

from the Sobinskoe field to Krasnoyarsk. However, today we can no longer mindlessly burn gas, which contains helium, a very valuable raw material. We must build a plant to separate helium from the hydrocarbons. Our own country does not have much demand for helium at present, but international demand is high. There is good reason to store helium in tanks created by atomic blasts in thick walls of rock salt. This is a sensible approach.

Minor reductions in atmospheric temperatures in the winter cause power breakdowns and interrupt the operation of oil and gas refineries: output is very low in freezing temperatures. In short, we need to create storage facilities for crude oil and gas. Salt deposits are ideal for this purpose. Storage space can be created by a blast. There is a simpler method too, - the temporary conservation of high-yield wells. When the need arises, they can always be used or the supply could be supplemented. We drill feverishly in search of hydrocarbons, spending huge amounts of money. We shout to the skies, announcing an heroic feat by the oil workers drilling a new well. But do we really need all these dramatic, empty gestures? What we need is solid, scientifically-sound work performed on a day-by-day basis.

Naturally, to begin the exploitation of the Eastern Siberian deposits quickly and at relatively low expense, the region must possess transportation links, power supplies, and a social infrastructure. In the past, chaotic, rushed solutions to such problems increased the cost of the construction and exploitation of gas and oil fields in Western Siberia by roughly 20%, as well as slowing down the pace of exploitation. It is already time to begin construction of gas and oil pipelines, railways and