

Report By *Don Sands*

Aboriginal Healing Foundation  
Residential School Healing Strategy Conference  
July 14,15,16,1998  
Squamish Territory  
Vancouver B.C.

#### Report for Walpole Island

Meeting commenced at 9.30. am. Opened with a prayer by Simon Baker  
Welcoming remarks by Chief Bill Williams, Opening remarks by Willie Seymour,  
Harold Tarbell reviewed agenda for the day, George Erasmus was asked by Phil  
Fontaine to chair the 350 million healing fund and get it started in a short time, Geo.  
Talked at length about the fund and how it should work, Also nothing political can be  
involved in funding, There's no money to be handed out to any person for any reason ,  
money strictly for healing, John Amagoalik confront pain and anger let's not forget it,  
Maggie Hodgson involved in Indian school healing for about 10 years, The 350 million  
is separate from the law suits, Grant Larry Edmonton first nation, In jail for ten years,  
After getting out went back to school, money won't solve the problem,  
Violet Robinson Nova Scotia on the royal commission with Geo. Erasmus Money is not  
the problem, It should not stop the ones from suing, It may have hurt some people  
already, It will and should help other people who use it right, Charlene Belleau Akali  
Lake, St. Joesph Williams Lake, Talked about sexual abuse the need to get to the  
bottom of problem and hold Bishop Oconner accountable, {Did not get name} humor is  
good for healing, [ I agree] he said he was a survivor of the Indian schools, There was a  
group from Ottawa Indian Health Commission they spoke on issues, Geo. Erasmus  
talked on funding agreement, Was on the 1996 royal commission, Government has not  
forgotten about implementation, Jane Stewart told to move quickly on government  
policies more than 100,000 in the Indian school system, Jan. 17. 1998, apology not  
enough by government, Any healing should be addressed more thoroughly, Had to  
have people for healing fund by the end of March 98., Eight top board members for a  
two year term, Seven one year term members Two government Reps., Healing not  
about politics agreed by native board members and Government reps., Inuitts, Mettis,  
want equal representation or fair representation, The first big meeting work shop money  
did not come out of the 350.million, there was \$ 450,000 allocated for the first meeting,  
5, million check by April 1<sup>st</sup>,1998, This is last years money for this year 98, what ever  
that means, Board Needs a key executive administrator for the funding project,  
[Funding agreement], Strong government rules " Legacy of Indian schools", On  
sexual, physical Cultural, and spiritual abuse, How did the family suffer, Grand  
parents, Father, Wife and children and grand children, Need to commit money in four  
years, [ mandatory], Can go till March 1999 before giving out any money on projects,  
Need committee past 4 years to over see committed projects, Canadian charter needs to  
be applied, Look at funding agreement booklet for reference, There is no money to be  
handed out from this fund it is for healing purpose only, This money not for suing the  
government or the churches, Question and answer period from 3.30 till 6.pm., Closing  
prayer by Vince Stogan , from the Squamish Long House, Broke for dinner,



Reconvened at 7.30.p.m. at the Squamish Recreational Center, We formed into to groups for an imformal healing session broke up about 10.30.pm.,

Wed. July 15.1998 Squamish Recreational Center,

Reconvened at 9.30. am, Opening prayer by the Squamish singers Opening remarks by Willie Seymour, Talked about losing two children, Then talked about healing, If your going to complain about someone you should be constructive in your complaint against another person, Chair turned over to Rod. Jefferies talked about funding, Also talked about equals of Mission Vision, Produced some graphic pictures, [The cycle of disruption and healing in aboriginal communities] showed in three phases, Had a 15. Minute snack break, Open to Question and answers,

First speaker Fred Elaney, Alberta Indian schools talked on existing law suits, Didn't get name talked on celebrating existing,

After lunch we broke into healing work shop groups, My group was chaired by Harold Tarbell it was also being tape and recorded, We introduced our selves we talked on what does healing mean to us, We explained our feelings and what happen to us, Also talked on who shouldn't get funding, Our group came from all over the country, Meeting broke up about 4.30.,

Came back at 6.30. p.m. for a feast, After dinner we were treated to an amateur floor show which was quite good ended about 11.30. p.m.,

Thursday. July 16.th. 1998,

Opening prayer by Chief Robert Joseph, Meeting opened by Willie Seymour at 9.30. a.m. reviewed first two day's events , Coordinator Harold Tarbell talked on review of agenda, Also talked on feed back of the last two day's events turn chair over to, Rod. Jefferies talked on Wed's events on the work groups, Healing moves in many different ways to many people, Dealing with pain and excepting it, Dealing with it at the family and community level, The communities will and should get help from the healing foundation committee any time they need it, research will be needed, Meeting opened to discussion on the floor first speaker wanted Geo. Erasmus to resign his post as hesd of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation , He refused to resign his post saying he felt he was needed for this very important position I *agreed*, There were many more heated discussions, The Inuits felt they had no representations on board and were asking for one more member to be added to the board , Chair agreed to take it under advisement, Some one brought up the issue that some books should be written on the Indian schools , I brought up the fact that there were several good books already written the number one book I recommend was J.R. Miller's book "Shingwauk 's Vision", also "Out of Depth's Isabelle Knockwood, "Indian School Day's By Basil H. Johnston, I also mentioned Bernice Logan's book "Teaching Wigwam" ?, After more disscussions we broke for lunch,

Return from lunch at 1.30. p.m. All board members returned to dias , First speaker Paul Chartran Apologized for not making the first two days of meetings, Talked about how hard it's going to be, To talk about violence at home, Geo. Erasmus



Talked about commitment for different needs, Also about Phil. Fontaine addressing the U.N. on the Indian School issues on human rights, Assisting in getting information on personal records in the archives, Any funding can be applied for at any time by any reserve for healing purposes, Funding is for healing only not for any political group issues, That was made Absolutely clear, Geo. Erasmus again brought up the fact he will not resign at this time, Meeting opened up for general discussions again , One person brought up the fact that the board should come down to the grass roots people to see there needs, For he was a very violent person at home and needed “ help” now not in the future,

Open session closed at 3.p.m. by Harold Tarbell, Some closing remarks by the board members, Geo. Erasmus asked for help and guidance to do a better job in the coming years ahead, Charlene Belleau of Alkali, Lake closing remarks on Love, Honesty and Trust,

Closing remarks by Willie Seymour praise the new board members and local workers and organizers and volunteers, Four plaques were presented to the host squamish nation members, Closing ceremonies song, sung by Inuits,

Willie Seymour officially closed proceedings at Four p.m., Thur. July 14.1998, Foot note; In conclusion I would like to say I'am glad I had the opportunity to attend this very powerful and emotional meeting, We were well fed and treated very cordial by our hosts the Squamish first nations people, I would say there were more than a hundred people in attendance, It's to bad more people couldn,t have attended, There wasn't room for more people, The book and litterature were handed out at the meeting I hope I got everything,

Thanks for the donation Pat I hope my report will meet your approval  
As ever

Don. Sands