

Tape #289
Navajo
Recorded by Tom Ration
Chapter Meeting of March 23, 1969, Community People
English - Tape 2
Side 1

This is a Chapter meeting program that sets up twice a month and the people of the community discuss different problems that they think it would be best for their people. In each district they have chapter officer, there is a president and the vice chairman, and the secretary. These three people runs the chapter meeting. These chapter officer has different plans to discuss about and they discuss things with their people in their area. There is, which they call chapter district, in throughout the Navajo Reservation that some of them run about two or three townships area which have one chapter meeting or chapter houses. There is over a little better than 100 chapter throughout the reservation now that has been set up by the Navajo tribe in 1962. And these chapter area has different members from each district which they get together in each two weeks, two times a month and they discuss things over. So, this is the Chapter that has been held in the Smith Lake. The chapter Smith Lake area is the following name is Tom Dick Ramon. He's president of the chapter and Mr. James Charley is the vice chairman and Mr. Ration is the secretary of the chapter. So, we will now get into the story of what the chapter officers will discuss.

They have a blackboard that which different agents will be discuss, number 1, number 2, number 3, up to 4 whatever it comes up. Today the discussion on the board which all the community will know what the discussion will be about and the last first meeting that they had, they had discussed about the housing project which has been set up in their district area. This project that has been set up is called the 90 days trainees. The 90 days trainees is a people that are trained into teaching them how to build good houses. These trainees that they have is came through the ONEO office. This is the chapter office, Mr. Dick Ramon has the first chance of announcement of different things, so he is now telling you about how this has came about first and later on there will be a different discussion take place. In every chapter they different mission church members which they call, some of them call themselves Presbyterian, Catholic, and Pentecostal way of church which they all give praise in the way it is set up among the chapter house, so this is a Pentecostal church member is going to pray for the opening of the meeting. The man that is going to pray for the chapter is called John Thompson. He is a pretty wise Indian which lives about at least 3 miles southwest of the chapter house. He is then in the missionary service for numbers of years and he is praying, going to pray in a Navajo language because most of

the members of the Navajo people so they would know what he is saying and what would be the best way of our life. So, Mr. Thompson is going to pray that now in the Navajo language. His prayer starts with Pentecost. Now the prayer is done, so we'll send it back to Mr. Dick Ramon, the chapter president. Mr. Dick Ramon, he has an uneducated man, he has a very good ways of leading his people. He has had about 2 or 3 terms in the chapter office and Mr. Ramon is going to take the stand. The people of the organization, the community, the visitors and the leaders and visitors we will now start our meeting, which we will discuss things that are on the board. And I think you have a very well-understanding most of the meeting of which we want to discuss today. Our first problem I will tell you a little about how we had started our meeting in the earliest days. The thing that we call chapter house is named from the white people's way. It is a place where people get's together and meet together and talk about their needs and talk about problems which would be best for their people, that is called a chapter meeting. We have had the same problems which we have still seen in these old ruins which they call a kiva. In earlier ancient days, people has problems among themselves where they have discussed alot of things in a way of living and this discussion problems and story took place recently. It has been carrying on for many, many of years. People had problem in to talk about. People has discussions about things in earlier days too. So, I

think most of us has a very well understanding about things how it is going among our people. As we know a kiva has been in ancient time, we don't know how many years ago but it probably been quite a number of years ago. So, we have still keeping the same problem, the same questions that we have in the ancient time. We now have seen quite a pretty good buildings in our country that is known a numbers of years ago which we have understood that had kept along from generation to generafion. So, as I say that we have never forget things yet. Today we are standing on a good way of discussion. These things the councilman has set up for us in the past years at Window Rock. The councilman has discussed that we should have a place where we can talk about things in our area, the needs that we want and solve all our problems which is best for us people. So, this is what the tribe has talked about in earlier days and I don't know what else to tell you about but I think it's a good problem that we have today. I do hope that we will discuss some good problems today which we will be carried on for the next coming year. And this is the problem which I am now going to tell you is about what we are going to talk about. In earlier days we have talked about how we can we live a better life. This is the reason why we have different chapter houses in through our Navajo reservation as a place where we can discuss alot of things. As I was telling you that we have a little better than 100 chapter houses through-out the Navajo nation. This is run by the Navajo tribe

