WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD 300 W GREEN ST PASADENA CA 91129 16PM



1-191308U016024 01/16/86 ICS LA08730 00399 MLTN VA 01/16/86 JN03636

SNTA

MR JAMES E MORTENSEN
BOX 111
UVALDE TX 78801

PART 1 OF 2

JANUARY 16, 1986

DEAR FELLOW-SERVANTS OF JESUS CHRIST,

BY NOW YOU HAVE RECEIVED OR WILL SHORTLY RECEIVE THE CO-WORKER LETTER CONTAINING THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE DEATH OF MR. ARMSTRONG. GOD'S WAYS ARE HIGHER THAN OURS, AND HE SEES WHAT WE ARE INCAPABLE OF SEEING. HE KNOWS OUR NEEDS AND HE DOES TAKE CARE OF THEM, THOUGH NOT ALWAYS IN THE WAY WE THINK HE SHOULD.

I LEARNED LONG AGO, WHEN MY OWN FATHER DIED IN THE FAITH, THAT ALTHOUGH GOD DOES GIVE US HIS FAITHFUL AND UNBREAKABLE PROMISE TO HEAL, UPON REPENTANCE AND FAITH, HE RESERVES THE DECISION AS TO HOW AND WHEN. IF INDEED GOD DOES CHOOSE TO ALLOW THE FAITHFUL TO DIE, THAT DEATH IS NOT PERMANENT, BUT ONLY A TEMPORARY STATE OF PEACEFUL REST FROM THE SUFFERING OF THIS PRESENT EVIL WORLD, AWAITING THE REDEMPTION OF OUR BODIES INTO THE GLORIOUS LIBERTY OF THE SONS OF GOD!

GOD MERCIFULLY GRANTED US WHAT MR. ARMSTRONG CONSIDERED SEVERAL ADDITIONAL YEARS OF HIS LEADERSHIP, TO TURN THE CHURCH AROUND FROM THE LIBERALIZED PATH IT HAD STRAYED ONTO IN THE MIDDLE SEVENTIES. GOD USED HIM POWERFULLY TO GET THE CHURCH BACK ON TRACK. TO A REDEDICATED, CONCERTED UNITY CARRYING OUT THE PURPOSE OF OUR CALLING, THE PROCLAIMING OF CHRIST'S GOSPEL OF THE SOON-COMING KINGDOM OF GOD, AND OF FEEDING THE FLOCK THAT IS THE BODY OF CHRIST.

I AM PERSONALLY, OF COURSE, DEEPLY SQBERED AND HUMBLED BY THE RESPONSIBILITIES GOD HAS PLACED ON MY SHOULDERS. THE APOSTLE PAUL STATED THAT HE WAS THE "LEAST OF THE APOSTLES" (I CORINTHIANS 15:9). IN ANOTHER PASSAGE HE CALLED HIMSELF THE "LEAST OF ALL THE SAINTS" (EPHESIANS 3:8). LIKE PAUL, I AM ALSO THE LEAST OF THE BRETHREN. YET I KNOW, AS PAUL DID, THAT "I CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST WHO STRENGTHENS ME" (PHILIPPIANS 4:13).

JESUS HIMSELF SET US THE EXAMPLE. HE DID NOT SPEAK ON HIS OWN AUTHORITY. HE SPOKE THE WORDS AND DID THE WORKS OF HIS FATHER,

WHO DWELT IN HIM (JOHN 14:10). HIS ATTITUDE WAS ONE OF PERFECT HUMILITY AND OF PERFECT SUBMISSION TO HIS FATHER. HE WAS NOT SEEKING HIS OWN PURPOSES, BUT HIS FATHER'S. HE WAS FILLED WITH HIS FATHER AND HIS FATHER'S PURPOSES. HE AND HIS FATHER WERE ONE! THEY WERE (AND ARE) IN PERFECT UNITY.

