

Meet the new boss

by BRIAN LOCKHART

I don't really follow American politics ? at least not at the level people in that country would.

If I'm going to follow politics it's going to be about the people on Parliament Hill who's decisions could affect my life.

However the recent presidential election in the U.S. and subsequent Broadway show of theatrics that followed over the next couple of months was hard to miss.

The new president, Joe Biden, seems to be a decent guy. He has a lot of experience in politics, and at the very least, he seems to be able to appear presidential in terms of conducting himself in a place of high office.

During the presidential inauguration, which is a big deal in the States, Biden said in his speech, it is ?A day of history and hope, of renewal and resolve?

Yes, a time of ?renewal.' That sounds familiar.

Going back over the past 60 years, lets take a look at the theme of inaugural speeches by incoming presidents.

John F. Kennedy 1961 - ?Let both sides explore what problems unite us instead of belaboring those problems which divide us - signifying renewal as well as change.?

Lyndon Johnson 1965 - ?We say ?Farewell.? Is a new world coming? We welcome it?and we will bend it to the hopes of man.?

Richard Nixon 1969 - ?We are torn by division, wanting unity.?

Gerald Ford 1974 - ?My fellow Americans, our long national nightmare is over.?

Jimmy Carter 1977 - ?This inauguration ceremony marks a new beginning, a new dedication within our government and a new spirit among us all.?

Ronald Reagan 1981 - ?We must act today in order to preserve tomorrow. And let there be no misunderstanding: We are going to begin to act, beginning today.?

George H.W. Bush 1989 - ?The new breeze blows, a page turns, the story unfolds.?

Bill Clinton 1993 - ?And so today we pledge an end to the era of deadlock and drift, and a new season of American renewal has begun.?

George W. Bush 2001 - ?I will work to build a single nation of justice and opportunity.?

Barack Obama 2009 - ?Starting today, we must pick ourselves up, dust ourselves off, and begin again the work of remaking America.?

Donald Trump 2017 - ?We, the citizens of America, are now joined in a great national effort to rebuild our country and restore its promise for all of our people.?

There is a definite theme of change, unity, renewal, and rebuilding in all of those speeches.

To be fair, there's not much else an incoming president could say.

It's not like a president is going to get up there and proclaim 'Things are going well. When I take over I'm going to continue the status quo.'

It seems that over six decades, no one has been able to unite the country - at least not according to every new administration.

I think our cousins south of the border are envious of our commonwealth status. They really want a King, not a president.

They refer to the Kennedy administration as Camelot and compare Jackie to a queen.

There are constant royal references in the media.

There's the King of Rock n' Roll, King of Pop, Queen of Soul, Queen of Pop, Queen of Disco, Roy and Dale as Queen of the West and King of the cowboys, Queen of Country music, King of country music, Queen of Bluegrass, Hollywood royalty, Hollywood's reigning Queen, and the list goes on.

I once saw an interview where a 'celebrity' asked why more Americans hadn't been knighted by the Queen. The interviewer had to explain the revolution to her.

Well, they don't have a Queen or a King who rules for life.

They have a president who is in charge, four years at a time.

Whether Joe Biden can unite the country remains to be seen.

But it reminds me of a song: 'Meet the new boss, same as the old boss.'