itself. Places like this as I have told you that the tribal council has discussed about all these good problem that we would have in throughout the Navajo reservation as solve all problems and talk about things we need. So, today we have a problem that has been made by the ONEO. There is another things about the ONEO is how it got its name ONEO, is the opportunity of the Navajo Economic Opportunity. That is why it is called the ONEO and it is a shorter name to name it ONEO and this was set by one of our Navajo educator that we have known of today. His name is Peter McDonald, he is a Director of the ONEO of the Navajo tribe, and this is run by the government. The ONEO has quite a number of different branches of program that is set by the Navajo people. They have what they call a Home Improvement, the Community Aid Problem, and the Alcohol Problem, and the Legal Aid Problem, and Pre-school Problem, Recreation. There is all kinds of branches that is being set up by the ONEO and this is the same problem as came out from the ONEO which is called the 90 days trainees, where boys are trained to be good carpenters for their people. The ONEO has set up a trainees for 90 days training. These trainees are trained to be good carpenters. The carpenter trainee is the boys that went to school and learned about carpenters. The carpenter trainee is the boy that they hired among each chapter house. Each chapter house has a number of 10 men to be trained for carpenter and mason work. So we

we got one here today as we are going to talk about how and where and who is going to be the trainees. The people that have their house built and how its going to run, so I will make a note of it before long but right now I am still telling you about such problems how it is set up into the Navajo Reservation. These are set up by some of our good education boys, men that came back from different high schools and I like to say that we are very thankful to have such problems in throughout our Navajo Reservation. I am trying to tell you about all such problems that has came out through the ONEO office in the past 3 years. It started about 1966 and it has been going on 3 years. In the past 3 years the ONEO has done a great deal for us through the Navajo country and most of us that has a very well understanding of what the ONEO is doing we are sure are appreciate for what has been done for us in the past years. Rnd so I do hope that most of you, people, are the same as I think. And we are still coninue on withour program which has been working among through our country. And like I say thatthe ONEO has done a great deal for us. I think that the Housing Project and the carpenter work and the building which they have done for us is known as a very good thing that has been ever done for the past year. For many years the people has never has discussed things like that before because in a way what most of us think that we have a better way of living today. We have

good houses and on the floor we have places, we have cement floors and they have lumber floors. There is quite a number of good things that we are now have that we appreciate by the way of good living. At the same time most of our younger generation has a very good education which they were now living in and it's a problem that we now are going to discuss about and I do hope you have a very well-understanding of what I am talking and telling you about on such problem. So, as I say that this trainees that we are now going to discuss about came out of Window Rock and these men that we are going to place the trainees is going to learn about carpentry. Later on in the coming future, they will work for themselves because they have learn about carpenter, carpentry work, mason work and that is why we are training such people to learn to be a carpenter, to learn to be a good mason. So I think I have told you enough about the trainees how it came up to pass. So, now I going to let you discuss about which man is going to be the trainees. The man that we have had in these jobs have been on for at least 3 months already and I want to give a chance to the trainees, the leader of the trainer to say a few words and see what he has to say. The new trainees that we have is Mr. Leonard Natanoba. Natanoba is Indian language. It's a name that during the time of war Natanoba is what the Navajo call a warrior. His father was named as a warrior so that is his last name today, Natanoba.

