



КОНГРЕС УКРАЇНЦІВ КАНАДИ

UKRAINIAN CANADIAN CONGRESS

CONGRÈS DES UKRAINIEN-CANADIENS

**Briefing Note on Content and Layout
CANADIAN MUSEUM FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
March 2013**

Preface

On a recent tour (February 2013), the UCC delegation asked:

Question: "Where is the Holodomor gallery?"

Answer: "Gallery? No – the Holodomor does not have its own gallery but rather a panel along with a study carrel which you can find right beside the washrooms at the back of the Hope and Hardwork gallery."

Question: "Where is the First World War Internment Exhibit?"

Answer: "There is no WWI internment exhibit but there will be a WWI internment picture on one of the walls in this gallery. There will, however, be a Japanese interment exhibit since people know more about this internment than the First World War Internment."

UCC's Position

Since 2003, UCC's position has been consistent. The CMHR must contain a permanent and prominent gallery dedicated to the Holodomor and a permanent and prominent exhibit dedicated to the WW1 Internment Operations.

The planned portrayal of these two tragic human rights stories at the CMHR is insulting to human rights education and to the Ukrainian Canadian community. The Holodomor is represented on a panel buried in the back of a small gallery outside the washroom in the museum and the WW1 Internment is represented by a non-descript picture on the wall of another gallery.

The UCC calls upon the Board of Trustees of the CMHR and the Government of Canada to make immediate changes to the layout of the CMHR that ensure the Holodomor and the WW1 Internment Operations be permanently and prominently taught through a dedicated gallery to the Holodomor and an exhibit to WW1 Internment within the CMHR.

UCC proposes:

1. Holodomor – that Sub-gallery A – Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) within the "Hope and Hard work gallery" be dedicated to the Holodomor and that the UDHR topic be incorporated into the Holocaust Gallery as it focuses on the causal effect of the Holocaust in the establishment of the UDHR.

2. Internment - a separate exhibit section should be dedicated to WW1 internment operations in the gallery titled "Canada's Human Rights Journey".
3. The Canadian Challenge gallery – must include a discussion on the *War Measures Act*, legislation which was used to remove the rights of thousands of Canadians during WWI and WWII.
4. Canadian Immigrant Experience gallery – must include the difficult experiences of Ukrainian immigrants to Canada.
5. Crimes of Communism and Nazism – must include human rights transgressions connected with crimes of Soviet-Communism and Nazism.

The Ukrainian Story in the CMHR

On Friday February 7, 2013, a delegation from the Ukrainian Canadian Congress attended an extensive tour/explanation of the planned contents of the CMHR.

A number of elements presented were significantly different even from what had previously been presented to the community, as recently as at the UCC Board meeting on December 2, 2012, where Mr. Stuart Murray CMHR CEO presented the layout and content of the CMHR.

Canada's Human Rights Journey

In the gallery titled "Canada's Human Rights Journey" it was described that the WWI Internment Operations would only be represented with a picture on the upper part of a 2-storey wall within this gallery. Among the 30 or so display exhibits, one is to depict the "Japanese Internment in WW2". The Internment of Ukrainians and other Eastern Europeans during Canada's First National Internment Operations in WWI will not be featured as an exhibit but only with a picture.

The Canadian Challenge

In this gallery, legislation regarding Canadian Human Rights is to be discussed. There are no plans to include in this gallery the *War Measures Act*, legislation which was used to remove the rights of thousands of Canadians during WWI, WWII and the FLQ Crisis in Quebec. The legislation suspended the rights of citizens and allowed for the encampment and forced labour of tens of thousands of people including Ukrainians, Poles, Chinese, Japanese, Italians and other Canadians.

Examining the Holocaust

The central gallery in the CMHR titled Examining the Holocaust will be dedicated permanently to the story of the Holocaust. The Holocaust gallery will contain a theatre together with several walls of displays and exhibits relating to the Holocaust. At one end of the Holocaust gallery there will be an area dedicated the principles of Raphael Lemkin on the definition of genocide. In the Lemkin exhibit, after the Holocaust story is told some of the other genocides defined by Lemkin will also be displayed, including the Holodomor.

