

Mr. LOTT addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT
AGREEMENT—S. 942

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the majority leader, after consultation with the Democratic leader, may proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 342, S. 942, the small business regulatory reform bill, and it be considered under the following limitations—90 minutes of total debate equally divided between the two managers, that the only amendments in order to the bill be the following: a managers' amendment to be offered by Senators BOND and BUMPERS and an amendment to be offered by Senators NICKLES and REID regarding congressional review; further, at the expiration or yielding back of all debate time, the bill and pending amendments be set aside, with the votes to occur on Tuesday, March 19, at a time to be determined by the two leaders, and, following the disposition of all amendments, the bill be read a third time, and the Senate then proceed to a vote on final passage of the bill, all without any intervening debate or action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE COMMUNICATIONS DECENCY
ACT

Mr. EXON. Mr. President, I have two articles that I will ask to be printed in the RECORD. There continues to be wholesale, gross, misleading statements with regard to the Decency Act that was included in the telecommunications bill.

Somehow we must respond to the whole avalanche of highly financed special interest groups who are opposed to the measure that overwhelmingly passed in the U.S. Senate and in the House of Representatives. I have no quarrel whatsoever with the process we incorporated in the measure to expedite the consideration by the courts.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD two articles, one from the Omaha World Herald of March 11, 1996, with the headline, "Internet Doesn't Fit Free-Press Concept," and another from the Omaha World Herald of March 13, 1996, with the headline, "Some Internet Fare Worse Than Indecent."

There being no objection, the articles were ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

INTERNET DOESN'T FIT FREE-PRESS CONCEPT

An illogical argument is being used to attack the Communications Decency Act, which was sponsored by Sen. J. James Exon, D-Neb. Some of the law's critics argue that

the Internet, a worldwide network of computers linked by telephone lines, should be free of Government regulation under the First Amendment's freedom of the press protection.

The anti-indecency law makes it a crime to transmit indecent materials by computer when the materials are accessible to children. Arguing that the law violates press freedom is a group of plaintiffs consisting of Microsoft Corp., the Society of Professional Journalists, the American Society of Newspaper Editors and an organization calling itself the Citizens Internet Empowerment Coalition.

Certainly the Internet provides many opportunities for research, rapid communication and entertainment. But a loose, dynamic computer network isn't a newspaper. The two have little in common.

Newspapers are published by companies that depend on the trust of their customers—their readers and advertisers—to stay in business. These customers know who is in charge. They know that a publisher ultimately is responsible for the newspaper and its contents.

A newspaper has editors who select what is to be published. They rank the news in importance and broad interest. They package it for ease of comprehension. They operate under the laws of libel. The newspaper can be held accountable and be ordered to pay damages if it intentionally and maliciously publishes false and damaging information.

The Internet has no comparable editors, no comparable controls, none of the continuous process of fact-checking and verification that newspapers engage in. No person or group of people is accountable for materials that appear on the Internet. Rather, its millions of users are free to send out whatever they choose, no matter how worthless, false or perverted it might be. The result can resemble a hodgepodge of raw and random facts and opinions. Some are worthy and valuable. Others are outright nonsense.

And no one stands behind the material disseminated on the Internet.

Congress passed the Exon bill to protect children. And properly so. It's ridiculous to claim that the mantle of press freedom should be stretched to protect computerized pornographers and predators.

[From the Omaha World Herald, Mar. 13,
1996]

SOME INTERNET FARE WORSE THAN INDECENT
(By Arianna Huffington)

If there is one problem with the recently signed Communications Decency Act, which makes it illegal to post "indecent" material on the Internet, it is its name. Discussions of indecency and pornography conjure up images of Playboy and Hustler, when in fact the kind of material available on the Internet goes far beyond indecency—and descends into barbarism.

Most parents have never been on the Internet, so they cannot imagine what their children can easily access in cyberspace: child molestation, bestiality, sadomasochism and even specific descriptions of how to get sexual gratification by killing children.

Though First Amendment absolutists are loathe to admit it, this debate is not about controlling pornography but about fighting crime.

There are few things more dangerous for a civilization than allowing the deviant and the criminal to become part of the mainstream. Every society has had its red-light districts, but going there involved danger, stigmatization and often legal sanction. Now the red-light districts can invade our homes and our children's minds.

