

Out of the Icelandic disaster comes a sign of hope

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[Link by Link - A Vision of Iceland as a Haven for Journalists - NYTimes.com.](#)

As the New York Times reports:

A banking scandal nearly bankrupted this tiny island nation (population: barely 300,000) little more than a year ago, but Iceland is considering a new vision: to become a haven for journalists and publishers by offering some of the most aggressive protections for free speech and investigative journalism in the world.

[The proposal](#), the Icelandic Modern Media Initiative, combines in a single piece of legislation provisions from around the world: whistle-blower laws and rules about Internet providers from the United States; source protection laws from Belgium; freedom of information laws from Estonia and Scotland, among others; and New York State's law to counteract "libel tourism," the practice of suing in courts, like Britain's, where journalists have the hardest time prevailing.

"We would become the inverse of a tax haven," said Birgitta Jonsdottir, a member of Parliament and a sponsor of the initiative. "They are trying to make everything opaque. We are trying to make it transparent."

I think that deserves an unambiguous welcome. I can see file servers moving to Iceland from all over the world. And, no doubt, they hope people too.