

The Day Santa's Reindeer Went On Strike

By Art Stevens

Whoa, Vixen, Whoa, Dasher, Whoa, Blitzen. There's trouble brewing. A breaking story is just now coming out of the North Pole. All of Santa's nine reindeer have voted unanimously to go on strike starting now and on through Christmas Eve.

Who would have thought that this could be possible? Santa's reindeer on strike? This is unfathomable. The smoothest running operation which has been around for thousands of years is about to break down just before Christmas. Can you imagine what a calamity this could be? If this strike persists then literally billions of children will be deprived of Christmas presents this year. This has never happened before in the entire history of the world.

What could possibly have brought this on? I for one always thought that Santa had an endearing and warm relationship with his reindeer. I always imagined that he treated them with love and respect. In fact, except for a few issues the other reindeer had with Rudolph at one time, I thought that Santa and the reindeer were family.

What's this? A bulletin just arrived. It's a statement from the reindeer and they have indeed walked off the job. They explain why:

"We'd like to make a statement to all our friends around the world who have been relying on us reindeer to escort Santa Claus on his annual pilgrimage around the world to bring joy and happiness to children everywhere. Yes, it is true. We have walked off the job. It is most regrettable but let us explain the reasons.

"To begin with, our working conditions have deteriorated. For the past five hundred years Santa Claus has simply taken us for granted and hasn't made any attempt to improve our working conditions. Can you believe that we don't even have a medical plan? Santa refuses to acknowledge that times have changed and that the cost of medical insurance has gone sky high. Last week Prancer had a problem with one of his antlers and wanted to see a doctor. Santa Claus told Prancer to take an aspirin and get a good night's sleep.

"Also, Santa refuses to negotiate directly with our agent. In fact, he simply refuses to acknowledge that we have the right to collective bargaining, a pension plan and free agency. We've worked exclusively with Santa Claus for the past three thousand years and Santa simply takes us for granted. We told him that Donald Trump recently made us a better offer but Santa doesn't take us seriously.

"Each year we lug some 13,500 pounds of toys in the sled and we'd simply like to take more of a breather between chimneys. But Santa won't give us the time of day on this issue. He's also been very stingy with the magic corn we need each Christmas to help increase our stamina and the magic dust that allows us to fly more easily.

"But the most important reason of all that we're going out on strike is that Santa never tells us he loves us. We've been together through thick and thin. There have been some Christmases where the snow and ice were so severe that we all almost got frost bite. Can you imagine that for working conditions? All we ever wanted from Santa is love and appreciation. When we bring this to Santa's attention he simply says that if we don't like our jobs the elves can do it instead. When we remind Santa that the job of the elves is to stack all the presents before we take off and that they can't fly Santa changes the subject to the awful year the Miami Dolphins are having.

"So we feel we have no choice but to go out on strike until Santa understands that even his reindeer have feelings too. We help bring good cheer to the children of the world. But who will give Santa's reindeer good cheer? It's certainly not Santa.

"We apologize to the children of the world but we hope they understand our dilemma. After three thousand years of dedication and loyalty we felt we needed to take a stand at this time."

I wonder if it's not too late to try to resolve this. There's still some time before Christmas. You know what? I'm going to put together a delegation to head to the North Pole right away to try to bring all the parties together and see if we can end this strike before it's too late. We must do anything we can to avert a great tragedy for the world and its children. I'll bring you up to date on this next week. Please tune in.