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# Play it again, Batka: “You don’t give up what you love!”

*Posted on*

8-9 minutes

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Dear Readers:

Please treat this as a sort of Addendum to my last post. The Belorussia news just keeps coming in thick and fast! I can barely keep up...

First [there are more details](#) about that meeting Lukashenko had with the Women’s Forum on Thursday. These are women who are loyal to him and voted for him, despite his gruff personality. Here are a few sound-bites from Lukashenko’s speech: *“The situation in our Republic has been tense for the past few weeks. The protesters wanted a quick and easy victory, but the security forces hindered them. Their planned Blitzkrieg, under the White-Red-White flags, was not successful.”*



Lukashenko continued: *“Then the Western nations started to exert political and diplomatic pressure upon the Republic. Our neighbors even went the Venezuelan scenario and picked out their Belorussian **Guaidikha**.”* [His funny name for Svetlana Tikhanovskaya, the Pretenderess to the Throne of Belarus, alluding obviously to Juan Guaidó who pretends to be President of Venezuela.]

Lukashenko also informed his female supporters about his due diligence in fortifying the national borders with Ukraine, Lithuania, and Poland, the three main enemies of his “regime”: *“These countries are participants in our internal disorders. They are planning to use our Republic as a trampoline to attack their main enemy, Russia.”*

## Don’t Say It – Sing It!

Next we have some related news from the Wonderful World of Show Business. Nobody ever imagined that the gruff and masculine Lukashenko could inspire a romantic song writer, or that the resulting product is better than 90% of the nonsense you hear at Eurovision Song Contest! But it came to pass that a soundbite from one of Batka’s speeches inspired a group of Russian and Belorussian artists. During the height of the crisis Lukashenko

declared, in his big speech to the Belorussian Parliament and people: “Belorussia is ours, she is beloved, and you don’t give up what you love.” (**Белоруссия наша, она любимая, а любимую не отдают.**)



Evgeny Oleynik

Belorussian song-writer Evgeny Oleynik was so inspired by these words that he wrote a song based on them, as the refrain. And then created a music video for it with beautiful and patriotic imagery. The song never mentions Lukashenko, or the elections, or the Opposition, or the protests. There is not one negative syllable in it. It praises the Belorussian people and land, evoking patriotism and inspirational emotions: *“Living on our own soil, in peace, love and harmony together...”* *“You don’t give up what you love.”* This is a powerful piece of musical propaganda, evoking purely positive emotions about life, home, country, nature, family and children. There is not one word in it which could offend anyone... **Oh wait!**

*[yalensis note: I struggled with the translation of this refrain, which pronoun to use: we, you, they. Technically, it should be translated as the indeterminate “One does not give up what one loves.” That’s the actual meaning, but “one” sounds stilted in contemporary English, so I just went with the pronoun “you”, even though there are semantic issues with that.]*

Oleynik gathered together a team of Russian mega-stars to sing the various parts, each separately recording his or her own tracks (it’s an ensemble-ego work, not unlike Michael Jackson’s “We Are The World”). The final product appeared on youtube just a couple of days ago, September 17, and was an instant cultural sensation, begetting a trending hashtag **#любимуюнеотдают**. Various tracks were recorded by such famous singers as Anita Tsoi, Denis Maidanov, Filipp Kirkorov, Alexander Buynov, and Diana Gurtskaya. Here is the song, please enjoy:

Although the song has not one negative note or thought, and is purely positive in its attitude, it enraged the Haters.

## Hater Backlash

That part of the Russian-speaking world who are Liberal Oppositionists and kreakles — to whom it is an article of faith that Ukrainian Banderites are God’s angels, and Lukashenko is the Devil — hated the song the moment they heard it. And not because it’s corny, but because they perceived it (correctly) as pro-Lukashenko in its intent, if not its wording.

[Oleynik says](#), he started receiving online threats against himself and the performers, within just a couple of hours of publishing the music video. Things got so bad that he had to remove the “Likes” and the comment section from his youtube. [Oleynik](#): **“Roughly two hours after the video was posted**, a series of Oppositionist Telegram-channels started calling for bullying [Russian **буллинг**, a brand new borrowing from American English!] in the comment section. These are the people who call themselves *peaceful* and *amazing*, but whom we, in Belarus, call **zmagary** [Belorussian

fascists]. Within an hour they had penned around 1,000 threats against me, personally, the author of the video clip and song, and also against my beloved artists, who participated in the clip. I simply don't have the resources to moderate my own channel and remove anything that would upset the artists. So, that's why I switched off the comments."

So much for living together in peace, love and harmony! Maybe they should have a coke instead.

## Baskov Buckles

One has to remember that Russian super-stars live in the same kind of bubble as their counterparts, Hollywood super-stars. They have very fragile egos and are vulnerable to peer pressure. Hence, it came to pass that, under the ideological onslaught of the **kreakles**, and **zmagary**, one of their number, [Nikolai Baskov](#), [caved](#) under the pressure. And this, sadly, has now led to a feud between Baskov and Kirkorov. Once again, so much for living together in peace, love, and harmony!



Kirkorov: "Now you make me mad!"





Baskov: “I can’t stand it when people hate me.”

Although Baskov, who is actually Belorussian himself, sang a track on the song, he may have regretted it, the moment the hating started. Haters posted such comments as: **“You are a traitor, the lowest of the low.... So, Kolya, how much did they pay you to sell your honor and sell out the Belorussian people?”**

Baskov responded by distancing himself somewhat and even trying to “explain away” why he participated in this project. The handsome Baskov apparently never learned the one true secret of being a great artist: Never apologize. For anything! Did Mozart ever apologize? I rest my case.



C’mon guys, just relax and have a coke!

At one point somebody apparently impersonating Baskov posted a quote on Twitter: **“Many artists came together to support Alexander Lukashenko, the President of Belorussia.”** When he saw that, Baskov blew a gasket and felt the need to defend himself: **“This is not my Twitter or Facebook. Respected media! Before quoting someone, please verify the authenticity of the account!”**

Personally I don’t see anything wrong in correcting something, if a quote is not attributed properly. But in a case like that, one still has

to stand one's ground. What Baskov should have said: "Just for the record, that quote didn't actually come from my account. But it really doesn't matter, because I feel the same way, I support Lukashenko and I am not going to apologize for that..."

I am not understanding all the nuances of the ensuing feud, but it seems like Kirkorov took offense at what he saw as Baskov's squirmy backsliding, or caving in to public opinion. Kirkorov posted his own aggrieved comment: "I just wanted to say to you, (Baskov), have you lost your mind? My dear friend, why are you waffling like this and trying to justify yourself?" Kirkorov is right, in my opinion, and he obviously knows the first rule (and his entire career has shown this) of a major artist: NEVER APOLOGIZE for your art!