

Creating Hope for the Future through Action and Change

Report on the Findings of the
February 28, 2004 'Futures' Workshop of the
Ukrainian Self-Reliance League of Canada

March, 2005

Preface

For the last number of years the Ukrainian Self-Reliance League (USRL/CYC) and its component organizations have been engaged in a process of trying to address an apparent crisis within the Ukrainian Canadian Orthodox community, namely dramatically declining memberships. The declining memberships have been occurring in its component lay organizations and within the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada (UOCC). This report documents the results of a workshop held on February 28, 2004 in Regina which drew on the recent experiences of the community and focused on developing concrete proposals that would arrest the declining memberships.

A further purpose of this report is to make the findings of the workshop available to the delegates to the USRL/CYC 2005 Convention to be held in Saskatoon and to the overall membership for its information and use. Consequently, it is hoped that the report will act as a catalyst for getting the community to undertake action that is both strategic and effective to address the critical challenges facing it.

Tony Harras
Editor of the 'Feb. 28/'04 Futures' report

Forward

For at least the last five years the Ukrainian Self-Reliance League (USRL/CYC) and its component member organizations have been trying to reverse their declining membership and thereby enhance the future prospects of their organizations. Over the years, a number of reports have been prepared that in various degrees address the 'future' question of the Ukrainian Canadian Orthodox community. These previous efforts led to the decision to hold a 'futures' workshop on February 28, 2004. The USRL family of organizations is indebted to all those who participated in the workshop including the facilitator Wayne Hellquist, but the USRL is also indebted to everyone who has been involved in the earlier efforts which in turn helped create the informational and attitudinal basis for the 2004 workshop.

The February 2004 workshop has resulted in a number of specific actions to date including the creation of a joint committee of the Ukrainian Self-Reliance League and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada as well as other initiatives. But it is further hoped that the vision and suggestions of the workshop will help reinvigorate, strengthen and grow the USRL, the UOCC and our community as a whole.

Michael Zaleschuk
President, USRL of Canada

Table of Contents

Preface	2
Foreword	2
1. Executive Summary	4
2. Introduction	5
3. The February 28th Workshop	6
4. The Findings	7
5. Recommendations	7
6. Next Steps	9
Group Picture	9
Appendix A. Proceedings of the February 28th workshop	10
Appendix B. Outline of Fr. Taras Udod's presentation on legal matters related to the Church	21

1. Executive Summary

The primary purpose of this report is to document the findings of a 'Futures' workshop sponsored by the Ukrainian Self-Reliance League (USRL-CYC) which was held in Regina February 28, 2004. A secondary purpose of the report is to place the holding and findings of the workshop within the context of events occurring in the Ukrainian Canadian Orthodox community.

For the last number of decades there has been a significant decline in the membership of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada and its associated youth's, women's, and men's organizations. Although this is similar to what has been occurring in many other ethnocultural communities and religious institutions it has been nevertheless disconcerting to members of the Ukrainian Orthodox community. As a result, attempts have been made to identify the causes of these declines and to develop concrete action which could be taken to reverse these trends.

The culmination of these efforts was the above noted 'Futures' workshop held in Regina. The workshop participants, USRL members from across Canada, identified eight main areas and a larger number of sub-areas where 'doable and effective' action could be taken which would materially benefit the Ukrainian Canadian Orthodox community in a variety of positive ways. Specifically, these areas in broad terms are:

1. Serve and support the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada (UOCC) in its emerging mission and embrace / affirm its distinct character
2. Foster an appreciation and promote the development of contemporary Ukrainian Canadian culture and identity
3. To coordinate, lead and direct activities of USRL component organizations
4. Provide leadership and advocacy on issues affecting the Ukrainian Canadian community
5. Provide leadership support to the development of democratic institutions and unity / strength of Orthodoxy in Ukraine
6. Promote our core values of self respect, self help, self reliance / assurance
7. Provide clarity on the relationship between USRL and UOCC
8. Ensure the future of USRL by assisting youth and recruiting members, etc.

The consensus of the workshop participants was that, inherent in the above, one of the most pressing needs was to establish a formal mechanism for dialogue between the UOCC and the USRL and to use that as one of the vehicles to help identify action that would be subsequently taken to grow the overall community. This in no way suggested that the other actions being recommended as a result of the workshop should be placed on 'hold' in the meantime. If fact, another purpose of this report is to encourage all member organizations and individuals to undertake concrete action which would help reinvigorate the Ukrainian Canadian Orthodox community.

2. Introduction

The history of the Ukrainian Self-Reliance League, by most measures, is filled with numerous examples of huge personal sacrifices and achievements, major collective accomplishments and

the transformation of a predominantly agrarian society into one that successfully participates in today's mainly urban mainstream while at the same time retaining its cultural distinctiveness. However, it is in the latter area that the success has been less than stellar. The Ukrainian Canadian community, as other ethno-cultural communities in Canada, has succumbed in large part to the assimilative influences of the dominant Anglo-American cultural of North America.

