

Atty. general should lead drug fight — Cleland

By Rich Perlberg
staff writer

Robert Cleland says he can defeat longtime state Attorney General Frank Kelley in November. That's the easy part.

Once elected, the St. Clair County prosecuting attorney says that, given the passage of two laws, he can rid the state of drug dealers in five years.

Kelley's camp says that claim is "bunk" and suggests Cleland may be running for the wrong office.

CLELAND, 39, was the second choice of gubernatorial candidate William Lucas to fill the attorney general's slot for the Republican ticket. First choice was state Sen. Alan Cropsey, whose conservative reputation cost him a spot on the ballot even before Lucas made his announcement.

Cleland, elected without opposition as county prosecutor in 1980 and 1984, vows he is not a sacrificial lamb in facing Kelley, the Democratic attorney general for a quarter of a century and winner in 1982 of a fierce battle with a much better known prosecutor, L. Brooks Patterson of Oakland County.

Patterson, said Cleland, would have won four years ago if his energy and finances hadn't been drained by a failed primary run for governor.

CLELAND SAID Kelley has to take a leadership role against crime as the state's chief law enforcement officer.

"It's been coaching this team for 25 years, and all he has come up with is a defense," said Cleland in an

interview Friday. "You can't score points against crime without an offense."

Cleland's offense is a six-point plan that includes mandatory sentencing, a revamping of the insanity defense and shifting the attorney general's staff to provide more emphasis on crime fighting.

The backbone of the plan is his idea that a revamped attorney general's office — with himself in charge — can rid the state of drug dealers in five years.

To do that, he said, the Legislature must pass two laws: one to allow closely monitored wiretapping to catch drug "king pins" and one that would allow the state to seize nearly all assets of individuals engaged in illicit drug trade.

"WE WILL introduce risk and make it too expensive to do drug business in this state that the criminal

entrepreneurs will simply make the business decision to vacate," Cleland said.

"Law enforcement — particularly drug distribution, with the organized crime implications that has — will be the priority of my office as attorney general," said Cleland, adding that Kelley couldn't buy a cup of coffee if he had "a nickel for every organized crime thug he's put behind bars."

Kelley was in Dallas Friday and could not be reached for comment, but his press secretary, Dan Loepp, said Cleland's statements were "pure bunk and election-time rhetoric."

LOEPP SAID 26 percent of Kelley's attorney general staff is "dealing with law enforcement issues and with crime on a day-to-day basis, which is more than any other attorney

general's staff in the country."

Loepp said Kelley successfully defended Gov. James Blanchard's refusal to release prisoners from overcrowded prisons, thereby forcing the Legislature to fund the nation's most extensive prison-building project.

Loepp said Cleland was "one-dimensional" and won't concede that by statute the attorney general has many non-criminal duties such as representing 166 state agencies and defending the state against 11,000 active lawsuits.

Nonetheless, Kelley's staff has successfully investigated nursing home abuses and welfare fraud, Loepp said.

Loepp dismissed Cleland's claim that Kelley has not vigorously pursued the passage of a state wiretapping law despite supporting the bill last year. "This is not a police state,"

he said, adding it is up to the legislature to enact the law. "Maybe he (Cleland) should be running for the Legislature."

CLELAND, A St. Clair County native whose father also was county prosecutor, said he handles civil issues through his office and is capable of uniting law enforcement efforts across Michigan.

He said he would be willing to use the muscle of the attorney general's office to force the wiretapping bill into law.

He says he will be elected if he can get his qualifications in front of voters.

Loepp said Kelley takes all elections seriously and feels voters will think of him as a reliable family attorney who should be retained. "Ultimately, the people will decide, and we feel very comfortable with that."



Robert Cleland
GOP nominee

The Investment Store

Our clothes are an investment by you for years to come.

Quality and Style! That's Us!



