

Daily Nebraskan

Editorial Board
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Chris Hopfensperger.....Editor, 472-1766
Jeremy Fitzpatrick.....Opinion Page Editor
Alan Phelps.....Managing Editor
Brian Shellito.....Cartoonist
Susie Arth.....Senior Reporter
Kim Spurlock.....Divisions Editor
Sam Kepfield.....Columnist

EDITORIAL

Domestic truth

Sacrifices necessary to make changes

Let us begin with energy and hope, with faith and discipline, and let us work until our work is done," President Clinton said in his inaugural address Wednesday.

They are good words. But whether they will be more than mere words is up to the people of the United States as well as their new president.



President
Bill Clinton

Scott Maurer/DN

was not shaped by World War II.

His strengths lie in domestic, not foreign, policy. He is as much of a Washington outsider as George Bush was part of the establishment.

In that, Clinton's presidency could represent a fundamental change in American society. It could, as Clinton has so often said, mean change.

But as Clinton acknowledged in his address, that change cannot be brought about by the president and Congress alone. The American people must be willing to make the sacrifices necessary to move the United States forward.

"We know we have to face hard truths and take strong steps," Clinton said. "But we have not done so. Instead we have drifted."

With a new leader and without divided government for the first time in 12 years, Americans have the chance to stop drifting. The United States can move on the domestic challenges it has ignored for too long.

Change obviously is not going to be an easy road. Already, Clinton has come under fire for failing to meet and waffling on his many campaign promises. But America chose a path, and the voters chose Clinton to lead them away from another Republican administration and the problems that have cropped up in the last 12 years.

Those problems cannot be solved effortlessly by Clinton or anyone else. Everyone must be willing to work harder and be prepared to sacrifice if we are going to really achieve change.

The ceremony of Clinton's installation as president was impressive, but the real decisions of whether America will move forward will be made in the homes of American citizens, not in the White House or the Congress.

When the inauguration speech and ceremony are but a memory, hard work will remain. If Americans really want change, they must be willing to accept that work and see it through to the end.

As Clinton said, "We have heard the trumpets. We have changed the guard. And now — each in our own way, and with God's help — we must answer the call."

America, which has been asleep on domestic issues during the last 12 years of Republican administrations, now has the opportunity to wake up to its severe domestic challenges and do something about them.

Clinton was elected on the theme of change, and his inauguration represents a significant shift in American leadership. He is the first member of his generation elected president and the first modern president whose life



TODD BURGER

School painter does real work

Watching performance artist Denny Dent in action Tuesday in the Nebraska Union, willfully splattering and throwing paint in a showy attempt to produce art, I was reminded of another painter, Bob Beahr, by sheer contrast.

Bob does not paint canvases; he paints within the realm of reality.

I worked alongside him this summer in my role as a temporary worker/participant in his scene.

Bob paints the interiors and exteriors of Lincoln Public School buildings for a living. His unsigned work is now on exhibit in — actually on — many Lincoln schools.

Bob's last name, Beahr, as in grizzly bear, comes close to capturing his essence. He is as solid, earthy, self-reliant and practical as a grizzly bear might be.

His physical presence is also solid and confident, with his brown, slightly graying, hair and mustache, and strong arms that jut out from his stout frame.

Bob seems slow to anger, but I would not want to be the one to rile him up.

As Bob says, he is not an "artiste." He does not aim for the highfalutin self-expression, but the more practical, though no less important, self-satisfaction of a job well done.

"Of course, the customer has to be satisfied with it, too," he says.

If one wants to see Bob the painter in action, you have to go to the work site. Bob and his painting crew are currently at East High, painting the interiors. "Just about got 'er done."

Hey Bob, have you ever tried art? "Can't say as I ever have."

Just as Denny Dent is an artist and only an observer to the real world of work, Bob is a worker and only an observer to the art scene. "Some paintings I like. Other paintings... I could



Just as Denny Dent is an artist and only an observer to the real world of work, Bob is a worker and only an observer to the art scene.

stand there all day and not figure it out."

Bob stands as an underappreciated painter in comparison to his more glorified, more egoistic brother with a brush — the artist, or "artiste."