The Ukrainian Canadian leadership has been aware of and concerned about these trends for decades. In the Ukrainian Canadian Orthodox community, as compared to the overall Ukrainian Canadian community, the trends have been similar although the specifics of certain situations differ. Generally within the Ukrainian Orthodox community there has been a greater commitment by its institutions to retain its 'Ukrainian' distinctiveness than by the overall Ukrainian Canadian community. This however has not been a sufficient factor to achieve community maintenance let alone growth.

Consequently and notwithstanding a litany of outstanding role models and achievements, the youth and many adults have not chosen to remain active in the 'organized' Ukrainian Canadian Orthodox community. An equally long litany of reasons is cited for the current circumstances ranging from language barriers, to systemic societal discrimination and to the absence of a viable strategy for community growth. In the midst of these discussions and reflections there has been a growing conviction that one of the main reasons why the community is declining is that the USRL and its component organizations and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada are not working in harmony and in fact, some believe, there may be some hostility toward each other.

As noted earlier, the community leadership has been aware of these trends for decades and has responded in a traditional manner. Initially there was denial followed by acknowledgement and an almost rigid response. Only recently has there been a major effort made to address these trends from a sociological perspective.

Within the last decade seminars and workshops have been held to seek ways of arresting and possibly reversing the community's declining membership. The latest of such workshops was organized by the USRL and held in Regina on February 28, 2004. This report documents the findings and conclusions of that workshop. It is the hope of the USRL and hopefully of its component organizations that the results of the February 28th workshop will form the basis of a 'road map' for revitalizing our community in the future.

3. The February 28th Workshop

The February 28, 2004 'futures' workshop was held at Selo Gardens, 1106 McNiven Street, in Regina. The facilitator was Wayne Hellquist of Quest Consulting of Regina. Wayne has conducted these types of workshops for in excess of a decade. He has considerable experience with the Ukrainian Orthodox community and the multicultural community in that he has conducted a number of workshops for both groups.

The methodology used by Wayne can be generally described as the 'future search' method. Essentially the method requires the workshop attendees to identify the issues and the desired

outcomes. The process consists of the participants responding to a series of thematic questions and in a systematic manner identifying where the target group is to where it wants to be along with concrete action proposals. Notes are compiled as the workshop progresses and posted on walls for everyone's easy reference.

Attending the workshop were the following individuals:

Jars Balan	Sonia Bejzyk	Luba Feduschak
Dr. Tony Harras	Wayne Hellquist	Fr. Andrew Jarmus
Rosemarie Kapyt	Slawko Kindrachuk	Dr. Peter Kondra
Yars Lozowchuk	Gerald Luciuk	Gene Luczkiw
Zenovia Sakowsky	Audrey Sojonky	Dmytro Spytkowski
Steve Stasiuk	Fr. Taras Udod	Orest Warnyca
Dr. Roman Yereniuk	Michael Zaleschuk	

At the outset of the workshop, the attendees were asked to focus on what they as a group wanted to achieve that day and what they wanted their community to be like in the future. Overall there was an acceptance that the focus had to be on change within the community since obviously what the community had been doing recently, overall, has not been working. Specifically, the group had to reflect on the future for their community and on the hows, whys, whens and whats of achieving its desired future. Further, everyone needed to appreciate that the route/journey for achieving these goals may not be a straight line but one full of twists and turns plus some very new or novel initiatives.

The ground rules for the workshop were not unlike most workshops of this type. These are tabulated in Appendix A; but some of the more familiar ones were:

- Everybody's contribution is important
- Everyone needs to be focused on the day's goal and on accomplishing it
- Everyone should feel free to express their ideas, feelings, take chances and speak frankly
- Be inclusive and open minded
- End product - develop 2 or 3 doable, achievable, measurable deliverables
- Listen with respect and respond to ideas rather than the person
- Be constructive and positive
- Recognize that all questions are valid

The broader themes that were addressed during the workshop were as listed below. Again these are further detailed in Appendix A. The themes were:

- What are your expectations for the day? At the end of the day what do the attendees hope to achieve?
- What should be the future purpose of USRL? What do we (USRL) need to / want to do?
- What are the internal and external issues that are affecting the organization?
- What are some of the things (projects/programs) that could potentially have significant 'positive' impacts on the USRL and for which doable plans could be developed?

