

The IAP

(Argentine Petroleum Institute) and the 13th Congress

**“We want to
capitalize on experience”**



Ing. Eduardo Rocchi is the current President of the Argentine Petroleum Institute, and he is also Chairman of the Organizing Committee of this 13th World Petroleum Congress ● In this interview he takes an authoritative look at the work of the IAP, the new context of the Argentine petroleum market, and the technical and professional importance of this major event, which is being held in Latin America for the first time.

At last the 13th World Petroleum Congress is being held, after all the efforts made by your organization...

Yes, and we are very pleased, because before Argentina was chosen as the venue, during the last Congress in Houston in 1987, we understood that on account of its importance in the world of petroleum and gas, Argentina deserved to organize this world event.

Three years ago you said that at this Congress Argentina would be able to announce the Houston Plan's results in terms of exploration carried out with private capital. But in the intervening period, the sector has undergone much more substantial changes...

That's so. At the time we couldn't have imagined the Argentine petroleum industry in the situation it is in today. The Houston Plan has about 70 contracts still in force, and at present a new exploratory plan is being drawn up. But the deregulation of petroleum has already begun, and soon deregulation will be applied to gas. Meanwhile the State company YPF is being restructured, while Gas del Estado is in the process of being privatized.

The changes I've mentioned are very important, and taken with international changes like the Gulf War, they amount to positive and negative experiences. It is about these subjects that the specialists gathered here today will be talking. This combination of international and local changes has given rise to the unusual interest being taken in this Congress, as shown by the increased number of foreign members as compared to Houston in '87.

How did the Institute divide the tasks of preparing this 13th Congress, at which it is the host?

The Technical Committees of IAP have, of course, reduced their normal activity since June, to devote themselves to mak-

ing final preparations for the Congress. Even so, there have been study visits to deep wells in the Province of Salta; day courses for operators of compressor plant in Neuquén, a symposium on refining in Mendoza and another on computers in Buenos Aires.

We're preparing the budget for next year which will involve intense and wide-ranging activity.

The Argentine Institute is a senior body in the industry here, and its involvement in drawing up petroleum policy and its views are much appreciated...

From the time of its creation as the South American Petroleum Institute it has been involved in deciding those policies, in particular together with the current Energy Under-Secretariat. For example, the

mitted a study drawn up together with competent petroleum institutions. This subject is vitally important to the country because the last reserves audit requested by the Energy Subsecretariat showed reserves are less than previously estimated.

Can one say that our country, by opening up the oil business and deregulating the market, is becoming attractive to foreign capital?

Yes, although we still need freer availability to make the market fully deregulated. We're at a stage of transition, and the future looks good, because deregulation is working.

What will this 13th Congress offer Argentina?

To Argentine oil men it will mean a chance

Patricio Whitney, Director of Petrotecnia, talks to Eduardo Rocchi.



Institute has been consulted about the question of petroleum derivatives and also on drawing up the Houston Plan. Because of the Institute's contacts with associated bodies here and abroad we were able to find the best ways to attract investment capital. At the time we played a part in the Follow-up Committee and in the drafting of Decree 623, adding improvements. Today we have been consulted about the new plan for exploration, and have sub-

mitted a study drawn up together with competent petroleum institutions, along with the opportunities this provides for mutually beneficial deals in the future. People on the technical side will be able to attend so many first rate exhibitions, keeping them up to date on what's happening around the world. All of us should seize the opportunity to learn from this experience, because it is an extremely positive one for the industry of our country.