U2’s Bono Praises Mike Pence for His AIDS Support

Here’s how folks on social media reacted. (Hint: Not good.)

February 21, 2017

While Vice President Mike Pence was in Europe for the Munich Security Conference, he was approached by U2 singer and AIDS advocate Bono, who had some nice words for Pence’s support of the U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR).

ABC News captured the brief exchange (see below), in which Bono tells Pence, “Twice on the House floor you defended [PEPFAR]. That’s how we know you. And we really appreciate that.” Pence responded in kind: “It was an extraordinary historical accomplishment, and you played a leading role.”

U2 frontman Bono meets with Vice President Mike Pence in Munich: “You’re the second busiest man on earth.”

A post shared by ABC News (@abcnews) on Feb 18, 2017 at 10:56am PST

Although the brief conversation may seem innocuous enough, journalists and folks on social media were quick to point out Pence’s less than stellar history with regard to HIV advocacy and the fact that PEPFAR has been accused of ignoring disenfranchised groups at high risk of the virus and for promoting a faith-based evangelical agenda.

As governor of Indiana, Pence defunded Planned Parenthood, which provides HIV testing, and he was slow to act on an HIV outbreak among injection drug users in that state. He has also been a staunch opponent of LGBT equality.

To learn more about PEPFAR, read the POZ feature “World of Difference: Questioning taxpayer funding of faith-based groups to fight HIV/AIDS.” And for a roundup of articles, click #PEPFAR.

Below are several social media posts regarding the Bono and Pence meeting.

Enjoyed chatting w/ Bono at @MunSecConf. Discussed prior effort to twice pass Africa AIDS assistance & future security in developing nations

pic.twitter.com/LJcvF4mXid

— Vice President Pence (@VP) February 18, 2017

Bono praising Pence for supporting HIV meds in Africa ignores his responsibility for the explosion of HIV in Indiana through program cuts

— D Gilmore-Kavanagh (@DrDeclanK) February 18, 2017

Hell, Pence one proposed redirecting federal HIV/AIDS funds to organizations that perform conversion therapy. https://t.co/ah92KXHFZW pic.twitter.com/TZmXFjGYHy

— Parker Molloy (@ParkerMolloy) February 19, 2017

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