

Sidelights

If you do not have mirth you will certainly have madness—G. K. Chesterton

By Brandon Bosworth

Over 70 percent of Americans believe Saddam Hussein should be sentenced to death if he is found guilty of the charges against him, according to a CNN/USA Today/Gallup Poll. ☛ Leftist anti-war activist **Cindy Sheehan was paid \$11,000** to give an hour-long speech at State University College in Oneonta, New York. The payment ate up nearly 30 percent of the school's annual lecture budget. . . . Meanwhile, retired Army officer Scott Rutter, a FOX News analyst who fought in Operation Iraqi Freedom, also spoke at the college. **He was paid \$600.** ☛ The Congressional Blue Dog Coalition, a group of moderate and conservative House Democrats, issued a report showing that in the last four years, the federal government has borrowed more money from financial institutions and foreign governments than in the previous 224 years combined. ☛ According to a Harvard University survey, 93 percent of college students **trust the American military** to "do the right thing" some, most, or all of the time. Eighty-five percent felt the same way about the President. ☛ Lee Kuan Yew, the first prime minister of modern Singapore, was quoted in *Time* warning of problems in Southeast Asia if Islamic extremists prevail in Iraq. **"If the jihadists win there, I'm in trouble here....** Their attitude would be 'we've beaten the Russians in Afghanistan, we've beaten the Americans and the coalition in Iraq. There's nothing we cannot do. We can fix Southeast Asia too.'" ☛ Venezuelan strongman **Hugo**

Chavez has ordered 160 missionaries out of the country, declaring them to be spies sent to prepare for an American invasion.

A survey by an employment law company recently determined that **only 38 percent of Americans who called in sick from work in 2004 were actually ill.**

- ☛ The United Kingdom's National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence ruled that patients who are grossly obese, smoke heavily, or drink alcohol excessively could be denied surgery or drugs due to the "self-inflicted" nature of illnesses they may develop.
- ☛ Starbucks has more cafes in London than in New York.
- ☛ Contaminated fruits and vegetables lead to more food poisonings in the U.S. than raw chicken or eggs, according to a study by the Center for Science in the Public Interest.
- ☛ Americans **spent \$485 million**

shopping online the Monday after Thanksgiving, 2005. . . . The typical American spends more on entertainment than on gasoline, home furnishings, or clothing, according to a Bureau of Labor Statistics study. ☛ **Since the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the number of disabled people who are employed has fallen** by 30 percent, claims a Cornell University study. ☛ The independent European Court of Auditors refused to certify the financial accounts of the European Union for the eleventh year in a row, citing "errors of legality and regularity." ☛ New Hampshire's Amherst Regional High School **banned the term "freshman"** in favor of the gender-neutral "ninth grader." Assistant principal Marta Guevara hopes the new terminology will raise student awareness of "misogynistic, oppressive, or non-inclusive language."

. . . Germany's minister for women's affairs declared her country's national anthem "sexist." Maria Rauch-Kallat **suggested new words for "Deutschland Uber Alles"**—changing "fatherland" to "homeland," and "brotherly choruses" to "joyful choruses." ☛ A fourth of all men leave public restrooms without washing their hands, according to research by the American Society for Microbiology. Only 10 percent of women do likewise. ☛ St. Mary's Hospital, **a nursing home in Ireland, opened its own pub** on the premises. Rose Mooney, assistant director of nursing, noted that relatives are visiting more often since the pub opened.

