

Unity

by [Armando Simón](#) (November 2024)



Cops (Robert Vickrey, 1988)

They had been rounded up very early and with a minimum of fuss. Even the ones who liked to boast, “They’ll take away my gun from my cold dead hands” had come along quietly, their precious and supposedly intimidating guns unfired.

In an empty gymnasium which now served as a holding pen, around a hundred persons milled about, angry or frightened. A few prayed. They had been told they were being taken to a Unity Camp—whatever that was—where they would be taken care of, an ambiguous forecast.

Along the walls there were some posters urging the public to

report to the authorities anyone uttering "hate speech" or passing "disinformation." The posters showed an attractive individual with a worried expression talking on the phone with one hand and pointing with the other hand behind him to a misshapen, hunched over person with a devilish look on his face.

One of the men who was angry was a fellow with a trim beard by the name of Harlan. He seemed restless, like a young cat, going here and there, inspecting every corner. Not finding what he was looking for, he finally settled down and simply stood scowling, looking around. He was approached by another man with a worried look on his face.

"What are you doing?"

"I was looking for a way out. Nothing!"

Then, glancing at the man's face, Harlan's expression was one of slight recognition. "I remember you. I saw you at a street protest a few months back." The participants at the event had objected to the government's officially nullifying the last of the traditional rights of all citizens. "I remember you cause you had an odd name, Nellie ... Newy, or something."

"Pusinelli."

"That's right! Pussynellie! I remember now. I was holding up a sign that you said was too harsh and you wanted me to put it away. You said the media would say bad things about our side."

"Yeah, you do look vaguely familiar," Pusinelli said.

"Well, the media never noticed it. But they smeared us anyway. Like they always do. Media said, 'Christian Nationalists at the protest were domestic terrorists.'" He remembered Pusinelli's pained look on his face as he had urged "taking the high road."

Glancing at the entrance, Harlan's face suddenly had a

scornful look. "Hell's bells!"

Harlan abruptly bypassed him and went to one of the double doors and rattled the opening bars, but the doors would not open. He hammered at the doors with a fist.

"Knock it off! Stop banging on the doors!" yelled a voice on the other side.

"Let us outta here!"

"Just wait. The FBI will be here soon."

"That's exactly what I'm worried about!" A pause. "Say, tell me something. You're state police. Are you proud of what you're doing—arresting people just for expressing their political views? Eh? How do you look at yourself in the mirror? Ever hear of the U. S. Constitution?"

"Hey, man, I'm just doing my job," said the voice.

"Yeah, I tell you what you are. You're a coward!"

"I'm no coward!"

"There are many types of cowards, pal, and you and your buddies are one type of coward." He paused. "When you get home today and your family asks what did you do, 'Did you arrest any burglars, any murderers?' you can tell them with pride that you arrested a bunch of people for expressing an opinion. Yeah, buddy, they'll be proud of you, all right!"

Pusinelli got between the doors and Harlan. "Don't," he said in a soft, calming voice. There was that pained expression on his face again. "Don't. We need to set a good example and take the high road." Harlan turned around without even looking at him and he joined the others milling about.

A few scared women were hunched over, silently crying.

A man slowly shuffled past him, looking downward at the floor

muttering, "They'll take away my gun from my cold, dead hands. They'll take away my gun from my cold, dead hands. They'll take away—"

Harlan walked among the crowd some more, temporarily resigned to being trapped. As he passed a small group of people praying, he almost said something caustic, but decided against it. Eventually, the doors opened and armed Federal Bureau of Inclusiveness personnel marched in, wearing their newly minted uniforms. No one was yet aware that it was the uniform of the recently created FBI Death Squads. One of them stepped forward.

"When I call your name, step forward, then go out this door where you'll find transportation to take you to a Unity Camp. The ride there won't take long. There'll be two trucks. Both go to the same place. Save your questions for when you get there. I don't have the information and if I did I wouldn't answer them. All right, now, I want to get this over with."

Names were called out. Predictably, some tried to get information from the leader without success. Pusinelli was near and told the two questioners in a whiny voice, "Hey, don't bother the man. He already said he can't answer your questions." In spite of the leader supposedly being in a hurry, it was all done very slowly. Harlan, Pusinelli and the others soon found out why. Just before entering the back of an 18-wheeler truck, each was handcuffed with their hands behind them. When it was full, the back doors of the truck were closed, and the truck drove away. Another took its place, destined to take its occupants to a different Unity Camp.

And although the captives vastly outnumbered their foes, yet as in countless times throughout history with different variations it never occurred to the victims to act as one and suddenly overwhelm the aggressors, thereby turning the tables on them.

