reaching out to the gangs in Wichita. They have even reached out to those trapped by prostitution, by drugs, and by alcohol through their ''Christ in the Streets'' program.

Joe has exchanged pulpits with black congregations in our community, allowing them to come into Valley Center Assembly of God, while he goes to other community churches. Some would say that this is innovative for a church to reach outside its walls. Joe would simply say it is changing the hearts and minds of America one soul at a time.

Welcome to the House, Pastor Voss.

CONGRESS SHOULD STAY IN SESSION AND WORK

(Mr. EDWARDS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, a moment ago we put our right hands over our hearts and pledged allegiance to our flag and the Nation for which it stands. I would like to challenge every Member of this House today to take another pledge, a pledge that we will not go home in February for a month, a pledge we will not take a paid vacation as Members of Congress, while this Nation is on the brink of defaulting on its good faith and credit for the first time in two centuries.

Mr. Speaker, I think every Member of Congress tomorrow who would vote to recess, when we are on this brink, are playing Russian roulette with the American economy and average working people's lives whose mortgage rates will go up and veterans who will not receive their paychecks and the widows of veterans who will not receive their pensions.

Anybody who votes to go on recess tomorrow should volunteer not only to give up his or her paycheck for the month of February. They should volunteer to explain to 44 million senior citizens why on March 1 they may not get their Social Security checks and Medicare recipients will not get their checks. We should stay here and work.

PROTECT CALIFORNIA'S FRUIT AND VEGETABLE INDUSTRY

(Mr. CALVERT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, the rumor going around the California agricultural community is that USDA Secretary Dan Glickman is out to ruin California's multibillion-dollar-a-year fruit and vegetable industry.

Why would Secretary Glickman want to destroy California's Agricultural industry? Only he knows.

Bill Clinton will get the blame—conventional wisdom says this is a no brainer—costing Clinton the November election.

An independent study by University of California, Riverside, Boston University, Cornell University, and Oregon State University states that USDA has not used good science.

Allowing pest ridden Mexican avocados into the United States is a recipe for disaster. They will bring in fruit flies, stem borers and seed weevils. The invasion of these pests will destroy California's crops for generations to come.

Secretary Glickman, use common sense. Don't allow pest ridden Mexican avocados into our country. It is bad policy, based on bad science.

LOAN GUARANTEES

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, let us see if this makes any sense. Uncle Sam borrows money from Japan and Germany and then gives that borrowed money to Russia. Russia then sells nuclear technology, fighter jets, tanks, and submarines to Iran and China. Military experts say that Iran threatens the gulf and that China, as we speak, threatens to nuke Taiwan.

If that is not enough to float your boat, the White House wants to guarantee part of a $9 billion loan, another one to Russia, $9 billion.

Mr. Speaker, did anyone ever stop to think that America with these policies just may be aiding and abetting our enemies?

Beam me up, Mr. Speaker.

If we can guarantee any loans for anybody, it should be for the people in the United States of America.

CASTRO'S THREATS AGAINST DISSIDENTS' YOUNG CHILDREN

(Mr. DIAZ-BALART asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, since the time of the visits of two of our colleagues to Cuba a few weeks ago, dissidents and independent journalists there are facing increased repression. Dissident leaders Miriam Garcia, Mercedes Parada Antunes, Leonel Morejon Almagro, Pedro Brito Hernandez, and many others, have reported being the victims of increasing repression. But perhaps the most spine-chilling example of Castro's new wave of brutality is the way in which Vicky Ruiz, a member of the dissident umbrella group Concilio Cubano, is being threatened.

State security has not only repeatedly threatened Vicky Ruiz's physical safety, but Castro agents have also told her that, if she does not stop her human rights advocacy, her young children, a 9-year-old girl and a 6-year-old boy, will be physically assaulted, as will be her 13-year-old nephew, who also lives with her in the same house.

I, Mr. Speaker, have personally heard her plea for help sent by telephone. All human rights groups, international organizations, our government, and all governments have a duty to immediately condemn these acts of cowardly brutality with all vehemence, and to intercede on behalf of Vicky Ruiz and her young family.

STOP JEOPARDIZING AMERICA'S CREDIT

(Mr. DOGGETT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, as so many Texans gathered yesterday in Austin to honor Senator Ralph Yarborough, I was reminded of his urging that we ought to put the jam on the lower shelf so the little people can reach it. How appropriate those words are this morning.

