

The navajo code talkers

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Major General Howard Connor once said, “ Were it not for the Navajos, the Marines never would have taken Iwo Jima” (Teller 1). During the Second World War, Navajo Code Talkers were some of the most important troops for the Allied Powers. They used a secret code to relay undecipherable messages to one another (Jones 1). There were many important people of World War II. The first person to suggest using the Navajo Language to send messages was Philip Johnston. Philip’s father was a missionary to Navajos, so Philip was raised on Indian reservations almost his whole childhood. He could both speak and understand fluent Navajo.

Knowing that other Indian languages had been used before, Philip thought Navajo would be perfect. Navajo was unwritten, unknown, had a complex form, a hard pronunciation, and had so many high and low tones that made it impossible to decipher. In World War I, 19 Chocotaw men worked bravely for the U. S. (Jones 1). By knowing this, Philip put his plan into action. His idea worked so well that Navajos were able to encode, transmit, and decode a three-line English phrase in a matter of about twenty seconds (Infoplease 1). This proved that the Navajo Language could be used for code talking.

In 1942, 29 Navajo men were recruited by the United States Marine Corps. These men were not told why they were needed or how long they would be gone. Most importantly they were not allowed to tell anyone, not a family member or even another marine, about what they were going to be assigned to. Theodore Parker, a preacher and writer once said, “ Let us do our duty, in our shop in our kitchen, in the market, the street, the office, the school, the home, just as faithfully as if we stood in the front rank of some

great battle, and knew that victory for mankind depends on our bravery, strength, and skill.

When we do that, the humblest of us will be serving in that great army which achieves the welfare of the world. " The Navajo men felt that this calling to the military was their duty and obligation. Never before had the country so desperately wanted them. This gave the Navajos a sense of strength to get through hardships other men could not. Their duty was to create a code, based on the Navajo Language, which would not be deciphered by the Japanese (Infoplease 1). The code that they created used Navajo words.

When these words were translated to English the first letter of the English translation would help to spell out a totally different message. " Wolachee" is in Navajo. In English it means ant. To decipher a code the person would take the " A" in ant along with many other letters and these would spell out a word. In the end, the Navajos had many words for just military terms and words instead of having to spell out the whole thing (Infoplease 1). Navajos played a big part in the communication of many battles. In fact, every major operation involving marines in the pacific area had code talkers.

In the Battle of Iwo Jima, six code talkers worked for two days straight and sent over 800 messages. Not a single one of these messages, however, contained an error (Infoplease 1). The code talkers would alert one another for planes, or for enemy infantries, and much more. The Navajo Code Talkers saved many lives with their unique way of communication and were by far the best way of communication during World War II. Although the Navajos were not allowed to tell anyone about their amazing accomplishments and

feats during World War II, they have now received medals and awards for their outstanding service.

It is truly amazing that the Navajos were so loyal to their country that they never told even their closest relative or friend about their missions. A great person once said, “ Men of genius are admired, men of wealth are envied, men of power are feared; but only men of character are trusted. ” The Navajos had none of these things except character, and for that they will always be known. Even though many Japanese tried to break the Navajo code, every one of them that tried found it impossible to decipher (Grant 131). The Navajo code is now, and always will be, known as the code that was never broken (Infoplease 1-2).