

If the Obama administration wanted to downgrade U.S. international religious freedom policy, it might prepare the way by rhetorical shift such as this.

Is that what the administration is doing? It is too soon to tell, but there are reasons to be concerned. In a follow-up post I will explore why the President and Secretary of State might in fact be acting to move IRF to the obscure margins of U.S. foreign policy, and, if they are, why their actions would reduce our nation's capacity to undermine religious persecution, and harm the interests of the American people.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF  
ERNIE HARWELL

HON. MIKE QUIGLEY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 24, 2010

Mr. QUIGLEY. Madam Speaker, in Ernie Harwell's famous definition of baseball, he wrote that it was "just a game, as simple as a ball and bat; yet as complex as the American spirit it symbolizes." There was nothing complex, however, about what one of baseball's most iconic broadcasters meant to us all. Ernie lent his voice to one of America's deepest loves for more than 50 years, most of them calling games for his beloved Detroit Tigers. He passed away a few short weeks ago at the age of 92.

Ernie brought Tiger Stadium into Michigan living rooms from Hamtramck to Bloomfield, and made the old ballpark at the corner of Michigan and Trumbull feel like a neighborhood sandlot. He'd call out the hometowns of fans who caught foul balls as if he knew all 35,000 of them by name. The beauty of his commentary was in its understated grace—simple, earnest, and full of insight. Ernie was the rare broadcaster who made you feel like you were in the stadium. He'd tell you the score at least once a minute, but never fell victim to the need to hear himself speak. A silence filled with the hum of the crowd and the call of a vendor was almost as important to his broadcast style as the vignettes from every era of the game that peppered his play-by-play.

For Ernie's faithful listeners spring was a time of hope and rebirth, as he welcomed four decades of spring training seasons with a familiar Psalm: "For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land." It is the kind of hope we can all relate to, especially fans of a certain team in my district who believe that every year might just be "next year."

When Ernie retired from broadcasting in a moving on-field ceremony in 2002, he told us "rather than say good-bye, please allow me to say thank you." Today, it's our turn. Thank you, Ernie, for all the memories. You will be missed.

HONORING SUSAN LAFFERTY

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 24, 2010

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate Susan

Lafferty upon being named as a 2010 Common Threads honoree. Mrs. Lafferty will be honored by California State University, Fresno at the 2010 Common Threads Award luncheon to be held on Friday, April 16, 2010.

Mrs. Sue Lafferty was born and raised in Los Angeles, California; away from farmland and agriculture. Mrs. Lafferty married Dave in 1976, and they moved to the Hanford-Lemoore area to begin their farming adventure.

Today, Mrs. Lafferty spends many volunteer hours working with the youth and agricultural education programs. She became involved with the Kings County 4-H Program while her daughter, Katie, was involved with the program. Although Katie is an adult, Mrs. Lafferty continues to spend countless hours with the group. Within the Kings County 4-H she has served as project leader, community leader, council secretary, council director and department chair for the Dairy Show 4-H Fair. Mrs. Lafferty is also the co-founder of Kings Harvest 4-H.

In 2009, Mrs. Lafferty encouraged eight 4-H members to develop a farm gleaning program to help them earn their Emerald Star and to supply fresh fruits and vegetables to the local food banks. Through her leadership and direction, the members were able to donate almost fifteen hundred pounds of tomatoes, nine hundred pounds of cantaloupes, seven hundred and fifty pounds of onions and two thousand pounds of sweet corn to Kings Community Action food pantry.

Beyond 4-H, Mrs. Lafferty volunteers for the Kings Fair Boosters, where she has served as President, Vice-President and secretary while also working on special events and fundraisers for the fair. Over the years, she has served in various positions for the Kings Fair Junior Fair Board, Kings Lamb Feed Committee, Hanford Future Farmers of America Parents' Club, Beef Educational Enhancement Fund (BEEF), Tulare County Fair and Great Western Livestock Show as well as the Dance Guild. Mrs. Lafferty is a lifetime member of Hanford Future Farmers of America.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend and congratulate Susan Lafferty upon her achievements. I invite my colleagues to join me in wishing Mrs. Lafferty many years of continued success.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO LARGO,  
FLORIDA, POLICE CHIEF LESTER  
ARADI

HON. C.W. BILL YOUNG

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 24, 2010

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Madam Speaker, the people of Largo, Florida, I have the privilege to represent will turn out Friday to honor their police chief, Lester Aradi, as he retires after 9 years of leading the force and a 37-year law enforcement career.

Chief Aradi has been a strong and compassionate leader who has earned the respect of the people he serves, the city's leaders under whom he works, and most importantly the men and women he leads on the Largo police force. Integrity and ethics are the words most often mentioned when people speak of Chief Aradi.

He has had a clear impact on making Largo's streets safer. Part of the reason is that he did not lead from behind a desk. He was always out in the field.

It was my privilege to work with Chief Aradi on a number of initiatives during his tenure. These include introducing new technologies into the police force to help make sure his officers had the latest equipment to do their jobs more safely and effectively. We also teamed up with the community on a project he spearheaded to create a local Silver Alert program to put out notices when senior citizens were reported lost or missing. Chief Aradi took the program state-wide and it is now a model national program.

Chief Aradi also had a special place in his heart for the families of his officers. My wife Beverly and the Chief worked together on a number of heartrending situations involving families who faced difficult times related to illness, injury, and even the death of an officer with a young family.

St. Petersburg Times reporter Lorri Helfand recently featured the life and career of Chief Aradi. Following my remarks, I would like to include her story for the benefit of my colleagues. Also, I will include an editorial from the same publication which speaks for the community in saying that Chief Aradi "will be remembered and will be missed."

Madam Speaker, serving in law enforcement is a thankless job. The officers put their lives on the line every day to protect our homes, our schools and our communities. As their leader, serving 24 hours a day 7 days a week, Chief Aradi has been the consummate professional—leading his force by example.

The people of Largo will miss Chief Aradi and we all wish him and his wife Diane the best in their well-deserved retirement years. Thank you Chief for a job well done.

[From the St. Petersburg Times, May 23, 2010]

THANKS, CHIEF ARADI, FOR YOUR SERVICE TO  
LARGO.

Lester Aradi left a good job in Illinois almost 10 years ago to come to Pinellas County because he had read a book, *Who Moved My Cheese?* and learned that change is good. Now, he's ready for another change. On June 1, Aradi will retire from his job as Largo's chief of police, and while the change may be good for Aradi, it will be a real loss for Largo.

Aradi, who lives in Clearwater, took over a police department that had been scarred by scandal and disrupted by having three chiefs in seven years. It desperately needed a steady hand at the helm. He brought discipline, direction and a closer bond between the department and the community.

Aradi was not Largo's first choice to replace retiring chief Jerry Bloechle in 2000. City officials initially preferred Vail, Colo., police Chief Greg Morrison, but after a visit to Vail, then-City Manager Steve Stanton cooled on Morrison and instead chose Aradi, the deputy chief in Buffalo Grove, Ill.

Aradi had risen through the ranks of the Buffalo Grove department for 25 years and was being groomed to take over as chief there—until he read that book about cheese. Aradi was familiar with the Tampa Bay area, having vacationed here often and even purchased a house in Clearwater. In the Largo job, he saw a challenge—a police department with a young, well-educated rank and file, but problems with leadership, discipline and profile in the community.

It was a risk for Aradi. He had never even lived outside of Illinois. He had never been