She recently had a serious case of food poisoning but, because of her lack of coverage, could not afford to go to the doctor for treatment.

This kind of situation cannot and should not be tolerated. As we devise new ways to extend health coverage to the uninsured, it just doesn't seem fair to me that we in Congress could allow these contractors, working side-by-side with Federal Government employees who we call upon every day to do the work of the Congress, to go without any coverage at all.

How can we enjoy subsidized comprehensive insurance while people who fix our computers, maintain our buildings, or cut our hair have no coverage at all? It seems to me that, in fairness, we just can't do that.

That is why I have introduced this amendment, which would require firms that contract with Congress—and only Congress—to offer health insurance to their employees. This requirement would apply to firms that employ 15 or more workers and that have Federal contracts worth at least $75,000. These contractors could buy a private health plan or could select a plan from the Federal Employee Health Benefits Program that currently is available to all permanent Federal employees. In either case, they would be required to contribute to their employees' premiums, just as the Federal Government contributes to its workers' coverage. This would ensure that everyone working full time for Congress has access at least to the comprehensive coverage that is now available to congressional employees.

This kind of action is certainly not without precedent. Several years ago, concern over high turnover among Senate day care employees led the Senate to give these contract workers the Federal health benefits coverage that we now enjoy. And Congress has a long-established history of taking action to guarantee fair working conditions for its contract workers. For 65 years, Davis-Bacon and other similar measures have guaranteed competitive wages to Federal contract workers. This bill complements these efforts.

The introduction of this amendment is not just a humanitarian gesture. It is, frankly, a very practical one. Health costs for uninsured workers who become ill are simply shifted onto others; shifted onto public programs like Medicaid, or shifted onto doctors and hospitals in the form of charity care.

In addition, the uninsured forgo preventive care and later need expensive emergency room treatment. We should not tolerate this kind of inefficient cost shifting. We should be setting an example for the rest of the Government, and certainly the private sector.

Some may say this measure will reduce cost savings from privatization. I believe Congress should contract out services performed more efficiently by the private sector. But, certainly, Congress should not save money by denying workers a basic benefit that is guaranteed to all other Federal workers. We want services that are leaner, but not meaner.

Outsourcing may be the wave of the future and, frankly, I generally support this trend. But we need to make sure that those workers caught in the transition have basic benefits to which other Federal workers are entitled.

For many years now, Members of Congress have spoken on the floor about the need to extend coverage to the uninsured. We all recognize there can be no financial security without health security. Let us simply put our money where our mouth is. Let us show our country that what is good for Members of Congress and their employees is also good for the contractors who work with us.

My hope is that my colleagues will join me in support of this amendment.

I yield the floor.

Mr. KERREY. Mr. President, my view is that this is a reasonable amendment. I understand there is no budget cost.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, if the distinguished Senator from Nebraska will yield, there is no budget cost to this. It is completely paid for. There is a negligible cost that is completely offset. So there is no increase in the deficit that is the result of this amendment.

The Senator is correct.

Mr. KERREY. I certainly support the amendment.

We are waiting for Senator STEVENS' view on this amendment. Both he and the chairman are right now at a defense appropriations conference committee. They should be back momentarily. Once they are back, we should be able to wrap this up and get a vote.

Mr. DASCHLE. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. KERREY. Mr. President, I urge Senators who would like to get out of here tomorrow to get to the floor and offer their amendments. There are no more than seven or eight amendments on either side. We have worked this down to a relatively small amount, and now all we are doing is waiting.

There are a number of Senators who would like to have rollcall votes. It takes time to have rollcall votes. We have been working as diligently as we can. I want nobody to be surprised when it comes to 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning around here, if we wait until 7, 8, 9 o'clock before somebody comes down and offers amendments.

This is an age-old problem, and we are heading to a very predictable point here. We have done about all we can from the floor. Now we have to have Members come down and offer their amendments.

