

EDITORIAL

WHY EDUCATE THE INDIANS?

We heard this question asked many times during our recent visit to New Mexico where the giant Navajo Indian Reservation is located.

"Why educate the Navajo's? You can even put them through Harvard Law School and they just go back to the Reservation and live like Indians," our friends commented.

We found out that the Navajos have an excellent reason for gaining an education and then returning to their homes for by so doing they expect to bring better living standards not only to themselves but to the entire tribe.

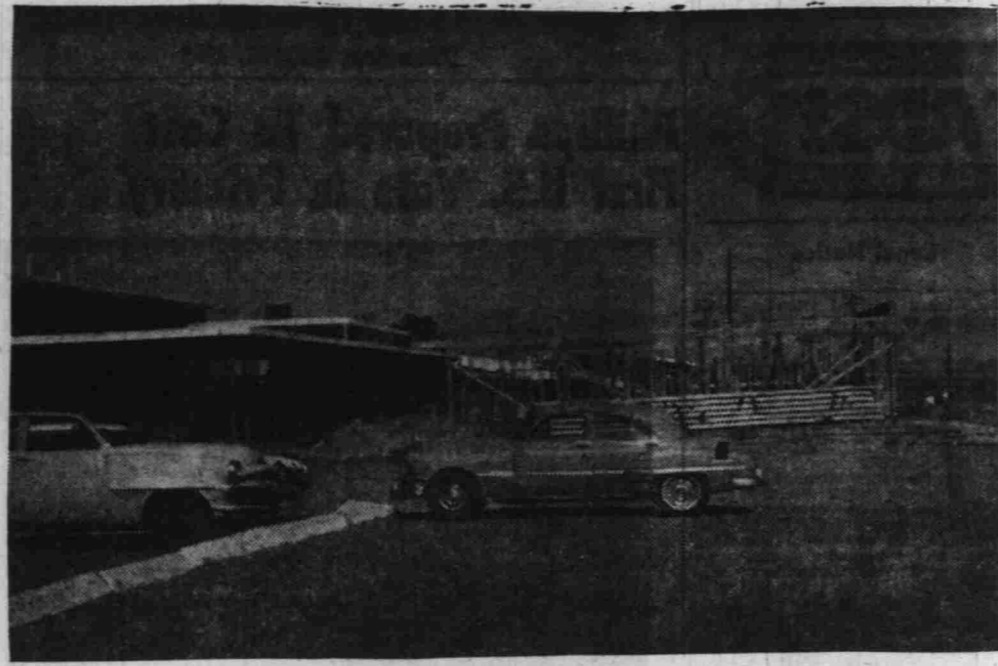
We visited the Reservation and also Mesa Verde, Colorado where the earliest American Indians lived as cave dwellers. These cave dwellings are said to represent the first haven where the Indian had a roof over his head. This was just 600 years ago.

The Indians' emergence from the stone age into the space age within the last few hundred years is best told in the following editorial clipped from the Navajo Times, a weekly newspaper published by and for the Navajo Tribe at Window Rock, Arizona.

