Jet fuel is the second-biggest cost for airlines, after labor. And that fuel is up about 40% this year, 71 cents a gallon Monday. Airlines, though, often contract in advance for fuel at a specific price to avoid big swings. Airlines and private jet operators don't appear to be buying less. There's been ''a lot of fussing,'' says Ed Hayman, vice president of supply for World Fuel Service to Miami, but ''we haven't seen a cutback.

PUSHING COSTS

A look at what's driving prices: Summer-blend gas. The Environmental Protection Agency can fine a service station $27,500 a day for selling winter-blend fuel after May 1, so the switch has to begin now. Fuel evaporates into the air and pollutes it easier in hot weather, so summer gas is made to compensate.

But there are more than 100 types of summer fuel across the USA. Some, such as in the Mid-west, require ethanol—grain alcohol—to support area farmers. Ethanol must be mixed locally and distributed by trucks. If an ethanol plant or a refinery supplying the special gas to blend with ethanol has trouble, there's an immediate shortage threat, and prices spike.

Last Aug. 14, for instance, the Lemont refinery outside Chicago caught fire, stopping production of fuel needed for the area's unique ethanol blend. By Aug. 16, the average wholesale price there jumped 12.1 cents a gallon, and pump prices averaged 12 cents higher than the day before the fire.

Crude oil prices. They rise and fall with demand. Crude oil accounts for about 38% of gasoline's price. The retail gas price hike ''is mostly crude and the changeover to summer fuel. Everybody tries to read more into the numbers, but that explains what's going on,'' says Alan Struth, oil market consultant at Energy Insights.

Venezuelan strike. Oil-market experts worried more about Venezuela than about the Arab nations Monday. Workers at the state-owned oil company known as PDVSA have been protesting management changes mandated by President Hugo Chavez for about six weeks. Venezuela is a major supplier of gasoline and heating oil to the USA. If a strike there lasted a week, the USA would feel the pinch, Struth says. ''It's that tight.''

SADDAM MAKES A MOVE

Despite mutterings it would happen, Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein's pledge to sell no oil for 30 days unless Israel withdraws from the West Bank caught traders and politicians by surprise Monday and sent crude prices up.

Reassurances from the U.S. government and international energy officials were prompt, but the boycott nonetheless could cause disruptions. And disruptions cause oil traders fits.

Monday ''was another wild and wooly day,'' says Peter Beutel of Cameron Hanover, which advises companies at risk when energy prices change drastically. ''Prices shot up. They did come back down, but at one point, prices did look as if they would roar out of control,'' he says.

Even before Iraq, ''the market was primed,'' Beutel says. ''We are in the pre-summer urgency period. Everybody says, 'If I don't get it now I won't have enough,' '' because summer driving uses up stockpiles of gas. This summer's demand is expected to be a record 8.8 million barrels a day.

Even though other members of OPEC—the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries—are expected to make up for any Iraqi shortfall, ''there is the whole exercise of flipping the switches,'' Beutel points out.

''Saudi Arabia can go ahead and increase production today, but the oil takes three or four weeks to get out of the ground and into a tanker. And the Saudis won't do that unless they're sure he's serious, so there's the whole question of how serious is Saddam?''

It would be May before increases by other oil exporters would show up in the USA.

And to heck with it, anyway, says Sherry Jones Nelson of suburban Minneapolis. She'll take her usual long-distance driving vacation, regardless: ''We won't let any company, or country, stop us.''

The Missing Energy Strategy

The events of the past year—prominently, a power crisis in California and the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11—gave the nation many reasons to reexamine its energy strategy. Now comes another: Saddam Hussein's decision to halt oil imports to the United States, at least temporarily, in retaliation for Washington's support of Israel.

In an interview with The Wall Street Journal earlier this week. President Bush warned that the recent 20 percent jump in oil prices could threaten economic recovery. While Iraq accounts for about 8 percent of America's imports, according to Washington's estimates, there is spare oil capacity in the system, and thus there should be no petroleum shortage if other Middle Eastern producers refuse to follow Baghdad. Even so, Mr. Hussein's action draws attention once again to America's dependence on imported oil, including oil supplied by the troubled countries of the Persian Gulf. It also points to Washington's sorry failure to devise a balanced strategy to reduce America's reliance on gulf imports and give itself greater maneuvering room in the war on terrorism and other foreign policy issues as well.

The Senate, which has resumed debate on the energy bill, is the last hope for such a strategy. Admittedly, the prospects are dimmer than they were a month ago, when the Senate took up an imperfect but honorable measure cobbled together by Jeff Bingaman of New Mexico and Tom Daschle, the majority leader. The bill included a mix of incentives for new production of fossil fuels, largely natural gas, along with provisions aimed at increasing energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources. As such it stood in stark contrast to a grievously one-sided House bill that provided $27 billion in incentives for the oil, gas and coal industries and less than one-quarter that amount for efficiency. The House bill also authorized the opening of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil exploration and drilling.

