NIAGARA ESCARPMENT landowners carried signs calling for an end to the NEC.

NEC not expropriating get you for being in an area where there's wildlife or one which has scenic potential," in final plan: McMullin

The Niagara Escarpment Commission (NEC) is hinting about the direction of retreats to be taken from its Preliminary Plan.

A major disclosure came from NEC chairman Ivor Me-Mullen who told 300 people in Terra Cotta's Creditview School last Tuesday (May 2) that the majority of commissioners favor dropping the word "expropriation" from final plans for the Bruce Trail.

When pressed by MPP Reed (L-Halton-Burlington) McMullen went further. The revelation went like this: "Your comments tonight lead me to believe the NEC will no longer consider expropriation as a way out," Reed said.

"Thirteen members of the Commission (which has 16 members) have said they are willing to remove expropriation," said McMullin.

McMullin also indicated the commission will consider permitting some growth around Cheltenham, just as it is allowing around such centres as Alton and Inglewood.

MPP Reed drew loud applause from the gatheringmany people also stood in the auditorium and foyer-by taking on what he sees as a threat to the traditional idea of ownership.

"I submit we've got to be very careful. It certainly appears to impose a new perception of landowners which I believe is untenable to most here.'

The Liberal MPP also took a swipe at McMullin's contention that if land is to be bought it will be priced at what the even required by legislation chairman termed fair market to get public and municipal

reaction, he pointed out.

The chairman earmarked

some of his comments for the

Bruce Trail. He indicated

people's concerns that expro-

priation will be used to as-

semble land for the trail are

perhaps unfounded. It was

then he prédicted the word

"expropriation would be

McMullin also defended the

the meeting.

commission from questions

raised from a flyer which ad-

McMullin assured listeners

their land is not restricted

and not frozen. The NEC's

rural policy calls for four

severances per 100 acres, that

is one more than Caledon.

don't think the land is frozen.

Do you want your land con-

Ron Reed, of Bruce County,

NEC's efforts to preserve the

The meeting learned that

the NEC's proposed plan is

escarpment. McMullin said

three months for municipal-

ities to talk to counties about

the escarpment, then another

month for counties to ap-

proach the commission.

the chairman said.

the trail.

vertised

Reed said the people at the Terra Cotta meeting have a right to be concerned about what is meant by "fair

market value." "I have the ombudsman investigating acquisitions in the Parkway Belt at much below market values," said the MPP. The government's reason for the low prices is the imposition of a draft plan,

McMullin replied that he did not think he knew of the province in this area buying land at more than what the market value would be. "I don't think Ontario could prove a need to buy land for the Bruce Trail on the Esearpment," the chairman said. Acquisition, McMullin said, will be a long time pro-

For most of the meeting McMullin and staff explained step-by-step details of the NEC's proposed plan. A brief question period was followed by an invitation from the NEC to residents to inspect the NEC's maps and talk about their particular con-

Ratepayers groups are forming to oppose the NEC, McMullin remarked. He said such groups are encouraged to give opinions to local councils and to the commission.

McMullin took a defensive tack regarding that opposition. "The commission is concerned about opposition,' said McMullin. The commission has not exceeded its authority, he sald. The preliminary proposals are not

NEC land control may be cut in half

The Province intends to cut the amount of land controlled by the Niagara Escarpment Commission by more than 50 per cent, a source at Queen's Park announced last week.

The reduction comes at a time when NEC proposals have aroused bitter opposition from landowners and farmers (See articles elsewhere in this

has sald the land to be taken from the commission's wing will be transferred to the 55 municipalities in the escarpment planning area. However, the municipalities will be expected to follow the objectives of the Niagara Escarpment act.

