

The Canada Trip

I'm [Adam Klugman](#) and you are listening to [AM 620 KPOJ](#), Portland's only Progressive Talk Station. The numbers here are 1-866-452-060, (503) 248-0620 or #620 on your AT&T wireless phone.

My family and I took a trip to Canada last week to visit some dear friends who live there. And just as we approached the border, somewhere around Bellingham, I saw a liberal bumper sticker that I had never seen before, which is rare, because I've been to a lot of liberal locales in my life and I thought I had seen them all.

And the funny thing was, it was this very synchronistic kind of a thing because as I was driving to Canada, I was thinking about what how messed up America is right now and how Canada is so... sane. Kind of like America on mood stabilizers, you know?

America without the fear and aggression and greed, without all the Christian fanatics and bi-polar demagogues, war mongers, wall street money addicts, republican hypocrites and gutless democrats battling it out to see who can take us down first.

Anyway, back to the bumper sticker.

It was synchronistic because I was thinking about what it's going to take to reclaim this country – because one thing is for damn sure, [Barack Obama](#) isn't going to do it.

And if it isn't him, and it clearly isn't, then there's no one left but us, right? That means an uprising right? A revolution of the people, for the people, and by the people.

That's you and me.

And so I 'm thinking about this, about what an actual revolution might look like in America, and I'm thinking about how excruciating something like that might actually be in reality, when this recovering hippie woman in an 1980s Subaru station wagon goes chugging past me with only one bumper sticker on the back. And it says: "If I can't dance at your revolution, I'm not coming."

And being me, I took it as a sign. I mean, wouldn't you? And so I had to think on it, beyond just the glibness to what she was really putting out, you know? Because I don't think she was being glib because it was the only sticker she had. This notion of wanting to be a part of the revolution was clear for her, but she had conditions.

She had to be permitted to dance.

Dancing at a revolution? I'd never considered it. But once I did, I would never think about revolution the same way because in order to dance at a revolution, it would have to be celebration, right?

I mean, I hang out with a lot people who talk and think about radical change and radical action and I spend a lot of time thinking about it myself and how this is our moment in history and I really believe in it.

But from this new purview of a revolution that was also a celebration, I noticed something was missing. There isn't any joy in what we're doing or how we're doing it. In short, there's no dancing going on. And I think its because I take it all so damn seriously so much of the time.

And I can't really blame myself because anyone even remotely awake can't deny that the most powerful and destructive elements in our society have seized control and are driving their boot heel into the neck of this country. And so it's hard to dance when your flat on your back and getting the life choked out of you. What you feel like, or I should say, what I feel like is... Murder! Rage! Revenge!

Let's take this recent "leak" that Obama is going to expose the belly of [Social Security](#) and [Medicare](#) to the wolves. I mean talk about Mad as Hell! I'm going to read an email from a listener who said that this was a deal breaker for her.

Now, she may just be having a mad as hell moment, but she may not be. How about you? Is this a deal breaker for you? I mean, if Obama gives up Social Security, Medicare, in the company of those salivating corporate predators some people call the [Republican Party](#) – if he splits the beast open and sacrifices it to them, will you vote for him? Will I? I don't know.

What good would that do? Help [Michelle Bachman](#) become the next president? Is there a principle worth standing on there? Not unless there's an alternative, right? But there isn't one. In 2008, when we crossed our fingers, prayed like hell and squinted real hard, we could believe that [Barack Obama](#) really was the guy in the cape with "change" emblazoned across his chest, but if you haven't already notice, he isn't that guy. And guess what else – he isn't ever going to be that guy.

So what do we do? I mean, our faith in the Democratic Party has been shattered in the past two decades and now with [Barack Obama](#) just completely rolling over from day one, after all the hype, where do we go?

The horizon is completely bare. There's nothing and no one there.

Okay. So. We need a revolution in some form that much is clear. Because those of us who believe that deliberate class warfare is raging, that the political system is completely broken and no longer able to serve it's people, and that American politics is now the hand puppet of a successful corporate coup, are Mad as Hell and not going to take it anymore. I mean, it's either Mad as Hell or go home and fiddle with the freedom you've got left because there's a time for incremental change and radical change. And I think the time for incremental change has passed. Do you? Okay. So now what? I mean, in real terms. What the hell are we going to do about this?

Well, I've got an idea. I got it off a bumper sticker on the back of an old Subaru: *dance*. Let's start a revolution in this country, absolutely! And I'm at the point where I'm ready to start that by build and voting for a legitimate third party, but let's not make it an "I hate the establishment party," let's not make it a "We Don't Dance," Party let's make it a "I love and care about the world, you got a problem with that?" Party.

I'm tired of having to apologize for being a *liberal* who cares about other people and the world and wants my government to care and prioritize those things, too. It doesn't make me a crazy hippie; it makes me a human being. It doesn't make me a Socialist. It doesn't make me Terrorist. It doesn't make me an enemy of freedom; it makes me an American citizen with a conscience. Which is the country I was raised in.

Now I'm not saying that we will all break our Tie-Dye and our flip flops and concert-dance our way into the white house. We've got to get Mad as Hell, and stay Mad as Hell until the people of this country are respected enough to be feared. But while we are doing that, and that is right now in this moment, let's always remember why we do it. Because as the man from [Network](#) says:

I'm a human being... my life has value... Stick your head out and yell I'm as mad as hell and I'm not going to take this anymore!

It's about our dignity. It's about our humanity. Our lives have value. And that's got to be a celebration. And you, that's the most dangerous position we can take. Those in power don't fear our hatred, they turn it against us. What they fear is... our humanity. Because they have no answer for that. That's why anyone who has come to this planet and preached love, from [Christ](#) to [Martin Luther King](#), gets killed. It's the most dangerous tool for self-empowerment the world has ever known. And that simple turn of mind changes everything... because the ends will be determined by the means, because what you sow, you reap. So when we start with Justice, we get peace. Start with peace, you get joy. Start with joy you get prosperity. Start with prosperity and we get power. Start with power rooted in our humanity and it leads us back to Justice.

So that's what I took away from that bumper sticker... And as I'm approaching the Canadian border on I-5, I have vision of millions and millions of Americans all out in the street literally dancing our asses off, music blasting in the background, celebrating our power out in the open, just like in Egypt, and I thought: it will be revolution alright, and the scariest thing corporate America has ever seen, because we will be celebrating the indestructible aspects of our nature: self-respect, compassion, charity, equality, peace, justice, freedom, courage. We need to say them out loud and get good at saying them, signing them dancing them in public because we are going to hold our leaders accountable to these principles. And not for one day, not for a few decades, not even for a few hundred years, but forever. Starting right here. Right now. Because that's the kind of resolve and commitment it's going to win our democracy back.

And you can bring your Tie-Dye if you want. Or your business suit, or your military uniform, or your baker's hat... we won't care.

We just have one request – when you get there, just start dancing.

And if you see an aging flower child in an old blue Subaru, say thanks from me. And tell her, I really like her bumper sticker.

We'll be right back.

You're listening to "[Mad as Hell in America](#)," with [Adam Klugman](#) on [KPOJ](#).

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