

The discovery of uranium ore on the reservation in 1950  
sent a wave of excitement throughout the South West.  
Much prospecting was done, other sources of ore both large  
and small were located with a rush reminiscent of the old  
Gold mining days. ~~a Uranium Processing Plant was built~~  
~~at Shiprock, roads improved or built to haul the ore~~  
Roads were improved or newly built in order to haul  
the ore by truck to the processing plant at Shiprock.  
When more ore was discovered in the Monument Valley  
area + farther west, two more plants were built, one  
at Mexican Hat, + one at Tuba City. The vast barren  
desert east of the Monuments, produced vast unsuspected  
riches for the Navaho Tribe, as well as work for many  
men, <sup>for many days when pit mine was mined.</sup> On the top of the northern end of the Lukachukai  
Mts, shaft mines produced many thousand tons of uranium  
ore. I visited one of these, and was taken down into  
the mine, where it seemed strange indeed to find Navaho  
boys, deep underground, hard at work as miners. The  
peak year of uranium mining was reached in 1962 when  
some 379,000 tons of ore were produced, adding immense  
revenue to the Tribal Treasury.

Though the first oil discovered on the reservation was as  
long ago as 1921 when the Rattlesnake Dome was dis-  
covered near Shiprock, new fields were found  
in 1957, also in this northern district of the San Juan  
River basin, particularly in the Four Corners area. More  
than 1000 oil + gas wells are now operating, bringing  
in high revenue. The first years of production from  
these new fields brought in many millions in leases  
and bonuses, the <sup>annual</sup> ~~yearly~~ ~~revenue~~ royalty of some  
12 million is of prime importance to the tribe