

# World Congress



# of Families Newsletter

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## WCF NEWS & EVENTS

### JACOBS AND FEDER ADDRESS 3,000 AT PRO-FAMILY CONFERENCE IN LATVIA

World Congress of Families Global Coordinator Larry Jacobs and Communications Director Don Feder addressed a pro-family conference in Riga, Latvia (November 14-18) sponsored by Watchmen On The Walls (see page 2 story).



The conference was attended by more than 3,000 pro-family activists from the Baltic states, Russia, Belyorussia and the Ukraine. It was organized by Pastor Alexey Ledyayev, leader of Riga's New Generation Church.

Feder spoke on "Hollywood And The Family" and "How To Take The Chill Out of Demographic Winter." [Click here to view video.](#)

Jacobs discussed the history and goals of World Congress of Families, as well as speaking on pro-family

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### NEW BOOK BY DR. JOHN HOWARD

Dr. John Howard, senior fellow of The Howard Center for Family, Religion & Society, has a new book – *Christianity: Lifeblood of America's Free Society (1620-1945)*.

The volume examines America's Christian heritage from the earliest settlements, through the Revolutionary and Civil Wars and concludes at mid-point of the 20th century. It also discusses the decline of Christianity's influence in the aftermath of World War II. Dr. Howard presents compelling evidence of the intimate connection between faith and freedom, and speculates



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### A NEW ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE FOR WORLD CONGRESS OF FAMILIES

Among the recommendations that came out of the WCF Bermuda meeting (October 4-6) was a new organization structure for World Congress of Families. The recommendations were approved by the board of directors of The Howard Center for Family, Religion & Society, parent organization of WCF, at its meeting in November.



Operational governance of World Congress of Families will be placed in two committees:

A Managing Committee responsible for overall management and coordination of WCF, including providing a strategic vision.

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### COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT WORLD CONGRESS OF FAMILIES – ANSWERED BY DR. ALLAN C. CARLSON INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY



*Question: Is the World Congress of Families a religious organization?*

*Answer:* The World Congress of Families encompasses believers of many religions. We recognize that religious belief is a central support for the natural family. I'm a member of the Lutheran Church. Global Coordinator Larry Jacobs is an evangelical and Communications Director Don Feder is a Jew.

The more than 100 speakers at WCF IV spanned the religious spectrum, including Dr. Paige Patterson (president of the Southwest Baptist Theological Seminary) and Cardinal Alfonso Lopez Trujillo (president of the Pontifical Council for the Family).

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## NEW BOOK BY DR. JOHN HOWARD

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on how our culture can be turned back to Judeo-Christian principles.

Historian Paul Johnson says: "Dr. Howard has written a powerful and highly readable series of reflections on the role Christianity has played in the history of the United States. The book is crowded with fascinating information and illustrated by many apt quotations. The argument is the sinewy and the conclusions fresh and stimulating. This is a book those who love America will cherish and learn from."

John Howard is a much-decorated veteran of World War II. He was president of Rockford College in Rockford, IL. for 17 years, and served in both the Eisenhower and Nixon administrations, in the latter as a member of the National Commission on Marijuana and Drug Abuse. He was also National President of the American Association of Presidents of Independent Colleges and Universities for three years. Over 40 of his addresses have been published in Vital Speeches.



*To order a copy of Christianity:*

*Lifeblood of America's Free Society (1620-1945), [click here.](#)*

## JACOBS AND FEDER ADDRESS 3,000

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resources available on the Internet. [Click here for video.](#)

The conference was also addressed by Pastor Ledyaeve, David Sobrepena of Manila, Russian businessman Vlad Kusakin, Anselm Madubuko, a pro-family leader in Nigeria, and American activist Scott Lively, president of Defend The Family International.



Jacobs and Feder also met with pro-family leaders in the Latvian government, including Iveta Zalpetera (State Secretary, Ministry for Children and Family Affairs), Inese Slesere (member of the Latvian Parliament, former member of the EU Parliament and a longtime WCF activist), Inta Feldmane (Latvian MP) and Viesturs Kleinbergs (Assistant to the Minister for Children and Family Affairs). Jacobs and Feder also met Janis Vanags, Archbishop of the Lutheran Church in Latvia.

Slesere spoke at World Congress of Families III and IV. (Excerpts from her Warsaw speech are reprinted in this issue.) Ledyaeve spoke at WCF IV. Watchmen on the Walls produced an exceptional video of the Warsaw Congress, [which can be viewed by clicking here.](#)

Officials of the Latvian government and pro-family leaders expressed an interest in having World Congress of Families V in Riga.