THAT SAME GODLY UNITY MUST BE THE BINDING OF GOD'S CHURCH. WE NEED GOD'S SPIRIT TO LEAD US. AND GOD GRANTS HIS SPIRIT TO THOSE WHO OBEY HIM (ACTS 5:32). THIS TRIAL OF MR. ARMSTRONG'S ILLNESS A 3 HAS GIVEN ALL OF US (AN OPPORTUNITY) TO LOOK DEEPLY AT OURSELVES. Month to see where we have been falling short. To repent of the SIN capacity that so easily besets us (Hebrews 12:1), so that we can draw close to GOD to receive of his spirit to empower us to carry on his work. This has been a most sobering time. And Indeed IT SHOULD BE!

JESUS GAVE US INSTRUCTION WITH A WARNING IN LUKE 12:42-48:

AND THE LORD SAID, "WHO THEN IS THAT FAITHFUL AND WISE STEWARD, WHOM HIS MASTER WILL MAKE RULER OVER HIS HOUSEHOLD, TO GIVE THEM THEIR PORTION OF FOOD IN DUE SEASON?

"BLESSED IS THAT SERVANT WHOM HIS MASTER WILL FIND SO DOING WHEN HE COMES.

"TRULY, I SAY TO YOU THAT HE WILL MAKE HIM RULER OVER ALL THAT HE HAS.

"BUT IF THAT SERVANT SAYS IN HIS HEART, 'MY MASTER IS DELAYING HIS COMING,' AND BEGINS TO BEAT THE MENSERVANTS AND MAIDSERVANTS, AND TO EAT AND DRINK AND BE DRUNK, THE MASTER OF THAT SERVANT WILL COME ON A DAY WHEN HE IS NOT LOOKING FOR HIM, AND AT AN HOUR WHEN HE IS NOT AWARE, AND WILL CUT HIM IN TWO AND APPOINT HIM HIS PORTION WITH THE UNBELIEVERS.

"AND THAT SERVANT WHO KNEW HIS MASTER'S WILL, AND DID NOT PREPARE HIMSELF OR DO ACCORDING TO HIS WILL, SHALL BE BEATEN WITH MANY STRIPES.

"BUT HE WHO DID NOT KNOW YET COMMITTED THINGS WORTHY OF STRIPES, SHALL BE BEATEN WITH FEW. FOR EVERYONE TO WHOM MUCH IS GIVEN, FROM HIM MUCH WILL BE REQUIRED; AND TO WHOM MUCH HAS BEEN COMMITTED, TO HIM THEY WILL ASK THE MORE."

OUR WORK IS CUT OUT FOR US. GOD HAS CALLED US TO UNITEDLY AND WHOLEHEARTEDLY CARRY ON TILL CHRIST RETURNS. INDEED MUCH HAS BEEN GIVEN TO US AND MUCH WILL BE REQUIRED.

THERE WILL BE EVEN GREATER OPPOSITION AND PERSECUTION AHEAD. ARE YOU READY FOR IT? ARE YOU PUTTING YOUR HEART INTO YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD SO THAT HE CAN USE YOU IN HIS WORK==SO THAT YOU CAN REMAIN FAITHFUL TILL JESUS RETURNS?

AGAIN I STRESS--WE MUST MAKE OVERCOMING THE PRIORITY. THE TIME FOR THIS WORLD'S CIVILIZATION IS SHORT. BUT THERE IS MUCH YET TO DO. AS WE SUBMIT TO GOD, CAREFULLY AND DILIGENTLY SEEKING HIS WILL IN OUR LIVES, AND FORSAKING THE WAYS OF THIS WORLD, GOD WILL CONTINUE TO BLESS HIS WORK. HE WILL LEAD US, DIRECT US, GUIDE US. BUT WE MUST FOLLOW HIS LEAD TOGETHER, AS ONE BODY. JESUS IS NOT FRAGMENTED AND NEVER WILL BE.

AFTER JESUS WAS CRUCIFIED AND BURIED, SEVERAL OF THE DISCIPLES DECIDED TO GO FISHING--BACK TO THEIR OLD TRADE. MAYBE THEY THOUGHT THE WORK WAS OVER. BUT WHAT THEY DIDN'T REALIZE WAS THAT THE GREATEST WORK WAS YET AHEAD!

