

French Jews, led by Klarsfelds, protest in Germany

ROSTOCK, Germany (AP) - A group of about 60 French Jews, headed by anti-Nazi activists Serge and Beate Klarsfeld, yesterday demonstrated against a recent German agreement with Romania on expulsion of Gypsies from Germany.

The protest took place in this Baltic coast city, where riots primarily directed against Romanian Gypsies at an overcrowded refugee center, shocked the nation in August.

The riots were followed by hundreds of attacks against other foreigners in Germany. Rightist radicals carrying out the attacks, mostly in economically depressed eastern Germany, blame foreigners for lack of jobs and a growing housing shortage.

Last month, Interior Minister Rudolf Seiters traveled to Bucharest to sign an agreement to expel Romanians back to their homeland if they were deemed not qualified for asylum.

Most Romanians seeking asylum in Germany are Gypsies, and opponents of the agreement say it is reminiscent of Nazi Germany's expulsions and slaughters of Gypsies and Jews.

Serge Klarsfeld said the August riots in Rostock, which forced relocation of several hundred Gypsies, were a reminder of the "terrible Nazi raids" against Romanian



Serge and Beate Klarsfeld

(Rahamim Israeli)

Jews in France 50 years ago.

"That is why Rostock was chosen for this action," Klarsfeld said after leading the French group to the Rostock city hall to deliver a memorial scroll to officials.

The scroll bore an inscription comparing the Nazi death camp at Auschwitz in Poland with the Rostock riots.

During the protest, streets leading to Rostock city hall were blocked by police, and the French group burned a flag bearing

the Nazi swastika symbol.

Police arrested four of the French demonstrators when they attempted to unfurl a banner out a city hall window.

Rostock's city council president, Christoph Kleemann, complained that the protesters had not taken the trouble to notify city officials of their intentions.

"We heard of that through the media, and we were not even asked to take part in this," Kleemann said.

Beate Klarsfeld, a native of Berlin, gained international attention in November 1968 when she slapped then West German Chancellor Kurt-Georg Kiesinger during a Christian Democratic party congress in Berlin, because he had been a former Nazi party member.

In Rostock, Mrs. Klarsfeld; who has been active in tracking down Nazi war criminals, said she could not understand why the city did not back the protesters and voluntarily provide them a time and place to carry out the demonstration.

"Especially Rostock" should find it necessary to back such an action, she said. "The image of Rostock has been blackened in the entire world," Mrs. Klarsfeld said.

Kleemann said Rostock never intended to stop the Jewish group's demonstration, and did not seek a confrontation with them.