

AMERICAN INDIAN HISTORICAL RESEARCH PROJECT

University of New Mexico

Tape Number: 504

Tribe: Navajo

Informant: Ray Blanca Yozzie

Informant's home address: Torean Mission
Cuba, New Mexico

Band or Clan:

Date and location of interview: 3-26-'70

Field Worker: M. B. Husband

Date of transcription: 5/70

Contents: Discussion of role of DNA;
welfare agencies; Torean Day School;
Cuba schools. Misc. area notes.

Evaluation of Interview:

Good discussion of
critical area problems -

Future Prospects:

will interview again.

Tape #504

Ray Yazzie
Navajo
Interviewer - Michael Husband
March 26, 1970
Side 1

Navajo language

- A. Everybody went over there.
- Q. Everybody around here get welfare money?
- A. Yes....except me, I have got no where to go. Missionaries can't help me.
- Q. They can't?
- A. I don't know what is wrong with them.
- Q. They won't help though?
- A. Unless I have got the money to pay them, they maybe will take me over there.....
- Q. Oh, you have got to pay them?
- A. Oh....he is awful that guy, I don't know, I didn't ask..... I told him yesterday when he made plan to take me over there, I told him that I had to work maybe for that over there, I don't know.
- Q. Work at the mission?
- A. Maybe.....
- Q. It says here five different government agencies, where you can get Navajo..... welfare.....
- A. Assistance.....
- Q. Yeah, the BIA and you have to go to Crownpoint to get that.
- A. They have got big office there.
- Q. Yeah. There is one in the state of Arizona, New Mexico, Utah and the Navajo Tribal Welfare Program which are, where do you get welfare from the Navajo Tribal Welfare Program?

- A. Right there.....
- Q. Crownpoint?
- A. Yeah, Crwonpoint....
- Q. That is a Navajo tribal agency there?
- A. Yeah, they have got a big place there a big office. Navajo you know, their girls working there, if you don't understnad English, they help you out right there.
- Q. It says here, that the welfare men come around will take your application, didn't they say that you could fill out an application for welfare?
- A. Down there, Crownpoint....
- Q. But you can't do it here and give it to them and they will take it.
- A. No, I don't think so cause I have to go over there personally and talk to them and fill out the papers for me.
- Q. Oh you have got to go there in person?
- A. I can tell them over here about my.... you know that I don't have any money....such and such.
- Q. Oh, you have got to go in person....
- A. Like to, you know what I mean....
- Q. Now where do you want to get money, the BIA, the state or doesn't it matter?
- A. Oh, they won't help, the state just from the BIA.....we have got an agency at Crownpoint.
- Q. What about the tribal welfare, the tribal money?
- A. Same....
- Q. Same thing...? How much can you get do you know?
- A. I don't know, depends on.... I tell them about what I need in the house so you know I want a, to buy some you know what I mean.... food or....
- Q. Let's go through it now, BIA welfare from the federal government.
- A. The government is the one....

- Q. Yeah, they will give you assistance if you are out of work, if you can't find work or if you are in bad health.
- A. Yeah, that is right, it is explained to you right there right?
- Q. And you are out of work, you can find work, you qualify for that, right?
- A. Yeah.
- Q. Now the state.....
- A. You mean the state.....
- Q. NO, that is the BIA if you are out of work, they will provide the money....
- A. The government.....that is the first time that they did. The year before, they didn't do that on account of the DNA..... they are the ones that helped the Navajos.
- Q. That is the federal government, now the state has program for needy people....
- A. That is for aged people.
- Q. Yeah OAA, that is Old Aged Assistance, but you have to be over 65. And you are not over 65?
- A. I'd tell you about the plan of the veterans but you have got to be disabled, what do they mean Bob by disabled?
- Q. Too sick to work, hurt....
- A. Broken hand?
- Q. Yeah, but you are not over 65 are you?
- A. No, I am 56 now..... I have got a long way to go.....
- Q. So you can't get the old age assistance.....
- A. Unless I go to the veterans administration and tell them about, I need a few 100, 200 maybe help me about 1,000.....
- Q. So that is one program, old OAA, Old Age Assistance which you don't qualify for, do you get social security?
- A. No, I have got to be 62 before I can get it....
- Q. Okay, another program of the state is ADC, and that is Aid to Dependent Children, but you don't have any children at home?

