

facilities. Like everyone else, the "oil kings" are feeling the fuel pinch: each year approximately four million tons, thousands of train-loads, are brought into the oblast! But it is possible to obtain everything locally and so unburden a little the in any case overburdened Trans-Siberian Railroad.

In Surget they have already begun construction of plants to produce diesel fuel and high octane gasoline: these will produce millions of tons of fuel per year. In addition, smaller facilities are already in operation or under construction in the oil and gas fields of Nizhnevartovsk, Urengoi, Nefteyugansk and elsewhere for production of diesel fuel and bitumen. A local petrochemical combine is processing every year approximately three million tons of a wide-boiling fraction of light hydrocarbons, expanding its capacity, and increasing output of a product that is in demand all over the world. Like a powerful magnet, this product is drawing business people from abroad.

And if, as the people of Tobolsk believe, you combine forces with good partners, you can achieve excellent results.

"Two years ago," related V. Yudin, general director of the Tobolsk Petrochemical Combine, "during a visit to our country by the Prime Minister of Italy an agreement was reached on establishing the joint enterprise "Sovbutetal" in conjunction with our plant. This enterprise will produce butyl rubber - a most valuable raw material for many sectors. Construction is now already in full stride, and operation is due to start up in the first half of 1993."

The "Sovbutetal" was the first sign of things to come, and then came the creation of an even larger joint enterprise - "Vespek", or the West Siberian Petrochemical Company. It was jointly founded by the Tobolsk Petrochemical Complex, the American firm "Combustion