During a recent taping of a "Firing Line" debate on controlling pornography on the

Internet, which will air March 22, I was stunned by the gulf that separates the two sides. For Ira Glasser, executive director of the American Civil Liberties Union, and his team, it was about freedom and the First Amendment. For our side, headed by Bill Buckley, it was about our children and the kind of culture that surrounds them.

There are three main arguments on the other side, and we are going to be hearing a lot of them in the year ahead as the ACLU's challenge to the Communications Decency Act comes to court.

The first is that there is no justification for abridging First Amendment rights. The reality is that depictions of criminal behavior have little to do with free speech. Moreover, there is no absolute protection of free speech in the Constitution. The First Amendment does not cover slander, false advertising or perjury, nor does it protect obscenity or child pornography.

Restricting criminal material on the Internet should be a matter of common sense in any country that values its children more than it values the rights of consumers addicted to what degrades and dehumanizes.

Civilization is about trade-offs, and I would gladly sacrifice the rights of millions of Americans to have easy Internet access to "Bleed Little Girl Bleed" or "Little Boy Snuffed" for the sake of reducing the likelihood that one more child would be molested or murdered. With more than 80 percent of child molesters admitting they have been regular users of hard-core pornography, it becomes impossible to continue hiding behind the First Amendment and denying the price we are paying.

The second most prevalent argument against regulating pornography on the Internet is that it should be the parents' responsibility. This is an odd argument from the same people who have been campaigning for years against parents' rights to choose the schools their children attend. Now they are attributing to parents qualities normally reserved for God—omniscience, omnipresence and omnipotence. In reality, parents have never felt more powerless to control the cultural influences that shape their children's character and lives.

The third argument that we heard a lot during the "Firing Line" debate is that it would be difficult, nay impossible, to regulate depictions of criminal behavior in cyberspace. We even heard liberals lament the government intrusion such regulations would entail. How curious that we never hear how invasive it is to restrict the rights of businessmen polluting the environment or farmers threatening the existence of the kangaroo rat.

Yet, it is difficult to regulate the availability of criminal material on the Internet, but the decline and fall of civilizations throughout history is testimony to the fact that maintaining a civilized society has never been easy. One clear sign of decadence is when abstract rights are given more weight than real lives.

It is not often that I have the opportunity to side with Bill Clinton, who has eloquently defended restrictions on what children may be exposed to on the Internet. When the president is allied with the Family Research Council, and Americans for Tax Reform is allied with the ACLU, we know that the divisions transcend liberal vs. conservative. They have to do with our core values and most sacred priorities.

REMEMBERING HALABJA

Mr. PELL. Mr. President, this weekend will mark the anniversary of one of

humanity's darkest moments. Eight years ago, on March 16, 1988, Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's forces, besieged by Iranian forces on the Faw Peninsula and losing ground to Kurdish insurgents in northern Iraq, commenced an attack on the Kurdish city of Halabja. There, Iraqi forces used poison gas resulting in the death of as many as 5 to 6 thousand Kurds, most of whom were innocent noncombatants.

In the 8 years since the poison gas attack, Halabja has become the single most important symbol of the plight of the Kurdish people—the very embodiment of Iraq's brutality towards the Kurds. The unforgettable images of the victims—a man frozen in death with his infant son; a little girl wearing a scarf, her face swollen in the first stages of decomposition—remain seared in the Kurdish psyche. Much as the Bosnians will never forget the ethnic cleansing of Srebrenica, the Kurds will never forget the attack on Halabja.

Incredibly, as we now know, Halabja was not the only instance when Iraq employed chemical weapons against the Kurds, nor was it the end of Iraqi repression against the Kurds. Although clearly the most dramatic, Halabja was but one of a series of Iraqi atrocities against the Kurds. Beginning in the mid to late 1980's—and culminating in the infamous Anfal campaign of 1988—Iraqi forces systematically rounded up Kurdish villagers and forced them into relocation camps, took tens of thousands of Kurds into custody where they were never heard from again, and destroyed hundreds of Kurdish villages and towns. By some estimates as many as 150,000 Kurds are missing from this period and presumed dead. Collectively, these actions amount to an Iraqi campaign of genocide against the Kurds.

I, along with the distinguished chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, Senator HELMS, have tried very hard to call attention to the persecution of the Kurds, including by introducing the first-ever sanctions bill against Iraq in 1988 for its use of poison gas against the Kurds.