- A. They are all grown, my wife has got children.....
- Q. So you can't get that? Do you have children of your own?
- A. No, I have got one boy, but he is working someplace, he is not here. And the same way with this, Bob let me tell you, his wife, her husband died and this Dorson is suppose to get some money from his boy, I don't know....
- Q. Oh, your wife's son died.....?
- A. Yeah, just about recently, I think BIA can do something about that.....
- Q. Yes, DNA.... they come around sometimes don't they?
- A. No, not to the hogans, just to meetings.....
- Q. Meetings? Okay.... So you have got Old Age Assistance that you don't qualify for and ADC Aid to dependent children which you don't qualify for and the state also has aid to the blind and you are not blind, nothing wrong with your eyes and finally there is AD, Aid to the Totally Disabled and you are not totally disabled? So it doesn't look as though you can qualify for state welfare. So you have either got to get BIA welfare or Navajo tribal welfare and according to the Navajo Tribe Welfare Program I think you can get either money or purchase order, in other words, either money or food, at the trading post.....
- A. I don't think that the trading post, there is nothing wrong with that.
- Q. Yeah, I don't know if you can get, yeah, it says if your house is destroyed you can get help or if you want to build your house or fix it they will give you building supplies to improve or build your house and that is just what you want to do over here huh?
- A. Inside.
- Q. And then you will move in there?
- A. Yeah, but I need a stove....
- Q. A stove?
- A. Yeah, a big stove, that is what I need.
- Q. Yeah, and that is one of the things that the tribe welfare will give you and also health expenses.
- A. You mean labor?

- Q. No, it says, health rehabilitation, which must mean hospital and medicine, assistance in burial expenses when somebody dies, you know, and surplus food, but that is only Arizona.
- A. You mean food comes from agriculture?
- Q. Yeah, that surplus food is only in Arizona. In New Mexico.....
- A. They doing that, but they change the rules now....some of these days, I think that they are going to get the stamps.... they approve it.....
- Q. But in New Mexico they, the only surplus food that they distribute is on the reservation....
- A. Arizona.....
- Q. No, in Arizona they distribute to anybody who needs it, and Indian..... In New Mexico, you have to be on the reservation.
- A. Yeah, and we are outside.....
- Q. Yeah, so you don't get that.....
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- Q. Have you ever been told that you can't get welfare?
- A. You mean from the state?
- Q. Yes.
- A. No, unless I am 65, same way with the veterans I think, I never go to the veterans administration. I think they wrote it for me, I have got it in here somewhere.....
- Q. So you have never applied for welfare anywhere?
- A. No for welfare, but I think the veterans administration, I don't know, I don't know what they did with it. And I went to Cuba and one time I saw a nigger over there, he don't do any good, I tell you....
- Q. See you have got to go to the Eastern agency in Crownpoint, BIA, social services.....
- A. I have got some here, you can read them..... I got it from some guy, he went to schools.....
- Q. They are talking about the.....

- A. This is housing....
- Q. Oh is that who has got a _____ for your housing?
- A. Oh, no not that one, that one is....
- Q. That is still the BIA agency in Crownpoint?
- A. Jack Natchisi.....
- Q. Jack Natchisi, he is in charge of housing development?
- A. Yeah, I went to school with this guy.....
- Q. Oh really, in Albuquerque?
- A. He's just like white, went up there.... right Bob?
- Q. I was going to ask you about the Torreon boarding school over here..... is it a boarding school?
- A. Yeah.
- Q. What grades, I mean, little small children?
- A. Pre.....school.....
- Q. Preschool?
- A. Preschool yeah, I think that if they are off today, I think that on the 26th I think that they are planning to go to, down to some place, I don't know where the place is....
- Q. They don't have first grade?
- A. I think that they have got it.....
- Q. Oh do they?
- A. Yeah.
- Q. First and second grades then?
- A. Yeah, from ABC to the first grade to I don't know how many grades they have, I really don't know much about it.
- Q. How many children go to school there?
- A. I don't know, maybe, say around 50 or 40,,,,,

