**Article: “Obama’s Inaugural Speech Was Bold, but Following Through Won’t Be Easy”**

http://swampland.time.com/2013/01/22/obamas-inaugural-speech-was-bold-but-following-through-wont-be-easy/

**Summary**:

This article describes President Obama’s Inaugural Address to the country that occurred in Washington D.C. on Monday. One major idea in the article is the difference between President Obama’s first Inaugural Address and this one. For his first one four years ago, he spoke optimistically about what could be accomplished by joining forces with Republicans and working together. He attempted to build bridges with several Republicans like John McCain, conservative journalists, and Colin Powell. In his second Address this week, he spoke much differently. He was more combative, clearly taking a Democrat vs. Republican approach. He highlighted controversial issues like entitlements, gay marriage, and climate change; and in some ways he “cast himself as a defender of regular Americans against Republicans. . .”

The article also discusses the current political climate in our country, painting a bleak picture for any sense of compromise. On issues such as the debt ceiling, gun control, immigration reform, and climate change, partisan deadlock exists and will likely prevent many actions from being taken. While Obama has made several promises in this Inaugural Address, it will prove difficult to follow through on most of them due to partisan game-playing and bickering. Four more years of “combat” and “warfare” are much more likely.

**Respond and Connect:**

This reminds me of another article I read this week in Time. In it, author Joe Klein offers some hope for Republicans and Democrats to get along in the next few years and actually accomplish something together. I found myself more discouraged after reading it, however, because it talks about just how hard it is for members of Congress to even try. They are shunned by their party if they even attempt to try to speak to someone from the other side. It’s definitely a mob-mentality thing; and the goal is to win, not to make the country better.

Unfortunately, this is the world we live in right now. Our politicians are playing power games with the country; and in the meantime, no plans are being made to fix the enormous difficulties we current face and will face in the future. It’s easier to fight and do nothing than to risk compromise with the goal of making America better. Part of the blame falls on the American people. We say that we want Congress to work together, but we support candidates who refuse to. We say that we want candidates to tell the truth, but a recent article I read said that most people are okay with their candidates lying if that’s what it takes to win. We say that we want to fix the budget, but no one wants to sacrifice. Sure, Congress is broken, perhaps beyond repair; however, in many ways Congress is merely a reflection of what the American public has allowed it to become.

What do I think of Obama’s speech? I think he went into his first term with a lot of fancy language that got people on board and feeling good; but he failed to act on those words, and he faced Republicans who made it their job to make sure he didn’t accomplish anything. His words now indicate he has also given up on the idea of an America working together, just as I seem to have, and he’s committing to a “my way or no way” approach to fit in with Washington.