PRAY AS NEVER BEFORE--FOR GOD'S PEOPLE, FOR ONE ANOTHER, FOR THE GROWTH OF THE WORK, AND PLEASE PRAY FOR ME. MY PRAYERS ARE WITH YOU. I DEEPLY APPRECIATE AND LOVE EACH ONE OF YOU. I KNOW HOW DIFFICULT YOUR JOBS ARE AND HOW MUCH YOU AND OUR WIVES NEED GOD'S HELP.

ENCOURAGE HIS PEOPLE. POINT THEM TO JESUS CHRIST. AND STIR THE BRETHREN UP TO RENEW THEMSELVES SPIRITUALLY FOR WHAT LIES AHEAD. REMEMBER THE ADMONITION OF REVELATION 18:4, "COME OUT OF HER, MY PEOPLE, LEST YOU SHARE IN HER SINS, AND LEST YOU RECEIVE OF HER PLAGUES."

WILL CHRIST FIND US DOING HIS WORK WHEN HE RETURNS? I INTEND TO BE. AND I'M CALLING ON ALL YOU MINISTERS TO STAND WITH ME IN CHRIST'S SERVICE, HOLDING FAST TO THE GREAT COMMISSIONS HE HAS GIVEN US, ENDURING PATIENTLY AND FAITHFULLY TO THE END.

WITH DEEPEST LOVE, IN JESUS! NAME, JOSEPH W. TKACH

P.S. ENCLOSED WITH THIS LETTER IS AN ADVANCE COPY OF THE MEMBER AND CO-WORKER LETTER THAT IS BEING PRINTED TODAY AND MAILED TOMORROW FROM HEADQUARTERS. PLEASE READ THE LETTER TO YOUR CONGREGATIONS THIS SABBATH. MANY OF OUR MEMBERS WILL NOT HAVE RECEIVED THEIR COPIES BY THEN.

21:01 EST

MGMCOMP

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1-193108U016024 01/16/86 ICS LA08730 00411 MLTN VA 01/16/86 JN03641

SNTA

MR JAMES E MORTENSEN BOX 111 UVALDE TX 78801

PART 2 OF 2 COWORKER LETTER, JANUARY 16, 1986

DEAR BRETHREN AND CO-WORKERS WITH CHRIST,

I AM DEEPLY SADDENED TO HAVE TO INFORM YOU THAT HERBERT W. ARMSTRONG'S ILLNESS HAS ENDED IN THE MANNER LEAST EXPECTED BY ALL OF US. MR ARMSTRONG DIED PEACEFULLY IN HIS SLEEP AT 5:59 THIS MORNING WHILE RESTING IN THE FAVORITE CHAIR OF HIS LATE WIFE MRS. LOMA ARMSTRONG.

IN THE NEXT SECOND OF HIS CONSCIOUSNESS HE WILL AWAKE IN THE FIRST RESURRECTION, COMPLETELY HEALED, NOT IN THE CORRUPTIBLE BODY OF THIS MORTAL FLESH, BUT AS AN IMMORTAL SPIRIT-COMPOSED BODY, IN GLORY IN GOD'S ETERNAL KINGDOM!

THROUGH THE YEARS, WE HAVE LEARNED THAT GOD'S PROMISES ARE ABSOLUTELY SURE--BUT NOT ALWAYS IN THE WAY WE EXPECT. BECAUSE HIS WAYS ARE NOT OUR WAYS. GOD SAYS TO US, "'FOR MY THOUGHTS ARE NOT YOUR THOUGHTS, NOR ARE YOUR WAYS MY WAYS,'" SAYS THE LORD. 'FOR AS THE HEAVENS ARE HIGHER THAN THE EARTH, SO ARE MY WAYS HIGHER THAN YOUR WAYS, AND MY THOUGHTS THAN YOUR THOUGHTS.'" (ISAIAH 55:8-9).

GOD HAS PROMISED TO HEAL THE SICK, UPON REAL REPENTANCE AND FAITH. BUT GOD HAS NOT PROMISED HOW, OR WHEN. THAT WE MUST LEAVE TO HIM IN FAITH.

GOD, IN HIS INFINITE MERCY AND WISDOM, FAITHFULLY ANSWERED OUR PRAYERS IN THE WAY HE CHOSE, RATHER THAN THE WAY WE WOULD HAVE CHOSEN. "PRECIOUS IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD IS THE DEATH OF HIS SAINTS" (PSALM 116:15).

