LISTE DU PATRIMOINE MONDIAL

A) IDENTIFICATION

Nomination: The Cathedral of Speyer

Location: Rhineland - Palatinate

State party: Federal Republic of Germany

Date: December 31, 1980

B) ICOMOS RECOMMENDATION

That the proposed cultural property be included on the World Heritage List.

C) JUSTIFICATION

The cathedral of Speyer, with those of Worms and Mayence, is a major monument of Romanesque art in the German Empire. It is, by virtue of its proportions, the largest and the most important, by virtue of the history to which it is linked - the Salic emperors made it their place of burial.

The cathedral, which was dedicated to Saint Mary and Saint Stephen, was built essentially between 1030 and 1106. It incorporates the general disposition of Saint Michael of Hildesheim and carries to its perfection a type of plan generally adopted, thereafter, in the region of the Rhineland. This plan is characterized by the equilibrium of the eastern and western blocks, by the symmetrical and singular placement of the towers which frame the mass formed by the nave and the transept.

In 1689, the cathedral of Speyer was seriously damaged by fire. Following this disaster in the 18th century, the
architect I.M. Neumann attempted its reconstruction in the Romanesque style, although not without inventing a Baroque "Westwerk" (1772-1778).

From 1854 to 1858, this addition was replaced by a western block, a pastiche of the Romanesque style, in keeping with current ideas. During the same period, all of the interior was enhanced by heavy neo-Romanesque decorative paintings and large historical panels, attributed to Schrandolph and his atelier.

Since 1957, the removal of the paintings and the layers of painted plaster has been undertaken in order to restore in its purity the eleventh century form of the cathedral.

Despite, or perhaps even because of, these vicissitudes, the cathedral of Speyer deserves to be included on the World Heritage List, based on criteria II.

It has, in fact, exerted a considerable influence not only on the development of Romanesque architecture in the 11th and 12th centuries, but as well on the evolution of the principles of restoration in Germany, in Europe and in the world from the 18th century to the present.