and onto himself.

“Get on the ground!” the command repeated.

“Stay down, stay down,” Shawna screamed.

LaVoy’s idea had worked. The attention was now focused on LaVoy and the shooting into the truck subsided.

Shawna looked over to see that Ryan was kneeling on the floorboard next to her, trying to see out the window at what was going on outside. She begged him to stay down, and noticed a little blood oozing through his shirt.

“Go ahead and shoot me. Shoot me! You’re gonna have to shoot me,” LaVoy shouted one more time. And they did, rapid gunfire ensuing from many directions ... and stopped.

“Damn it! Are they shooting him? Did they shoot him?” screamed Shawna. “You a**holes!”

“Oh my God!” cried Victoria, as she began to weep.

The gunshot volley’s echoing report finally ceased.

“I think he’s out,” said Ryan.

“Is he dead?!” asked Victoria, the young girl now resolute.

Another command for the truck’s occupants to exit the vehicle was shouted.

“Don’t get out!” said Shawna with the first hint of fear in her voice.

“Let me out!” Ryan said. Then, looking at Victoria, he asked, “Are you hit?”

“No!” cried Victoria.

“No, hold on, hold on, don’t do it. They’re shooting. Don’t do anything. Where the hell is LaVoy?” Shawna screamed, now totally overcome by fear.

Ryan attempted to peer over the window frame. “I can’t see.” Removing his cowboy hat, like in old westerns, he spied over the window frame, he muttered, “I think they just killed LaVoy.”

Looking at the right-side door, a shocked Shawna said, “I think they did enough shooting on this door.” She tried to assess their situation, staring at all the bullet holes throughout the cab of the truck.

“I know. I got hit too.” Ryan muttered.

Victoria asked, “Did they tell us to get out of the car?”

“No, I can’t hear anything. I don’t dare get out of the car,” replied Shawna.

Then all hell broke loose once again. This time there were explosions with more bullets ripping through the truck.

“Oh sh*t! Quit shooting my windows!” Shawna yelled over the confusion.

“Why are they shooting us?” Victoria screamed.

“They’re hitting the windows, I don’t know. They’re trying to break out windows!” Shawna shouted through the noise.

Victoria cried out, “God keep us safe please.”

“Please, please protect us God,” Shawna agreed in the melee. “Please protect us. Please protect us. Please protect us. We need help. We need help. We need help.” Shawna cried, as more and more explosions jolted the truck.

It became eerily quiet again.

“Did they kill him? They killed him,” cried Victoria.

“I can’t see, but I can see a laser coming in,” replied Shawna.

“They kill ... Oh, my God, they killed him!” cried Victoria, as she came to grips with what was happening

“Ryan, are you okay?” Shawna asked, looking at her friend.

“Yeah, I’m okay.” as he gingerly rubbed his arm, blood soaking through his shirt.

“I can see lasers goin’ back and forth,” Shawna said, still lying flat on the backseat of LaVoy’s truck.

With much concern, Victoria asked, “Where did you get hit?”

Not wanting to worry Victoria, Ryan replied, “I’m okay.”

“We got lasers.... I can see the laser. If you see a laser, keep it away from...” cried Shawna, referring to the many red laser dots darting throughout the cab of the truck, searching for a target.

Victoria shrieked as if seeing a snake. “There’s a laser, don’t let it get near me!”

Shawna, wanting it to end, cried, “Stop. I don’t dare get out ‘cause they’ll shoot me!”

Ryan replied in agreement, “I know. I don’t like being hunkered down here either.”

“Me either, but I don’t know what to do ‘cause...” as her voice trailed off, Shawna tried to decide what to do.

“I don’t know either,” Ryan replied.

“They keep shooting lasers at us,” a frustrated Shawna cried.

“Too many stinking lights, think things are all dandy and fine, we got too damn many lights,” Ryan replied, also frustrated.

“Damn, why are they keep shooting?” Shanna rambled on.

“They’re trying to take my head off is what they’re trying to do,” Ryan declared.

“I know but all of us?” Shanna questioned loudly.

Then Shawna screamed at the top of her voice, “Stop! Stop! Stop!”

Victoria joined in, “Please!”

Shawna yelled again, “Stop!”

“Ple...-!” shouted Victoria, then starts crying again.

“That’s ridiculous. You guys are stupid. They gonna kill all of us?” Shawna muttered angrily at the overwhelming pressure watching the lasers searching over her head.

BOOM

Then a second ... **BOOM**

BOOM, BOOM, BOOM, BOOM, BOOM, BOOM ... sounded right outside the passenger side of the truck.

Some struck the right-side passenger window (but not breaking it); still more found their way into the front compartment onto the floor.

The explosion was deafening, the flash extinguished as the three were pinned to the floorboard of the truck. Their ears were ringing, painful, their minds confused.

Ryan yelled, “Those are gas rounds.”

“I can’t breathe. You okay?” Shawna asked Victoria.

“God... God, if you...” Victoria was praying again.

“Okay, they’re shooting at us, again!” Ryan exclaimed as the bullets flew through the cab of the truck again.

