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Prime Minister

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

20 March 1986

Spaeth is one of the  
brighter stars in the  
CDU firmament. Agree  
to give him half an-  
hour.

28/10  
10.00

CDP  
20/3

Dear Charles,

Yes no

Visit by Lothar Spaeth

We have been seeking for over two years to attract Lothar Spaeth, Minister President of Baden-Wuerttemberg since 1978, to the UK. He has suggested a three-day visit this year from 28-31 October, and has asked that this be built around a call on the Prime Minister. Reluctant as he is to inflict a further burden on the Prime Minister, the Foreign Secretary recommends that she should consider seeing Spaeth at some time during that period.

Spaeth's reputation is based primarily on the development of Baden-Wuerttemberg into a model of economic dynamism and innovation. A strategy based on the active encouragement of high-technology investment, effective links with universities, and the promotion of small firms as well as large famous names such as Mercedes Benz has given the area enviably high growth and low unemployment: it has one of the highest per capital GDPs in the European Community. Spaeth has a political profile to match this record. On his regular visits abroad he has met in recent years (among others) Mitterrand, Lee Kuan Yew, Mubarak, Jaruzelski, Gandhi and Suharto. His name is high on the list of possible successors to Kohl.

The UK needs to be involved as closely as possible in the growing prosperity of Baden-Wuerttemberg. The level and growth rate of our share in the market has been lower than that for the Federal Republic as a whole. The Consulate General in Stuttgart was closed in 1984, because British businessmen failed to make sufficient use of the services it provided. Sir Geoffrey Howe believes that a successful visit by Spaeth could yield important dividends. For Spaeth, who is not a modest man, success will be measured primarily in terms of his access to senior Ministers, in particular the Prime Minister.

I should be grateful to know if the Prime Minister would agree to receive Spaeth for a call of, say, half an hour. She would find him articulate and perceptive, particularly on the role of government in encouraging a dynamic private sector.

/I

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/ I enclose a personality note.

I am sending a copy of this letter to John Mogg (DTI).

*Yours ever,*

*Colin Budd*

(C R Budd)  
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq  
PS/10 Downing Street

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SPÄTH, LOTHAR

Minister-President of Baden-Württemberg (CDU) since August 1978. A Deputy Chairman of the CDU.

Born 1937 in Sigmaringen. Studied administration at the State School of Administration, Stuttgart. Began his career in local government finance, then became manager in several firms of building contractors. 1967 joined CDU. 1968 elected to Landtag in a constituency previously held by the SPD. 1970 became Mayor of Bietigheim. 1972 appointed to the Board of Landeskreditbank, Baden-Württemberg, 1973 to board of Württembergische Landeskommunalbank, 1975 to executive board of large firm of building contractors, Baresel AG, Stuttgart.

In 1972 he was elected chairman (cf Chief Whip) of the CDU in the Landtag and as such made a name for himself as a first class political manager. The Parliamentary Party's relationship with Minister-President Filbinger became an effective dialogue instead of a chorus of sometimes grudging approval. February 1978 appointed Minister for the Interior in succession to Karl Schiess who resigned over trouble with terrorists in Stammheim prison.

August 1978 elected Minister-President in succession to Hans Filbinger who had resigned in the face of public criticism of his war-time activities. Led his party to convincing land election victories in 1980 and 1984. Elected a Deputy Chairman of the Federal CDU in 1981. As Minister-President he has made a major mark, especially by nurturing Baden-Württemberg's pre-eminent economic position in the FRG by a policy of active encouragement to new firms investing in high technology.

He is small, energetic and highly articulate. He has made his dissatisfaction with Kohl's leadership of the party since the 1980 Federal election increasingly clear. As Minister-President he has become more statesmanlike and is widely regarded as having strong ambitions on the Federal Chancellery himself.

Interested in modern paintings and drawings. Married with one daughter and an adopted son. His wife Ursula is an exceptionally charming and attractive though retiring personality. Späth visited the UK as a guest of HMG in 1980. He speaks a little English.

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21 March 1986

**VISIT BY LOTHAR SPAETH**

Thank you for your letter of 20 March about the proposed visit of Herr Lothar Spaeth, Minister President of Baden-Wuerttemberg, in October.

The Prime Minister could see Herr Spaeth for half an hour on 28 October at 1000.

(C. D. POWELL)

Colin Budd, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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JB