The commission, with headquarters at Georgetown, now controls about 1.3 million

stretch of escarpment from Queenston to Tobermory. Property owners have complained the commission has

of the escarpment,

ment controls and the com- developments. mission is an entirely different tune than was sung before the Commission was formed. Then environmentalists and

made, said the chairman. acres along the 450 mile Also the plans will be reviewed every five years after adoption, he said. exceeded its authority with others were clamoring for plans for control over land as protection for the escarpment. much as 15 miles from the lip When the Government Although there have been sion there was almost total

decided to form the commiscries to abolish the Niagara approval from newspapers Escarpment Commission, and environmentalists along A source at Queen's Park Premier Davis has said it the route. However, over the would be irresponsible to do years support for the comaway with it. The Government mission's mandate has deterhas long sought to protect the forated when controls have escarpment from develop- been implemented. Both land ments and gravel pits and owners and developers have opposed having the commis-The push to abolish escarp- sion scrutinize their plans for

he said.

Farm gates closed but Trail still supported Escarpment Commission

policy proposals on February 14, and the subsequent formation of opposition landowner NECRA / NENRA has placed the Bruce Trail in an ex-

tremely vulnerable position, according to Al Stacey of the

Bruce Trail Association. "We have lost the co-operation of many landowners, particularly in the Grey-Bruce and Grimsby areas. who have closed their trail sections. However, he says 'notwithstanding emotionalism and genuine concerns of the appeals of NECRA/NENRA,

majority of our landowners have continued to support our objectives of a continuous footpath along the escarp-

"There is no question that there are problems implicit in the future planning of this unique resource, the Niagara Escarpment. The Bruce Trail Association fully appreciates the need to incorporate the oft-conflicting land usesextractive, agriculture, forestry, reescarpment area and the province-but, planning must be done.

In response to NEC pro-posals and to make clear the position of the Bruce Trall

Landowners warm

(Continued from page 1) being in the 'scarp area, they he sald. When a citizen takes something from the state, it's called theft. If the state takes something from a landowner,

it's called planning." White complained that the NEC still doesn't have anybody on its staff with training in agriculture. He said there's no need for the NEC to have a continuous trail from Niagara to Tober-

White suggested the NEC tell its planners to go back to the drawing board and that the Wintario piggybank be tapped for the government to

removed from final plans for buy up land along the trail. Orangeville area farmer Thirty-three per cent of the Bruce Trail is already in Harry Baker told the meeting that there are now seven public hands, disclosed the different designations on the 120 acres of land he owns. "Some of the best farmland I have is designated forestry," said Baker.

"I paid 55 cents to use the new Spadina subway extension in Toronto the other day," sald Baker. "We contribute close to \$200 million in taxes. Why is it these people should be able to come up here and have free use of this trail."

Baker said he honestly trolled by elected representthinks the NEC is brainatives or by the appointed washed by the number of planners it has.

Angus Ralph, a Tobermory Eight of the NEC members farmer, had the sit on councils, others have been council members and audience in stitches when he said the government had the balance represents people shown his land as a provincial at large, replied McMullin. park on the road maps last year. "Now I'm a provincial and John Mitchell of 10th park with camping allowed," Line, Esquesing, both said Ralph reported. they, in general, support the.

Another Orangeville area farmer, J. McKee, charged that the Bruce Trall Association has developed a cancer. "The Bruce Trail Association far from the final word on the has cut their own throats, it's not the landowners" said there is a minimum period of

> McKee said that narrowing of the planning area is not the solution to the problem. complete rejection of the NEC planning and control Act

Public hearings are to follow, Lloyd Thompson said he sees Tory Even after final plans are some good in the NEC plan charged. adopted by cabinet, amendment to the play may be and proposals, but em-

phasized that landowners

Ontario Federation of Hannam reminded meeting of the need for all landowners along the escarpand be unanimous in their feelings. "If there's not values. unanimity, the government 4. That the securing of a will take full advantage of

Hannam said the OFA has establsihed an escarpment action committee with reps from all areas of the province which the escarpment passes

through. "I can't be opposed to good planning, but planning is for people and the people who should get priority are those whose livelihood, investments and life savings are affected by the regulations"