Hope and Hard Work

After the "Examining the Holocaust" gallery, the adjoining gallery will feature two sub-galleries (Sub-gallery A - Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Sub-gallery B – the Five Genocides) and a small theatre.

Sub-gallery A - Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Three quarters of the "Hope and Hard Work" Gallery will house exhibits relating to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the causal role of the Holocaust in establishing this declaration.

Sub-gallery B – the Five Genocides

One quarter of the "Hope and Hard Work" Gallery will contain 5 large "panels" and 5 learning booths depicting the 5 genocides recognized by the Canadian Government, namely the Armenian genocide, the Holocaust, Srebrenica, Rwanda and the Holodomor. There will be no distinct Holodomor gallery. The Ukrainian Canadian Congress believes that due to the magnitude and significance of the Holodomor story to human rights education, it should have a permanent gallery in the area currently slated for the Sub-gallery A - Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

At the inside corner of that room will be a small "Theatre" (capacity 25-30) for showing relevant videos. At a meeting with the UCC Board of Directors, CMHR CEO Stuart Murray announced that this would be the "Holodomor Theatre". This would be the first mention of "Holodomor" in the Museum. We were informed on our tour by Dr. Clint Curle that the name of the theatre has not yet been decided.

The placement of the Holodomor panel will be near the washroom which the museum designers believe will be a high-traffic area in the Museum. Such a placement is demeaning and insulting to the significance of the Holodomor. Furthermore, the flow of the museum galleries is such that a visitor could walk from the Holocaust Gallery, through the Universal Declaration of Human Rights gallery to the Canadian Immigrant Experience gallery without ever viewing the Five Genocides, unless they needed to visit the washroom.

Canadian Immigrant Experience

A triangular room will be dedicated to the "Canadian Immigrant Experience. At present, there are no plans to include the difficult experience of Ukrainian immigrants to Canada and that this particular aspect of Canadian Immigration was not to be considered here. It was, however, stated that this aspect should be raised with the programming group and may be considered.

This "immigration" gallery would contain 7 specific "stories" including the immigration of Sikhs and Armenian children to Canada as examples, but were told that this was not finalised as yet, however, there is no plan to include a Ukrainian immigration "story".

During various waves of Ukrainian immigration to Canada, many Ukrainians were forbidden from speaking their language, bullied and ostracized. As a result, many assimilated into the Anglo culture by changing their names and rejected their identity, traditions and values.

Other

When asked if there is any plan to include human rights transgressions connected to WWII, the CMHR representative stated that WWII related matters are more suitable for the Canadian War Museum.

There are many human rights stories that starkly impacted millions of Canadian arising from the crimes of communism and Nazism. For example, the use of slave labour by the Germans (ost-arbeiters) and Gulag prisoners by the Soviets; classification of people as sub-humans (untermenschen) by the Germans and "Kulaks" and "enemies of the people" by the Soviets, which fingered such people for abuse and destruction.

CMHR representatives acknowledged that these are human rights stories but were not under consideration.

Background

The UCC has called for an inclusive and equitable Canadian Museum for Human Rights (CMHR) that would include dedicated permanent Holocaust and Holodomor galleries as well as a permanent exhibit dedicated to Canada's World War I Internment Operations, among other topics/themes.

Because of its distinct pedagogical value to human rights education, we have asserted that the Holodomor, arguably one of the greatest acts of genocide in 20th century European history, should be displayed in a permanent and prominent gallery in the CMHR.

The UCC and our member community organizations along with many other ethnocultural organizations have made such representations to the largely discredited Content Advisory Committee of the CMHR, to the Museum's Board of Trustees and Management, the Government of Canada, and Members of the House of Commons. Despite over 85 representations by the UCC and its member organizations to the Content Advisory Committee ("CAC"), the CAC's report did not contain any references to the Holodomor or the crimes of communism.

To our deep dismay, the UCC has learned from its recent meetings with CMHR management and tour of the CMHR, that neither Canada's World War I Internment Operations nor the Holodomor will have permanent and prominent exhibits and galleries in the CMHR.

