

Position Paper Concerning the Rabaska Project

Rabaska An Opportunity for Growth

By Catherine Constantin

I have been following the debate regarding the Rabaska project through the media for the past year now, and I must say I am rather surprised at some of the arguments being presented by the interest groups who are opposing the project. Having read a great deal regarding LNG terminals around the world, marine transportation of LNG, the transformation process from liquid to gas, etc, I seriously wonder if these people the have done any research whatsoever on the subject.

Over the years, I have listened to Quebec complain that her share of the federal pie was too small, yet has also always claimed, should Quebec separate from the rest of Canada, that she would be economically and financially self-sufficient. A little paradoxical isn't it? ...especially since Quebec, having turned down billions of dollars of investment in industrial development over the past several years, seems to fear industrial and economical development, which we all know is the corner stone of any nation.

Rabaska offers Quebec the opportunity to strengthen her economy, the opportunity for sustainable development. Promoters have done an impeccable job in presenting their project to the Quebec public, and have been remarkably transparent throughout their campaign. They even sent out exhaustive information in the form of flyers and brochures directly to residents throughout Lévis, Quebec City and surrounding communities. They have done everything imaginable to design the installations so as to make them harmonious to the surrounding landscape; they have and will compensate landowners for the inconveniences caused during construction; safety issues have been covered from all angles.

One of the arguments brought up by those opposed to the project is that it was unthinkable to have an LNG plant in front of the Island of Orleans, since this island is an important part of Quebec's heritage. The presence of the LNG plant would be an eyesore.

Not only will the presence of the LNG plant not change the "national heritage" status of the Island, but the plant will become practically invisible within five years after its construction, literally melting into the landscape. I would rather have that view than

the one I have now; which is the back of a convenience store where adult males go to relieve themselves in full view of the entire neighbourhood.

Another argument is that marine safety would be compromised because of the imposing size of the LNG tankers and the narrowness of the St. Lawrence at the proposed site for the dock. They also argue that the risks of a spill of LNG in the Saint Lawrence are unacceptable and would be devastating to the river's ecosystem.

Vessels built for LNG transport have the lowest occurrence of incidents / accidents in the family of tanker vessels (which already enjoys a very low risk factor). Because of the inherent properties of LNG, there cannot be a "spill" in the Saint Lawrence (the liquid state of the product transforms into gas and evaporates when in contact with the air). Furthermore, in its liquid state, LNG is not explosive. For an explosion to occur with LNG, it must first vaporize and then mix with air in the proper proportions (the explosive range is 5% to 15%), and then be ignited afterwards. It is highly unlikely that these specific conditions would be found in the middle of the Saint Lawrence. However, should a spill of fuel or diesel occur, all the necessary infrastructures are already in place to react swiftly and efficiently in case of an emergency. Furthermore, the port of Quebec is home to Ocean Group, a highly efficient and experienced towing company whose track record speaks for itself, making the docking and undocking manoeuvres virtually risk free.

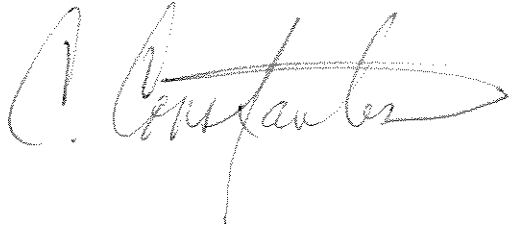
My favourite argument is the following: "I don't want to live next to an LNG plant".

Then move! Property value in the surrounding area has been climbing steadily since the beginning of this saga, so now would be a good time to sell.

I certainly do not want to minimize the population's fears and concerns. However, it would be helpful if these fears and concerns were based on facts and not simply ignited by a group of activists looking for a cause... any cause.

Rabaska gives us the opportunity to help strengthen our economy. The presence of this type of energy may in turn attract other investors to our area, therefore creating jobs, making our area more prosperous hence improving our quality of life.

We must grasp this opportunity and stop hanging on to the proverbial apron strings of the federal government.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "A. Constant". The signature is written in black ink on a white background. The first letter "A" is large and stylized, followed by a period. The rest of the name "Constant" is written in a fluid, cursive hand.