Len Watt of Nottawasaga township, who identified himself as a longtime supporter of the Conservative Party, said he believes that, unless the Davis government listens to landowners' concerns and does something about them, it will no longer be worthy of their support Wellington-Dufferin-Peel

MPP Jack Johnson, the only Government Member at the meeting, promised to convey the messages from the meeting back to his caucus and the Cabinet. Johnson said he believes the area covered the plan could be drastically reduced in size. He also said he believes strongly in local autonomy and that more decisions should be left with local

Longtime Liberal MPP for Bruce. Eddie Sargent, told the meeting the NEC has so much power that even Premier Davis can't do anything about it. "I've never seen so much injustice and dictatorship in my career than from the NEC," he said.

governments.

"75 per cent of the escarpment is in Grey and Bruce, yet there are only four reps from that area on the NEC Orangeville Deputy-reeve and they're all appointed

Chiropractic

Clinie

Dr. W. R. Tom Thompson

must be notified by registered mail how their land is to be designated and have the right to a hearing.

that," Hannam warned.

business?" he asked.

Sargent was ready to offer the meeting two suggestions, first, that Davis be asked to abolish Bill 129 and, second, that the premier set up a Royal Commission, when he was roundly booed halfway through the second. Sargent said he'd better go back to the first one and was cheered

Mel Swart, an NDP member from the Niagara peninsula, said his party believes there should be a continuous Bruce Trail. "We have some obligation to our neighbors and societies," he said.

However, he criticized the NEC for holding closed meetings and sald it should be phased out.

speaker on the platform, said the proposal to have a continuous Bruce Trail caused all the problem in the first place. He said all reference to expropriation should be removed from the Bill.

Legislature.

Association on issues that have been paramount in criticisms levelled against it. Stacey says the Association will make the following recommendations to

1. That the extent of the Planning area can be reduced many areas presently

2. That the narrow Scarp protection area is critical to the "provision and maintenance of the escarpment as a continuous natural environment;" that no development be permitted on existing lots of record within this limited scarp area and that these be acquired when they come on the market or when the owner requests.

3. The concept of a "66 foot wide Trailway" is mis-leading. It should be replaced by a variable and flexible approach only after the negotiated consent of the landowners when securing the route of the footpath. As in the past, the footpath cannot upset the normal land uses of continuous access by the Agriculture President Peter landowner. Any arrangements should ensure the continuance of current land use casement patterns, keep ment to have a common voice title in the landowner's hand and assure continued Trail

continuous footpath be first satisfactory to the landowner

Government members themselves can't believe what's

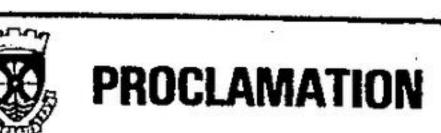
"Do we have to take 5,000 tractors down and paralyze Toronto for a day to show Davis that we mean

McKessock,

Shepherd read a letter from Premier Davis which he said was delivered to him by courier that day. Davis assured NECRA the government wants to know its concerns, but added the final decision will rest with the elected members of the and that expropriation be deleted as inappropriate with this policy. The continuation of voluntary co-operation

should wherever desired by the landowner, be the means of securing the trail. Where this is not possible, immediate negotiations by an appropriate government agency to secure the optimum route should be entered into with landowners to end their uncertainty, through mutually negotiated agree-

5. That landowners along the trail be protected by sulfable liability legislation.



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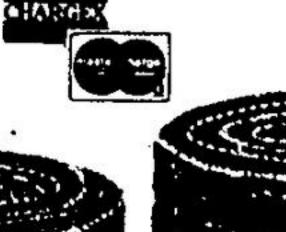
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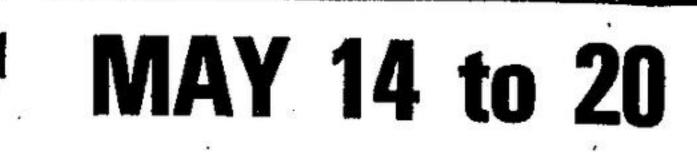
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