While the artist Denny Dent freely slops all over the place searching for elusive existential meaning and giving a new emphasis to the utility of drop cloths, Bob and his white-panted fellow workers are remarkably neat and clean for working — truly working — with the medium of paint.

I was amazed this summer at Bob's understated facility with paint. At least initially, I as a temporary worker looked closer in appearance to the free-flowing performance artist than the astute professional painter.

Denny Dent is a self-proclaimed, self-advertised "two-fisted" painter with up to three brushes in each hand at a time. Or he may decide, "what the hell," and dip both his hands in the paint bucket.

By contrast, Bob Beahr goes along

his workaday productive life just fine with one brush at a time: Purdy is his brand.

The working man is naturally fatigued after a day of working his craft, but he is nonetheless satisfied and at peace with himself and his paint. He does a good job, if you will take care to notice.

He appreciates the occasional compliment that comes his way.

And he'll go at it day in and day out. He has a routine, and the routine has him.

As for plain philosophy for living a life, Bob tells me about the business card he got from an old-timer in the trade when he was first starting out, after he got through with his duty in Vietnam. Painting is a craft that is passed from generation to generation of painters. "Unless they liked you, they wouldn't show you the tricks, the shortcuts."

He carries the miniature document in his wallet to this day, which seems to reflect for him the frustration as well as the transcendence of the working man:

"To my critics,
"When I am in a sober mood, I worry, work and think.

"When I am in a drunken mood, I gamble, screw and drink.

"And when my moods are over, and my time has come to pass, I hope they bury me face up, so the world can kiss my..."

And so goes the working man. You've got to at least respect him for what he is.

"As long as you do your best,"
It's been good talking with you, Bob.
"No problem."

Burger is a junior philosophy major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Staff editorials represent the official policy of the Fall 1992 Daily Nebraskan. Policy is set by the Daily Nebraskan Editorial Board. Editorials do not necessarily reflect the views of the university, its employees, the students or the NU Board of Regents. Editorial columns represent the opinion of the author. The regents publish the Daily Nebraskan. They establish the UNL Publications Board to supervise the daily production of the paper. According to policy set by the regents, responsibility for the editorial content of the newspaper lies solely in the hands of its students.

LETTER POLICY

The Daily Nebraskan welcomes brief letters to the editor from all readers and interested others. Letters will be selected for publication on the basis of clarity, originality, timeliness and space available. The Daily Nebraskan retains the right to edit or reject all material submitted. Readers also are welcome to submit material as guest opinions. The editor decides whether material should run as a guest opinion. Letters and guest opinions sent to the newspaper become the property of the Daily Nebraskan and cannot be returned. Anonymous submissions will not be published. Letters should include the author's name, year in school, major and group affiliation, if any. Requests to withhold names will not be granted. Submit material to the Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St., Lincoln, Neb. 68588-0448.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

'Right On'

Regarding Wendy Mott's article, "Music stores staffed by snobs" (DN, Jan. 18, 1993):

Right On!

Finally someone willing to tackle this burning issue. The music-store snobs in their Butthole Surfers T-shirts that make character judgments about anyone buying anything mainstream need a kick in the butt. Many is the time that I — a long-haired, "alternative" looking kind of guy — have bought something like Madonna or Guns n' Roses and been asked,

"You're actually buying that?" by someone so caught up in their politically correct musical genre that they haven't the foggiest what anything else even sounds like.

Want your own personal revenge on these people? Pick any artist in the Top 10 and ask how his or her new album compares with his or her previous work. That is the Achilles' heel of these people — They've never heard the stuff and will usually admit it. I tried this technique when I was buying Motley Crue's "Doctor Feelgood" album and the guy looked confused, then admitted that he had never heard the album even though it had been the

No. 1 album in America for weeks.

And as for that "slender prairie flower" Wendy Mott: Damn fine writer! She can take solace in the fact that Del Amitri's vocalist/songwriter Justin Currie — while he may be no Paul Westerburg — is generally regarded by critics as one of the best lyricists working the pop field today. I must differ with Mott, however, on one small point: I find the Twisters staff to be the least judgmental of Lincoln's record stores.

Thomas Irvin
former UNL student
Lincoln