

Historical Context for JFK's Inaugural Address

January 20, 1961
President Kennedy delivers his Inaugural Address.

1953
President Eisenhower announces the development of the hydrogen bomb.
Cold War continues.
The first color televisions go on sale.

1954
The first large scale vaccination of children against polio begins.
Racial segregation in public schools is declared unconstitutional.

1955
Rosa Parks refuses to give up her seat on the bus to a white man, setting events in motion that would lead to the declaration in federal court that bus segregation laws were unconstitutional.

1956
Congressmen from southern states call for resistance to the Supreme Court ruling on desegregation.

1957
Congress approves the first civil rights bill since after the Civil War; in Little Rock, Arkansas, nine black students are barred from attending a previously all-white high school.
The US fails an attempt to launch a satellite into space.

1958
The first successful US space satellite, *Explorer I*, is launched.
Jet airplane passenger service begins in the United States.
The Dockum Drug Store sit-in is organized in Wichita, Kansas, for the purpose of integrating segregated establishments in the US.

1959
Alaska and Hawaii are admitted to the United States as the 49th and 50th states.

1960
A US U-2 reconnaissance plane is shot down by Soviet forces.
John F. Kennedy is elected president.

1961
The US government severs diplomatic and consular relations with the Cuban government.