

## Module 03: 1917 — Did the War Cause a Revolution?

### Evidence 6: "Dubinushka," The Manual Laborer's Work Song



#### Introduction

This tribute to "Dubina," the cudgel of green wood used to goad manual laborers in the pre-revolutionary period, evokes a mood of melancholy and weariness. At the same time, the lyrics of the folk song articulate the spirit of rebellion that lurked beneath people's resignation to the harsh conditions under which millions lived. The recording is by the great Russian bass Fedor Chaliapin, who popularized the song for elite audiences after the 1905 Revolution.

#### Document

"Dubinushka"

*Verse 1:*

I have heard many songs all around the land  
I have heard many songs all around the land  
But my memory holds just one song of them all  
That's the song of the body of workers.

*Refrain:*

Hey, Dubina, the green one!  
Hey, you, help us do the labor hard, the labor hard!  
We pull it, and pull it,  
And move it!!

*Verse 2:*

Canny Englishmen did tons of gadgets invent  
As to do all the labors routinely.  
Russian men strive with hands till they're tired to death  
Then they sing their hearts with "Dubina"!

*Refrain:*

Hey, Dubina, the green one!  
Hey, you, help us do the labor hard, the labor hard!

We pull it, and pull it,  
And move it!!

*Verse 3:*

Oh, new times, come to us! When the workers wake up  
When they straighten the backs from the labor.  
When they crush all who suck their strength, their blood  
Crush with their beloved Dubina!

*Refrain:*

Hey, Dubina, the green one!  
Hey, you, help us do the labor hard, the labor hard!  
We pull it, and pull it,  
And move it!!

Source:

Translation by Raymond Wickham for the Marxist International Archive at  
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