- Q. Do they live there?
- A. Yeah, they have to stay there all the time....
- Q. They have to.
- A. They eat their lunch there, do you know what I mean, they have got the dormitory there.
- Q. Can't their parents take them in the morning and pick them up in the evening...
- A. No, we bring the boys over here last Saturday, Henry's boy and my neice, that is Benny's little boy we take hem to the missionary and they take them back that night, they had to go to church first.....
- Q. But they have to stay there at night huh?
- A. They have got to stay all the week, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday.....
- Q. That is BIA school huh?
- A. Yeah, if you want them bad, you go over there personally, we bring them home and then we have to bring them back on Sunday night.....
- Q. Are they all white teachers there, do they have any Navajo teachers.....
- A. One day I was over there and I saw a white superintendent and white teachers and Spanish teachers, I don't know where they were from....
- Q. But no Navajo teacher huh?
- A. No. Used to be a Navajo teacher, but he is just around there....
- Q. How are the teachers, pretty good, do they ever talk to you about them?
- A. I never visit them, they tell us to go over there and visit them, see what is going on.....
- Q. They invited you over there?
- A. Anybody can come over there, they told us over there in Cuba too, you want to go to Cuba, they have a high school, and you have to go to the superintendent and then he let you eat over there in the noon time or....
- Q. Really?
- A. That is what I heard.
- Q. But the bigger kids they go into Cuba on the bus, don't they?

- A. I understand that Crownpoint, they never have a high school, I thought they had a high school, that is the way that I heard it like that..... it is pretty good, that is the way I heard it when I was in the hospital over there. And this doctor told me that they are going to build a big school, they are going to build a big hospital at Crownpoint too.
- Q. A new one?
- A. Yeah, I tell you that is pretty good, they need more doctors, dentist and more nurses.
- Q. Are there any Navajo doctors or any Navajo nurses over there in Crownpoint?
- A. No Navajo, just the nurses, you know.....
- Q. Just Navajo nurses.....
- A. Hopi's or some you know, Laguna and some of those Navajos janitors, make a good job.....
- Q. Yeah....
- A. There was one guy over there and I said, hey, let us work but that janitor said that it was pretty good if they would pay him more.....
- Q. They don't pay him a whole lot huh?
- A. How about the time when we were working over here, I worked and I saved my money he said, I have got children too he said, and usually have a bank account in Gallup and he said, it is pretty good sometimes to learn about this dentist, and sometimes with the nurses he said they like that place, they save their money, they don't drink wine, they buy a car and everything house, you see they take time out of their wages, most of the boys that I meet they went to good school, graduated and are in college, they say that they might be teachers some of these days.
- Q. Do you know anybody that goes up to the Navajo Community College up at Many Farms?
- A. No.... maybe Billy can tell you, you know the guy that was talking to us the other day.....
- Q. Oh, you mean Billy.....?
- A. Tushi..... the medicine man.
- Q. But do all the kids around here go to school in Cuba then, or do some of them not go to school?
- A. We have a lot of those drop outs....?

- Q. Drop outs....
- A. They just loaf around, drinking wine and raising hell.....
- Q. That young huh?
- A. If, I was that age, I would go to school, instead of loafing around here.....
- Q. How are the schools in Cuba?
- A. They said, that they are good schools, one time they was talking to us, they had a big school there, high school, they don't like it though, they invite us over there one time.
- Q. Is there any trouble between the Indian children and the Spanish children?
- A. I don't think so....
- Q. They get along pretty well?
- A. I don't know, I don't see any niggers over there, colored....
- Q. Do the Navajo people get along with the colored people all right?
- A. I don't know some of them but I get along all right with them. When I was in the army, I get along with colored, Spanish and everybody, some Polish and white.....
- Q. No trouble huh?
- A. No trouble, we go to the same church, but mostly those guys drink but they don't raise hell, but some of those Japanese it was in our outfit they smart, boy they don't like to be by them.
- Q. So there are a lot of drop outs here huh? What do they do, do they gotto work or do they.....
- A. They just loaf around, loaf around....
- Q. That's all huh? There is no work around here, huh?
- A. Did I tell you about my brother?
- Q. No.
- A. Manuel..... one time his daughter-in-law told him you must go to Crownpoint for treatment, alcoholic treatment, then he said, he told policeman, about how we going to take this man over there my father, and he said, oh we have to go to Crownpoint and talk to the doctor and see what happens and he went to the

doctor to see and I think that my brother is over age, he might have too many alcohol in his system. And then the doctor says, we will give you shots, intravenously you know shot....that is all.....

