The bill also requests the agencies to determine if there are industry standards and practices that embody this electronic Privacy Bill of Rights. Where technological tools don’t exist, or where a particular industry refuses to embrace this code of electronic ethics in a way that solves the problem, then the Government is obliged to step in and reinforce protection of privacy rights.

I implore the industry to act swiftly because the current situation is utterly unsustainable. The same libertarian quality that has stimulated such rapid growth of the Internet gravely threatens to cripple its promise. It is chaotic, free, and open, but has spawned an exponential increase in commercial voyeurism that is tearing privacy asunder. While Jack Kerouac would have a fine time joyriding from site to world Wide Web, I believe that many, many citizens of the Net would be particularly troubled to find that their personal data—their usage of the World Wide Web itself—can be and is being tracked. At risk is consumer confidence in the medium. When consumer confidence plummets so will economic activity by Internet.

My legislation will establish “Knowledge, Notice, and No” as the goal and will require Government action where the technology or the industry fail to adequately protect consumers and kids. I want to thank President Bill Clinton for his forthright leadership in going to South Carolina and seeing first hand the crisis and meeting with the victims whose church has been destroyed. But that is only part of the effective use of the bully pulpit of the presidency.

What has happened? Over 63 African American churches have been burned over the past five years. Other churches, with African American members, have been burned. There has been a pattern. The firebombed churches have not been major churches, but smaller rural churches located in isolated areas.

Why is this happening? Is it a legal conspiracy? Is the jury is still out—and the investigation is still on—with regard to a legal conspiracy.

Is it a cultural conspiracy? And what is meant when someone says that? Let me try to explain. I am from Chicago. In 1962, Michael Jordans point basket, Chicago fans jump in excitement because Michael Jordan just made a basket. But guess what? Michael Jordan fans in Los Angeles, Dallas, Miami and all around the country jump up too—a kind of cultural conspiratorialism. We are, in basket-ball terms, Michael Jordan represents the common denominator through which all of his fans relate.

What’s the parallel to church burnings? When we talk about cultural conspiracies with respect to church burnings, we are talking about some politicians, some radio and television personalities, some hate mongers around the country fanning the flames of economic insecurity and race hatred, fanning the fears of racial animosity with anti-affirmative action, anti-minority, anti-immigration propaganda from the very top of our nation, creating a kind of racial cultural conspiracy.

In 1940, in response to Brown v. Board of Education decision in 1954 and the resulting civil rights movement, Barry Goldwater, a Republican, ran his presidential campaign talking about States’ rights. But it will not work. In basket-ball terms, Michael Jordan represents the common denominator through which all of his fans relate.

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In 1968, in response to the 1967 and 1968 riots and the anti-Vietnam mass protests, Richard Nixon, a Republican, ran his campaign on a law and order platform.

In 1972, George Wallace, a Democrat, ran his campaign in reaction to attempts to segregate the schools, on an anti-busing platform.

In 1976, even Jimmy Carter, also a Democrat, gave a speech in Indiana talking about ethnic purity.

In 1980 and 1984, Ronald Reagan talked about welfare queens; and in 1988 it was George Bush who used Willie Horton. Even our current President, in 1992, used Sister Soulja to have his bid to become the President of the United States.

This year we heard Pat Buchanan, a presidential candidate, who says “We Shall Overcome” with whistling “Dixie.” He said those who sing “We Shall Overcome” and those who whistle “Dixie” are both involved in freedom movement.

Well, if whistling “Dixie,” protecting the Confederacy, and “We Shall Overcome,” fighting for equal protection under the law, can be equated, it suggests that either we are all missing the boat or that something is taking place within our nation that has not been healed (even) since the Civil War.

The Republican leadership of Congress in 1994, and Tom Wicker reports in his new book, Frugal Failure, “on January 23, 1995 ... in the ornate hearing room of the House Rules Committee, a Republican member of Congress, instead of voting to continue the investigation, reported the case to the Appropriations Committee, which eventually brought the matter into public view.”

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