## A NEW ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE FOR WORLD CONGRESS OF FAMILIES

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- The Managing Committee will be composed of the Congress's International Secretary, who will in turn designate 4 other members.
- The Managing Committee will in turn choose members of a Selection Committee (which will select the site of the next World Congress of Families).
- The committee will receive and decide on recommendations of the Selection Committee regarding sites, dates, venues and themes of future Congresses and approve WCF endorsement/sponsorship of regional Congresses.

A Selection Committee will be composed of about 15 members, chosen by the Managing Committee shortly after the conclusion of each World Congress of Families.

- The Selection Committee will include at least two members from the organizing (local host) committee of the last Congress.
- It will reflect geographic and religious diversity.
- The Managing Committee will designate the chairman of the Selection Committee.
- The Selection Committee will consider proposals to host the next Congress, as well as recommendations of the Managing Committee regarding site, dates, venue and theme.
- After a site is chosen, the Selection Committee will expand to include 3 to 5 members of the successful local organizing (host) committee. At that point, it will be designated the International Planning Committee.
- As such, it will develop a proposed schedule for the Congress and a list of speakers for consideration and approval by the Managing Committee.
- This committee's work will end at the successful conclusion of the Congress. The Managing Committee will function on an ongoing basis.

As noted in the November World Congress of Families News, the Bermuda meeting recommended that the location of future Congresses be "put out to bid," following the Olympic model. Proposals should include: Congress theme, probable venue (physical location of the Congress), accommodations, a plan for recruiting and training volunteers, and a coherent business plan – including fundraising objectives. Preference will be given to plans that are fully or largely self-funded as well as to locations of strategic importance to the global pro-family movement.



[Click here to request more information.](#)

# World Congress of Families Partners

To date, 14 organizations have become World Congress of Families Partners. In this issue, we welcome six new partners.

[For more information on the WCF Partners Program, click here.](#)



**ALLIANCE DEFENSE FUND** was founded for the unique purpose of aggressively defending religious liberty. ADF directly litigates carefully chosen, strategic cases to protect freedom of religion, guard the sanctity of human life and preserve marriage and traditional family values. Among other activities, ADF has created an internal mentoring program in which new attorneys with the finest credentials are trained to litigate – and win – these crucial cases.

[Click here for the Alliance Defense Fund website](#)



**THE CATHOLIC FAMILY AND HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTE (C-FAM)** is a non-profit research and educational institute focusing on international social policy. C-FAM monitors the evolving international debate on social policy, and assists governments at the UN and elsewhere to more deeply understand these difficult issues. C-FAM's mission also includes educating the public about pressing issues debated at the UN and at other international institutions.

[Click here for the C-FAM website](#)



## IN DEFENSE OF CHRISTIAN VALUES

(official name, *Luci sull'Est - Associazione per la Difesa dei Valori Cristiani*), based in Italy, is a pro-family, pro-life, and pro-traditional-values organization with more than 175,000 members. In Defense of Christian Values is located in Rome and operates in several of the former Soviet republics.

[Click here for the website of In Defense of Christian Values \(which is in Italian\)](#)

## THE DOHA INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR FAMILY STUDIES AND



**DEVELOPMENT** is committed to promoting the family as the natural and fundamental group unit of society. The Qatar-based Institute undertakes to: support effective programs that assist and promote stable family life, coordinate a series of regional conferences focused on the family, participate in both governmental and non-governmental family policy events, publish *The Family in the New Millennium* (an annual volume of scholarship) and sponsor family-friendly media initiatives.

[Click here for the Doha Institute website.](#)

## HIS SERVANTS,

whose purpose is to know, serve and build the Kingdom of God, is an organization used solely as a facility for ministry. His Servants wants to assist in whatever God is seeking to do in each person's life. It publishes material on preventing the homosexual condition, supporting fatherhood and celebrating God's design.

[Click here for the website of His Servants](#)



## WATCHMEN ON THE

**WALLS** is an international Christian movement that unites



Christian leaders and Christian and social organizations and aims to protect Christian morals and values in society. Among other activities, it organizes massive events on the municipal level, involving pastors, politicians, singers and musicians. It sponsored a November conference in Riga, Latvia addressed by Larry Jacobs and Don Feder ([see story, page 1](#)).

[Click here for the English-language website of an affiliated group, Defend the Family.com](#)

Other World Congress of Families Partners spotlighted in past issues include:

[American Values](#) -- [Click here for website](#)  
[Concerned Women for America](#) -- [Click here for website](#)  
[GrasstopsUSA.com](#) -- [Click here for website](#)  
[Human Life International](#) -- [Click here for website](#)

[REAL Women of Canada](#) -- [Click here for website](#)  
[Religious Freedom Coalition](#) -- [Click here for website](#)  
[Tradition, Family And Property](#) -- [Click here for website](#)  
[United Families International](#) -- [Click here for website](#)

[Click here for information on how your organization can become a World Congress of Families Partner](#)



# Family News from Around the Globe



## Massachusetts Bill Would Ban Spanking –

A bill filed in the Massachusetts legislature would ban corporal punishment (defined as “the willful infliction of physical pain or injurious

or humiliating treatment”) on children in the state. Randy Thomasson, president of the Campaign for Children and Families, charged, “This bill equates loving, corrective discipline with hateful, harmful abuse.” Thomasson asked, “What’s next, jail time for parents who raise their voices to their children? We already have enough legitimate laws prohibiting physical abuse of children, and this proposal is certainly not one of them.” Thomasson’s group defeated similar legislation in California – which would have put parents who spank their children on 4 years probation, forced them to attend “nonviolent” parenting classes and made their children the subject of a protective order.



