

Arlo Guthrie, Pause Of Mr. Claus

words and music by Arlo Guthrie

This next song we're going to dedicate to a great American organization. Tonight I'd like to dedicate this to our boys in the FBI.

Well, wait a minute. It's hard to be an FBI man. I mean, first of all, being an FBI man, you have to be over 40 years old. And the reason is that it takes at least 25 years with the organization to be that much of a bastard. It's true. You just can't join, you know. It needs an atmosphere where your natural bastardness can grow and develop and take a meaningful shape in today's complex society.

But that's not why I want to dedicate the song to the FBI. I mean, the job that they have to do is a drag. I mean, they have to follow people around, you know. That's part of their job. Follow me around.

I'm out on the highway and I'm drivin' down the road and I run out of gasoline. I pull over to the side of the road. They gotta pull over too - make believe that they ran out, you know.

I go to get some gasoline. They have to figure out whether they should stick with the car or follow me. Suppose I don't come back and they're stayin' with the car.

Or if I fly on the airplanes, I could fly half fare because I'm 12 to 22. And they gotta pay the full fare. But the thing is that when you pay the full fare, you have to get on the airplane first, so that they know how many seats are left over for the half fare kids. Right? And sometimes there aren't any seats left over, and sometimes there are, but that doesn't mean that you have to go.

Suppose that he gets on and fills up the last seat, so you can't get on. Then he gets off then you can get on. What's he gonna do?

Well, it's a drag for him. But that's not why I want to dedicate the song to the FBI.

During these hard days and hard weeks, everybody always has it bad once in a while. You know, you have a bad time of it, and you always have a friend who says "Hey man, you ain't got it that bad. Look at that guy." And you at that guy, and he's got it worse than you. And it makes you feel better that there's somebody that's got it worse than you.

But think of the last guy. For one minute, think of the last guy. Nobody's got it worse than that guy. Nobody in the whole world. That guy...he's so alone in the world that he doesn't even have a street to lay in for a truck to run him over. He's out there with nothin'. Nothin's happenin' for that cat.

And all that he has to do to create a little excitement in his own life is to bum a dime from somewhere, call up the FBI. Say "FBI?", they say "Yes", say "I think Uncle Ho and Chairman Mao and their friends are comin' over for dinner" (click) Hang up the phone.

And within two minutes, and not two minutes from when he hangs up the phone, but two minutes from when he first put

the dime in, they got 30,000 feet of tape rollin'; files on tape; pictures, movies, dramas, actions on tape. But then they send out a half a million people all over the entire world, the globe, they find out all they can about this guy.

'Cause there's a number of questions involved in the guy. I mean, if he was the last guy in the world, how'd he get a dime to call the FBI? There are plenty of people that aren't the last guys that can't get dimes. He comes along and he gets a dime.

I mean, if he had to bum a dime to call the FBI, how was he gonna serve dinner for all of those people? How could the last guy make dinner for all those people. And if he could make dinner, and was gonna make dinner, then why did he call the FBI?

They find out all of those questions within two minutes. And that's a great thing about America. I mean, this is the only country in the world...I mean, well, it's not the only country in the world that could find stuff out in two minutes, but it's the only country in the world that would take two minutes for that guy.

Other countries would say "Hey, he's the last guy...screw him", you know? But in America, there is no discrimination, and there is no hypocrisy, 'cause they'll get anybody. And that's a wonderful thing about America.

And that's why tonight I'd like to dedicate it to every FBI man in the audience. I know you can't say nothin', you know, you can't get up and say "Hi!" 'cause then everybody knows that you're an FBI man and that's a drag for you and your friends.

They're not really your friends, are they? I mean, so you can't get up and say nothin' 'cause other wise, you gotta get sent back to the factory and that's a drag for you and it's an expense for the government, and that's a drag for you.

We're gonna sing you this Christmas carol. It's for all you bastards out there in the audience tonight. It's called "The Pause of Mr. Claus".

Why do you sit there so strange?
Is it because you are beautiful?
You must think you are deranged
Why do police guys beat on peace guys?

You must think Santa Clause weird
He has long hair and a beard
Giving his presents for free
Why do police guys mess with peace guys?

Let's get Santa Clause 'cause;
Santa Clause has a red suit
He's a communist
And a beard, and long hair
Must be a pacifist
What's in the pipe that he's smoking?

Mister Clause sneaks in your home at night.
He must be a dope fiend, to put you up tight
Why do police guys beat on peace guys?