GOD IS FAITHFUL. HE IS MERCIFUL, COMPASSIONATE, AND LOVING. HERBERT W. ARMSTRONG IS MERELY AWAITING THE DAY OF HIS CHANGE, ALONG WITH THE OTHER THOUSANDS AND THOUSANDS OF GOD'S SAINTS, INTO IMMORTAL, GLORIOUS SPIRIT-LIFE, BORN INTO THE VERY FAMILY OF GOD AT THE SOON COMING RETURN OF JESUS CHRIST.

GOD GRANTED MR. ARMSTRONG 93 1/2 DYNAMIC YEARS, THE LAST 53 OF WHICH WERE FULLY IMMERSED IN DOING THE WORK OF GOD, PROCLAIMING THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD TO A WORLD BLINDED BY THE DECEPTION OF THE GOD OF THIS WORLD, SATAN THE DEVIL (REVELATION 12:9).

EVEN IN THE LAST YEAR OF HIS LIFE, WITH DECLINING STRENGTH, HE COMPLETED WITH GOD'S HELP, HIS MOST POWERFUL AND EFFECTIVE BOOK "MYSTERY OF THE AGES". THIS AFTER HALF A CENTURY OF ARTICLES, LETTERS, BOOKLETS, BOOKS, SERMONS AND BROADCASTS, PREACHING AND TEACHING THE TRUTH OF GOD'S WORD, OF HIS PLAN FOR MANKIND, OF THE GLORIOUS AND RADIANT FUTURE THAT IS THE ULTIMATE DESTINY OF HUMANITY.

WE DON'T KNOW WHAT TRIALS LIE YET AHEAD OF US IN COMPLETING GOD'S WORK OF PROCLAIMING THE GOSPEL TO THE WORLD. PERHAPS GOD SAW FIT, AS HE DESCRIBES IN ISAIAH 57:1, TO SPARE MR. ARMSTRONG, AT HIS ADVANCED AGE, FROM THE PERSECUTIONS AND TRIALS PROPHESIED TO COME AS WE FINISH THE WORK OF GOD FOR THIS AGE. INDEED, AS MR. ARMSTRONG WROTE IN HIS FINAL LETTER TO YOU, "THE GREATEST WORK LIES YET AHEAD...NEVER BEFORE IN THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH HAS IT BEEN POSSIBLE TO REAP SO GREAT A HARVEST."

NOW LOOK AT REVELATION 3:10-11. JESUS TELLS US, "BECAUSE YOU HAVE KEPT MY COMMAND TO PERSERVERE, I ALSO WILL KEEP YOU FROM THE HOUR OF TRIAL WHICH SHALL COME UPON THE WHOLE WORLD, TO TEST THOSE WHO DWELL ON THE EARTH. BEHOLD, I COME QUICKLY! HOLD FAST WHAT YOU HAVE, THAT NO ONE MAY TAKE YOUR CROWN."

LET US PERSEVERE. LET US CARRY CN, REDOUBLING OUR EFFORTS TO DRAW CLOSER TO GOD IN PRAYER AND BIBLE STUDY, FASTING OFTEN, AND STRIVING TO OVERCOME, AS WELL AS PUTTING OUR HEARTS INTO DOING THE WORK OF GOD! AS MR. ARMSTRONG SO OFTEN STATED, "WHEN OUR WAYS PLEASE GOD, HE WILL BLESS US."

I AM REMINDED OF LOMA D. ARMSTRONG'S ADMONITION TO SEVERAL HEADQUARTERS MINISTERS AT HER BEDSIDE JUST BEFORE HER DEATH NEARLY 19 YEARS AGE, SHE SAID, "WELL, GO ON NOW, ALL YOU MEN, AND DO YOUR WORK. I'LL BE ALL RIGHT."

HERBERT W. ARMSTRONG HAS GIVEN US THE SAME ADMONITION SO MANY TIMES. AS HE WOULD SAY, "GOI CARRY ON WITH GOD'S WORK, NEVER SLACKEN! NEVER LET DOWN!"

THE GREATEST TRIBUTE WE CAN GIVE MR. ARMSTRONG IS TO DO THE WORK WE'VE BEEN CALLED TO.