4. The Findings

At the end of the workshop, the group had identified eight areas where USRL and its members should focus on if they are to reinvigorate their community. These in general terms were:

1. Serve and support the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada (UOCC) in its emerging mission and embrace / affirm its distinctly conciliar character.
2. Foster an appreciation and promote the development of contemporary Ukrainian Canadian culture and identity
3. To coordinate, lead and direct activities of USRL component organizations
4. Provide leadership and advocacy on issues affecting the Ukrainian Canadian community
5. Provide leadership support to the development of democratic institutions and unity / strength of Orthodoxy in Ukraine
6. Promote our core values of self respect, self help, self reliance / assurance
7. Provide clarity on the relationship between USRL and UOCC
8. Ensure the future of USRL by assisting youth and recruiting members, etc

5. Recommendations

As the final step, the workshop participants prioritized the above findings. These are restated below along with the specifics of each recommendation.

- 1. Serve and Support the UOCC in its emerging mission and embrace / affirm its distinctly conciliar Ukrainian Canadian character**
 1. Commission translation of M-L history of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in E format
 2. Conferences on the conciliar governance and decision making (*SOBOR needs to be factored in*).
 3. International conference at St. Andrew's College (SAC) on role of Laity in governance of the UOCC.
 4. Survey of USRL support of UOCC.
- 2. Foster an appreciation and promote the development of contemporary Ukrainian Canadian culture and identity**
 1. Sponsor adult cultural immersion camps
 2. Sponsor youth Ukrainian Orthodox immersion camps
 3. Commission works by Ukrainian Canadian artists
 4. Develop art appreciation handbook
 5. Survey of USRL support of UOC.
- 3. To coordinate, lead and direct activities of USRL components**
 1. (Hire/appoint) An Executive Director for the USRL
** This is a reflection of capacity. Issues around staffing. How do we provide the human resources necessary to deliver this?*
 2. Conference / Workshop / Position Paper to examine USRL governance before 2005 convention

3. Project coordinators
- 4. Provide leadership and advocacy on issues affecting Ukrainian community**
 1. Commission position papers on core USRL values and current issues (Multi, UCCLA, UIA)
 - * *This also takes care of 6-1 and 6-2 as these all deal with the same thing - revamping image, material, etc.*
- 5. Provide leadership support to the development of democratic institutions & unity / strength of Orthodoxy in Ukraine**
 1. Support UCC. in supervising elections in Ukraine
 2. Each national executive take on one project to assist Ukraine
 3. Co-sponsor Ukrainian Carols CD / Book with K.M.A.
 4. Facilitate priests / laity relationships with Orthodox Church Ukraine and experience retreats
 5. Ethics course Ukraine and Canada
- 6. Promote our core values of self respect, self help, self reliance / assurance**
 1. Revamp informational material / website. Present testimonials re the relevance of USRL in life / profession. Visitations to branches and/or parishes
 2. Position paper on USRL core values
 3. Support Clergy to engage and promote USRL. Money to attend conference
 4. Manual for Theology Students / New Clergy on USRL core values and history
- 7. Clarity of the relationship between USRL and UOCC**
 1. Bilateral committee (USRL, UOCC) to meet regularly and report
 2. Commission - Bilateral paper on USRL - UOCC relations and recommendations for change prior to SOBOR 2005
 3. USRL lobby / Position SOBOR 2005
- 8. Ensure the future of USRL by assisting youth and recruiting members, etc**
 1. Promote network of Ukrainian Orthodox / USRL hostels, facilitate community development
 2. Task force to identify heritage churches and plan for preservation
 3. Develop leadership programs for youth by modelling / skill development / mentoring
 4. Distribute the recently developed (in Regina) Immigrant Handbook

6. Next Steps

The consensus is that, in order that the results of the workshop and the process leading to it, create tangible and the desired outcomes, a conscious and major effort will be necessary on the part of all, the USRL and its component organizations and members. Consequently the initial next steps must be:

- 1) the larger USRL community has to decide on what projects/programs they,

on an organizational and individual basis, are going to undertake. Instead of trying to do everything at the same time, it will be necessary to prioritize what will have the most desirable initial impact and the best results for the effort spent, and

- 2) the next steps will be for a 4 or 5 person team, from each of the organizations, to review what was discussed at the workshop. Following this, an action plan needs to be developed, undertaken and a commitment made to adhere to it.



Group Picture of the Attendees

Front row (l to r) Orest Warnyca, Zenovia Sakowsky, Fr. Andrew Jarmus, Michael Zaleschuk, Fr. Taras Udod, Rosemarie Kapyt, Dr. Tony Harras

Back row (l to r) Sonia Bejzyk, Dr. Roman Yereniuk, Gerald Luciuk, Jars Balan, Steve Stasiuk, Yars Lozowchuk, Wayne Hellquist, Gene Luczkiw, Dr. Peter Kondra, Slawko Kindrachuk, Dmytro Spytkowski, Luba Feduschak, Audrey Sojonky