

# Beate Klarsfeld held in Syria

PARIS (Reuter) - French Nazi hunter Beate Klarsfeld was arrested in Damascus yesterday while protesting against Syria's refusal to hand war criminal Alois Brunner over to the West, her husband said.

Serge Klarsfeld told Reuters his wife was under police guard in a Damascus hotel after being arrested at the Syrian Interior Ministry. She carried a sign reading "President Hafez el Assad, 99.98 per cent of the votes is not enough. Extradite Alois Brunner. Free the Jews of Syria."

Assad, who has held power since 1970, was re-elected for another seven-year term in a yes-or-no ballot earlier this week.

"She is safe in her hotel under police guard. I'm not particularly worried. I'm much less worried than I would be if she had been arrested in South America for example," he said. "It's much easier to predict what the Syrian police will do."

Klarsfeld said his wife entered Syria on Thursday with a false passport. "It's true, she entered the country illegally. So it's for the Syrian police to decide what to do," he said.

"But they know we are spearheading the Brunner affair. They know she is not alone in this. An act of violence would not do Syria any good."

Austrian-born Brunner, 79, stands accused of having sent 130,000 Jews from France, Austria, Czechoslovakia and Greece to die in Nazi concentration camps. A French court sentenced him to death in absentia in 1954.