Q. He died?

A. Yeah, that is what the doctor tell him, he said, there is nothing that he can do it unless he straightens up.....

Q. That is your brother, Manuel Castillo?

A. Did you see him on the way?

Q. No. Does he drink a lot still? All the time?

A. Alcohol, he can't stand up, no good, right?

Q. Is he always drunk?

A. Yeah, he don't take those he might be about 6 over, if he didn't take those.....

Q. Did he always drink like that always?

A. Well he never did, but ever since he.... John Smith took his wife, he kind of start.....

Q. Well, is that what happened, we talked to them last time..... they live right next to each other up here don't they?

A. Yeah, but this John Smith he is Peyote man, no good.....

Q. Oh he uses Peyote?

A. Yes, excess.....

Q. But he took Permanuel, your brothers wife? Was that here we talked to last night?

A. Yes.....

Q. Is she married to him now?

A. Yeah, if Manuel get another wife, he might be alright.... maybe he would quit, I don't know.... He always drink, drink, drink, that is the way with some of the Spanish people..... how about colored?

Q. I don't know. Getting back to the boarding schools, pretty good reports? Does the parents seem to like it all right?

- A. Yeah, and some of them are getting and A, B, C, Henry have got all those boys, they bring a report and we look into.....
- Q. How many boys does your brother Henry have?
- A. Two, one is going to school in Crownpoint.
- Q. Lives there huh? And the little one goes here?
- A. Yeah, the younger boy goes there too, Fidel.....
- Q. Who is Benny?
- A. Benny is my niece's husband. Benny we called him Castro.
- Q. Benny Castro.....
- A. Toledo, and I don't know why he puts Castro in there.....
- Q. Benny Toledo? Does Henry's little boy come home from the Torreon boarding school on weekends?
- A. Yeah, he comes in with those Jemez boys and he stays up here.
- Q. And he stays up here?
- A. Yeah, one day. I think that Benny and his wife are working in Albuquerque, you know that Japanese, nursery, what do they call it.....?
- Q. Oh, that is where they work, at the nursery? Do they sell trees?
- A. Yeah, Japanese.
- Q. So these little kids are in school then all week?
- A. Yeah, there are lot of them, they have dormitories they stay in there, real good place to sleep.
- Q. Good food?
- A. Yeah, and they got shower, almost everyday and there is always somebody taking care of them.
- Q. Do they give them clothes over there?
- A. I think so.
- Q. Do they?

- A. I was talking to a guy over there and he said we are going to give them clothes in January he says. They might have, because he wears good clothes.....
- Q. The government buys the clothes for them?
- A. Yeah, well in Cuba the government pays for them.
- Q. Well do they go to the mission at all to church, these kids at the boarding school?
- A. Missionaries have to go to visit them. At the Torreon Day School.
- Q. Does each missionary go there?
- A. Yes, every Sunday.....
- Q. They have Sunday School there at the school?
- A. No, they just go overthere for classes.
- Q. Talk to them?
- A. Yeah.....
- Q. You have to pay the missionaries to take you to Crownpoint?
- A. Yeah....
- Q. Do they tell you that?
- A. No, they told me I have to work around, I told them to take me over there and come back right away, it don't take long to get there, if you start early.....
- Q. No.... how far is it?
- A. They are building the pavement from here to the ridge....
- Q. Paving it huh?
- A. Yeah some Mexicans are working on it. You know a lot of guys go to Crownpoint, they come back right away, all you do is just go in the office and.....
- Q. Then you make an application.....
- A. And come out and there you are and if you start early, then you come back in no time....
- Q. But they won't just take you huh?

- A. I try and talk to her in there but one time they took me to Crownpoint, it was snowing, oh it was snowing that day, and I work for one day pay up.....
- Q. You work for the missionaries, doing what?
- A. Raking.....
- Q. Raking the grass?
- A. Raking rocks and everything... no good right?
- Q. That is the work huh?

END OF TAPE