On its first big test, however, the Senate collapsed under industry and union pressure and rejected a provision requiring the first increase in fuel economy standards since 1985. To Mr. Daschle's dismay, Democrats deserted the cause of fuel conservation in droves; New York's senators, Charles Schumer and Hillary Rodham Clinton, were among the honorable exceptions. The only bright moment in a dismal two weeks of debate and defeat was the approval of a ''renewable portfolio standard'' that would require utilities to generate between 5 and 10 percent of their power from wind, solar and other forms of renewable energy.

There are several things the Democrats and their moderate Republican allies can do to produce a respectable bill. First, they must defeat any amendment aimed at opening the Arctic refuge to drilling. Such an amendment is almost certain to be offered by Frank Murkowski of Alaska, but the facts are not on his side. Every available calculation—including those that accept Mr. Murkowski's inflated estimates of the amount of oil underneath the refuge—show that much more oil can be saved by fuel efficiency than by drilling.

Next, they must resist efforts to weaken the renewable energy provision, while defending energy efficiency measures that have yet to be voted on—chiefly a provision that would increase efficiency standards for air-conditioners by 30 percent. The Senate should also preserve a useful provision that would require companies to give a public accounting of their production of carbon dioxide and other so-called greenhouse gases. On the supply side, it can take steps to improve the reliability of the nationwide electricity grid, while increasing incentives for smaller and potentially more efficient producers of power.

These are modest measures, less ambitious than the Senate's original agenda. But at least they point in the right direction, toward a strategy that includes conservation as well as production.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO THE UCONN HUSKIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FORBES). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SIMMONS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SIMMONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise here today on the floor of the House to commend and congratulate the 2002 NCAA women's basketball champions, the University of Connecticut Huskies. This past Saturday in my home State of Connecticut and the State capital, over 150,000 men and women and children, enthusiastic fans, gathered for an hour-long parade in freezing temperatures to congratulate and cheer on these young women who not only have excelled on the basketball court but have excelled academically as well.

The UCONN Huskies team were led by Most Outstanding Player Swin Cash; and they capped a perfect 39–0 season, beating the University of Oklahoma 82 to 70 in what was a closely contested competition. All of the State of Connecticut watched with pride as the Huskies claimed their place as undefeated champions and one of the great all-time women's basketball teams in NCAA basketball history.

The University of Connecticut was founded in 1881 and has a rich tradition of academic excellence as well as athletic ability. The Huskies now add another national championship to their title and their world-class academic reputation. The pride of Eastern Connecticut and Storrs is now the pride of Connecticut and the pride of the United States of America.

It is with great joy, Mr. Speaker, that I commend and honor the UCONN team because I was a teaching assistant at that university for 4 wonderful years. And I want to say to all of those here present and to those listening and to the Huskies, way to go, Lady Huskies. I especially would like to congratulate the players, Sue Bird, Swin Cash, Asjha Jones, Diana Taurasi, and Tamkia Williams, and Head Coach Geno Auriemma, and Associate Head Coach Chris Dailey, the staff, as well as Lou Perkins, the head of the athletic department.

In the words of the cheerleaders of the UCONN Huskies, U-C-O-N-N, UCONN, UCONN, UCONN.

HONORING BILLY CASPER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, this is the first day of the Masters, one of the most prestigious sports events in our Nation and, indeed, the world. And I rise today to commemorate the fact that for only the second time in 45 years, one of the great golfers of this decade, in fact, one of the great golfers of this century, Billy Casper, is not playing in the Masters. Billy Casper, won the Masters in 1970. He also won a couple of United States Open championships. In fact, in 1966 at Olympic Country Club in San Francisco, he came from behind in what is considered to be one of the most stunning come-from-behind victories in the history of golf. That is when he was seven shots back to Arnold Palmer with only nine holes to go and Billy Casper, called by Golf Magazine the greatest putter in the history of golf, managed to shoot a 32 on the back nine at Olympic Country Club in San Francisco, one of the most difficult golf tracks in the world. He tied Arnold Palmer for the U.S. Open championship and the next day shot a 69 and beat Arnold Palmer.

