

Story 1748 1994 Tape 3)

Narrator: Cevdet Uğuz,  
veterinarian

Location: Taşkale village,  
Karaman (provincial  
capital but former-  
ly kaza merkezi),  
Karaman Province

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Şükrü Saracoğlu<sup>1</sup> on Taxation

During the time when Şükrü Saracoğlu was Prime Minister, taxes were very high. The people of one village became very upset about the high tax rate, and they decided to complain to the Prime Minister about this matter.

They sent a delegation of their citizens to Ankara, where the Prime Minister agreed to meet with them. When they were shown in to the presence of the Prime Minister, they began to list their complaints both about the high taxes and about the methods of taxation used by the chief tax collector.

After listening to their complaints, the Prime Minister called to his presence his chief tax collector.

<sup>1</sup>Mehmet Şükrü Saracoğlu--he never used his first name in public--was one of Turkey's most distinguished statesmen during the first half of the 20th century. Born in 1887, he died in 1953. He was Prime Minister, President of the Grand National Assembly, and the holder of several Cabinet positions.

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that official arrived, the Prime Minister asked him, much should the hoca<sup>2</sup> of a village pay each year?"

The chief tax collector answered, "100,000 liras, sir."

"No, no!" answered the Prime Minister. "That is far too little. He should pay 200,000 liras."

When the villagers heard that, they immediately turned around and fled from the room

<sup>2</sup>In the Turkish Republic a hoca is a preacher and religious leader. During the Ottoman period he was both preacher and teacher.