## Echoes of Nazism In German Persecution of Homeschool Families –

While Germany has turned away from much of its past, the persecution of families that homeschool, begun in the Third Reich,

not only continues but intensifies. A recent decision by the Federal High Court of Karlsruhe, Germany’s highest court, found officials in Paderborn remiss in allowing a family to move to Austria where their two children could be educated at home. The court reiterated the government’s position that homeschooling is “child welfare endangerment.” In the face of international criticism, the German government admits that children schooled at home do as well on standardized test scores as those in the state school system, but claims, “School teaches not only knowledge but also social conduct, encourages dialogue among people of different beliefs and cultures, and helps students to become responsible citizens.” The Netzwerk Bildungsfreiheit, which advocates for homeschooling parents, says this is reminiscent of a 1936 ruling of the State Court of Hamburg, which ordered, “Custody rights shall be terminated for parents who, as fanatical Bible students, cannot rear their children in accordance with today’s State and because this endangers the mental wellbeing of children, who are thereby prevented from participating in the national community.” The shadow of the swastika looms over Germany’s persecution of homeschooling families.



## Russia Urges Abortionists To Provide More Information –

Russia’s Ministry of Health has taken a modest step toward making women more aware of the consequences of abortion. The Ministry has approved a form listing

possible physical and mental health complications from abortion. Unlike informed consent laws in the United States, physicians aren’t required to present this information to women seeking an abortion. They are merely urged to do so. (Since this might result in a loss of income, if patients change their minds about having an abortion, compliance is in doubt.) Abortion has become the most common form of birth control in the country. (There probably are more abortions than births in Russia today.) Officially, 1.5 million abortions were performed in Russia last year, versus 1.6 million births. But the former figure is probably higher, as an estimated 10-15% of all abortions aren’t recorded. Russia’s declining population (it’s losing three-quarters of a million people a year) has the government frantically offering huge bonuses to families who have more than one child.



## Multi-Party Pro-Life Coalition Launched in Northern Ireland Legislature –

On November 5, the All-Party Pro-Life Group of the Northern

Ireland Assembly was launched with a meeting at the Stormont. The coalition, organized by Bernadette Smyth of Northern Ireland’s Precious Life, was addressed by Dr. Alveda King, niece of Dr. Martin Luther King, who spoke of her own abortion and why she now speaks out for the civil rights of unborn children through “Silent No More,” an organization of post-abortive women. Present were members of the Social Democratic and Labor Party, Alliance Party, Ulster Unionists Party, Democratic Unionist Party and Independent MLA. The coalition was formed to oppose any extension of Northern Ireland’s 1967 Abortion Act, which allows abortions in cases where it can be proven that a continuation of the pregnancy would harm the physical or mental health of the mother.

Send us news of pro-family developments in your country and around the world. We’re particularly interested in the activities of pro-life and pro-family groups outside the U.S.

[Click here to reach the editor of the World Congress of Families Newsletter.](#)



# WCF - PROFILES IN LEADERSHIP

This continues our regular feature of celebrating the women and men who have contributed to the growing success of the international pro-family movement.

## BABETTE FRANCIS

Babette Francis grew up in India and holds degrees in microbiology and chemistry. She is a free-lance writer and for 10 years broadcast on the radio show "Australian Diary." Her articles currently appear in the Melbourne Herald Sun.

In 1995, Francis was invited by the Pontifical Council for the Family to chair the English-language group's discussions at the Third World Congress of Pro-Life Movements, held in Rome.

Francis attended meetings of the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women, The U.N.'s International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo +5) and the Beijing +5 UN Conference on Women, the last as the representative of an accredited NGO.

Mrs. Francis is the National and Overseas Coordinator of the Endeavour Forum – a Christian pro-life, pro-family lobby which is an NGO with Special Consultative Status with the U.N. Economic and Social Council. At meetings of the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women, she has organized NGO workshops on the link between abortion and breast cancer and post-abortion trauma.

Mrs. Francis is married to Charles Francis and they have eight children, 18 grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Francis has the distinction of being one of the very few pro-family leaders to have addressed all four World Congresses of Families.