Mr. SHELBY. As the Senator from Nebraska said, we made a lot of progress. We are getting down to what we hope is the beginning of the end tonight. If people who have some amendments pending come over here and try to work with us, we might work some of them out. If we cannot work them out, maybe they can offer them and keep the process moving. It is 10 minutes to 6 now. We could be out of here in a couple of hours, maybe less, if people would cooperate. I know the Senator from Nebraska has been pushing it all day, and so have I. This is our third day on this bill.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. EXON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be allowed to proceed for not to exceed 10 minutes as in morning business. And if we need to, I will be glad to yield the floor back.

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

THE DOLE ECONOMIC PLAN

Mr. EXON. Mr. President, as the Democrat leader on the Senate Budget Committee with a long and established record as a fiscal conservative, as Governor of my State longer than any other in its history, and proud of continuing that record for 18 years in the Senate, I begin today a number of statements on sound budgeting.

These will be based on fact and proven or provable economic theory, or just common sense, in a hope that I might divert America from careening again down a path that will certainly lead our Nation to new irresponsible depths—new depths indeed—of national debt, if not depression.

Alarmingly, the latest ''Follow The Yellow Brick Road'' path of wizardry blends $550 billion in tax breaks, unspecified spending cuts, and rosy economic scenarios into one shameless political ploy. When the unsuspecting Dorothys of the world pull back in wonderment the curtain, they discover a huffing and puffing candidate Bob Dole as the wizard. This is the same wizard who for the first 72 years of his life foreswore such economic nonsense.

Bob Dole's transformation from a deficit hawk into a carrier pigeon for supply-side economics is a great loss and disappointment to fiscal conservatives of both parties.

In my 18 years in the Senate, I often stood shoulder to shoulder with then Senator Dole. Although we have had different priorities when it came to spending cuts, we were both strong advocates of a line-item veto, a constitutional amendment to balance the budget, and a no-nonsense approach to economic policy.

But as Senator Bob Dole became Presidential candidate Bob Dole, fiscal responsibility was turned on its ear. Irresponsible tax cuts became his fetish. Listening to the advice of the campaign consultants and pollsters instead of using common sense, Bob Dole, I am afraid, has lost his moorings. And to pay for his folly, he would have us fall into a deeper pit of deficits and debt.

Mr. President, we cannot allow that to happen to the American people a second time. We cannot allow the 1980's gibberish of supply-side economics to go unchallenged again. As a freshman Senator, I supported it, as did Senator Dole. In retrospect, I acknowledge it was the worst vote that I ever cast, in the Senate.

To understand the terrible gamble Bob Dole is taking with our future, the American people should understand the history behind it. I would like to spend a few moments today describing the fiscal carnage of the 1980's, or as George Bush once christened it, ''Voodoo Economics.'' And there is no magic to it. It is just misery.

During the 1980's, the American people got their first taste of the supply-side mumbo-jumbo. It was the Reagan-Bush feel-good, no-fuss, no-muss way to reduce the deficit and grow the economy. There was only one catch: It simply did not work.

Enacting huge tax cuts and increasing spending without balancing the budget, was a ghastly experiment gone terribly awry. Fed by a quick shot of high-octane tax cuts, the economy revved up and then sputtered. The promised revenues evaporated and the deficit exploded with a big deficit bang. A small hill of debt became a mountain.

The supply-side economics of the 1980's was a classic example of the difference between promise and performance. Supply-side tax cuts were supposed to boost the private sector's economic performance. In fact, the economy put in a mediocre showing only, during the Reagan years.

For example, private-sector job growth was 3.3 percent per year in the Carter years, compared with 2.3 percent under Reagan and 0.4 percent in the Bush years. It finally rebounded to 2.9 percent during the Clinton administration—but without, and I repeat, without supply-side economics.

Private investment, which also was supposed to receive a boost from supply-side tax cuts, slumped during the Reagan years. Real business fixed investment, which had been growing at a 7.1-percent annual clip during the Carter years, slowed to a 2.6-percent pace under Reagan, and came to a screeching halt under Bush. During the Clinton administration, business investment has soared at a 8.4 percent rate, the strongest showing since World War II.

With both private-sector employment and business investment suffering under supply-side policies, it is not surprising that private-sector gross domestic product also posted an inferior performance, by any measure. The growth of the private-sector slowed from a 3.5-percent pace under Carter to a 3.0-percent rate during the Reagan years. Having registered a meager 1.3-percent showing under Bush, private-sector growth now currently has averaged 3.2 percent during the Clinton administration.

