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News Release

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A Christmas Message from Lt. Governor Peter Kinder

60 years ago this week, snow was falling hard on the streets of Independence, Missouri. As dusk fell and a blanket of white covered the town, a home on Delaware Street would soon become the focus of all of America.

It had been just three years since the end of World War II. American troops still stationed in Japan gathered on Christmas Eve to collect money and gifts for Japanese orphans near Tokyo. In war-torn Berlin, U.S. soldiers joined with German troops, some of which they had fought just years earlier, to celebrate together the meaning of peace, hope and joy. And from his house on Delaware Street back in Missouri, President Harry Truman prepared to deliver his Christmas Eve message to millions of people listening around the globe.

With the vestiges of war still lingering on the American economy and tensions with the former Soviet Union beginning to build, President Truman spoke of America's resilience in times of uncertainty and hardship.

"But with all our strength we have always had a deep feeling of compassion—a human sympathy for the underdog, the oppressed of all lands, for all who bear heavy burdens. That is a part of the American spirit," he said. "They are the thoughts that bind us together, one to another. They make up the great American epic---the epic of the home."

"We have had difficult problems, and that is why we can understand the problems of other peoples."

In many ways, we can draw parallels between our current state of affairs and those that were faced throughout the world over 60 years ago.

Today, our nation and our state lie in the clinch of a global economic downturn. We have seen the effects that this crisis has had on our economy. As a result, many of our friends and neighbors face this Christmas with lost jobs and lost income.

I know that Missourians will help each other through this crisis and with a spirit of unity and selflessness will provide for those who are in need.

This holiday season, many service men and women are still serving their country proudly at home and abroad. Many will spend this Christmas separated from their loved ones.

Across the globe, over 1,500 Missouri Guardsmen and Women are protecting our nation from threats abroad and helping to restore peace and hope to lands ravaged by war and crime. In total, over 11-thousand of Missouri's Citizen-Soldiers are protecting our freedoms at home and abroad. I am also happy to welcome home our men and women of the 9-35th Aviation Support Battalion who are returning from Afghanistan on Christmas Eve morning.

This Christmas, let us be thankful for the blessings that we have received, and let us celebrate the supreme gift of Christ's birth. In a world often filled with economic turmoil, political unrest and an unknown future we gather this Christmas with friends and family to find our peace and our hope in the loving arms of God.

May you and your family have a Merry Christmas and prosperous New Year.

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