As the truck where Harlan and Pusinelli found themselves in moved away, the cargo was jostled to and fro until some fell and the others awkwardly sat down, in the process toppling over someone already on the floor. After a while, the truck's erratic movement ceased, and it became smooth driving.

"The bastards were doing it on purpose!" someone said.

"At least, the truck's got a canvas top so we can get some air coming in," said another.

As he sat, Harlan squirmed. He reached his hands where his belt was. He slid a zipper open that was built into his thick belt and he removed a key or a pin of some sort and soon was able to open the handcuffs. He stood up and leaned against the side to steady himself.

"Anyone else?" he barked, holding up his "key."

"Yeah!" said several men.

"Man, how did you do that?"

"I'm always prepared for every possibility. Always!" He started unlocking handcuffs, right and left. To his surprise, most declined.

"Fellas, I think you're making a big mistake! You'll only make matters worse." Pusinelli blurted out.

"Shut up, you!" someone said, and he was ignored for a while. However, he was not ignored when he started yelling, "Guards! You need to see this!"

Five men lunged towards the sitting Pusinelli. The first to reach him was a big, burly man who lifted his face up by grabbing his hair, then smashed his face with two massive punches. His jaw was dislocated, and Pusinelli began to whimper.

The freed men and women huddled together.

"Well? What now? We can't go out that way," one said, motioning to the door after trying to open it. "It's locked."

"And we can't wait until it reaches the destination. There are bound to be more guards with guns," another one reasoned.

"What then?" a woman asked at the same time.

Harlan lightly tapped the metal floor with his foot then looked up. "That only leaves one way out."

"Will it hold all our weight?" one asked.

Harlan thought for a second before answering. "OK, this is the only way. Let's get over to the side for support. A couple of you hoist me up. I'll cut through the canvas--"

"With what, your teeth?" the burly fellow interrupted.

Harlan unbuckled his belt and took out a very small knife concealed into the buckle and brandished it. "As I was saying, hoist me up. I'll cut through the canvas, pull myself up, then you hoist the next. We can't all be on top so one by one we'll have to drop off on the road."

"This truck has enough room in the front for two, maybe three guards," the burly prisoner pointed out

"I got an idea," said the youngest. He looked to be around twenty. "Two of us could go to the top, crawl to the front, get down and attack the two in the front. Pull them out!"

"Son, you've been watching too many movies."

"Their doors are probably locked, anyway," Harlan pointed out.

"We're lucky that this truck has a canvas top. Our one bit of luck."

“They have side mirrors.”

“Yeah, well, hopefully they’ll be looking at the road in front of them,” the burly man pointed out.

“Won’t we get killed if we jump off?” a woman asked.

“Maybe. It’ll certainly hurt but I’ll take the risk,” said the young man.

“I don’t think we’re going fast,” said another woman.

“If there’s a car behind us, and we jump, we’ll get killed,” said the woman.

“OK, enough!” said Harlan. “Come on, hoist me up!” The men formed a cone of sorts and Harlan got on their shoulders. He began cutting, eventually making a hole through which he could pull himself up. He looked around and saw that the truck was not on a highway, but a state road with intermittent farms and there was practically no traffic. He laid flat on the canvas top.

“Send Junior up!” The movie fan joined him. This was followed by another. Harlan began to worry about the combined weight on the canvas.

“OK, I’m dropping off,” he said to the others. He crawled to the back, carefully lowered himself part way and stopped midway. He had no idea which was the best way to flee, jump or roll off. For once, his self-confidence vanished, and he hesitated.

At that moment, the truck braked as it ran over a thick tree branch that had fallen on the road. The resulting jolt made Harlan lose his grip, and he fell.

It hurt like hell.

And he was dazed.

He tried to get up, but stumbled down, then got up again. And stumbled down.

It must have taken more time than he thought because he looked up and saw the truck had stopped. They must have seen him through one of the side mirrors. Two guards were running towards him.

He got up and was about to run away when he heard one of the guards yell out, "Hey, mister! You all right?"

They got closer. "Where did you come from? We didn't see you! Are you OK?"

"Maybe we need to get him to a hospital."

"I don't see any blood on him," one of them said when he got to Harlan.

Harlan glanced up towards the truck. Acting like he was more dazed than was the case, he fell to his knees and screamed, seemingly in pain. The guards grabbed him on both sides. As he was being pulled up, they heard a voice behind them.

"Hello."

They turned and saw Burly, who fired off a fist at his nearest guard, who staggered and fell back. Junior attacked the other one and Harlan was dropped back down, but he sprang back up and joined the melee. Both guards were trying to unholster their guns, not bothering to defend themselves. Burly ignored the attempt as he quickly leveled another fist at the guard's face.