So, he is the trainee leader. He trained the boys to do good carpenter work. Now we will give him a chance to say his say. And we will ask question of how it would go about Mr. Natanoba is now to give a chance and I thank you all for what I have told you and you been listening well and so I will have another chance later on. Here is Mr. Natanoba to tell you the people of the audience and the people in the community, leader members and the visitors and chapter officers, vice chairman, secretary I thank you for giving me a little chance to talk and tell you about the details how things are running with me and the trainees program. During the time of 1966 the ONEO has started to be a member of a program which was going to be set up in each district in the Navajo Reservation. There are about five agencies was set up to be called as ONEO headquarters. First, our real headquarters is at Fort Defiance, Arizona, that is the ONEO headquarters and outside the reservation we have Crownpoint, New Mexico which is the Eastern Navajo Agency and there is another in the northern part of the country which is called Shiprock, New Mexico and there is another one at Tuba City, Arizona area, and there is another at Lukachukai. So this is where the ONEO headquarters is set up in each country. Now we will discuss about the trainees. In the latest days that I have been appointed as the trainees at Naschitti area. Naschitti is about around 50 miles north of Fort Defiance, Arizona - Naschitti is in New Mexico. It is set outside the Arizona border. I was born in the Naschitti area and I lived there until my

father has passed away quite a number of years ago. So, I went to school at Fort Defiance and from there I went down to Oklahoma area. Since then the school was not so high in these years, just lower grade and quit school. From there on I took up carpentry work for that many period of years and this is where I learned my carpenter work. So, I like to say that I have done pretty good of learning how to be a good carpenter. So, I am now going, so I am now with the trainees job with ONEO. Any question that you wanted to ask, I will probably try my very best to answer such question. So, the question you'd like to ask is who for Mr. Ramon is vice chairman, is there any question that anybody wants to ask it is on the floor. There is Mr. Roy Gibson, Mr. Gibson the chapter officer and the vice chairman, secretary and the visitors and the leadership members and the visitors I thank you all for the opportunity that I'm going to have. I like to ask Mr. Natanoba a little question for all of us. I like to ask him we have heard alot of different discussion on the trainees program, the way it is run. I wanted to ask you, he says that these men have been work 3 months of the period and like today most of our boys are on the railroad. They are off to work with and most of the woman folks are home and a few men that are around the campus and some of them boys are already have worked. I wonder there is a chance for the second turn for the man that is already worked. I don't see hardly any man

to appoint to the trainee. I'm just asking if it is a chance for another term with the same trainees that has been in. Mr. Natanoba, yes the question that you have just asked is that he is available. Is there is another story I like to tell you before I answer the question. In each chapter there is a program run as which they call the CAC, the Community Action Committee. These people are to be known as to discuss such problems that you just have asked. The CAC members are supposed to decide how they are going to run the program. I didn't tell you anything about in the first place. I should told you about before you ask any questions. Anyway the question that you should answer is in this problem that the CAC members is the one to take up such as the problem as the next term for the trainees. So, I think the CAC has discuss- ed that. I just want to tell you that the time, during the time of our meeting, in different meetings where we have learned that the second term or the third term up to a year can be possibly have terms for the trainees, but the standard program says about 3 months term. Because in the 3 months term the man would know and have a very good experience by building things so it is a chance for them if the CAC to discuss this over and vote on it. We are all mixed up some CAC has a different plan so they have to discuss these, how these other folks are standing in the way of living and work

like that, the ONEO says that it is mostly for the poor people. And we know there are a lot of people are poor as they don't have jobs and hard way of living. And this is another problem that I want to tell you is that the, during the time of 1966 they have discussed it about field workers which they call a community aid. Whoever a community aid in this district is, he is, or she, or he, is the one that should know most about the poor people where he visit around and learn about their problem. He is the one to ask and the CAC has the same problem which they know that the poor people would be appointed. So, the Community Aid is one that has to answer that question by the next turn in a way of how you was taught is people that has numbers of children to support and the children are going to school. They are the ones who take more turns and like I say has about at least these terms which is 9 months and I think that is as far the one trainees can stand because out of what they have learned in the past 3 months they can get a steady job for themselves. So this is one of the problems that you are asked which I think it is available for you to talk with the CAC that they are the ones who discuss these things over any manner of poor people side and that is the question that you have asked and the terms what they should get. Is there any more question that can be asked about the problem of the trainees. It looks like there is no more problems to ask so

I think this is all what I am going to tell you today and there might be somebody else to say any more, anything, about any other problem so I thank you verymuch for giving me an opportunity on these

I thank you.

