

Testimony of Emine Erkan

Emine Erkan, a middle-aged widow with two children and a member of the Society for the Protection of Human Rights, was expelled on June 5 after she refused to spy on fellow Turks for the police. At the end of May, she was summoned to the police station in Harmanli and was accused of organizing demonstrations. The police asked her to be a spy for them. They wanted her to go to ethnic Turks' homes, drink coffee or tea with them, and gather information. Mrs. Erkan refused, so the police took her to another room where a large man wearing a mask punched her. Then the police told her that she would be expelled. She had never applied to emigrate. She asked whether her two children could go with her. The police said they could not. On June 5, at 5 p.m., Mrs. Erkan was given a passport and was told that she had two hours to board a train for Turkey. She quickly threw some belongings into a small duffel bag, took her purse and went to the station. She has no relatives in Turkey. (Interview in Istanbul, June 6, 1989).

Source: Emine Erkan, interview by Ted Zang, Istanbul (June 8, 1989), "Destroying Ethnic Identity: The Expulsion of the Bulgarian Turks," *Helsinki Watch Report*, October 1989, *Human Rights Watch*, <http://www.hrw.org/> (accessed June 25, 2008).