We are often told that the Reagan tax cut led to a doubling of tax revenue by the end of the 1980's. That is merely a manipulation of the facts. Total revenue doubled during the 1980's but income tax revenue fell far short of doing so. Revenue from Social Security taxes, however, more than doubled as a direct result of a major Social Security tax increase in 1983. That tax increase, incidentally, was passed when Republicans held a majority of the U.S. Senate and Senator Bob Dole was chairman of the Senate Finance Committee.

Having failed to deliver on its economic promises, it should not be surprising then that supply-side tax cuts also failed to deliver the declining deficits promised by the Republicans.

In March 1981, the Reagan White House predicted that the deficit would shrink from its $79 billion level and the budget would be balanced by 1985. Instead, the deficit widened dramatically, hitting $212 billion in 1985—when it was supposed to be zero—and topping out at $290 billion in 1992.

A year later, the Reagan administration could see the red ink rising. President Reagan told the Nation in 1982, and I quote,

> One area of justifiable concern is the deficit. And believe me, we take it as seriously as any problem facing us. But let's recognize why such a huge deficit is projected. It is not, as some would have you believe, a product of our tax cuts.

I am here to tell you and the American people that it was because of the tax cut. But do not just take it from me. More than 10 years after President Reagan made that famous speech, his OMB Director, David Stockman, said his boss was wrong. The deficit was caused by the huge tax cuts that were the hallmark of President Reagan's first year in office.

In an article on the deficit in the March 1993 issue of New Perspectives Quarterly, Mr. Stockman wrote, and I quote,

> The root problem goes back to the July 1981 frenzy of excessive and imprudent tax cuts that shattered the Nation's fiscal responsibility . . . It ought to be obvious by now that we can't grow our way out [of the deficit].

Mr. President, the huge deficits of the Reagan years have left taxpayers with a gargantuan burden of debt and debt service. When President Reagan took his oath of office, the debt was under $1 trillion. When he left, our national debt was over $2.6 trillion, a debt expanded over fourfold since President Carter to over $4 trillion by the time President Bush left office. If it were not for the interest payments on the debt built up during the last two Republican administrations, the Federal budget would now be in surplus.

The Nation has paid a terrible price for the mistakes of the 1980s, and we are still paying for them. Supply-side economics left an economic radioactive fallout that pollutes the economy for years to come. We still do not know its halflife. I feel as though I have spent most of my Senate career trying to clean up the mess, and many of my colleagues have joined in that work, but the job is still unfinished.

We in the Senate spend a lot of time talking about the legacy we will leave our children and grandchildren. But if we are indeed concerned about mortgaging our children's future, we cannot and we must not resurrect supply-side economics. We clearly made a horrendous mistake economically in the 1980s. To duplicate it in the 1990s would be unforgivable. Neither Dorothy nor any self-respecting munchkin would or should forgive us.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BENNETT). The time of the Senator has expired.

Mr. EXON. I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

TREASURY, POSTAL SERVICE, AND GENERAL GOVERNMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1977

The Senate continued with consideration of the bill.

AMENDMENT NO. 5244

(Purpose: To amend title 18, United States Code, with respect to gun free schools, and for other purposes)

Mr. KOHL. I ask unanimous consent to lay aside the pending amendment.

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

Mr. KOHL. I send an amendment to the desk for immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Wisconsin [Mr. KOHL] proposes an amendment numbered 5244.

Mr. KOHL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

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

The amendment is as follows:

At the appropriate place in the bill, add the following new section:

SEC. . PROHIBITION.

Section 922(q) of title 18, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

''(q)(1) The Congress finds and declares that—

''(A) crime, particularly crime involving drugs and guns, is a pervasive, nationwide problem;

''(B) crime at the local level is exacerbated by the interstate movement of drugs, guns, and criminal gangs;

''(C) firearms and ammunition move easily in interstate commerce and have been found in increasing numbers in and around schools, as documented in numerous hearings in both the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives and the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate;