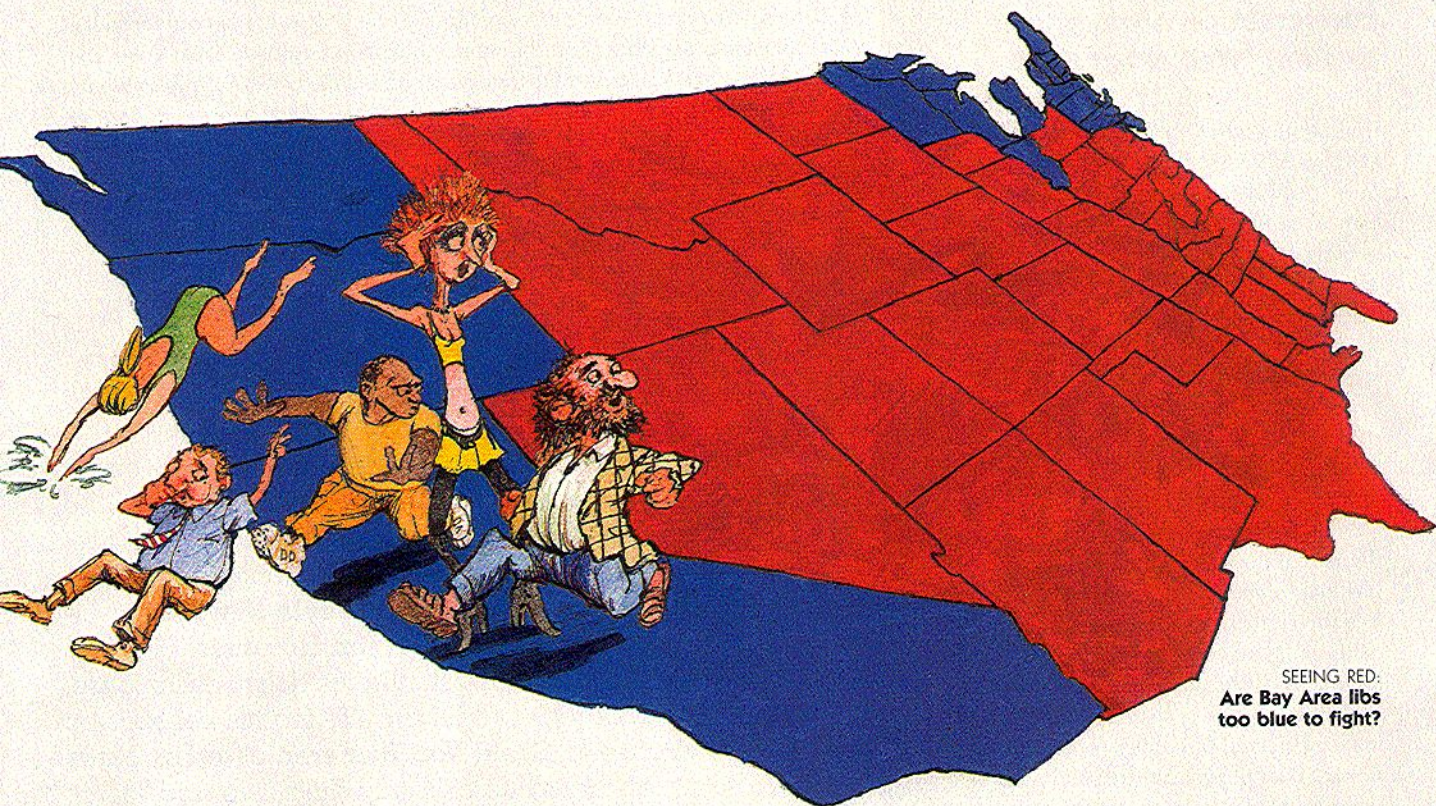


Insider

WHAT'S BUZZING AROUND THE BAY | EDITED BY NELSON MUI



SEEING RED:
Are Bay Area libs
too blue to fight?

Flight Risk

Local liberals' postelection urge to emigrate misses the whole point about the Bay Area.

BY MICHAEL MASON

Flee! Grab the laptop—oh, and the Zinfandel! Where's our autographed copy of *My Life*? Hurry, honey, before the jackboots arrive!

Only hours after Kerry conceded, Bay Area liberals were pulling suitcases out of closets and calling one another for advice on emigrating—to Australia, or France, or Mexico; it hardly mattered. In San Anselmo on that gray Wednesday, Gina Guinasso was counting the reasons to pack for the Canary Islands: "One, there's no George W. Two, my partner speaks Spanish. Three, beaches. Four, British tourists need bilingual bar staff. And five, cash under the table."

Where, oh where, might a liberal feel welcome? In this country, evangelical Christians swanned about the political talk shows after the election, taunting the free-thinking naïfs who supported gay marriage and cooperation with the United Nations. Conservative legislators crowded over a new political mandate that would impact the

environment, health care, public schools—everything liberals hold dear. Once a right-wing profanity, the word *liberal* itself became a punch line, the kicker to a joke so funny no God-fearing American could tell it to the end. (*Did you hear the one about liberals and global warming?*)

"There was a level of psychological involvement in this election that I haven't seen in 40 years," says David Tabb, professor of political science at San Francisco State University. "The anybody-but-Bush

