

THE BATTLE OF BUNKERVILLE

VICTORY OVER OPPRESSION

WELDON TRAVIS, ROUGH AND READY, CALIFORNIA

This is a tale ~ my observations, conclusions, thoughts ~ of Cliven Bundy and his struggle against the Federal Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in Clark County, Nevada, 60 miles from Las Vegas and 10 from Mesquite, bordering Arizona. It may contain errors.

It begins in 1864 when Nevada was admitted to the Union, necessarily ceding vast stretches of public land, almost 85%, to the Federal government; to 1877 when Cliven's forebears homesteaded; moves on to 1946 when Cliven was born and the same year that the BLM was established by President Harry S. Truman. For me, my wife Irene, and our friend Malen "Jim" Jacobs, all *Oath Keepers*, it culminated (but has not ended) on Easter Sunday, 2014.

The previous week was reminiscent of Concord and Lexington and the "shot heard 'round the world." It was a day that will go down in our proud history, witnessing an intense showdown between heavily armed BLM agents and the Bundy clan, who were backed up by Nevada and other State militias, "irregulars," Oath Keepers and other supporters. The local Sheriff, Douglas Gillespie (a strong supporter of Obama), Governor Brian Sandoval and the Nevada National Guard had remained obscure.

A new friend with whom I shared a morning cup of coffee is a major contractor and developer, much of it around Las Vegas. He was one of seven snipers set up on Interstate 15, a divided four-lane highway which was totally shut down. As he trained his scoped AR-15 toward the stand-off confrontation, watching developments, some Nevada Highway Patrolmen behind him also stood watch. My friend wondered if the shooting started, what would they do, who would be shooting whom? Shortly, they asked him if it would be okay to open one lane each way. Preposterous, I know.

Later, one exclaimed, “What *could* we do?” if anything, about the situation, implying their non-direction under very confusing circumstances.

Gillespie finally attempted to defuse the situation to avoid another Ruby Ridge or Waco-type incident, asking for a private meeting with Bundy. Cliven insisted that their conversation be open to all present, now numbering in the hundreds, as Gillespie laid out the proposed conditions for de-escalation. Cliven listened attentively, then told the Sheriff that he had one hour to have the BLM agents disarm and depart. Gillespie, himself, had that same authority, but chose to not exercise it. As zero hour approached, Cliven asked if the hour limitation should be extended; a resounding “NO!” was the citizens’ answer.

Gillespie’s S.W.A.T. team quickly covered the withdrawal (“strategic advance to the rear”) of the BLM agents. One hundred and forty-two (142) BLM SUV’s (most containing two or more personnel) and including maybe six ATVs withdrew to cheers, jeers, fist-pumping and one-finger salutes. Red Bear, a fourth Great-grandson of Geronimo, may have shouted “Ja-LAN-Kah” in encouragement to perform a solo and salacious impossible act.

We had originally intended to be there during the increasing tensions but regretfully had “stood down” as the situation cooled. Then U. S. Senator “Dirty Harry” Reid infamously threatened that “This isn’t over yet.” His son, Rory, stood to gain from Chinese solar power installations on the land. Steward Rhodes, Founder of the Oath Keepers, issued an urgent call for reinforcements.

We had arrived in our motorhome on Friday evening before Easter, having traveled 14 hours straight through. A temporary “victory” celebration was in full swing, with live entertainment and tasty victuals for maybe 700.

Irene and Jim went to fetch me a plate from down on the river as I completed decorating the motorhome with several flags. Cliven had kissed Irene, as he did many of the ladies with his “Sweetheart” wife, Carol, smiling in approval.

Irene must have been emotionally overwhelmed by his charm because, as we stood against our coach and finished our chow, she collapsed. She, having “died” twice last year from a blood clot in her heart, and me saving her, I thought, “Oh, *no* . . . I’ve lost her again.” Jim and I lowered her to the ground, bruising her ribs and twisting her ankle. I brought her around one more time.

Local Resident Deputy Andy Caldwell, volunteer Firefighters and EMT’s, and son Ryan Bundy choked up the parking lot for an hour as Irene, the love and light of my life, livened up her rescuers inside the ambulance. Stabilized, finally, and with the understanding that she was simply dehydrated, we formally declined further treatment or hospitalization.

Saturday was filled with:

- A press conference by Cliven and Ammon;
- An exhortation by founder Stewart Rhoads to join or reaffirm the **Oath Keepers’** pledge and a warning of needs to respond to other areas soon;
- A rousing speech by terminally ill Mike Venderboegh of the *Sipsey Street Irregulars*. He graphically and humorously punctuated his talk by relaying that his grandfather had cautioned him to never disturb a Michigan wolverine as he had done, and which had nearly emasculated him. The *Federales* had clearly provoked ***We the People***. That phrase had been erected maybe 80 feet high atop two flagpoles near “our” bridge.
- Nevada Assemblywoman Michele Fiore defending the Bundy’s stance while acknowledging the grazing fees due. However, **Cliven had offered to pay all grazing fees to Clark County or the State of Nevada** but both entities had refused to accept.
- A constitutional Sheriff from Indiana, taking vacation time off, telling us that others of the CSPOA (Constitutional Sheriffs and Peace Officers Association) would be rotating through indefinitely. That organization was founded by former Sheriff Richard Mack, Graham County, Arizona. I had the privilege of meeting him in Grass Valley near our home last year.