Speaker GINGRICH wants to put all the jam up there on the top shelf so that those who are sitting comfortably on the top ladder can reach up there and get the tax breaks and the crown jewels. Those that are down there on the bottom rung, working families, they reach into the cupboard and they find it bare. All they get is a notice for raised taxes under this Republican economic plan.

Mr. Speaker, meanwhile the Speaker is talking about getting this country into a jam of a far different type: Defaulting on the full faith and credit of the United States of America, the kind of idea we would have only heard on the crackpot circuit a year ago. Well, it is time to stop jeopardizing with these political shenanigans the future of working families across America.

PRESIDENT CLINTON AND BIG GOVERNMENT

(Mr. BALLENGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to include extraneous material.)

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, last week President Clinton said this was the end of the era of big government. And this week, the President says that he established a record of remarkable consistency.

Mr. Speaker, let's review the facts. President Clinton is responsible for the largest tax increase in American history. He tried to take over one-seventh of the U.S. economy by socializing the Nation's health care system. Last year, the President submitted four budget plans, none of which balanced, all of which had $200 billion deficits as far as the eye could see. And only until very recently has the President submitted a balanced budget, but even that puts off the tough choices for future politicians and spends $326 billion more on failed Washington programs.

If this is the end of big government, I must be in political fantasyland.

Mr. Speaker, let's cut through the double-speak see that, in reality, Bill Clinton has become big government's little buddy.

Mr. Speaker, I submit the following for the RECORD:

[From the Washington Post, Jan. 31, 1996]

CLINTON SAYS RECORD SHOWS ''REMARKABLE CONSISTENCY''

(By Ann Devroy and John F. Harris)

President Clinton said yesterday his declaration last week that the era of big government is over was not a departure from the philosophy he brought to the White House three years ago and said he will show voters this year that he has compiled a record of ''remarkable consistency.''

Clinton's comments came in an Oval Office interview a week after a State of the Union address in which he embraced many of the limited-government themes sounded by congressional Republicans. Despite his advocacy of a federal overhaul of health care earlier in his administration and recurrent charges by his critics that he has moved across the political spectrum with the polls, Clinton said his basic approach to the presidency has not changed.

''I believe I've given the American people a coherent view of the world,'' he said, adding: ''Just because I'm not for big government doesn't mean I think we should have a weak government or that there's nothing for government to do.''

Clinton said that while he hopes other Democrats share this vision, he will not make recapturing Congress for the Democrats a primary goal of his 1996 campaign. Such an appeal based solely on party, he said, would be ''self-defeating.''

On welfare reform, Clinton said he has not given up hope that a compromise bill acceptable to him will be approved this year. But he set a new price for his signature on a welfare system overhaul, asserting that the Senate proposal he indicated he would support last fall will have to be changed for him to support it now. He called on Republicans to send him a revised bill that would contain fewer cuts in funding for food stamps, provide child care for welfare recipients who work and preserve current protections for disabled children.

One of Clinton's major campaign pledges in 1992 was to replace welfare ''as we know it,'' but he must reconcile that with his veto of a Republican welfare plan earlier this year because it was too hard on children. Since the veto, Republicans have been debating among themselves how to revive the issue. One alternative they have discussed is to agree to unite behind the Senate version, which was adamantly opposed by House Republicans.

That way, some Republicans argue, Clinton would have to sign the bill—as he earlier indicated he would do—hereby angering liberals in his party, who think the Senate bill amounts to an abandonment of the party's traditional commitment to the needy.

Clinton's comments yesterday appear to add a new hurdle to getting any version of welfare overhaul through Congress this year. Some argue it is an academic discussion anyway, because Republicans have deep disagreements over whether to try for a deal, how to proceed and whether a more limited measure like the Senate version could make it through the House.

In the interview and later talking to reporters, Clinton said any new version sent him should ''at least reflect'' understandings on improvements reached between him and congressional Republicans during their marathon balanced-budget talks at the end of 1995.

''We reached an understanding,'' Clinton said, that ''we should do more'' on child care funding, food stamp proposals, funding that covers Social Security disability payments to children and provisions affecting the children of legal immigrants.

Republicans disputed Clinton's description of the talks and his call for using them as a basis for new legislation. Tony Blankley, spokesman for House Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.), said the welfare discussions were in the context of Republicans taking less than real reform in order to get more of a real balanced budget. Without the balanced budget, he said, the equation doesn't hold up.