“They got lasers still on us,” Shawna shouted through the intense noises again. “They got lasers still on us. LaVoy got out; I think they’ve killed LaVoy. They just shot gas rounds into the car. We’re hunkered down in here trying not to get shot.” She tried to use all her

reasoning to decide what to do.

Then again, BOOM, BOOM, BOOM, BOOM, BOOM, BOOM, BOOM, BOOM.

“They’re shooting more gas rounds, the gas is getting pretty thick in here,” Ryan said.

It became eerily quiet again ... Everyone remained still.

A small breeze miraculously began to blow through the open driver’s door and the cab quickly cleared of gas.

“Okay, the gas is dissipating,” Ryan murmured.

“How do you speak to people who ambushed us on the way to see a sheriff and now they’re shooting into our vehicle and we’re hunkered down. We don’t even have phone service at this location to call for help,” Ryan was now talking aloud to himself about the situation.

Then came a command from the outside: “Come out of the left side door!”

They had had enough. They were trapped and they knew it.

Ryan climbed slowly out of the truck with hands raised. There, lifelessly lying in the snow, was LaVoy’s body, face up toward the sky. “LaVoy’s dead,” Ryan said back to the two women still in the truck.

“Sh*t. Okay,” Shawna replied, now knowing the finality of the situation.

Victoria was weeping again. “He’s dead. LaVoy’s dead.”

After the first part – and for the rest of the ambush – LaVoy’s body had lain lifeless in the snow as the flash-bang and gas grenades were launched into and around the truck to disorient its three remaining occupants.

With obvious caution, another vehicle approached this scene of utter chaos from behind the roadblock. An innocent bystander, a citizen traveler, was just passing through. They stopped a few hundred yards

behind the barricade, exited their vehicle, and began to take pictures.

With their arrival, the assault ended and the three were allowed to surrender. This decision probably saved the rest of their lives.



Aftermath

Each passenger emerged without further incident and all were arrested from both vehicles and taken to a nearby rest stop.

Only one .223 bullet had found its mark. Of the nearly 100 rounds that law enforcement fired into the truck that day, this lone bullet had hit Ryan in his arm.

Ryan Bundy was taken to a nearby medical clinic to have his bullet wound checked out.

For hours Cliven and his wife, Carol, were distraught, not able to get any details of the shooting. It wasn't until that night word came that Ryan Bundy was only injured and still alive.

Later that evening, Victoria Sharpe and Mark McConnell were released. Sharpe was determined to be just an innocent bystander in the incident. McConnell, though the only occupant of the two vehicles that was openly carrying a firearm, was released and never charged.

Once Ryan Bundy was medically cleared, he was seated in a squad car. Separated from each other, Shawna Cox, Ryan Payne, Ammon Bundy, and Bryan Cavalier were also placed in individual squad cars. Then via a very high-speed motorcade – reaching 100 miles per hour – they were all rushed to the Multnomah County Jail in Portland, Oregon, five hours away ... the low-altitude plane still following overhead.

Finally, the news came to his parents that Ryan was alive. But Ryan and Ammon were under arrest. And LaVoy was dead. The two women miraculously escaped without harm.

At the hospital, Ryan refused to let the doctors remove the bullet. He reasoned that if it went into evidence it would be “lost”, and the proof of what happened that day would be lost as well.

It appeared that Ryan's intuition may have been accurate.

In the ensuing investigation into LaVoy's death, one HRT officer was

accused and indicted for lying to investigators, bullet casings came up missing, and the following summer some unidentified governmental agency went to the site of LaVoy's death and set fire to the area burning up any evidence that the melting snow might have revealed.

Ryan Bundy still carries the bullet fragment in his arm to this day.¹



Just Visitin'

Fifteen days after Ryan was shot, Cliven decided to head to Portland, Oregon, to visit his boys in the Federal lockup there. He had also been invited by Nevada State Assemblywoman Michele Fiore to speak to the Coalition of Western States about the land issues he had been fighting for the last twenty years. On the 80-mile drive into Las Vegas from their ranch, Cliven planned to stop at the Mormon Temple to pray, then meet Michele at the airport.

Cliven arrived at the McCarran International Airport only to find his seat was not available due to the fact he was on the Do Not Fly list. Cliven thought that odd, since in the last twenty months he had flown almost two dozen times for various speaking engagements. But now he was forbidden to fly? The gate agent told him to be patient and they would get the error cleared up. Michele boarded their flight and went on ahead. Four hours later, he was allowed to board another flight to Portland, the mix-up presumably resolved. The short 1.5-hour flight went quickly; Cliven had become accustomed to his new-found travel schedule, so he remained relaxed, only anxious about the opportunity to see his boys and to be sure they were okay.

As the plane touched down and began to taxi off the runway, he noticed out the window that the plane didn't seem to be heading towards the terminal, instead stopping well away from the jet bridge.

Coming to a stop, the plane was suddenly surrounded by black SUVs and armed men impeccably dressed in black were exiting the vehicles. The front passenger door of the plane opened and four men walked briskly down the aisle. Cliven thought to himself, "What's all the commotion about?" As two of the men passed him the second two stopped right in front of him. Then almost instantly, Cliven realized the first two had doubled back and were right immediately behind him. Effectively, they surrounded him the best they could in the cramped space of a commercial jetliner.

¹ http://www.oregonlive.com/oregon-standoff/2017/06/fbi_agent_indicted_accused_of.html

“Cliven Bundy?” the man directly in front of him said, looking him right in the eye. “FBI. We have a Federal warrant for your arrest. Please stand up.”

Some 40 FBI agents had come for Cliven Bundy, at the same moment FBI agents all over the western United States and in New Hampshire were moving on 15 other men in a similar fashion.

It turned out that the FBI had put Cliven on the Do Not Fly list temporarily, so they could prepare in Portland for his arrival. They loaded him up into the awaiting motorcade of vehicles, motorcycle cops, and helicopter escorts. Cliven was stunned at the manpower and resources spent in arresting and transporting him to the Multnomah County Jail; every other transport he experienced since has been with the same intensity.

“It’s as if they were transporting the President himself,” he has said.

With that swift action by the FBI, Cliven Bundy was swept into the Federal Justice System.

His future and very life hung in the balance.





LOCK-UP

Hello. I am Michael Stickler, Inmate 47483-048. Mike, to most.

This past summer, I spent about two months with Cliven Bundy in the Southern Nevada Detention Center in Pahrump, Nevada. As we formed a deep and lasting relationship, we talked about his story – a story that has not been told in any other medium. This book chronicles our discussion – and his story.

Before I begin with what he told me, let me tell you what it was like living there – for me, for Cliven, for the other 18 “co-conspirators” (as the judge for their trial had so prejudicially characterized them), and for the other detainees incarcerated there.

It was late in the day, April 20, 2017, when I finally entered what was to be my home for the next two months – the G2 Unit of the Southern Nevada Detention Center In Pahrump, Nevada.

Pahrump is a small dusty rural town located in Nye County, a county half the size of the state of Maryland. It is just west over the Spring Mountains – about an hour and a half ride from the Lloyd D. George U.S. Federal Courthouse, in Las Vegas.

I had arrived at the Center much earlier in the day, and was treated to a remarkably arcane intake procedure that is a hallmark of America’s modern Incarceration system. This was a modern facility built around a core of inefficiency that was composed of hours of waiting, punctuated by moments furious activity. We were all brought in and unshackled (hands and feet), showered, interviewed, fingerprinted, photographed, and of course, strip-searched – a dehumanizing process in which the examining correctional officer looks in every crack and crevice of your body before giving you your new outfit and kit.

My tenure in other parts of ‘the system’ has enabled me to see all kinds of outfits in all kinds of prisoner outfits and colors ... the worst being the black and white striped jumpsuits that some institutions perversely prefer for their extra humiliation value. Here, my new attire was a simple, royal blue uniform, the pants and shirt being similar to the scrubs you see in the medical field, oddly enough. There were also Crocks, those rubberized shoe-sandals with a comfortable foot

bed (unlike the color choices preferred on the outside, these Crocks were bright-orange), and socks (a fashion-match to the Crocks, these were also bright-orange). I also received a kit – a mesh laundry bag containing extra clothes – two pair of boxers, three more pairs of those bright-orange socks, and two more uniform sets – plus a towel, a blanket, a bar of soap, a weapon-proof toothbrush (a short little thing made of soft plastic so you can't heat and form it into a weapon), and a miniature tube of toothpaste.

One of the niceties is that each detainee is also given an inexpensive radio to tune-in to the local broadcast stations. Used on an individual basis, these do help control the high volume of audio noise, which is a constant nuisance, all with other annoyances and distractions they can become overwhelming at times.

The G2 Unit where I was housed is a large open room – like warehouse space, really – maybe 75' x 75', with cream-colored cinder block walls, no windows, a plain, polished concrete floor, and a 30' high ceiling held up by bare steel beam trusses stretching from wall to wall. The heating, ventilation, and air conditioning system worked way too well, something you couldn't help but instantly notice, as the temperature was a good 40 degrees cooler than Southern Nevada's sunny-but-mild, spring outdoors. That explained why I saw that virtually every single one of the ninety-four men in the unit were wearing their tan windbreakers indoors in – an attempt to stave off the arctic blast of the air conditioners.

It was an open dorm, rather than the individual-room, cell-block style I'd been expecting. Four rows of metal bunk beds occupied two thirds of the unit's space. The bunks were two and half foot-wide steel planks, supported by a steel framework that was firmly bolted to the floor. There was no ladder to climb to the top bunk; but at least, they were furnished with a 4" thick plastic mattress which actually hung over its frame at least 6" on each side, making me think someone had forgotten to measure the frames before ordering them. They appeared to be fairly new.

Along one entire wall was a row of showers, sinks, and toilets. I was relieved (please pardon the pun) to see that the toilets and showers had privacy screens, built and sufficient to shield your private parts from every eye that came in and out of the unit, whether male or female. This is not the case in all institutions. Some are completely devoid of

such screens or privacy.