HE OFTEN POINTED US TO HIS MOTHER'S FAVORITE VERSE IN THE BIBLE, PSALM 133:1, "BEHOLD, HOW GOOD AND HOW PLEASANT IT IS FOR BRETHREN TO DWELL TOGETHER IN UNITY." WE DO NEED THAT UNITY NOW

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AS NEVER BEFORE. JESUS CHRIST, THE HEAD OF HIS CHURCH, HAS PROMISED US THAT HE WILL NEVER LEAVE US NOR FORSAKE US (HEBREWS 13:5); WE MUST MAKE SURE WE DO NOT LEAVE OR FORSAKE HIM, BUT REMAIN STEADFAST IN HIS CALLING, WORKING TOGETHER IN UNITY AND HARMONY LED BY HIS SPIRIT!

PRAY ESPECIALLY FERVENTLY FOR GOD'S CHURCH AT THIS CRITICAL TIME, AND FOR ONE ANOTHER. AND PLEASE PRAY FOR ME AND THE OTHER MEN HERE IN PASADENA. WE NEED YOUR PRAYERS, AND OUR DAILY PRAYERS ARE WITH YOU.

LET US CARRY ON IN FAITH, THERE IS MUCH YET TO DO!

WITH DEEPEST LOVE, IN JESUS! NAME,

JOSEPH W. TKACH

PRESS RELEASE

CONTACT:DAVID HULME
(818) 304=6087

HERBERT W. ARMSTRONG DIES

PASADENA, CALIFORNIA, JANUARY 16, 1986 - HERBERT W. ARMSTRONG, THE APOSTLE AND PASTOR GENERAL OF THE WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD, DIED PEACEFULLY AT 5:59 A.M. TODAY AT HIS HOME HERE WHILE RESTING IN THE FAVORITE CHAIR OF HIS LATE WIFE, LOMA. HE WAS 93 YEARS OLD.

MR. ARMSTRONG HAD RECENTLY APPOINTED JOSEPH W. TKACH TO ASSUME THE OFFICE AND TITLE OF PASTOR GENERAL OF THE 80,000-MEMBER WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD. THROUGHOUT HIS RECENT ILLNESS, MR. ARMSTRONG REMAINED ACTIVE IN THE DAY-TO-DAY DECISION MAKING OF THE SEVERAL ORGANIZATIONS HE HAD HEADED FOR MANY YEARS. MR. ARMSTRONG, AT A RECENT BOARD MEETING, SPOKE OF "PASSING THE BATON" TO ENSURE THE CONTINUED, UNABATED HUMAN LEADERSHIP OF THE CHURCH UNDER JESUS CHRIST.

MR. ARMSTRONG WAS ALSO FOUNDER AND CHANCELLOR OF AMBASSADOR COLLEGE; FOUNDER AND CHAIRMAN OF THE AMBASSADOR INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL FOUNDATION; AND THE FOUNDER AND EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF "THE PLAIN TRUTH" MAGAZINE, WHICH IS PUBLISHED IN SEVEN LANGUAGES AND HAS A WORLDWIDE CIRCULATION OF MORE THAN EIGHT MILLION.

MR. ARMSTRONG IS WIDELY KNOWN FOR HIS WEEKLY APPEARANCES ON THE "WORLD TOMORROW" TELEVISION AND RADIO BROADCASTS WHICH ARE CARRIED BY 374 TELEVISION AND 30 RADIO STATIONS WORLDWIDE, HE IS THE AUTHOR OF SEVERAL BOOKS INCLUDING "MYSTERY OF THE AGES" (1985), "THE MISSING DIMENSION IN SEX" (1969, REVISED 1981), "THE UNITED STATES AND BRITAIN IN PROPHECY" (1967, REVISED 1980), "THE WONDER-FUL WORLD TOMORROW" (1979), "THE INCREDIBLE HUMAN POTENTIAL"

(1978), AND HIS "AUTOBIOGRAPHY."

MR. ARMSTRONG WAS BORN ON JULY 31, 1892 IN DES MOINES, IOWA, THE ELDER SON OF HORACE AND EVA ARMSTRONG. IN JULY 1917, HE MARRIED LOMA DILLON, AN IOWA SCHOOL TEACHER WHO DIED IN APRIL, 1967.