''It's not going to happen,'' he said of legislation rewritten to reflect the president's newest specifications. Adding new requirements now to the one version he did embrace ''offers a flavor of the kind of two-step he did in the Oval Office last month,'' moving the goal posts as the game proceeded, Blankley said.

Administration officials are vague on what precisely Clinton and the Republicans reached understandings about. But one senior official said Republicans agreed to add back about $4 billion of the $26 billion in cuts they proposed for food stamps, and were no longer seeking to make the program a block grant. On child care, they did not object to adding $2 billion in spending and to allowing women who work 20 hours a week to meet the work requirement to keep benefits.

On Social Security disability payments, the Republicans, officials said, did not object to loosening requirements to allow more traditionally disabled recipients to retain their benefits, while removing alcoholics and others. The two sides also ''threw out a number of ideas'' on how to loosen the GOP requirement that legal immigrants not be eligible for most welfare benefits, an official said.

Clinton was relaxed and voluble for most of the interview, becoming more intense only when defending himself when asked if he has been inconsistent in his approach to government. He was joined in the Oval Office by a handful of senior aides, including senior adviser George Stephanopoulos, press secretary Michael McCurry and communications director Don Baer, none of whom joined the discussion.

Regarding the 1996 campaign, Clinton said he has gotten a good reception to the conciliatory tone of his State of the Union speech and said seeking common ground with Republicans would be part of his election-year message.

But asked if he would ask voters to give him a Democratic Congress to help accomplish second-term goals, Clinton said, ''The American people don't think it's the president's business to tell them what ought to happen in the congressional elections.''

Presidents have been only modestly successful in recent elections in getting voters to link their presidential votes to congressional votes by party. George Bush, when he was elected in 1988, saw his party lose seats in Congress, as did Clinton in his 1992 election. But the reelections of Richard M. Nixon and Ronald Reagan, in 1972 and 1984, saw their Republican Party make double-digit gains in congressional seats.

''The evidence that the president's been successful making that kind of argument to the American people is not very heavy,'' Clinton said.

He added, ''I think it ought to be obvious to people that Speaker Gingrich would like to have a Republican president and it's obvious to people that I would like to have more Democrats in the Congress, but I think what the American people want to know is: What are these people saying, how's it going to affect me, and then I'll make a decision about how I'm going to vote.'' The president said he would ''make my case'' about what he wants to do in a second term. ''I hope it will embrace a lot of the people that are running for Congress in my party. But to tie the two things together I think would probably be self-defeating.''

Asked about his changes in governing philosophy since he took office and to reconcile his first speech to Congress in 1993 with his State of the Union address last week, the president flushed and rejected the premise that the different themes showed a different philosophy.

In 1993, he began his speech by saying, ''Tonight I want to talk to you about what government can do because I believe government must do more,'' and went on to outline a ''package of jobs investments of over $30 billion to put people to work now, to create half a million jobs: jobs to rebuild our highways and airports, to renovate housing, to bring new life to rural communities.'' Last week, he twice proclaimed, ''The era of big government is over.''

Clinton said the two speeches are inconsistent ''only if you have that kind of selective quotes.''

''I've worked very hard to work out a coherent philosophy that is different from either just letting the market run the world and America, or pretending that the government can solve all the problems,'' he said. ''I have worked on it very hard for years and years and I believe that there's a remarkable consistency in what we have done.''

CONGRESS SHOULD BALANCE THE BUDGET IN THE RIGHT WAY

(Mr. OLVER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, as American workers and families struggle for economic security, the 104th Congress has an obligation to help. First, this Congress must protect the credit and good name of our Nation. Congress should pass clean legislation to avoid default on our debt now, this week.

Next, we should raise the national minimum wage so working families can survive without Government assistance. Then we should provide workers with portable health insurance and guarantee that no one can be denied health coverage due to a preexisting condition.

We should balance this budget, but only in a way that protects our parents' pensions, provides education and job training, keeps our streets and schools safe, and protects our environment.

Mr. Speaker, Americans are skeptical that their Government can do anything to make their futures brighter. We should prove them wrong.

BALANCE THE BUDGET

(Mr. METCALF asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. METCALF. Mr. Speaker, the interest on the debt this year is $235 billion; that is more than the deficit. In other words, Government spending is really less than Government income, if we do not count the deficit.

We are paying interest on a debt that Congress overspent, the result of Congress overspending for decades. It has resulted in this disgraceful deficit, and the budget we now begin this year, the interest on the debt will exceed the huge defense budget. Interest on the debt costs $1,300 for every American. That is $5,200 for a family of four.