On the opposite side of the unit was the ‘day room’ area, consisting of 21 metal tables (again, bolted to the floor) with four stools affixed to each table. The tables were for dining, cards, writing, or whatever the detainees used them for during the day. Three televisions (all flat screens) were mounted on the wall above the day room – one TV for each of the major races in the unit. One was for the ‘Paisas’ (literally - those from a region in the northwest of Colombia, including the part of the Andes in Colombia; though, when used to refer to Mexicans from areas like northern Mexico this term is derogatory, like calling them ‘indigenous,’ ‘ignorant,’ and/or ‘flamboyant.’ Here, it seemed simply to be a relatively new, prison slang term for ‘Hispanic’), another for the Blacks, and the third for Whites. The racial separation was mainly expressed in the programming on each TV.

Although prison politics and forced racial segregation were the reality of prison, it didn’t seem as prevalent in this facility as in others, thankfully. Perhaps it was because it was a low security unit in which most of the detainees were non-violent offenders who did not want to add the polarizing effects of racial tensions to the list of stresses with which they were already coping. Nevertheless, cultural differences exist and were still quite obvious, as seen on the TV screens.

Also in the day room area, there were phones and computers with email service. Detainees had to pay for their use. Rounding out the huge list of amenities were several microwave ovens for cooking or heating up drinks.

Just outside the unit was an adjoining 30’ x 30’ recreation yard from which you could view the high, earthen berm that surrounded and enclosed the facility, the upper parts of the surrounding mountain ranges, and the sky. There was one pull-up bar and one dip bar, and a 30’ chain-link fence topped with razor wire. It wasn’t much, but at least you could get outside – to fresh air, the sky, and sunshine.

This facility is operated for the U.S. Marshal Service by a private, for-profit company, CoreCivic, formerly the Corrections Corporation of America (though, still familiarly referred to as ‘CCA’). Its appointments and operations are noticeably different from the federally-operated, government employee-run prison institutions at Lompoc, California, where I’d just been. This CCA facility is

modern, clean, and has a professional (and even, respectful!) staff. I wasn't used to that, nor to being addressed as "sir," nor referred to by my last name, especially spoken in a calm, respectful manner. The amenities were obvious, too, like soap being readily available, which is important. Living in such close quarters with a constant population turn-over means exposure to infection and disease is an on-going threat.

Back in Lompoc, I remember the health nurse lecturing us on the dangers of "MRSA." Also known as methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus, MRSA is the king of modern hospital infections – a highly contagious, and antibiotic-resistant strain of bacteria that spreads on contact and causes severe skin infection. She told us how MRSA could even be life-threatening, so we all needed to practice "good hygiene" and wash our hands with hot water and soap – often. At the end of the lecture, one of the inmates yelled out, "Can we get some soap?" (The restrooms had soap dispensers, but their soap was only replenished just prior to a 'surprise' inspection). The officer in charge standing with the nurse yelled back, "Nooooo!"

Beyond soap, the CCA had forms – actual NCR forms! ... in triplicate! Forms for medical requests, forms for grievances, and forms for everything you might need, plus an actual medical staff of several doctors and nurses. This facility, by my estimation, had three times more medical staff for its 800 detainees than the Lompoc prison had for its 3000 inmates, incarcerated in its three, separate facilities. Consequently, while a doctor visit at Lompoc took months to get, here at Pahrump it only took a couple of days.

Don't get me wrong. The detention center wasn't the Ritz Carlton by any stretch of the imagination, but it was shockingly better run than any federally-operated facility I'd ever been in. However, underneath all the smooth-running operations there was still that dark, oppressive, institutional vibe, a spirit with which I was very familiar. But, what really separates Pahrump from most other prisons is, that while it is:

A 'detention center' holding men and women facing and awaiting trial criminal charges in the Federal District of Nevada – like Cliven and his 18 fellow detainees.

A 'repository for the Paises' or immigrants, held for

the Immigration Customs Enforcement Service's (ICE's) preparation for these people's deportation.

A 'holding center for transfers' of convicted persons being moved from one Bureau of Prisons (BOP) facility to another, which is how I came to be housed there.

Because of the transitory nature of its population, here we were considered 'detainees;' rather than 'inmates' or 'convicts,' which institutions with a more stable population prefer. In fact, most detainees here were awaiting trial and not yet convicted of any crime. So, in our politically correct world, instead of inmate, to describe us, somebody latched on to this new word 'detainee' – a term invented maybe only as far back as the late 1920s. (The Merriam-Webster dictionary ominously notes its meaning as, "a person held in custody, especially for political reasons.")

The nature of the population of the Pahrump Detention Center is one of constant change. The high turn-over results in few, if any, social connections between detainees. Detainees can go to sleep one night and the next morning find that some – or even most – of the men they had dinner with the night before are gone and there already is another person in the top or bottom bunk.

Most transfer moves are done at night.

