



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on September 8, 2019

Iceland Confronts VP Mike Pence With LGBT “Rainbow” Protest

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During his recent official visit to Iceland, Vice President Mike Pence was confronted by a series of LGBT “rainbow” banners and displays — including not-so-subtle rainbow-themed bracelets gracing the wrists of Iceland’s president, Guðni Jóhannesson, and his wife, as they met Pence at Reykjavik’s famed Höfði House.

The arguably juvenile display appeared to be designed to confront Pence over his long-time opposition to same-sex marriage and special rights for homosexuals.

The *Washington Times* reported that during an official state meeting September 4, Jóhannesson and his wife, Eliza Reid, “both wore the rainbow bands ... apparently as a show of support for LGBT individuals in light of criticism of Mr. Pence’s record on gay and transgender issues.”

Iceland’s own *Monitor* newspaper reported that in addition to the country’s president, among those prominently displaying LGBT flags and banners was the IT company Advania, whose headquarters faces Höfði House. “We just felt the need to celebrate diversity today and wanted to show that by flying the flags,” Ægir Már Þórisson, director of Advania, told the *Monitor*.

The *Monitor* recalled that while serving as governor of Indiana, “Pence signed legislation in 2015, which allowed individuals and businesses to refuse access to their businesses to certain people, justified by their religious beliefs. This was thought to be a sign of discrimination, especially since restaurant owners could now refuse gay couples service, if gay lifestyle went against their beliefs. The law met fierce criticism and ended up being repealed.”

The Reykjavik paper added that “Pence became the first vice-president to speak at the openly anti-LGBT Family Research Council’s annual conference in 2018.”

In addition to the sundry “rainbow” displays across Reykjavik, homosexual activists and their supporters also reportedly held a “Party Against Pence” in the city’s Austurvöllur Square September 4.

The *Washington Times* noted that the Pence visit “isn’t the first time Mr. Jóhannesson has worn the rainbow bracelet to protest a visiting politician’s involvement with anti-LGBT policies. He has also worn it when meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin.”

In a related story, the *Washington Post* complained that Pence’s trip was made with what some considered over-the-top security measures, especially considering that Iceland is a “famously peaceful country where its president travels alone on private errands.”



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The *Post* noted that Iceland, with its population of some 350,000 citizens, “has a remarkably small police force, the majority of which is armed only with batons and pepper spray.” The paper observed that President Jóhannesson “has been spotted, among other things, visiting a popular geothermal bath and ‘plogging’ (picking up rubbish while jogging) around the presidential residence on his own.”

In its reporting, subtly intended to denigrate Pence over the security precautions, the *Post* noted that weeks before his visit, “Secret Service personnel were seen in the city scouting out locations,” bomb-sniffing dogs “were given special clearance to enter the country,” and extra law enforcement “were sent in to help the Reykjavik police meet security standards set by the United States.”

And when Pence met with Icelandic officials, “snipers were seen perched on the rooftops of nearby buildings,” reported the *Post*, citing a previous Associated Press story.

The *Post* accented its report with a quote from Iceland’s national broadcasting service, which quipped that, all in all, “the scale of Pence’s visit, not least the security arrangements, are greater than ever seen in Iceland before.”

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