Since then, a wealth of evidence has been uncovered documenting Iraq's brutality against the Kurds, much of which was written in Iraq's own hand. The Foreign Relations Committee—particularly through the vigorous efforts of former staff member, now United States Ambassador to Croatia Peter Galbraith—led an effort to retrieve more than 18 tons of Iraqi Secret Police documents captured by the Kurds in 1991, which charts out Iraq's criminal behavior in excruciating detail. Human Rights Watch, the independent human rights organization, has done a superb job of analyzing those documents to mount an overwhelming case that Iraq has engaged in genocide against the Kurds.

This is a story that must be told. As some of my colleagues may know, the issue of genocide has a particularly

strong resonance for me. Just after World War II, my father, Herbert Claiborne Pell, played a significant role in seeing that genocide would be considered a war crime. Although he met stiff resistance, my father ultimately succeeded and I learned much from his tenacity and commitment to principle. The world must oppose genocide wherever and whenever it occurs; Halabja cannot be forgotten, and Iraq must be held accountable for its atrocities against the Kurds. We simply cannot afford to let this opportunity pass by.

I wish I could say that there is a happy ending to the tragic story of the Kurds in Iraq, that there was a lesson learned by the Iraqi leadership. Sadly, I cannot. Although the Iraqi Kurds now control a significant portion of Kurdistan—a consequence of the Persian Gulf war—Saddam's ill treatment of the Kurds continues. Iraqi agents continually carry out terrorist acts against Kurdish targets, and Iraq maintains an airtight blockade of the Kurdish-controlled provinces. Since there also is a U.N. embargo on all of Iraq, the Kurds are forced to live under the unbearable economic weight of a dual embargo. In addition, Kurds in other portions of the region—particularly in Iran and Turkey—have been subjected to serious abuses of human rights and outright repression, demonstrating that the Kurdish plight knows no boundaries. The situation has become so dire that for the past 18 months, the Iraqi Kurds—once united in their quest for autonomy and their hatred for Saddam Hussein, have resorted to fighting amongst themselves.

The situation does not seem right or fair to me. Nor does there seem to have been a proper response by the international community to the horrifying legacy of Halabja. I think there should be a much greater effort to look at ways to help the Iraqi Kurds dispel the painful memories of the past, to graduate from the status of dependency on the international donor community, and to confront our common enemy—Saddam Hussein. Only then can Iraqi Kurdistan emerge as the cornerstone of a free and democratic Iraq.

At a minimum, the international community—and the United States in particular—must reaffirm its commitment to protect the Kurds. Under Operation Provide Comfort, an international coalition including United States, British, and French forces, continues to provide air cover and protection to the Iraqi Kurds, and to facilitate the supply of humanitarian relief. The recent political changes in Turkey, however, have cast new doubt on the long-term viability of Provide Comfort, and overall economic conditions in Kurdistan continue to deteriorate. The current situation does not serve United States or international interests, nor does it help to rectify the sad history of repression against the Kurds. Our work in Iraq—both against Saddam and in support of the Kurds—is not yet done.

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, I join with my distinguished friend, Senator PELL, the able ranking member of the Foreign Relations Committee, in recalling the massacre of thousands of Kurdish civilians 8 years ago at the town of Halabja.

On March 16, 1988, Iraqi jets, without warning, dropped chemical weapons on Halabja, a Kurdish village in northern Iraq. The attack, horrific even by Iraq's barbaric standards, killed thousands of unarmed men, women, and children.

The massacre at Halabja drew attention to Saddam Hussein's campaign of genocide directed against the Kurds of northern Iraq. However, that attention was not enough to prevent the systematic killing of hundreds of thousands of Kurdish civilians by the Government of Iraq.

Mr. President, I must commend Senator PELL for being one of the few willing to speak out about the plight of the Kurds. I worked with him in 1988 to sanction Iraq for its reprehensible behavior. Had more people around the world, and especially here in the United States, heeded Senator PELL's pleas to protect the Kurds, perhaps more could have been saved.

The final act of this tragedy, however, has not yet played out. Saddam Hussein has not abandoned his crusade against the Kurdish citizens of Iraq. If he cannot eliminate them, he will do all he can to deprive them of their basic human rights.