When it comes time for you to transfer (typically unannounced) you'll be awakened by a duty officer in the middle of the night, told to 'roll-up' (pack your things), and then you are quickly shackled hand and foot, loaded on a bus, and sent off to 'who knows where.' You are not told your destination because the U.S. Marshals, who coordinate all transfers, are always concerned that if a detainee knows when and where they are going they may try to plan an escape. That leaves every detainee deeply insecure about their fate. It also causes families and loved-ones tremendous worry and frustration wondering where their loved-one has been taken. It's not unusual for families to wait for weeks, even months, to find out where their loved one is now detained.

When I arrived at the Southern Nevada Federal Detention Center in Pahrump I joined other detainees awaiting their fate in this

limbo. Included in this group were “The Bundy 19,” as they were affectionately dubbed by the other detainees. The Bundy 19 were the nineteen men charged by the United States Justice Department with domestic terrorism. These men were stranded here at the mercy of the federal government, with their constitutional rights to a speedy trial having long ago faded away into “the way we do things.” I found myself, by Divine Appointment, a fellow detainee with “The Bundy 19.”



Here is the way the Federal Justice System ‘does things:’

When an accused is presented before the court to hear their charges (at what is called their ‘arraignment’), the accused has no idea what evidence is held against them, so, the accused pleads “NOT GUILTY” every time. At that point, if the accused asks for a speedy trial (a trial held within 90 days of arraignment), as is every citizen’s Constitutional right, they risk proceeding blindly. They have no idea of what, if any, evidence the prosecutor may be holding against them, which leaves them little or no ability to mount any appropriate defense.

Additionally, judges seem consistently to get angry if you force the court to rearrange its ‘finely-tuned’ schedule (*i.e.*, the schedule that has been coordinated, set, and is now convenient for the judge and prosecution) just to accommodate your constitutional rights. These two realities are significant hurdles the accused would have to overcome were they to establish any type of proper defense. So, most feel (and are advised) that practically, since the prosecution does not have to share its evidence with the defense before the arraignment, they have no choice but to waive their – your – Constitutional right to a speedy trial, and once they’ve waived that right – it is gone forever, barred from ever being asserted again as the case proceeds to trial ... and then, if found guilty, to sentencing.

The consequence of waiving of this right is that the accused is now at the mercy of the system as to when they may ever see a jury (as were each of The Bundy 19 when I was there). It may take months upon months – or even years – before they get their day in court. This means that regardless of whether the accused is eventually found to be

innocent in the eyes of the law, you lose your freedom while waiting for the trial date. (Actually, the accused is never found by any court to be ‘innocent’ of anything – just ‘not guilty’ of what they were accused – whether what they were accused of ever actually happened or not – or whether whatever they were accused of was actually a crime, or not!).

The Bundy 19s’ situation is a good example of this institutional violation of their Constitutional right to a speedy trial. From the so-called ‘Standoff’ (as the Government calls it) on April 12, 2014 to their incarceration in February 2016, they remained free. For these twenty-two months, the Feds investigated them, restricted their travel, and put them on the ‘no-fly’ list; but, didn’t pick them up or arrest them. The Bundy 19 knew they were being investigated, watched, and followed, but never fled and never committed any crime.

Once they were arrested and arraigned, the prosecutor made a very impassioned plea to the judge that (in the prosecutor’s words) these accused were all a “danger to the public” and a “flight-risk.” In Cliven’s case, the U.S. Prosecutor, Assistant U.S. Attorney (AUSA) Steven Myhre, claimed that, “He (Cliven) has pledged to do so again in the future to keep federal law enforcement officers from enforcing the law against him” Though Cliven has never left the country in his life, the prosecution contended that he would, *in effect*, be a “flight risk;” because he would return to his ranch and surround himself with militia establishing a refuge that “we’ll never get him out of.”²

Myhre never produced any evidence that such a fantasy would happen. But no matter, this prosecutorial myth resulted in immediate detention with no release – either on recognizance or under bond – and an open-ended period of incarceration until trial for all of The Bundy 19.

Now, this is not the practice normally inflicted by state or federal courts on even the ‘worst of the worst’ criminals. Rather, what determines whether pretrial release from custody (bonded or not) is granted or not, depends solely on:

The judge’s pre-knowledge of the case,
and (were they not to be detained before their trial)

² Prosecutor Steven Myhre’s detention memo of February 16, 2016

The judge's assessment of the physical threat the accused may pose to the community and the threat that their flight may pose to the ability of the case to proceed.

However, this *was* the practice for everyone who came afoul of the government and was charged in this case – without exception. The prosecution asked for immediate remand to custody until trial for each of The Bundy 19 plus *none of The Bundy 19 was granted pretrial release* even under the condition of a bond. All were remanded to custody until the trial.



While I was at the Detention Center in Pahrump, I met some detainees who had been there for years. One older detainee had been in Pahrump for seven years only to become a walking zombie, with no hope, beaten down, totally discouraged ... and still awaiting his trial.

