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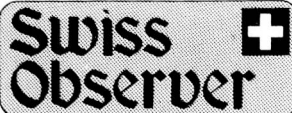
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Mrs Thatcher's two special reasons to say thank you to the Red Cross

BRITISH Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, on a recent private holiday visit to Switzerland, made a special point of calling in on the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva, reports Colin Farmer.

Mrs Thatcher visited the all-Swiss ICRC at her own request "because I have two very special reasons to thank you."

She told senior Red Cross officials: "Firstly, when we needed you, you came and looked at some of the things that were happening in Northern Ireland during the hunger strikes. And you did wonderful work when we were unfortunately involved in the Falkland Islands conflict."

The Prime Minister said it was "always a matter of honour and privilege" to co-operate with the Red Cross.

"Your reputation is such that what you say is always accepted. You should be proud of working for this unique, wonderful organisation. Its work is vital and admirable, morally right and practically effective."

During her visit Mrs Thatcher announced that the British government would be making a special financial contribution to the ICRC's international programme for political prisoners.

Later the same day Mrs

Thatcher met some of the 400 British scientists working at the European Organisation for Nuclear Research, which also has its headquarters in Geneva.

CERN is funded by 13 West European countries, including Switzerland, and employs a permanent staff of 3,500 scientific and administrative personnel.

The Prime Minister, who was accompanied by her husband Denis, spent 10 days relaxing at

the spacious luxury home on Lake Zug of her close friend Lady Glover-Hürlimann, who has been host to the Thatchers several times in recent years.

Lady Glover-Hürlimann is the widow of Sir Douglas Glover, who was for 17 years Conservative Member of Parliament for the Lancashire constituency of Ormskirk and who died earlier this year. Her first husband was a prominent Swiss businessman.





Above: Mr and Mrs Thatcher tour the CERN nuclear research centre. Between them is Professor John Kingman of Britain.

Above right: Mrs Thatcher holidaying on Lake Zug (from Die Weltwoche).



Margaret Thatchers Ferien am Zugersee

Zeichnung: Paul Perret

Right: The Prime Minister is watched by senior officials of the Geneva city and cantonal authorities and the United Nations as she signs the visitors' book. Second from right is Mr Thatcher.



Facing page: The Prime Minister waves to crowds as she leaves the Geneva headquarters of the International Committee of the Red Cross.