

## CALIFORNIA NIGHTMARE

# Guilty of being born a Texan

■ Lone Star native pays price for his Texas origins in liberal, eager-to-blame Golden State

By JOE MITCHELL

I AM a political criminal. My list of crimes includes: stealing thousands of square miles from another nation — Mexico; the execution of countless citizens — by electric chair and lethal injection; gouging energy prices — for electricity sold to the citizens of the state of California; and conducting a coup d'état, forcing a heartless authoritarian state upon millions of unwilling subjects — the Florida election debacle of 2000.

Like other tyrants before me, I'm reviled far and wide by those persons who refer to themselves as "civilized."

Yet, unlike other tyrants of the 20th century — Pol Pot, Augusto Pinochet, Papa Doc and Baby Doc Duvalier, Adolf Hitler and Josef Stalin — no substantial evidence has been brought against me in either a court of law or the court of historical record. I am guilty by association — guilty by perception.

You see, my only crime was having been born and lived most of my life in the state of Texas.

I have now lived in the liberal bastion of Northern California for more than three years.

"How long did you live in Texas?" many potential em-

ployers and friends have queried with thinly veiled disgust.

"Where's your gun?" I have heard more than once sans the least hint of irony.

"You don't sound like you're from Texas" is a common refrain among astonished Coasties.

I have been subjected to countless unprovoked diatribes against the Bush clan and the evils of unregulated energy markets. I always smile and refrain from pointing out that California's 47 electoral votes went to Bush Sr. in 1988, and that energy market deregulation was put into effect by Californians, not the Texas companies that happily exploited it.

I've even had a first date get up and leave the restaurant upon my confession of Texas origins. She said she could not associate with someone from George W. Bush's home state. The anger in her voice bordered on hissing. I was too shocked to protest. The snickers from surrounding tables were embarrassing. Yes, I paid the check, then I skulked out the door as quickly as possible.

Strangely, for all the abuse heaped on me for the sins of my home state, I am, and have always been, a raving liberal. I voted for G.W. Bush's opponents both times he sought the governor's office in Austin. I have voted straight Democrat in presidential elections since I cast my first vote in 1984 with one exception, and that

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## TEXAN:

# Thing is, I'm a liberal

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was a Green Party candidate. No, it was not Mr. Nader that got that vote. I am so insanely liberal that I have happy dreams that Bill Clinton is King of America.

Still, in the eyes of too many liberals, because I am from Texas I am a gun-toting redneck full of too many prejudices to name.

It's funny how prejudice keeps otherwise "open-minded" people from recognizing one of their own. It is a typical "limousine liberal" mindset that favors well-to-do members of the Democratic Party from the two coasts at

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the expense of the non-union working class in the nation's midsection. The thinking goes: "If you come from the heartland or the South, you are too backward and too ignorant to understand what's best for the country."

Most of the folks in the nation's middle have heard that declaration loud and clear. It's why their states came up red in November 2000 and will most likely do so again in 2004. If the Democratic Party does not purge this elitist mentality from its ranks, it will never be able to make those red states blue.

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# OUTLOOK

COMING MONDAY

■ Summer is for slowing down to reflect on what's happening in the world and how what's happening gets covered by the media, says editorial writer Andrea Georgsson.

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