- The late evening arrival of the rotund Don Wood, riding a *Screaming Eagle* Harley-like homemade motorcycle, with a video camera on his helmet, heavy canvas pants decorated with many patches, his arms covered with meaningful tattoos, his bike packed and stacked for weeks on the road. I opened our door and shouted out to him to turn off his camera and come join us. Turns out he's the rolling field rep for *Palmetto Moonshine* of South Carolina, the first legal "shine" cooker since Prohibition! He's a gentle, soft spoken, thoughtful giant of a man, surprisingly well educated and very much aware of global circumstances. Y' just never know . . .

All day long, more and more militias arrived and set up outposts. They came from Alaska, Montana, Georgia, New Mexico, Texas, New Hampshire and Utah. Some had quit their jobs, not knowing when they might return home to their families. Sounds like our forefathers, right? They were young, old and in-between, in great physical condition or old greybeards with pot-bellies and suspenders. Most were veterans, determined to protect the rights for which that had fought previously.

One new friend is a former Marine who had seen action in Afghanistan, had become an executive protection specialist for the private and troubled security firm, *Blackwater* and, more recently, has established his own tactical coaching firm.

On a high hilltop, previously occupied by BLM agents and overlooking our motor home parked at River Cliff Road, flew a large American flag. My contractor friend, with goose bumps of pride rising again on his arms, described how several men a-horseback, crying "Let's ride!" had carried and planted flags of our five military services and ultimately Old Glory, highly reminiscent of Iwo Jima.

There were at least two independent filmmakers, including Dennis Michael Lynch of **Liberty and Lead.com**. One working title I heard was *Boy on a Painted Mule*.

Easter Sunday was truly a Resurrection, one that affirmed that our Nation was having a well-deserved rebirth. Ryan Bundy opened the day on the flatbed trailer which served as a stage, with a benediction, with his daughter sharing her thoughts.

Next spoke his son, the boy on the mule, wearing his best-go-to meeting-church Western attire. He, too, was very emotionally expressive. After all, he too had bravely stared Death in the eye, side by side with his father and uncles.

As he spoke, militiamen were practicing their firearms skills across the Virgin River, but Ryan believed that the Lord would understand and forgive the audible intrusion.

Family members departed for their regular LDS services in Mesquite, inviting one and all to join them or to stay and share with those who remained. Several others spoke emotionally and gratefully about how privileged they felt to be present.

Fifty-three ranches have gone by the wayside in Clark County, including that of a Cherokee Chieftain whose Social Security checks have been garnished for years to pay his past-due grazing fees and legal costs. Cliven is the “Last Man Standing.” What is wrong here? It continues in Texas along the Red River, which changes boundaries with the water flow, but the Federal government ends up mysteriously “owning” 90,000 more acres.

This is about much, *very much* more, than saving the desert tortoises (which were rounded up in “Bundy Territory” then euthanized in Las Vegas); more than the spotted owls in Oregon (which ruined the timber industry); more than the smelt rescue in the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys, which decimated the orchards and vegetable crops; and more than the red-toed frogs in Rough and Ready. Those tactics and excuses have been very effectively employed by “liberals” and environmentalists. I, myself, am a liberal yet strict conservationist, and despise those who desecrate Mother Earth, but there *must* be realistic considerations.

This is about States’ Rights, Freedoms of Speech and Assembly, to Bear Arms and the ever-increasing overreach of our Federal bureaucracy, accomplished by imperialistic and despicable, often illegal and un-Constitutional executive orders.

You may agree or disagree with me, but I urge you to become fully aware of the downward plunge our once Great Nation has taken and to do your duty, regardless of consequences, as did our forefathers.

Much more information, including history and court cases, videos, press conferences, newspaper and television coverage may be viewed via:

[Bundy Ranch.blogspot.com](http://BundyRanch.blogspot.com).

[BLM Whistle-blower](#) providing significant motivations by Feds and Reid:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=BNGJXDULkDI&list=PL427E9E5B238E01D9&index=132

[Las Vegas Review-Journal.com](http://LasVegasReview-Journal.com)

[Oath Keepers.org](#) “Molon Labe ” = “Come and take them”- (weapons), King Leonidas, 480 BC; “...if they mean to have a war, let it begin here!” Captain John Parker, 1775

[Constitutional Sheriffs and Peace Officers Association](#) ~ CSPOA.org

[Sipsey Street Irregulars.blogspot.com](http://SipseyStreetIrregulars.blogspot.com)

[Liberty and Lead.com](http://LibertyandLead.com)

[Palmetto Moonshine.com](http://PalmettoMoonshine.com)

Feel free to share if you care . . .

Weldon

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P.S. The Bundy Ranch Brand is “V” over an “O”, which has been reinterpreted to signify Victory over Oppression and is printed on t-shirts (reverse side) to raise funds for the cause. I’m assuming that the “V” is from the Virgin River, but I don’t know what the “O” signifies, nor have I learned who designed the clever logo of the bull with the O-ring through its nose. (Reminds me of many citizens led by the Feds.)



The Cliven Bundy Homestead is straight ahead a couple of miles on dirt, iffen you can make it past three checkpoints manned by Militiamen and Oath Keepers . . .

4/24/14: Recent racial comments by Bundy do not alter the underlying major concerns and facts!