

# Libertarian hopeful decries Thomas hearings

By Wayne Peet  
staff writer

Controversy over the nomination of U.S. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas is the clearest reason yet to abandon the two major political parties, Libertarian Party Vice Presidential candidate Nancy Lord said.

"I think the people finally got a chance to see Congress in action and they were revolted," said Lord during a campaign stop last week at the University of Michigan-Dearborn. "People are beginning to see that it's the people in power who are the problem."

Lord is a licensed, though non-practicing, doctor and an attorney in practice in Washington, D.C. She was recently her party's candidate for mayor in that city.

THAT DUALITY — doctor and attorney, conservative and liberal — underscores both Lord's philosophy and that of her party.

Staunchly pro-choice, Lord nonetheless lists herself as a Thomas supporter.

"It's shameful what they did to that man," she said. "The real reason the liberals feared Clarence Thomas was because they were afraid he was going to do what Supreme Court justices should have been doing all along — declare cer-

tain acts of Congress unconstitutional. They were afraid he was going to tell them there were some aspects of American life into which Congress couldn't intrude and they were afraid of that."

Lord, a former member of the National Organization for Women, said she wasn't afraid Thomas would cast the deciding vote in overturning abortion rights.

"If we lose at the Supreme Court, we'll win at the ballot box," she said. "Actually, I don't believe the public is as far apart on the issue as our leaders would have us believe. I don't think there are many pro-choice people who would favor abortions in the third trimester. And I don't think there are too many pro-life people who would outlaw abortion under all circumstances."

Barely a blip on the electoral chart in 1988, the party's 1992 goal is modest.

"Realistically, we're looking at taking 1 percent of the vote this time," Lord said. "If we do that we feel we'll send a message to Washington."

There were only six people in attendance for her talk at UM-D, a turnout 100 to 1,000 times less than Dan Quayle would have drawn for a similar visit.

But Lord, was both direct and enthusiastic during a give-and-take question with her tiny audience. Au-

dience members, it seemed, were equally enthusiastic about her.

"I think she's great," said UM-D student Mark Fleming of Westland. "I've been following her since the convention (in September). I know she's a lot better than Dan Quayle."

What does Lord think of Quayle, the man whose job she seeks?

"Well, I'd love to debate him," she said with a laugh.

On other issues, Lord would outlaw neither guns nor drugs and if television networks want to show adult-oriented fare, that's fine with her.

"Common sense has to prevail,"

she said. "Television networks aren't going to put pornography in prime time. They wouldn't get any advertisers."

Lord's personal affiliations include membership in the National Rifle Association, National Abortion Rights Action League and National Taxpayers Union.

If anything, hers is a political philosophy built on an issue-by-issue basis.

"WHEN I was a NOW member, I knew we stood for abortion rights, but I didn't know that also meant buying in to gun control and high so-

cial spending."

While she favors reducing welfare, Lord said that Michigan Gov. John Engler's approach may have gone too far.

"Ideally, you don't want to see able-bodied people receiving welfare, but it's better to wean them off gradually than to just dump them. One idea I've been considering is to cut welfare \$1 for every \$2 they earn in the workforce."

Libertarians have been selling their message of less government involvement for more than a decade, though to date there haven't been too many takers.

In 1988, the party's national ticket pulled less than one-half of one percent of the total vote. Though its 432,116 votes was the third most cast for any party, its ticket trailed such candidates as ex-Klanisman David Duke, right to life candidate William Marra, and long-age Democratic Party contender Eugene McCarthy in several states where those candidates also appeared on the ballot.

The party's 1992 ticket is headed by presidential nominee Andre Marrou, the Alaska state legislator who remains the party's highest ranking elected official.

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