

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

chief of a police department. And the Largo department he wanted to lead had seen one chief forced out because he interfered in a criminal investigation of his 15-year-old son, and another chief retired after a scandal involving sexual activity between Largo police officers and girls in the department's Explorers post.

But Aradi took the risk. Almost 10 years later, the department and city are better for his having been here.

Whatever people needed from Aradi, he seemed able to deliver it. While his officers were careful to toe the line, they also knew their chief as a man concerned about them, their career advancement and their families. To the community, he was warm, approachable, respectful and always looking for ways to connect with them, whether it was through his Coffee with the Chief series, his community walks or his visits to their neighborhood meetings. Local nonprofits knew him as a compassionate person who helped others, especially children and the elderly.

His bosses in City Hall were grateful because he ran a good department and kept it free of scandal. Other chiefs in Pinellas County admired Aradi for his eagerness to try new techniques and his high ethical standards.

Aradi admits to being tired and ready to retire to some place serene, perhaps to a plot of land in the mountains where he can ride horses and spend long, leisurely hours with his family. It is no surprise that in making his decision to leave his job, he also was thinking of the man he trained to be ready to take over, Deputy Chief John Carroll. Staying longer would be selfish, Aradi said, and would deny Carroll an opportunity he deserves.

So Aradi is making a change, again. But in Largo, he will be remembered and he will be missed.

[From the St. Petersburg Times, May 2, 2010]

DEPARTING LARGO POLICE CHIEF LESTER
ARADI LEAVES LEGACY OF LEADERSHIP

(By Lorri Helfand)

After 36 years in law enforcement, police Chief Lester Aradi is ready to move on.

Aradi, 58, wants to give his second-in-command, John Carroll, a chance to lead. And he wants to spend more time with his wife, Diane, and family.

If Aradi stuck around, it would be for selfish reasons, he said.

"It would deny (Carroll) an opportunity to become police chief and deny someone else an opportunity to be deputy chief," said Aradi, who announced Wednesday he will leave at the end of May.

City Manager Mac Craig, who has lived in the community since 1983, said he's never seen another police chief contribute so much.

He praised Aradi for having coffee sit-downs with residents, for having a major hand in the state's Silver Alert program and for working with numerous nonprofits.

"And he did all that while running a great department," Craig said.

Aradi's law enforcement career began during the Nixon administration. He came to Largo in 2001, after 25 years in the Buffalo Grove Police Department in Illinois, where he worked his way up to deputy chief.

As Largo's chief, he earned a reputation as a warm-hearted, approachable leader.

Joseph Stefko, who lives and works in downtown Largo, said the chief attended Old Northwest neighborhood meetings and was always willing to listen to his concerns.

"You can go right up to him and talk to him," Stefko said.

He credits the chief with helping clean up his neighborhood.

"He definitely changed the crime rate," Stefko said. "When I lived here 15 years ago it was pretty bad."

But Aradi said his accessibility, coupled with his responsibilities, came with some drawbacks.

"No matter where I am, the BlackBerry is constantly going off day and night," Aradi said.

Messages range from residents telling him that their cars were stolen to announcements about the community garden getting manure.

Other law enforcement leaders say they've enjoyed working with Aradi and consider him a friend.

"It's clear Lester is a man of integrity and maintains high ethical standards," said Pinellas County Sheriff Jim Coats. "That is reflected in the staff that works underneath him."

"Lester's always been on the cutting edge," said recently retired Clearwater police Chief Sid Klein. "He's not afraid to take chances. He's just a real top-notch professional."

When Aradi came to the department, its image had been tarnished by a sexual misconduct scandal involving officers. There were tensions between the former city manager and the officers.

"I think he brought the community and the Police Department closer together by being visible himself, by being conscious of the officers, and by being respectful and doing good customer service," Mayor Pat Gerard said.

Last year, Craig ran into friction with the chief over Aradi's choice to suspend, rather than fire, an officer who fixed a ticket. Some have speculated that Craig's decision to suspend Aradi led to his departure.

"I'm not surprised because of the incident a year ago where he was publicly reprimanded by the manager," said former Mayor Bob Jackson.

But Aradi adamantly denies that.

"That's water so far under the bridge it's out there in the Caribbean Sea," Aradi said.

There were no major controversies in the department during Aradi's tenure. But that's not to say that Aradi avoided controversial issues.

Three years ago, he received flak for his support of former City Manager Steve Stanton's personal choice to become a woman. Some called for an investigation of Aradi and all officials who knew of Stanton's choice but didn't make that information public.

He tackled the issue head-on, choosing to talk about it at a local Rotary meeting.

He also took strong positions, defending his officers even when his opinions clashed with city administrators.

Last year, during budget talks, he told Craig and other city leaders he couldn't agree to furloughs, which would remove more officers from the streets.

Aradi's influence also extended beyond the community.

Last year, Aradi was recognized by the Area Agency on Aging for his efforts that helped create the statewide Silver Alert program.

Aradi says he's done with law enforcement and is not sure what he'll do down the road.

"I want to go fly-fishing again," Aradi said. "I want to ride my horse."

He's ready to live on 10 acres of land in the Blue Ridge Mountains, visit his children and new grandson, and take a permanent vacation from his BlackBerry.

About a year ago, Aradi and his wife adopted a former racehorse, Haggis Hanover, who had been neglected. They hope to adopt one or two more and move to Tennessee, Georgia or North Carolina, where one of his daughters lives.

"We've made good friends here," Aradi said. "I'm going to miss the people of this community."

But he'll be fine not being chief, anymore. "I don't need the title," Aradi said. "My family is much more important."

HONORING SUSIE SNEDDEN

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

Mrs. Susie Snedden grew up on the family farm in Maricopa, California. She graduated from the University of California, Los Angeles with a Bachelors Degree in political science. While in school, she interned for then-Congressman William Ketchum in his Washington, DC, office, the Republican State Central Committee and was the first intern for the California Cattleman's Association in Sacramento. As a young adult she returned to the family cow-calf operation that she now co-owns with her husband, Richard.

Mrs. Snedden is very active in the Kern County community. She has served as president and director for the Kern County CattleWomen and as a state director for the Kern County Cattlemen's Association. She and her husband served as state membership co-chairs for R-CALF, USA, a national cattle producer's organization. Mrs. Snedden operates an educational booth at, and assists with, the annual Farm Day in the City, has been involved at Maricopa School on the School Site Council and School Bond Committee. She often gives presentations about beef, its by-products and the cattle ranching business to classrooms and organizations.

Mr. and Mrs. Snedden have hosted visitors from around the world, providing them with a taste of ranch life. Mrs. Snedden is active member of her church, where she has led mission trips to Mexico, and has opened her home to Vacation Bible Schools and women's retreats. For her efforts, Mrs. Snedden was named "Kern County Cattle Princess" in 1972 and "Kern County CattleWoman of the Year" in 2001.

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

IN HONOR OF WILLIAM AND
MARTHA MANNING

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 24, 2010

Mr. CASTLE. Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to pay tribute to William and Martha Manning, two individuals who have been major advocates for education in my home State of Delaware.