[To read her speech at the Warsaw Congress, click here.](#)



## RICHARD G. WILKINS, J.D.

Richard G. Wilkins is the Managing Director of the Doha International Institute for Family Studies and Development in Qatar (see page 3 story). He also served as Chair of the NGO Working Committee for the 2004 Doha International Conference for the Family.

For the past decade, Wilkins was Managing Director of the World Family Policy Center at the J. Reuben Clark Law School at Brigham Young University.

He has written extensively on U.S. constitutional law, international law and family policy. Professor Wilkins is a former assistant to the United States Solicitor General and argued eight cases before the U.S. Supreme Court.

Professor Wilkins taught a course on international human rights in Beijing and has made presentations to numerous U.N. bodies and commissions including the General Assembly and the Commissions on Social Development and Human Settlements. He has testified before legislative panels in Australia, Sweden, the United States and the EU, as well as assisting various governmental and non-governmental advisory committees on issues related to the proposed Constitution for the European Union.

Professor Wilkins is married to Melany Moore Wilkins. They have four children and two grandchildren.

Wilkins spoke at World Congress of Families II, III and IV.



## COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT WORLD CONGRESS OF FAMILIES

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Among the 45 co-sponsors of the Warsaw Congress were the Central European Area of the LDS Church, the Knights of Columbus and the Family Ministry of the Church of God, the world's fastest-growing Pentecostal church.

The World Congress of Families isn't an ecumenical movement, but does seek to unite orthodox believers of diverse faiths behind support for the natural family.



## WORLD CONGRESS OF FAMILIES NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT

World Congress of Families relies on the generous support of pro-family donors and activists such as you. Help us to build a truly international pro-family movement and set the stage for World Congress of Families V.

[Click here to make a tax-deductible donation.](#)

# Spotlight



On..

*This is part of our on-going series highlighting speeches from World Congress of Families IV (Warsaw, May 11-13, 2007)*

## EXCERPTS FROM INESE SLESERE SPEECH TO WORLD CONGRESS OF FAMILIES IV – “BUILDING A PRO-FAMILY POLICY IN LATVIA”

Inese Slesere is a member of the Latvian Parliament and a former member of the parliament of the European Union. She addressed World Congress of Families III and IV. Here are excerpts from her Warsaw speech.

“A few statistics should serve to illustrate the seriousness of the demographic problem in Latvia.

Since 1989, our population has declined by 13% -- from 2.6 million to 2.3 million (in 2004). The number of children aged 17 and younger has decreased by almost 30 %, from 681,000 to 469,000.

Our divorce rate is one of the highest in Europe, with 61% of marriages ending in divorce. More and more children are being born out of wedlock – 39% of all children in 2003, compared with 17% in 1990. In 2003, for every 1,000 births there were 691 abortions.”

“After the parliamentary elections of 2002, a political party representing Christian values not only gained seats in the parliament, but also actively participated in forming a new government and determining family policies.”

“Since 2003, the Latvian government has worked to overcome the demographic crisis and build family friendly infrastructure as a top political priority.

In 2003, the Latvian government established the Ministry of Children and Family Affairs.

Special tax incentives are planned to help families who are raising children. A new law, which took effect on 1 January 2005, provides for the reduction of income taxes for families with children.

Also noteworthy is the increase in the child-care allowance to a Latvian family during the first year after the birth of a child. This makes it possible for one parent to stay at home for a year and to look after a newborn without any loss of

household income.

Latvia's National Action Plan also provides for certificates to Family-Friendly Enterprises.”

“Since 2004, special benefits have been introduced to help adoptive families during and after the adoption process. Because of this, there has been a doubling of domestic adoptions during the last two years. Also, the number of foster families has increased 20 times since 2002. ”



“To address our high divorce rate, we are in the process of establishing a Mediation Institute to promote reconciliation among couples contemplating divorce.”

“The Ministry of Children and Family Affairs has also initiated the official celebration of Mother's Day, Father's Day and Family Day. Family Day – the 15th of May - has been recently included in the law as an official celebration day. We hope this will also help to elevate the role of motherhood, fatherhood and family. ”

“I believe that our most important and fruitful initiative to protect the traditional family is a proposed amendment to the Constitution that clearly defines marriage as a union between man and woman. Although our civil law already prohibits same-sex marriages, we felt that this principle is of utmost importance and should be written in the Constitution. The amendment was accepted in the Parliament on the 15th of December last year with a majority vote.”

“We believe the foregoing will serve as a positive example to all pro- family forces in Europe to take a firm stand on behalf of the traditional family despite serious, aggressive and powerful opposition throughout Europe and even the world.

It is necessary to work together to ensure that the future Europe is no longer associated with a culture of death and rejection, institutionalized egoism and population decline, but with the preservation of religious, ethical and cultural values that enhance a virtuous life in all relevant aspects.”

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