Mr. President, thanks to Senator PELL, the plight of the Kurds has the attention of the world. They must never be forgotten.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, 8 years ago this week, in the closing weeks of the Iran-Iraq war, Saddam Hussein sent Iraqi forces to crush a rebellion among the Kurds of northern Iraq. In the assault, centered on the city of Halabja, Saddam's forces rained poison gas down upon the city, and over 5,000 Kurds, many of them civilians, lost their lives in horrifying fashion.

As research since the end of the Iran-Iraq war has shown, Halabja was only the most brutal chapter in Saddam's genocidal campaign against the Kurds of northern Iraq. From the mid-1980's through the end of the war, Iraq forced hundreds of thousands of Kurdish citizens into detention camps, kidnapped tens of thousands of others, most of whom are presumed dead, and attacked Kurdish towns and villages, often with deadly poison gas. Some 150,000 Kurds lost their lives in this infamous Anfal campaign—which can only be described as a campaign of genocide by Saddam Hussein against the Kurds of Iraq.

Sadly, this is not the only incident of Saddam's brutality against his own people. The threshold crossed by Iraq during the Anfal campaign laid the groundwork for Saddam's most recent genocidal killing spree, this time against the Marsh Arabs of southern Iraq. In the years following the gulf

war, as Iraqi Shiite rebels took refuge in the remote communities of the Marsh Arabs, Saddam turned his army on this community. In the last 3 years, thousands of Marsh Arabs have disappeared, never to be heard from again, and entire villages have been burned to the ground. This time, the genocide was accompanied by an environmental outrage, as Iraqi engineers drained thousands of acres of marshlands in order to reach remote villages, wiping out a fragile ecosystem and obliterating the centuries-old way of life of the Marsh Arabs.

The Kurds, too, continue to suffer at Saddam's hand. They narrowly escaped a new round of massacres at the end of the gulf war in 1991, thanks to the intervention of the United States and our allies. Today, although the Kurds of Iraq govern the northern provinces autonomously under the protection of Operation Provide Comfort—a cooperative effort by the United States, Britain, and France—they remain subject to an internal blockade by Saddam's forces, as well as the U.N. embargo against all of Iraq, and periodic Iraqi attacks against Kurdish towns and individuals.

No Member of this body has done more to publicize and address the plight of the Kurds than the distinguished ranking member of the Foreign Relations Committee, Senator PELL. Thanks in large part to his efforts, and those of the distinguished Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, Senator HELMS, over 18 tons of Iraqi Government and secret police documents detailing Iraq's genocidal campaign against the Kurds—after being captured by Kurdish rebels in 1991—were brought to the United States for research and analysis. The result has been a well-documented history of Iraqi atrocities against the Kurds, including the horrific use of poison gas.

On this tragic anniversary, I want to commend Senator PELL and Senator HELMS for their leadership on this issue. I hope that the United States will continue to take a leadership role in working to ensure a better life for the Kurds of Iraq, both until and after Saddam Hussein is driven from power.

THE BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, on numerous occasions I have mentioned to friends that evening in 1972 when I first was elected to the Senate. When the television networks reported that I had won the Senate race in North Carolina, I was stunned. Then I made several commitments to myself, one of them being that I would never fail to see a young person, or a group of young people, who wanted to see me.

I have kept that commitment and it has proved enormously beneficial to me because I have been inspired by the estimated 60,000 young people with whom I have visited during the 23 years I have been in the Senate.

A large percentage of them have been concerned about the Federal debt

which recently exceeded \$5 trillion. Of course, Congress is responsible for creating this monstrous debt which coming generations will have to pay.

Mr. President, the young people and I almost always discuss the fact that under the U.S. Constitution, no President can spend a dime of Federal money that has not first been authorized and appropriated by both the House and Senate of the United States.

That is why I began making these daily reports to the Senate on February 25, 1992. I decided that it was important that a daily record be made of the precise size of the Federal debt which, at the close of business yesterday, Wednesday, March 13, stood at \$5,025,887,532,178.79. This amounts to \$19,076.70 for every man, woman and child in America on a per capita basis.

The increase in the national debt since my report yesterday—which identified the total Federal Debt as of close of business on Tuesday, March 12, 1996—shows an increase of nearly 9 billion dollars—\$8,603,940,268.76, to be exact. That 1-day increase is enough to match the money needed by approximately 1,275,792 students to pay their college tuitions for 4 years.

