

*Says "Not Amused" That President of the United States Was "Used for Propaganda Purposes by Anti-American Socialist Dictator"*

**Washington,** **Apr 22** - U.S. Congressman Mike Pence gave the following statement today at the House Foreign Affairs Committee



Congressman Pence  
speaking at the Foreign  
Affairs Committee today

Hearing with Secretary of State Hillary Clinton:

**"Thank you for your service to the country in this post and over many years. I want to raise an issue with you that has come up in this hearing before. And I want to raise it with great respect to you and to the President of the United States of America that you serve. In testimony before this committee earlier, I know that the issue of the President being photographed with the virulent anti-American Socialist dictator of Venezuela came up.**

**"And I know that according to testimony that was handed to me that you indicated that you found it 'rather amusing.' But let me say with the deepest respect Madam Secretary, I am not amused.**

**"And I want to speak to that issue and get your sense, as an American who is both known and respected around the world about the wisdom of the leader of the free world being seen in that kind of a setting with that kind of a Socialist dictator. Hugo Chavez is, we all know, a Castro wannabe in the region. He has oppressed the media. He has bullied economic interests in the country. He has blacklisted political opponents from state agencies. There are reports of which you are well aware of his lack of cooperation on our efforts to confront narco-terrorism in the region. There are reports of worse by that government. And of course he has openly supported Iran's nuclear ambitions, and has**

referred to the predecessor of the 44th President as some sort of a demon, which would not be inconsistent of his long history of spewing vile intentions toward the people of the United States of America. You made a comment in July of 2007 in which you said with regard to potential meetings with North Korea, Venezuela or leaders of Cuba, you said 'I will not promise to meet with the leaders of this county in my first year.' Because you said, and I with much agreement, 'I don't want to be used for propaganda purposes.'

"And so my question, Madam Secretary, is in light of your previously stated insight, isn't it true that having the President of the United States be seen on the world stage warmly greeting a virulent, anti-American socialist dictator that, intentionally or unintentionally, that our President was used for propaganda purposes, to borrow the phrase that you used? And isn't it also true that as Natan Sharansky observed memorably in his book Case for Democracy there is almost nothing more demoralizing then people fighting for freedom in their own country than to see the leader of the free world in friendly association with the very people that are oppressing them.

"Sharansky said we can 'never fully prepare ourselves for the disappointment that came from seeing the free world abandon its own values' in that context. And so, in a very real sense I wanted to invite in a respectful way your thoughts about that, recognizing that you serve this President, but also expressing to you my profound concern that this Administration allowed itself intentionally or unintentionally to be used to prop up and promote the image and the interests of a very anti-American socialist dictator in Venezuela."

NOTE: The full exchange is available on YouTube [HERE](#) .