Tom Dick the chairman, the chairman of the chapter officer. I think that as far as we go with the trainees but then according to the people it's up to them to decide whatthey have to say so it is we go on, on the next subjects. As we have been on this problem I will say a little myself. Most of these trainees have been doing pretty good so far of learning about carpenter works. I have among quite a few of the buildings that has been made in the past few days or past month and year. I have known that some of the buildings are very well made in the area of Smith Lake area; so we like to do more better if we can continue on with our work. So I like to say that in about 3 years time the ONEO has done a great deal for our people in throughout the Navajo country and throughout the chapter houses. We notice that the boys that were being trained has learned how to fix a window, have learned how to fix a door. They have learned alot of other things that it is good for them to learn about mostly all these things as making a table or a chair. Any other kind of furniture most of these boys has learned so much in about 3 year's time. So, in my part I sure appreciate all these things as they come along. So far as I know that most of our

boys have well underway with their carpenter work and we do hope that when they learn they will do their own work and get jobs some other place which they learn from the trainees and there is alot of more come to their work needed all through the Navajo Reservation. Maybe later on, our boys will be contraced building houses throughout the country and myself I haven't asked nobody to build my house yet. Some of these days I'm going to hire some of our boys to build my house and this is what I say that the ONEO is the kind of a community, economic opportunity has done a great deal for us in the past 3 years now. And we are still keep pushing and this is what I wanted to mention to you people that anything that you are learning, I think you ought to appreciate what they have done for us. And in my side I will say a very big hellp or big thanks to for my people and this is what I like to tell their leaders. Well, I think this is as much as I'm going to say so we all will go on to the next problem. As we have talked about the trainees a while ago, I think we have a very-well understanding most, alot of these things, in this meeting. I like to say that we will give a chance to one of the members of an outside reservation and tell what he thinks about most of these things that is going on today. This man comes from Canoncito. It's near Albuquerque, west of Albuquerque about 20 miles west is Canoncito. We have a few Navajo people there and we have the leader here in the chapter house with us so I will give

hime a chance to say what he knows about his people and his name is Selerio (??). He has a Mexivan name. So Mr. Selerio, I think we will ask you to see what you think about our meeting and get a little information from your part of the country. Mr. Selerio. Mr. Selerio is a district council from Canoncito. He is been in the council seat for about 3 years since he district chairman seat, I mean the councilman sets. So, I think he has a pretty good idea that many things were given a little chance to say his saying to our people. Mr. Selerio, hello to all the membership, the chapters members and the Comanche people. I have to say hello to you all and I have little opportunity and have a little chance to say a little word to you so I will now try my best and give you a little detail on how are we going about the.... first I like to tell you that what I am and introduce myself. We, Navajo people, have claimed clans of what. We have call my clan is what they call Mexican clan so I'm a Mexican clan. My wife is what they call Coming to Water Clan. So, I believe I am over about 71 years old. My father and mother has been to Fort Summers during the time of their Fort Summers Walk. So, I just like to tell you a little story what they have told me before they passed away. He said that he was about around 42 years of age when the Fort Summer long walk. My mother was nearly the same age of about 36, she was a little bit younger than my father. And after they came back from Fort

Summer I was born along the Rio Grande River. During the time my people and some other relations has been wandering along side of the Rio Grande River. They have settled down from the Rio Grande River of Canoncito in the early days. This is how we have came to Canoncito. So, today we have a little reservation there of our own. It is now too big to talk about, but there is over about 4 to 500 population that live there and the... we are under the Navajo tribe today. We used to be under the United Pueblos out of Albuquerque for quite a number of years. So, now we are under the Navajo tribe today. So we are alright withour people. The Navajo tribe has worked pretty hard to do a lot of different things of way of running its people. So I am very proud of the Navajo tribe how they get along with its people. So, I don't really know or see what mostly the biggest problem is about the Canoncito people as I know so far that we are doing pretty good in the way of living. We have livestock to talk about, we have sheep and cattle and horses. Just lately we started to build houses. I like to tell you in the earliest days of 1919. In 1919 there is no white man or any others leaders that came around Canoncito and finally we just pushed ourselves on and years after years. But we never went away, we stay one place which they call Canoncito and finally the United Pueblo (inaudible) so that was how it was for many years and finally they have changed it all the ideas that the

