

# Sidelights

A Minneapolis library has banned chess playing due to the rowdy behavior of those who come to watch the games. ♣ A Pennsylvania high-schooler was disqualified from running for junior class president after joking during a speech that he would give everyone in his grade a cookie were he elected. School officials said the cookie pledge was a form of bribery. ♣ Doctors in many Melbourne, Australia hospitals now refuse to perform potentially life-saving procedures such as lung and heart transplants, artery bypasses, and coronary artery grafts on smokers. ♣ The Virginia House of Delegates declined to apologize for the state's former policy of forced sterilization. As part of Virginia's eugenics program, thousands were sterilized between 1924 and 1979. Victims have been unable to sue the state for damages because the U.S. Supreme Court upheld Virginia's eugenics law in 1927. ♣ Only 21 percent of workers believe a business-lunch cocktail is acceptable, according to a recent survey. Dinner cocktails are acceptable 68 percent of the time. ♣ Women now account for 46 percent of the U.S. workforce, according to the Employment Policy Foundation, and may outnumber men by 2025. ♣ One out of every seven California voters declines to name a party preference when registering to vote, an increase of 50 percent over the last decade. ... 95 percent of Californians vote for either a Democrat or Republican in gubernatorial or Presidential races. ♣ Vandals in San Gabriel Valley, California used BB and pellet guns to shoot out the windows of over 300 vehicles, mostly SUVs. ♣ Students at Ferndale High, Washington elected a lesbian student as prom king. ... A memorial to gay veterans is planned

for Desert Memorial Park in Palm Springs, California. ♣ **John H. Rogers**, a Massachusetts politician, proposed a bill that would count jails and prisons as low-income housing. ♣ The Information Office of China's State Council issued a report entitled "U.S. Human Rights Record 2000" condemning America, "the only country where carrying a private weapon is a constitutional right," as a "society ridden with violence."

Taxpayers may be overpaying as much as \$311 million to the IRS due to their own errors, according to the General Accounting Office. ... Over half of all Americans now pay to have their tax returns professionally prepared. ... H&R Block's revenue for tax preparation services totals \$1.3 billion ... IRS chief **Charles Rossotti** predicts an increase in tax audits. ♣ 85 percent of Americans think at least one quarter of the federal budget surplus should be used for tax relief. ♣ A retired trucker won a baseball bat signed by **Babe Ruth**, but had to sell it because of the \$35,000 in taxes he'd have to pay to keep it. ♣ Nicaragua has banned afternoon siestas for federal employees. It is estimated the

measure will save the government \$40 million. ♣ A financial officer of the U.S. Postal Service was given a relocation package of \$142,000 to move a distance of 15 miles. ... A federal audit shows that the Postal Service wasted over \$1 billion over the last four years. ... During the last three years of **Bill Clinton's** administration, the Department of Education lost track of \$450 million. The department's chief inspector attributes the losses to waste, fraud, and errors. ♣ Over 40 percent of Americans surveyed believe the FBI "knowingly withheld" evidence in the **Timothy McVeigh** case. ♣ While appearing together on "Politically Incorrect," talk-show host **Dennis Prager** asked **Whoopi Goldberg** why fighting communism is morally different from fighting Nazism. She responded, "I'm not sure that communism is necessarily a bad thing." ... The Socialist Party plans to create a non-profit think tank called the American Socialist Foundation. "We like to think of this as our Cato Institute," said **Greg Pason**, the party's national secretary. ♣ According to former Democratic senator and Presidential candidate **Eugene McCarthy**, the three greatest outrages of his political life were **Joe McCarthy's** Communist witch hunt, the Vietnam War, and the McCain-Feingold campaign finance reform bill. ♣ 79 percent of Americans would be interested in attending a speech by **Colin Powell** according to a recent Gallup poll. He topped a list which included **George W. Bush** and **Oprah Winfrey**. ... The poll showed that more Americans would be interested in hearing a speech by **Jimmy Carter** (66 percent) than one by Bill Clinton (51 percent). ♣ A Thai farmer has invented a mini-treadmill to aid in the training of roosters for cock fighting. —BB