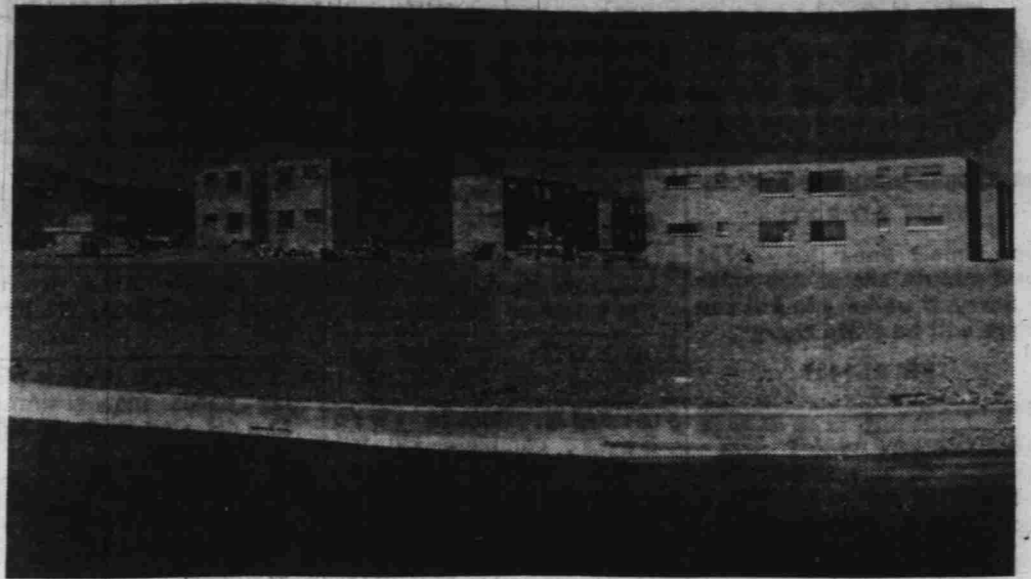
A GIANT FLEXES HIS MUSCLES

Every now and then, one reads about earthquakes in various parts of the world. This is an awe-inspiring happening, but the Navajo Times feels that we are sitting right in the middle of an upheaval that will far surpass any mere earthquake in long-range effect.

Within the last six months, changes have been taking place almost too fast to keep abreast. The sleeping giant that is Navajoland is stretching and flexing his muscles, and reaching far into the reservation and the lives of the People who dwell there. A finger touches a hogan, and light springs into being through the wonder of electricity. A hand opens in far places and young people gather to proudly accept well deserved diplomas. A bill passes in Congress, and many of our



BASIC GROWS—Shown here is the start of construction work on the new addition to Basic High School which was started immediately after the close of school here. This is the second addition required to keep pace with growing high school enrollment.



NEW APARTMENTS—Recognize this scene? This is the corner of Center Street and Major Avenue where the apartments being built by Boyd Bullock and associates are rising at a remarkably rapid rate. A great deal of other construction is also going on in this area.

people will have water which has never been available before. A sawmill begins operations to provide jobs for many, and soon modern housing on the reservation will be a reality.

So many things have been done and accomplished, and so much more remains to be done. We look with great pride upon the young Navajos who graduated in recent weeks; those who soon will begin to assume some of the responsibility for helping our young giant grow mightier still. Our youth is, and will remain, our greatest resource.

Possibly our second greatest resource is the earth herself, and the beauty bestowed on our land. As our roads, system develops, as it is doing quite rapidly, tourists will come in increasing numbers. New motels, restaurants and service stations will come behind them, to mention only a few of the more direct possibilities.

Power and water resources are growing, paving the way for industry. The land is here, the power is here, and the tremendous labor market is here, virtually untouched. New industry will come, bringing new jobs and improved living standards to many.

The giant is opening his eyes and looking around him, too. He is beginning to realize his own strength, and will probably be surprised by it many times in the future. The present population of the reservation Indian in Navajoland is over 90,000. Annual growth rate is over 3%! What a fantastic vote potential lies there! A good many of this number are young people, who are taking an ever greater interest in the political happenings. It is unhappily true that a good many politicians hold office by default—not because of the people who actually work to keep them there, but rather because of the indifference of the masses. Can you imagine what might be accomplished by a unified effort of Navajo voters?

There is great economic strength here, too. There are several towns which derive sixty to ninety percent of their business from the Indians. THAT IS A LOT OF BUYING POWER! As our road system continues to improve, peripheral towns will have to compete more with each other for the Indian business. Here again lies great power for the Navajo giant.

Within a very short time, the First Navajo Bank will be under construction at Window Rock, with our Executive Secretary serving on the Board of Directors as the first full-blooded Indian ever to be so honored.

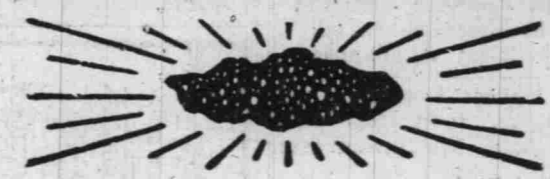
It's a pretty safe bet that soon after the bank gets into swing, other businesses will find their way to the reservation, either at Window Rock or elsewhere, bringing convenience with them for reservation dwellers.

In any direction you wish to look, signs of progress for the Tribe and the individuals who form it may be seen. More and more of our young people are realizing the value of education, and many of them are returning to the reservation to help in this growth with their knowledge.



LYNETTE RHEES cheerfully awaits a customer in her position as cashier at Vegas Village Department Store. She is a student at BYU and is earning her way through college.

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