Navajo tribe. I have learned many things into the council meeting at Window Rock, Arizona and today I think I have a very good experience with what I have learned and how it is run in the needs of my people. So, we are now working with the ONEO program. I think the people around this area around Smith Lake area and other areas are also running under the ONEO program and it is a very nice thing to have into our tribal country and I think you have learned very much about the ONEO because you are close enough to be there mostly every day. But we are living away out far where we are hard to reach and it takes time for our gas and different things. They have runned it from Albuquerque, Santa Fe and this is the way it was. So, we ddin't want to say (inaudible) so I don't know what more to tell you about things you have already told each other about how the ONEO is helping its people. They are helping us the same way. But something that we have in the way of hardship life is our water problem. In the Canoncito area and all close to Albuquerque we have a sour water. The water is the only thing that's giving us trouble cause water don't taste good in that area. So, we are talking about the water problem that last meeting that we had and we tried to run a pipe from the Albuquerque area up into Canoncito. It's about 20 miles and they are still talking about how it can be fixed for us, the problem is not that big but I think it can be done someway. So, we are still keeping talking about it such problem in that there

are good waters. Do, I think for myself that you people have, don't have hardships and I don't know what more to tell you in line of all these things. So there is the early start when we have first made building houses. That is the time before the ONEO has ever known. My people in Canoncito area help each other to work on houses, build houses and then the relations is friends. We have worked together for quite a numbers of years until the ONEO arrived from Window Rock and today most of my men are well known in the area about other people unless you all wanted to come. So I don't know which side we will be all in by the time of this long talks. So, we have had produced our livesotck which made us a little better on grazing. In the years of not much rain we have enough grass for our livestock and this is another problem that we been telling about so far. So, I have told you what we are around Canoncito. We are still keep building houses for the young generation that are just married, the ones that came from back from school graduation, we have talked about building houses too. So, this is what I know of my country and my people and I sure do thank you for the opportunity that has been given to me here in this meeting. I thank you all! Let the president of the chapter officer Tom, I thank you very much .r. Severio. I just want you to tell your people how, what the Canoncito area is cause most of these people have never seen Canoncito area and don't know how many people are living

around the Canoncito area, but I hope they know now. And they have, some of them have a well-understanding of the story that you have told the people and we will go on through the next problem. There is another man from Alamo, I like to introduce him so you could all know him in this area. I don't know his name but we all call him Tony. His last name is a Mexican name, it is Alma is his last name. So, Mr. Alma we like for you to tell our people what you know in your area. So, here is Mr. Alma. Chairman and the vice chairman, the secretary and visitors and people of the community I thank you and say hello to you all, I never thought that I would have a little chance to say anything but I will just give you a little story of how my people are. The Mr. Chairman has given me a chance to say my saying. Yeah, we have a little bit in Alamo. I think just as long as the Canoncito people has lived there is was part of our great grandfathers and great grandmothers during the time of Fort Summers time. I will start with my story, how my people settled in that part of the country. Alamo is about more than 60 or more some odd miles from Albuquerque, east of Albuquerque and we have been there for a long time over a time as much as the people that came back from Fort Summers. So, nobody hasn't ever come up or know how long it was so I like to tell you I think it's over a little better than 100 years ago so this is where my story has to start. I lived in Alamo all my life, I was born in Alamo. My mother and father has pass away and