Harlan instantly assessed the situation and in a split second decided that Junior was the one needing help. In what must have taken less than two seconds to execute, he hit the guard's neck with the edge of his hand full force, in what used to be called a karate chop, followed by immediately grabbing the arm about to pull up the gun from the holster The

guard was shocked to be attacked from the rear and glanced back. It was all Junior needed. He delivered a punch to the throat that incapacitated the guard. Burly knocked out his prone opponent and finished off the other guard.

Both guards were rendered unconscious.

"Let's drag them over there," Harlan said, looking at some trees and thick bushes. "Better yet, let's lift them!"

"Why?" asked his burly ally.

"I'm going to switch clothes with this guy," he motioned. "I don't want the uniforms ripped open."

The group went out of sight from the road. Both guards were stripped of their uniforms, ID, weapons and money.

"Are they dead?" Junior asked.

Burly man aimed the gun to their heads and fired twice. "They are now."

Seeing Junior's shocked face, Harlan told him with a smile, "Just like the movies." And he donned the uniform but kept his own clothes, folded.

As they walked back to the truck, a car passed. The passenger of the car gave a raised middle finger to them and the truck which was clearly labeled "FBI." Somehow, that made them feel better.

They opened the back door of the truck and Harlan addressed the prisoners.

"OK, listen up! We're on a farm road. I'm a truck driver, so I can drive this rig to the nearest town. Be patient. You can stop worrying now. Once there, you can all scatter to the four winds. Here are the guards' keys so you can uncuff yourselves," and he threw in the keys. "I want you two upfront

with me," he told Burly and Junior.

"What happened to the guards?" someone asked.

"They're asleep," Harlan responded. Then he closed the truck's door.

Once they were moving, Burly said, "I figure we got maybe two hours before they go unreported. They may give another hour at most, maybe less, in case they think the truck broke down or something."

"I was thinking that. I'm pretty sure I know where we're at. I'm Harlan, by the way."

"I'm Jim," said Junior.

"Caleb," was Burly's name. "Either one of you knows how to get in touch with the Underground Tunnel to Canada?"

Both shook their heads.

"Damn."

An hour later, they were on the outskirts of a city. "I got an idea," said the driver and he parked the truck at a side street. Having FBI markings assured most persons would avoid it. "I'm going to get some food for everyone. You guys come with me," he said to his companions, and they went to the nearby convenience store that he had sighted prior to parking.

Using the guards' credit cards, they bought ten bags bursting with food and drink, focusing on compact items. They asked for the bags to be triple bagged.

The FBI uniform inhibited the clerk from asking questions.

They got back in the truck and resumed driving towards the center of town, but at one point, near a park, Harlan pulled over and parked the truck. A billboard could be seen not too far away which read:

Diversity is Unity.

Free speech is Fascism.

Obedience is freedom.

The trio went to the back and opened the doors. They were surprised that the majority still refused to uncuff themselves. To the others, Caleb said, "We're here. You can come out now." Over a dozen did so, apart from the ones who had previously been uncuffed. The others refused to go free. "I'll leave the doors unlocked in case any of you change your mind." He closed the doors.

"Make yourself sheep and the wolves will eat you," muttered Caleb.

"What?" Jim asked.

"Oh, just something Ben Franklin said," he replied, shrugging.

Harlan randomly handed out what cash the guards had. The food was also distributed. Harlan informed them of the local streets, landmarks, and means of transportation. "Anyone knows how to contact the Underground Tunnel?" Nobody did. "No? Well, in that case, we suggest you pair up. The buddy system. But don't bunch up! Find some way to cross the border."

"You picked a good place to drop off the truck," said Caleb.

"I told you. I know this city."

"I think we should stick together," said Jim. "We make a good team." Caleb and Harlan agreed.

Two of the women approached the trio. "We'd like to join you guys. Is that OK?"

Harlan looked at his partners and saw no objection on their faces. "Sure." He looked up at the group. "The rest of you: scatter! And good luck!" Ten minutes later, they were nowhere to be seen.

Nine hours later, the truck was finally located. The FBI asked the remaining prisoners what had happened and were informed of what had transpired. The guards were grateful to them for the information, and the truck with its cargo resumed the original journey.

They arrived later that night at the Unity camp and the prisoners were taken out and uncuffed. The few remaining youngsters were segregated, marked for indoctrination, or to use the official jargon, "re-education."

The others were escorted a long distance to the back of the Unity Camp and were executed.

Pusinelli was the first.

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