If you add to that great win, that great success, and his other U.S. Open success and his 1970 Masters success the fact that Billy Casper won 51 times on the PGA tour, which puts him the sixth winningest golfer of all time, and you add to that the fact that he has the best Ryder Cup record in terms of wins and losses of any player in American history, and you add to that the five Vardon trophies he won on having the lowest scoring average on the U.S. PGA tour, then you have to conclude that Billy Casper indeed is one of the great heroes in sports history.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud that Billy Casper lives in San Diego, California. He still plays golf at San Diego Country Club, where he worked as a caddy as a kid. He has a big heart. He has been a great leader of junior golf in developing young golfers in our country and, indeed, the Nation. Billy Casper is joined by his wife, Shirley, in all of his efforts. He not only is a great athlete and a great teacher but a great person and a great leader in our community.

Mr. Speaker, I know that the greatest golf field in the world is playing in the Masters right now. The game is still on. We will have a leader today; and ultimately on Sunday afternoon we will see who the champion is. But there is one great champion, the 1970's Masters champion who is not playing this time for only the second time in 45 years, but he will be down there because he is a wonderful person. He has a big heart. He loves this event. He loves the tradition. He loves the galleries which in turn love him because he is indeed a great sportsman, one of the great representatives of the game of golf. Billy Casper.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Georgia (Ms. MCKINNEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. MCKINNEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

WELFARE REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentlewoman from Hawaii (Mrs. MINK) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the minority leader's designation of this hour to the discussion of welfare reform.

The Bush administration has submitted various proposals. Most of them go to the technicalities of States' performance and percentages of people that must be in a work program. They have increased the work requirements from 30 hours to 40 hours, with some allowance for the use of 16 hours for other than actual work activity. But in most cases the administration's proposals do not go to the matter of the actual recipients and families that have been affected by the many changes that we made in 1996.

I do not think there is any dispute on either side of the aisle that the provision of the 1996 Welfare Reform Act did dramatically lower the number of welfare recipients all across the country. This was because there were mandatory requirements on work. If you did not work, if you did not register for work, if you did not go into some sort of a work project, you would lose the cash assistance. Therefore, the numbers that fell dramatically to about 50 percent of what they were in 1996 is basically because of the rules that were included in the 1996 TANF legislation.

The requirement to work has removed many of these families from the welfare roles. The problem with just removing these families from the welfare roles, however, is that they have simply gone to dead-end jobs, most of them earning minimum wage, perhaps some as much as $6 or $7 an hour, but that is it. So most of these families remain under the poverty level and, therefore, continue to be a responsibility of the national and State governments.

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They continue to be eligible for housing support. They continue to be eligible for food stamps. They are eligible for Medicaid allowances and are, of course, as former TANF recipients, going to work under the TANF rules entitled to significant amounts of child care support.

The object of welfare reform, it seems to me, is to really take a look at the outcomes, not simply the mechanisms; what percentage, 50 percent, 60 percent are at work. The mechanisms have been proven to work, partly because of the flexibility that the States have been given to implement these new requirements.

The real way that we can measure the success of welfare reform, it seems to me, is to look at the quality of the family life after they have left welfare. Are these families earning sufficient funds to really take their family out of poverty, out of all of the support services that the poor in this country are entitled to? I think the answer to that question is that the substantial majority of families that have gone off welfare are still poor, are still below poverty and are still dependent upon the wide variety of support mechanisms that are there for the poor in America. So, therefore, welfare reform, it seems to me, has stopped short of accomplishing the real mission which it should be, and that is to bring these families up to economic self-sufficiency, to a matter of economic security.

One of the real mistakes I think that we made in the enactment of TANF in 1996 is that we did not consider these families as being those that might benefit from education. We have 1 year vocational training as a work activity, but for many of the individuals on welfare, additional educational opportunities ought to be provided. That is the number one goal of legislation that I have introduced in the House last November, which now enjoys 90 cosponsors. And it looks to the welfare reform legislation from the perspective of the recipient, not from the perspective of the mechanic, the percentages that are being held or the percentages that are being gotten off of welfare or all of those mathematical statistical charts.

What we have done in the bill I introduced, H.R. 3113, is to look to see how it impacted the families, and as a result of the legislation, H.R. 3113 currently enjoys the support and endorsement of over 80 organizations throughout the country, the YWCA, the National League of Women Voters, a large number of women's organizations, Business Professional Women, Center for Women Policy Studies, and on and on.

These individuals have not come on to support the legislation as casual observers. In most instances, they have participated in the writing of the bill from, again, the perspective of the child, of the family, of the single parent, to see what we could do to enhance their condition, their standing in our society.

The people on welfare have to be looked at as individuals who want desperately to improve their condition, and I think that the major item that is missing in the current law and in the Bush administration's proposal is the importance of education.

Our bill hopes to consider education as a work activity. The law says one must be in a work activity. So in order to comply with the law, and not to be sanctioned for failure to comply, we must first of all say education is a