

Gas prices plummet to lowest level ever

1 LOS ANGELES — Gas prices have plummeted so low, they are now at the lowest recorded level in their history, an industry analyst said Sunday.

The average all-grade pump price has dropped nearly 3 cents since Feb. 20, continuing a downward spiral of more than 23 cents since September.

When the figures are adjusted for inflation, it means customers are getting the lowest price ever.

The Lundberg Survey checks 10,000 gas stations nationwide and found that the national average for self- and full-service combined was \$1.0924 as of March 6.

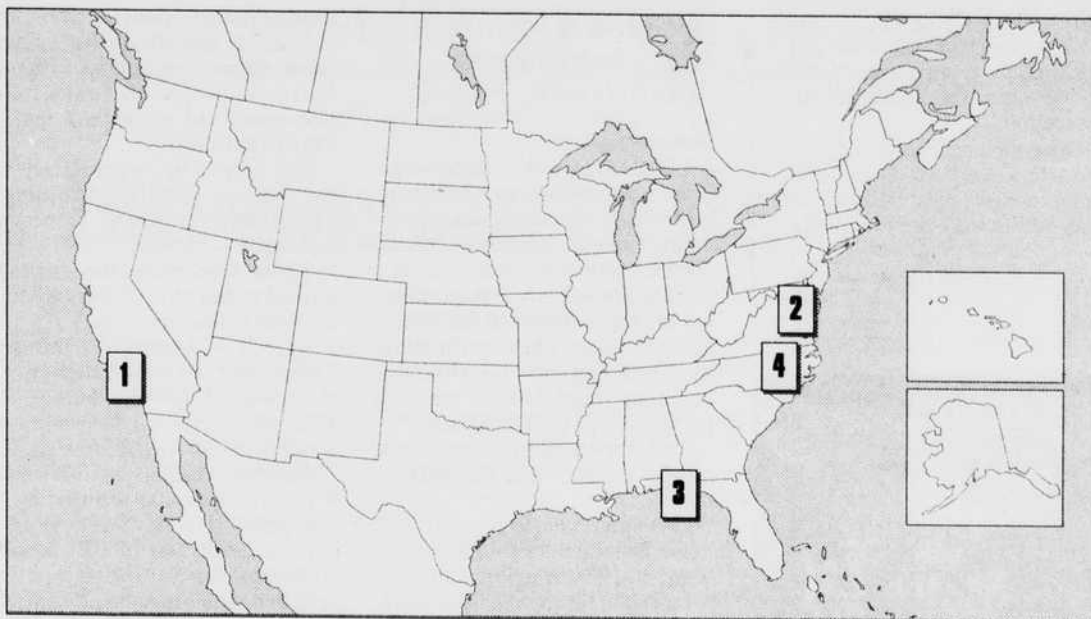
Regular self-serve gasoline was selling for less than \$1 at nearly half the stations in the country.

The main reasons for the price drop are a continuing sag in crude oil prices and a price war among refiners and distributors, Lundberg said.

Crude continued its slump from the \$24-per-barrel range late last year to below \$15.

U.S. air strike would require U.N. approval

2 WASHINGTON — U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan said Sunday that, contrary to U.S. assertions, the United States would need to consult with the U.N. Security Council before



mounting a military strike against Iraq.

"If the United States had to strike, I think some sort of consultations with the other members would be required," Annan said on ABC's "This Week with Sam Donaldson and Cokie Roberts."

Annan stressed that if Iraq breaks the agreement on full access for U.N. weapons inspectors he reached with President Saddam Hussein, "It would be much easier to get agreement in the council to take military action."

But he noted that three perma-

nent members of the Security Council, Russia, France and China, have objected to giving the United States carte blanche to launch military action.

Spring Break Court in session in Florida

3 PANAMA CITY BEACH, Fla. — Spring Break Court is now in session.

Vacationing college students nabbed for misdemeanors such as underage drinking and disorderly conduct can expect some immediate justice at this popular spring break destination. And they can avoid a criminal

record by giving up a day at the beach for a day cleaning up the beach.

Starting Monday, instead of processing offenders through normal criminal channels, Bay County judges will hold court at City Hall in this Florida Panhandle resort town. The plan mirrors a similar program used at Key West for several years.

First-time offenders can keep their records clean by doing up to eight hours of community service cleaning beaches, parks and roadways.

Other options are pleading guilty and paying a \$175 fine or

pleading innocent and having to return for trial. But the community service option carries a distinct advantage for youthful offenders.

Duke University adopts sports apparel code

4 DURHAM, N.C. — Duke University adopted a code of conduct Sunday to ensure sports apparel and other products bearing its name are not made in sweatshops.

The code covers a range of internationally accepted labor standards and was touted as a model for other colleges.

Duke is one of the top-selling names on sports apparel, thanks partly to a perennially top-ranked men's basketball team. About \$20 million worth of products bearing its name are sold each year, ranging from hats and sweatshirts to handheld electronic games.

About 700 licensees make the gear at plants in the United States and overseas.

The code includes guarantees of health and safety, the right to unionize and protection against child labor. While a handful of colleges have similar codes, Duke's also includes requiring licensees to allow independent monitoring of factories and publication of the results.

— Compiled from the Associated Press

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