The CMHR is proceeding with only 2 permanent galleries: one dedicated to the Holocaust and the other dedicated to the Indigenous peoples. While the UCC supports the inclusion of Holocaust and Aboriginal galleries, we contend that the story of the Holodomor must be housed in a permanent, dedicated and prominent gallery in the CMHR. Furthermore, due to the unique and tragic Canadian human rights story of Canada's internment of Ukrainians and other Eastern Europeans during WW1, we strongly contend that this story must be told in a dedicated exhibit within the CMHR.

Why WW1 Internment Operations?

The experience of Ukrainians and other Europeans unjustly imprisoned during Canada's first national internment operations of 1914-1920 should be permanently included in an exhibit.

During this tragic period thousands of Ukrainians and other East Europeans were unjustly imprisoned and disenfranchised only because of where they had come from. This was the first time the *War Measures Act* was used, which gave precedence to other well known human rights abuses in Canada including the Chinese Head tax, Internment of Japanese and Italians during WW2.

Why the Holodomor?

The Holodomor should be included in this publicly-funded museum for the following reasons:

1. It is a genocide that was recently recognized (May 2008) by the Parliament of Canada and one which is relatively unknown;
2. By its geographical focus and intensity is arguably one of the greatest genocides in human history;
3. It is an example of the human rights violations suffered by the victims of communism around the world; specifically the denial of the human right to food as well as the crimes of communism; and
4. It is still being denied today.
5. Studied in concert with the Holocaust provides a valuable study of two heinous regimes and dictators that attempted to eradicate the Jewish and Ukrainian peoples on the territory some scholars have called the Bloodlands.

History (2000-2009)

The Ukrainian Canadian Congress represents the interests of 1.2 million Canadians of Ukrainian origin. Ukrainian Canadians have a particular interest in the content of the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, having been subjects of one of the twentieth century's greatest atrocities, the genocidal Holodomor in 1932-33, as well as Canada's first national internment operations in 1914 – 1920.

The Ukrainian Canadian Congress is deeply concerned about process and governance issues around the management and development of the Canadian Museum of Human Rights and in particular, the failure to include in any significant way, the experience of Ukrainians in Canada and in Ukraine in the permanent galleries of the CMHR.

In 2000, the late Israel Asper announced his intention to build a Holocaust Museum in Canada. When Mr. Asper announced his intention to seek public funding for a revised Human Rights Museum project, the Ukrainian Canadian Congress (UCC) National expressed its concern with the scope and focus of a publicly funded museum. These concerns were expressed to the Government of Canada, to Mr. Asper personally and to the Asper Foundation. Following discussions with the Asper Foundation, in April 2003, UCC National received assurances from

the Asper Foundation that:

1. The Ukrainian Famine/Genocide (Holodomor) of 1932-1933 would be featured very clearly, distinctly and permanently in the CMHR.
2. The Internment of Ukrainian Canadians during WWI would be included as part of "The Canadian Stories Gallery."
3. There would be a recognition that the Ukrainian people were victims of the Nazis during WWII and that this would be portrayed as an historical fact in any discussion about the Holocaust.
4. Mr. Asper and the Asper Foundation would continue to work with the UCC in telling its history of human rights abuses in Canada and Ukraine and to work with our representatives towards this objective.

On the basis of these representations, the UCC expressed publicly its support for the CMHR.

In 2009, the CMHR's Content Advisory Committee undertook extensive cross-country consultations. Approximately 85 representations were made to the Content Advisory Committee by members of the Ukrainian community. Unfortunately, large sections of witness testimony were omitted from the Committee's findings. These consultations took place from May 2009 to February 2010.

The Content Advisory Committee of the CMHR released its final report on September 22, 2010. There is no mention in that report of the experience of Ukrainians in Canada or in Ukraine.

The current vision of the CMHR is to include only two permanent galleries in the museum - one devoted to aboriginal issues and another to the Holocaust.

This vision of the CMHR is not consistent with the undertaking given to the UCC National by the Asper Foundation, nor is it reflective of the historical record or the experience of all Canadians.