MR ARMSTRONG PRODUCED THE FIRST "WORLD TOMORROW" BROADCAST IN JANUARY, 1934, AND FOLLOWED IT IN FEBRUARY WITH THE FIRST REGULAR PRINTING OF "THE PLAIN TRUTH" MAGAZINE, WHICH HE OFFERED FREE OF CHARGE TO THE LISTENING AUDIENCE. "THE PLAIN TRUTH" AND ALL SUBSEQUENT LITERATURE ARE STILL OFFERED FREE TODAY.

AS AUTHOR, RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTER, AND EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF SEVERAL MAGAZINES, HERBERT W. ARMSTRONG WAS WELL VERSED IN WORLD EVENTS. HIS TRAVELS INCLUDED NUMEROUS VISITS WITH WORLD LEADERS. THESE MEETINGS WITH EMPERORS, KINGS, PRESIDENTS AND PRIME MINISTERS GAVE HIM A UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE ON WORLD AFFAIRS AND WERE A CONTINUAL FOCUS OF HIS WRITING AND BROADCASTING.

AMONG THOSE WITH WHOM HE HAD PERSONAL AUDIENCES ARE HIS MAJESTY KING BHUMIBOL OF THAILAND, KING LEOPOLD II OF BELGIUM, EMPEROR HIROHITO OF JAPAN, KING JUAN CARLOS OF SPAIN, KING MAHENDRA OF NEPAL, THE EMPEROR HAILE SELASSIE OF ETHIOPIA, KING HUSSEIN OF JORDAN, THE LATE PRESIDENT ALLENDE OF CHILE, PRIME MINISTER MARGARET THATCHER OF GREAT BRITAIN, THE LATE PRIME MINISTER INDIRA GANDHI OF INDIA, PRIME MINISTER MENACHEM BEGIN OF ISRAEL, THE LATE PRESIDENT ANWAR EL-SADAT AND PRESIDENT HOSNI MUBARAK OF EGYPT, PRESIDENT SUHARTO OF INDONESIA AND ALL OF THE JAPANESE PRIME MINISTERS SINCE 1970.

MANY HONORS WERE BESTOWED ON HIM, INCLUDING JAPAN'S ORDER OF THE SACRED TREASURE; COMMANDER OF THE MOST NOBLE ORDER OF THE CROWN OF THAILAND; THE PRESIDENTIAL MEDAL OF MERIT FROM PRESIDENT MARCOS OF THE PHILIPPINES; A SPECIAL PEACE AWARD FROM BELGIUM'S KING LEOPOLD III; AND AN HONORARY DOCTORATE IN HUMANITIES FROM BOTH ILOILO UNIVERSITY AND ANGELES UNIVERSITY IN THE PHILIPPINES, ALL IN RECOGNITION OF HIS WORK FOR WORLD PEACE.

MR. ARMSTRONG OFTEN DISCUSSED THE PARTICULAR PROBLEMS FACED BY EACH RULER OR LEADER OF THE NATION HE VISITED. THROUGH THE AMBASSADOR FOUNDATION, MR. ARMSTRONG COOPERATED WITH MANY LEADERS IN PROVIDING NEEDED ASSISTANCE IN NUMEROUS HUMANITARIAN AND CULTURAL PROJECTS. THE FOUNDATION CONTINUES TO BE INVOLVED IN PROJECTS IN ISRAEL, EGYPT, SYRIA, ENGLAND, THAILAND, JAPAN, CHINA, BELGIUM, KENYA AND OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD.

MR. ARMSTRONG HAD BEEN RECOGNIZED BY MEMBERS OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS AS AN UNOFFICIAL "AMBASSADOR OF WORLD PEACE" AND A "BUILDER OF BRIDGES BETWEEN PEOPLES EVERYWHERE."

PRIVATE FUNERAL SERVICES ARE BEING ARRANGED. IN LIEU OF FLOWERS, DONATIONS MAY BE MADE TO THE CHURCH'S HERBERT W. ARMSTRONG MEMORIAL FUND.

21:28 EST

MGMCOMP