

Harney County Committee of Safety's Letter Asks Ammon Bundy to Leave Refuge



[0006](#)

[by Stewart Rhodes](#) , [January 9, 2016](#)

Committee to Ammon Bundy: “We ask that you organize your people, explain that your point has been made, and leave in a peaceful, honorable fashion.”

During last night’s January 8, 2016 meeting of the Harney County Committee of Safety, in Burns, OR, Committee member Melodi Molt read aloud the Committee’s unanimous letter to Ammon Bundy, thanking him for bringing attention to the Hammond case and other important issues, and for stirring them to action, but also criticizing him for occupying the wildlife refuge without their knowledge “or any other local approval” in a way that hurt the Committee’s credibility in the community.

The letter ends by directly asking Ammon Bundy to end his occupation of the wildlife refuge and to leave peaceably. (the full transcript of the letter is posted below the video). This is the same Committee that Ammon helped to create on December 15, 2015 and assured them that they, the people of Harney County, would be in charge:

Introduction to Letter, by Committee Member Melodi Molt:

We've only been on this committee a couple weeks, and two weeks ago, I didn't know what a committee of safety was. So I looked up the definition and I 'm going to read it to you before I read this letter from the Committee of Safety:

'The first committee of safety was formed prior to the Revolutionary War to fight the tyranny and oppression of a corrupt government and its officials, and to protect the safety, health, and welfare of the local citizens.'

So, that's the definition of a committee of safety and it's three or four hundred years old.

Full Text of the Harney County Committee of Safety Letter to Ammon Bundy:

Ammon,

The Harney County Committee of Safety, as it was originally named, delivers this letter to you, the voice of those occupying the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge Headquarters.

We thank you for shining light on the Hammond case here in Harney County. Your actions have created a national focus on the Hammonds and other issues here and across the West that have created mutual distrust, anger and unrest between the people of the land and the Federal government. We thank you for stirring us to action which we hope will peaceably lead to justice for the Hammonds and ultimately a better Harney County, a better state, and a better nation.

We were very upset that you chose to take the aggressive action of occupying the refuge, and did it without our knowledge, or any other local approval, and in a fashion that created huge distrust and loss of credibility of, and for, us as a group of residents within the community. We approved of most of your message but disapprove of your unilateral methods of occupation.

With that being said, we feel that any good which may come out of this event has reached its full potential. We ask that you organize your people, explain that your point has been made, and leave in a peaceful, honorable fashion. This will allow us in Harney County to carry on with the business of improving the lives and opportunities that our beautifully blessed country offers through its bounty and natural resources. Peace be with you.

*Note: While the Committee was unanimous on the contents of the letter, and read it aloud to the people of Harney County last night, the Committee is still undecided (reportedly deadlocked 3 to 3) on when to actually deliver the letter to Ammon. Regardless, it expressed their unanimous sentiment that he should end his occupation of the refuge. (Thanks JKS)

NOTE FROM STEWART:

The Committee is essentially asking Ammon to take the same honorable exit that I recommended in my [open letter to him on January 6, 2016, which you can read here](#). Ammon promised this committee that they would be in charge and make the decisions on how best to proceed in defending their rights, and taking control of their land. Now that the committee has made it very clear that they will continue the fight, Ammon should do as the committee asks and leave the wildlife refuge.

The Committee's draft Resolution of the People of Harney County, which they also read aloud last night, was very strong, and ended with a demand that the federal government turn all lands currently under its control in Harney County, over to the people. You can read it here: [RESOLUTION OF THE PEOPLE OF HARNEY COUNTY final rev](#)

It was an inspirational meeting. And though the Committee expressed their anger at the way Ammon acted on his own, without telling them what he had planned, and without local consent, they still expressed their very real gratitude to him for bringing national attention to the gross injustices against the Hamonds and to the broader issues of the Federal dominance over the land that rightfully belongs to the people of the West. Out of this can come great things if the follow-up is done right.

As for us, Oath Keepers has a standing offer out to the people of Harney County, OR to assist them with security if they chose to start working the land again, in defiance of unjust Federal edicts, and most importantly, a standing offer to help train and organize them so that they can provide for their own security, as the Founders intended (which is the core purpose of our Community Preparedness Teams (CPT)). If the people will stand, we will stand with them, and we will train them, but they need to be in charge, and they have to make that momentous decision to take a stand. We cannot do it for them. Looks to us like they are well on their way, so long as the maintain momentum.

For the Republic,

Stewart Rhodes

MORE DETAILS ON OUR OFFER OF HELP TO TRAIN THEM

Here is what I wrote in the post linking to the live feed of the meeting last night:

This is exactly what needs to be done in every county in the West – the people coming together to take the bull by the horns and stand together with THEM in charge.

It was a very good meeting, and it was good to see the community come together and start to stand. Now that we DO support.

The next step needs to be that at least one, but preferably several, ranchers need to turn their cattle out on the public land and then we (all groups, all patriots) can defend them, and most importantly, train and organize them to defend themselves and each other. And it would be best if the Committee of Safety called for that action and fully supported it (yes, an individual rancher has the right to take that stand on his own, and we can defend him – that is what happened at Bundy Ranch, Sugar Pine Mine, and in Lincoln, MT, where we defended individuals who were willing to stand even if most of their neighbors were not – but it is best for the community to be directly involved and in full support. That is what is needed for a long term, lasting retaking of their land.

Also, we must train them to defend themselves and each other. Outside security volunteers can only stay for so long, and if/when there is a national crisis, such volunteers will not be able to go anywhere, since they will be very busy in their own AO. So, the people of Harney County must be trained and organized to provide their own security. And that is what we will be happy to do for them so they can be their own security rather than having to rely on “sheepdogs” from outside their county.

In fact, I hereby make this standing offer to the people of Harney County, OR, and to the Harney County Committee of Safety. Oath Keepers will train you and help you organize for your own security, so that, whatever you do, you can provide your own local security teams made up of well trained locals, and those locals can serve as competent, effective local leadership for any outside volunteers you may consent to inviting in to assist you, under the command of local leaders you choose. That is the best way for you to proceed so you, the locals, call the shots and are in charge, including of any security operations in defense of your rights, as Ammon Bundy himself said is the way this is supposed to go.

Stewart Rhodes

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About Author



[Stewart Rhodes](#)

Stewart is the founder and National President of Oath Keepers. He served as a U.S. Army paratrooper until disabled in a rough terrain parachuting accident during a night jump. He is a former firearms instructor, former member of Rep. Ron

Paul's DC staff, and served as a volunteer firefighter in Montana. Stewart previously wrote the monthly Enemy at the Gates column for S.W.A.T. Magazine. Stewart graduated from Yale Law School in 2004, where his paper "Solving the Puzzle of Enemy Combatant Status" won Yale's Miller prize for best paper on the Bill of Rights. He assisted teaching U.S. military history at Yale, was a Yale Research Scholar, and is writing a book on the dangers of applying the laws of war to the American people.