STATEMENT BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE FRIENDS OF IRELAND IN THE U.S. SENATE

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, The Friends of Ireland is a bipartisan group of Senators and Representatives opposed to violence and terrorism in Northern Ireland and dedicated to maintaining a United States policy that promotes a just, lasting, and peaceful settlement of the conflict. The latest developments for peace and the need for an immediate restoration of the IRA cease-fire make this year's St. Patrick's Day a particularly critical time in the peace process.

I believe all our colleagues will find this year's statement by the Senate Executive Committee of the Friends of Ireland of interest, and I ask unanimous consent that it be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

STATEMENT BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE FRIENDS OF IRELAND IN THE UNITED STATES SENATE, ST. PATRICK'S DAY, 1996

On this St. Patrick's Day, the Executive Committee of the Friends of Ireland in the United States Senate join the people of Ireland, North and South, in welcoming the latest developments for peace and in demanding an immediate restoration of the IRA cease-fire.

We welcome the Joint Communiqué issued on February 28 by Irish Taoiseach John Bruton and British Prime Minister John Major proposing steps to renew the peace process for Northern Ireland and pledging to begin all-party negotiations on June 10.

Friends of Ireland everywhere were outraged by the end of the IRA cease-fire last month and by the subsequent bombings in populated London which took the lives of three people and injured many others. Our hearts go out to the victims and the families

of those killed and injured in these terrorist attacks. We condemn unequivocally the IRA violence, and we call for an immediate restoration of the cease-fire. We commend the Loyalist paramilitaries for maintaining their cease-fire in spite of the IRA's resumption of violence.

We are greatly encouraged that the political leaders of Ireland and Great Britain have recommitted themselves to achieving a lasting peace. They clearly have a mandate from the vast majority of the people of Ireland—North and South, Protestant and Catholic alike—who recently turned out in large numbers to condemn the recent violence and demand a return to peace.

Many of the Friends of Ireland had the opportunity, during the recent visit to Northern Ireland by President Clinton, to see at first hand the determination of people of all traditions to seize the opportunity for peace. This was reaffirmed by the recent rallies in which people turned out in large numbers across Ireland to condemn the recent violence and demand a return to peace. As preparations are made for the commencement of all-party negotiations on June 10, there is an obligation on all parties to ensure that this widespread commitment to peace is turned into a reality for all the people of the island.

Friends of Ireland who accompanied the President on his trip also had the opportunity to observe the excellent work of the International Fund for Ireland, which continues to create jobs and promote understanding in both communities.

In 1994, at the strong urging of responsible leaders in Northern Ireland and Ireland, many of the Friends of Ireland wrote to President Clinton to suggest an encouraging gesture be made towards Gerry Adams, by giving him a limited visa to visit this country, in hopes that it might bring dialogue and an end to violence. John Hume later called the visa, "crucial" to achieving the subsequent cease-fire. We believe that the participation of Sinn Fein in all-party negotiations is vital for the success of the peace process, but Sinn Fein cannot take its place at the peace table without the restoration of the cease-fire.

In an effort to move beyond the pre-condition that weapons be handed over prior to all-party negotiations, an international commission led by former Senator George Mitchell was established by the British and Irish Governments to assess the issue and make recommendations to overcome the impasse. We commend Senator Mitchell and the other members of the commission for the outstanding job they have done. The commission found that turning in weapons in advance of talks would not occur and suggested constructive alternative ways forward.

When the Irish and British Governments launched the Mitchell Commission last November, they had agreed to "the firm aim" of achieving all-party negotiations by the end of February. Unfortunately, that target date was missed, due to the introduction of a new pre-condition by Prime Minister Major that elections must occur before talks can take place. The insistence by the British Government that elections precede all-party negotiations created unnecessary delays in the process and aroused concern in the Nationalist community of a return to the days when the Unionist majority imposed its will through the Stormont Parliament.

We are also disappointed by the lack of willingness, on the part of the leaders of the largest Unionist parties in Northern Ireland, to participate in good faith in the peace process, despite the fact that the process so clearly has the support of the people of their community. The Friends of Ireland urge the leadership of the Ulster Unionist Party and the Democratic Unionist Party to engage