Another was 93 years old. He'd been free and at home leading up to his trial. But, when the jury found him guilty, the prosecutor moved to have him now detained until his sentencing. The judge agreed, maybe telegraphing how he would rule on the sentence, so, there he was, at 93, locked up, sitting in his wheel chair, confused as to what had happened to his life. He was a war hero, and a medical doctor for over 60 years without even one complaint, and yet, now here he was, characterized as 'a danger to society' even though he had to be reminded why he was there ... every day ... while now waiting for his sentencing hearing.

Those years – so full of uncertainty, disruption, and danger – take a terrible toll on a man.

So, why does our justice system work this way?

The reason why The Bundy 19's – and virtually everyone's – constitutional right to a speedy trial has eroded away is because detention time in lock-up, though *eventually* (albeit, uncertainly) leading to these court events (where the prosecution's accusations could actually be challenged), tends to make the accused pliable and more willing to take a deal – a plea-deal, that is – rather than fight their case out in court. That is what the Federal Government wants of its citizens (whether really guilty or not) – pliability – so the feds can maintain its prosecutors' 97% conviction rate.³

³ "United States Attorneys' Annual Statistical Report for Fiscal Year 2012" (PDF). United States Department of Justice. Retrieved 2014-10-28.

In practice, this institutional erosion of your constitutional right to a speedy trial means that nearly every accused person takes a plea-deal and pleads guilty, regardless of their intent to ‘commit’ (or lack thereof), the ‘crime’ (if, indeed, a crime was even committed), and tragically, regardless of however innocent the accused may be.

The prosecution clearly wanted to take the fight out of Cliven Bundy and The Bundy 19, just as they want to do with every other accused person, and so here they sit.



Now you have a taste of the atmosphere in which I met Cliven. I was privileged to be trusted enough by him to hear his story, here we go...



The day I first met Cliven, it was his birthday. He had turned 72 years old. By then, he had been locked up for more than fourteen (14) months.

One of the detainees excitedly pointed him out to me, “There he is, have you heard about him and his boys?”

“I have, and I’d love to meet him,” I responded.

“He’s real friendly; go talk to him,” he urged.

I decided to wait for the right time.

The next day, after reflecting on that morning’s news and after a time of prayer, I decided to break the ice with Cliven. I approached his bunk where he sat reading and said, “Mr. Bundy, I just want you to know there are thousands of folks praying for you.”

At that, Cliven’s eyes lit up, and a big ‘cowboy grin’ swept across his face.

Let me try to describe this ‘cowboy grin’ for you,



'cuz I've seen it a thousand times before, in California, Nevada, and Oregon. It's a smile that is genuine and spreads across a man's entire face, ear to ear; but, there's more. It communicates – in an intelligent, knowing, simple way – an interest that is so gracious, so concerned for *your* well-being, that it makes you feel like you are the best thing of his whole day; and it is so inviting; it welcomes you in to sit.

And that's just what Cliven did, saying, "Thank you, why don't you have a seat? Just sit right there on that bunk. It's my boy, Davey's, bunk. He's gone for a bit."

There we sat, across from one another in our silly royal blue uniforms, our bright-orange Crocs, and our bright-orange socks. Cliven had been in the G2 Unit long enough to have gotten one of the coveted, end bunks against the wall – which have more privacy. He sat there with his back against a stack of pillows, blankets, and whatever other soft, cushiony things he could find to lean on.

He sat up and adjusted his padding while sharing, "Being able to lean against the wall is nice, but it's so cold it gives a man a chill."

Around him were three or four plastic footlockers, some belonging to his son, David. Normally, a detainee only gets one footlocker; but, The Bundy 19 needed extras to accommodate the volumes of their legal paperwork, court documents, and such, to prepare for their trial. Across the length of Cliven's bunk, against the wall, are a dozen photos of his family, grandkids, and the Ranch. As he turns back to look at me with his piercing, steely gray eyes, I noticed a pocket-sized copy of the U.S. Constitution in the left breast pocket of his royal blue uniform. I glanced around the bunk and scoped out a Bible, a Book of Mormon, an almanac, and a notepad with some scribbles and hand drawings.

He said to me, "Tell me about yourself," and smiled.

I realized that he actually meant it, it was not just a conversation starter. So, I did, thinking to myself, where do I begin? I decided to start where I left off, telling him about the many people and churches and prayer groups who I knew were praying over the volatile events that transpired in the lives of The Bundy 19.

He soon interjected, "Well, I thank you, and we sure can feel all 'em

prayers ... without ‘em we couldn’t ’of made it this far.”

He took a moment to make eye contact, smiled, then said, “But tell me about *you*.”

So, I did. I told him about my cowboy and ranching experience, my attending California Polytechnic State University to study animal science and then transferring to the University of Colorado in Fort Collins to learn about artificial insemination and embryo transfer. I told him about my years of training cutting horses and even the two years I had only recently spent in a sustainable agriculture program at Lompoc. I told him about my family, grandkids, my travels, and writings. I told him about how I had gotten in trouble with the Feds, as had he and The Bundy¹⁹. I just kept going on and on.

Cliven never broke eye contact, and never stopped smiling. He was like a border collie attentively studying a flock of sheep. By the time I was done, more than an hour had passed.

