



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

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24th February 1988*Jan Charles,**Prime Minister
COP 25/2.
m*REDEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE OF THE SPANDAU PRISON

The Prime Minister may wish to be aware of the plan for the redevelopment of the site of the Spandau Prison in Berlin, which the Secretary of State for Defence and the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary have approved.

Following the death of Rudolf Hess last August, Spandau Prison was demolished under the terms of the protocol signed by the Four Powers in 1982. To avoid the site becoming a place of pilgrimage for Nazi sympathisers it is to be retained in British hands for use in direct connection with the British military presence in Berlin. Since there is a parallel, identified need to replace existing British Forces facilities in Berlin, it is proposed that the Spandau site should be developed as a Berlin Forces Families Centre, centred around a new NAAFI complex. British Forces Germany have identified no suitable alternative use for the Spandau site.

There has been continuing German press interest in Spandau. But the German authorities in Berlin have been briefed and the Governing Mayor has publicly supported the project in the Berlin House of Representatives. The US and France are understood to approve the broad principles of the project, and the Soviet Union is unlikely to raise any objection. There thus seems to be little likelihood of a serious negative reaction to the proposed redevelopment.

The entire cost of the project, which is estimated to be DM 56.2M, is to be met from the British Occupation Costs Budget which is funded by the Federal Ministry of Finance (FMOF) in Bonn. The FMOF has been briefed on the outline of the project on several occasions and is generally sympathetic. American and French forces in Berlin already have shopping and other facilities comparable

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with those planned for Spandau and paid for out of the Occupation Costs Budget.

On present plans the Property Services Agency proposes to arrange for the award of a contract for the first phase of the redevelopment by the end of this month.

I am sending copies of this letter to Lyn Parker (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) and to Trevor Woolley (Cabinet Office).

Yours sincerely
John Ball

(D C J BALL)
Private Secretary