737-0022

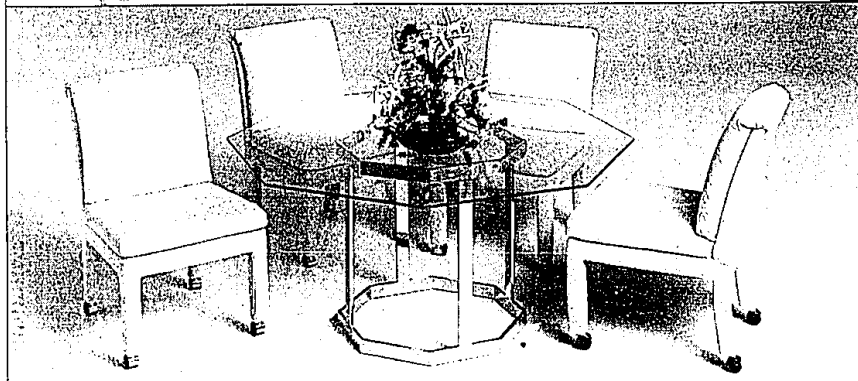
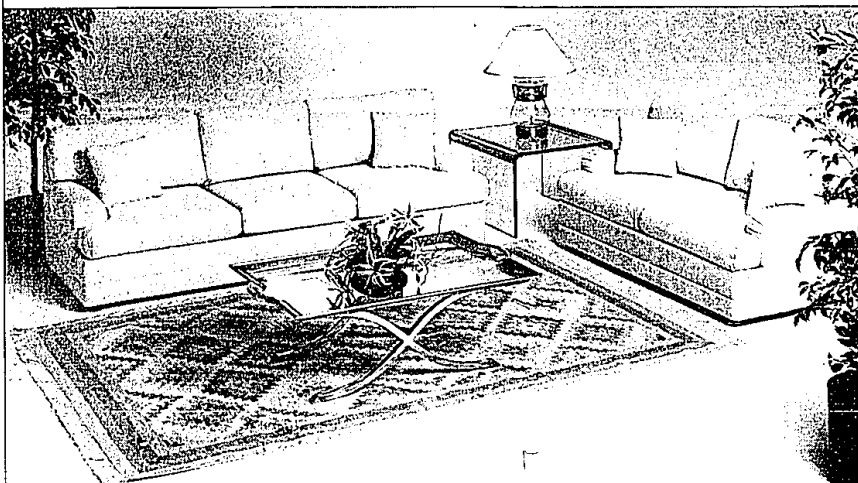
6215 Orchard Lake Rd.

• ¼ mile north of Maple • West Bloomfield
"On the rising sun side of the street."

tree chic petites



GORMAN'S



LOOK WHAT YOU CAN GET AWAY WITH AT GORMAN'S.

Gorman's professional designers will be happy to help you coordinate a look that suits you. Hurry to Gorman's NHFA sale and make off with a special price on quality. Now through October 12th.

Take advantage of us with huge savings on the top quality furnishings Gorman's is known for. During the NHFA's billion dollar sale, we're practically giving furniture away.

- 10 to 50% savings storewide.
- Selected Drexel sofas...from \$699.
- Drexel Heritage bedrooms, dining rooms & occasional tables...25% off.
- Imported Italian Leather sofas, sectionals & chairs...25% to 30%.
- Heritage upholstery...25% off.
- Selected Henradon upholstery...33% off.
- Selected Henradon living room, dining room & occasional tables...33% off.

Selig sofa and loveseat with contemporary Charles of London arm. Beige on beige textured fabric in stock. Special order fabrics available at same price.
REGULAR: \$1,888 NOW: \$999

Brass and glass octagon table with four upholstered chairs. Table measures 53" and glass is 5/8" thick. Special order fabrics available at same price.
REGULAR: \$1,995 NOW: \$999

Southfield
Telegraph at 12 Mile
Phone: 353-9880

Troy
W. Big Beaver at Crooks
Phone: 649-2070

Fairlane
260 Town Center Drive
Across from Fairlane Mall
Dearborn • Phone: 336-0340

All stores open Daily 10 to 6, Monday, Thursday & Friday 11-9;
Troy and Fairlane open Sunday 12:00 to 5:30.
Bedrooms on display at Troy and Fairlane.