We were then interrupted by the ‘call-for-count’ (every three hours the entire Pahrump detention center comes to a complete stop as the detainees all return to their bunks while the officers in charge ‘count’ every inmate to be sure none have escaped.)

And just like that, awkwardly, but matter-of-fact like, we concluded our first meeting and I walked back to my bunk on the other side of the unit. As I lay down on my bunk, I began to reflect on the past hour or so, thinking, “Why did I just tell him all that?” I know better, I’m in prison for heaven’s sake. ‘Dumping my bucket’ is not something I do. But with this guy, with Cliven, I did. There was something about him, it was like visiting with my grandpa and getting him all up-to-date with my life. Oddly enough, Cliven seemed to actually listen and care. But, I really didn’t know him well enough at that point to know just how genuine he is ... not then, anyway.

You see, in prison you meet all kinds of characters and various types of people, from a wide range of lifestyles, cultures, and countries. Most of them fall into at least one of five general categories. Except for God’s grace, they will stay as they are. Some can hurt you.

With the first two, you have the CRIMINALS and the CON ARTISTS.

These are the guys who should definitely be behind bars, because they're out to take advantage of anyone and everyone who crosses their path, in any way possible. These sociopaths may actually be innocent of the specific crime for which they are doing the time – but without a doubt, are guilty of other, maybe even more serious offenses, known to the justice system or not. I stay clear of these guys.

Then, there are the *whack-a-doos*. Mostly, they are the whacked-out conspiracy theorist that wear tin foil hats and swear the Government is out to steal their secrets and kill them, but there are others just as nuts. Clinically, some of these whack-jobs are mentally disabled, having taken too much meth, crystal, oxycodone, ... or whatever. Some were just born that way. Like the first category, these guys also get a wide berth for the same reasons, but also deserve understanding and grace, in my opinion. Nevertheless, for your own safety, you also have to discern the whack-a-doos from the others.

Then, there are the *deniers*. These are the self-deceived, self-proclaimed, 'innocent victims' – of someone else, of their circumstances, or both. They refuse to look at their own role in how they got into trouble and into prison. They have long, complex, anguishing stories that extinguish or at least, minimize, their taking any responsibility for their actions, their affiliations, their omissions, or their lifestyle. No genuine, honest accounting is visible or forthcoming. These folks are doomed to failure and a return to prison if and when they are ever released. They just don't get it, but they also share the need for a wide berth for the same reasons as above.

Lastly, there are those actually *innocent* – who fall into two camps:

Those who made some bad choices; but, *had no intent to do anything wrong*, and

Those who *actually did nothing wrong*, either because someone else committed the crime, or because no crime was ever committed.

This last realization should shock all Americans, as it did me.

We have become so sure of ourselves, so arrogant, (or have just bought into so much of what is on the TV detective shows), that we think our justice system doesn't make mistakes.

The truth of the matter is this: At least a third (33%) of the currently-estimated 2 million people incarcerated in the U.S. falls into one of these two camps of *innocent*. That is, perhaps, as many as 5-700,000 Americans who are actually innocent of the crime of which they were accused, who are held in custody, every day, in prison.⁴ What a current-day tragedy.

As I lay there waiting for ‘count-time’ to end, I was wondering into which category did detainee Cliven Bundy fit. To be honest, I was musing that he could possibly be a whack-a-doo. After all, he was taking on the Federal Government of the United States of America.

If so, he certainly was a *likeable* one.

Still, at this point, I had no real basis even to guess.



Time will tell, I thought.



⁴ www.law.umich.edu/special/exoneration/.../Exonerations_in_2014_report.pdf



How can YOU help?

Begin a letter-writing campaign, first to the President, asking for a pardon for all of the Bundy 19. Send letters to Attorney General's office and your congressional representative to cease the further prosecution of the Bundy's. A visit to their local congressional office will help show just how serious this is.

Included with your letter, send them a copy of this book. Ask them to read it.

