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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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