they said that their grandmother and grandfather has been to.. my grandmother and grandfather has been to the on the Long Walk and then when we came back my father was born and my mother but they didn't live long. So, I don't have no father and no mother but still we live in Alamo. Alamo is a little place, a little bit smaller than Canoncito and we used to live near the United Pueblo just like Mr. Severio just told you, that his little reservation that lays outside our reservation was runned and cared for by the United Pueblo. So, we have been under the United Pueblo for quite a number of yerrs. United Pueblo is a pueblo that brings in Acoma, Isleta and different other Indian or united pueblos. So, it is not a Navajo Reservation. So, now I just want to give you a little idea how we have grown up, in these days the last people that came back from Fort Summer had settle there and some of the people that are been adopted by the Mexican, they been captured or whatever you call it for a quite a numbers of years they were the ones that settle there at Alamo. So, we Alamo people is pretty good as the good Mexican people, we understand pretty good Mexican language, but we are full-bloodied Navajo. So, we have the same problem - program as the trainees have and we are having a little money coming from the ONEO, the economic opportunity out of Winrock and at the same time the tribe also help us too. So, that is why we are now under the Navajo tribe. During the time of the United

Pueblo we used to have carried mostly all the things that we did in Albuquerque. (inaudible)

So, today we are under the Navajo tribe which it is more better than anything else as a matter of that we can move in tribal money to do work on our reservation. And I don't hardly will say that tell you more about anything else, but we have done a very good for a number of period of years which we have a good place of living. The Navajo tribe has worked very hard for us to build our houses throughout our reservation and I think in the place of the littler reservation we should co-operate together in order to do more better things in our line. So, this is the way we live today, but we have better water that comes from the mountain and the different country maybe that why the water is pretty good. So we don't have no water problem in this area and the government and the Navajo tribe has helped us alot so I always thank them when I have seen. So I don't have much to say about my people in this area. So I will just tell you this much I know and I do thank you all for listening carefully to what I have to say and so we'll give it back to the chapter and see I do thank them for giving me a little opportunity here and so Mr. Alamo, I always forget your name but anyways we thank you for what you have said to the people and I think dinner time is about ready so I will get the vice chairman. See what he has to say maybe he has a more better idea than I have. So we thank you, the

councilman from the Alamo country so there is much that they could say as a chance that we'll give me, vice chairman. Mr. Jim Charley. This is Mr. Jim Charley. Hello to everyone in the community. I just have to say a little, not too much because it will be at dinner time pretty soon so we thank for telling us so much about your country and your people and how you are cooperating with your people. We have been here quite a long time discussing things about different things. We haven't went so far yet but we will be going on longer as time after dinner so I just want to tell you what I know myself and my people. Here at Smith Lake as we know is part of the Checkerboard area country. The Checkerboard area lays about more than 5 townships and it lays mostly in the mountain all the way down to Gallup and up to the state line. In about 1957 there was what they call a uranium rush throughout the country. People was looking for mines here and there all over the country. During the time of this a man named by Patty Martinez was the first man that discovered the uranium at Haystack. He is half-breed, his mother is Navajo and his father is a Mexican. and he was the little guy that found the uranium. In the time of his finding the uranium, he didn't know nothing about it. I'll tell you a little story about his mother was one of the good weaver in these days and his mother was always dye her wool with the uranium color, yellow color, it gives it a natural color, it does't fade out. So,

one day Mrs. Martinez was her mother how she get yellow wool being dyed. And she brought up some rocks that was in vein inbetween the rocks and she crushed it up and boiled it with the wool and there it gets its color. She said this is the way I get my color and finally I think Mr. Martinez dug around and found out that that was a very valuable rock that they been using so he took part of this rock to Grants and have it x-rayed and it was very rich uranium. This is where and how it was fo-nd in the early part of the year in 1957 and during that time quite a number of our Navajo people was leasing their land for uanium mine. And most of our people around Smith Lake area and down up the line they have found some uranium on their land and these Navajo are very well-fixed today and this is how we are today. I think dinner is about ready so I think I will have another opportunity when we get back. I thank you all!

END OF TAPE