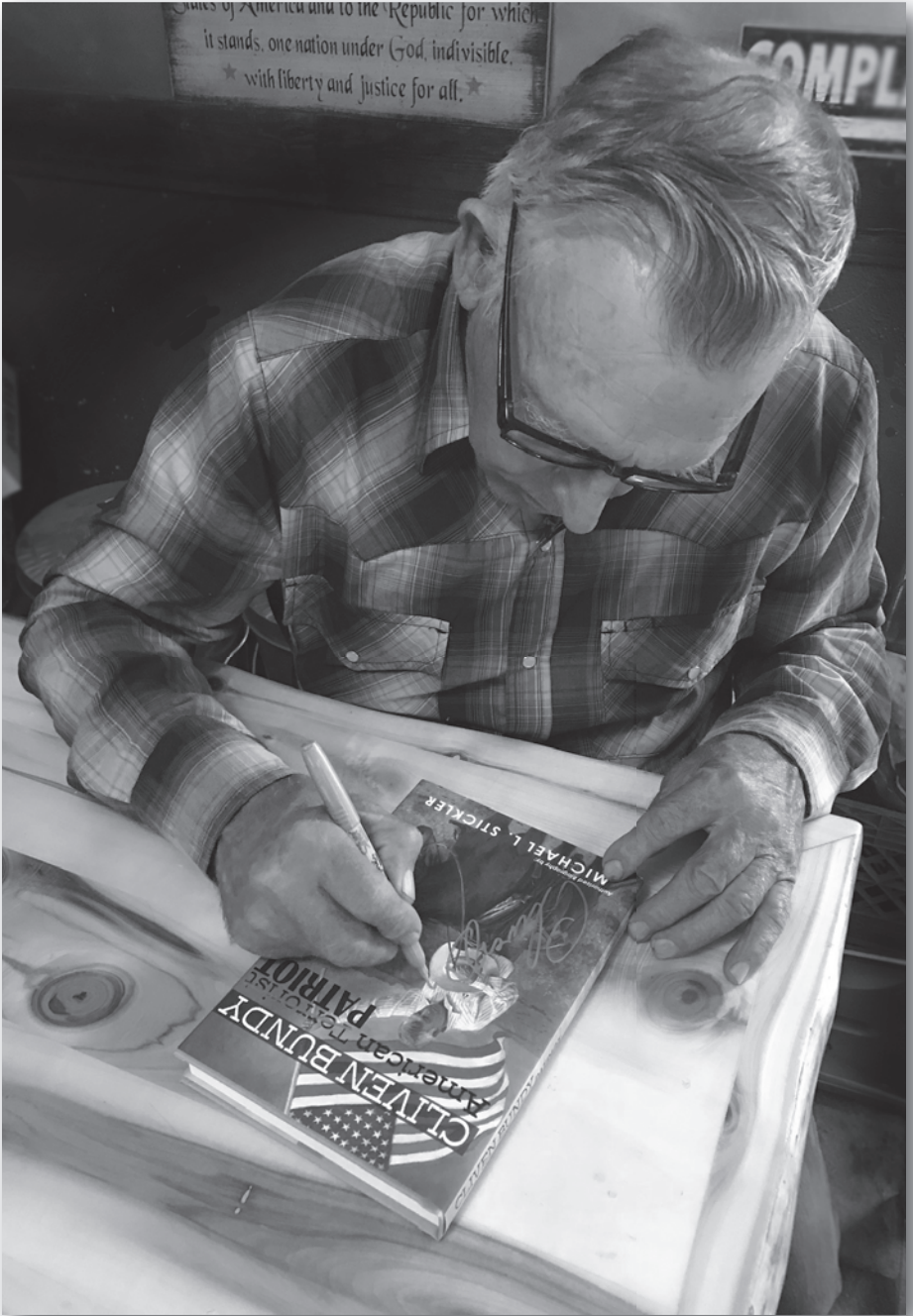
Get the word out.

You can do this by purchasing additional copies of this book and placing them in the hands of those interested. Ask them to join you in getting the word out about the abuses of our government. Get extra books for your library, local bookstores, wherever possible in order to get this book read. And the truth out there.

Invite Mike to come and speak to your group and share this story.

For further information on the above or to make your comments about this book here: ***ClivenBundy.net***





For more of the author's books, go to **MikeStickler.online**.

ABOUT THE BOOK

Cliven Bundy

Domestic Terrorist or American Patriot?

The Federal Government treats him as a domestic terrorist
The media characterizes him as a gun-toting militia-wacko.

With this book, Cliven Bundy tells his story for the first time to author **Michael Stickler** while behind the razor wire fences of Federal lockup. Stickler spent over 60 days documenting Bundy's side of the conflict that led over 200 Federal agents – **in full tactical gear** – to seize, sell, and destroy his property – acting well beyond their judicial warrant. The *Standoff* made international news, creating the rally cry “No, Hell NO!” that brought thousands of Americans from across the country to the Bundy Ranch in April 2014.

It's a story every family should read and declare their own voice in!

Bundy became the face of beleaguered ranchers suffering under the boot of Washington's war against the West.

Larry Pratt | Executive Director Emeritus | Gun Owners of America

This book is a must read for anyone wanting to understand what the BLM and the FBI is capable of when they are allowed to go unchecked. Michael Stickler has done a phenomenal job covering the events that occurred at the Bundy Ranch. He details the heavy handedness and Gestapo like tactics that the government is so prone use on those citizens they target.

Jay Redd

Son of Dr. James Redd - who died after the BLM & FBI raided his home

Cliven Bundy American Patriot is a must read for anyone concerned about the future of farming, ranching, and public lands in America. When you realize the lengths that the BLM and FBI went to frame and convict the Bundy family in order to placate Environmental NGOs and the Political Class, you begin to understand 21st century America. Michael Stickler exposes the real “inconvenient truth” of environmental politics and government overreach.

Dan Happel | Host – Connecting the Dots with Dan Happel radio program

Cliven Bundy American Patriot chronicles one man's stand against an overreaching Government. What happened in Bunkerville, Nevada woke me up, motivated me to action and changed my life forever.

Ace Baker | American Warrior Revolution

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