GARLAND
ATKINS

Cousin Claire, Here's How Things Have Been

My first cousin, Claire Atkins, was married Saturday night. She is spending her honeymoon deep in the mountains of Western North Carolina, away from the cares of the world, from newspapers, radio, television, and other forms of communication. So that she won't be too shocked when she returns this week and reads and hears about all the many crises that have arisen, I am writing her this letter to tell her what has been happening back home and around the world.

Dear Claire,

It must be nice to be honeymooning in the autumn colored mountains—without a worry in the world. I envy you. I thought I would just drop you this line to let you know what is going on back here in "civilization."

"Uncivilization" would be a better word for it. The way the world is acting, you wouldn't think there was a civilized person left in it.

I would say that it has been a rather eventful week, since you have gone.

Gastonia and Lowell tried to annex each other, we almost got into a third world war, and Ben Casey cut himself shaving the other night on TV and fainted at the sight of blood.

Oh horrors! President Kennedy finally acted in the Cuban situation. He decided he had better do something. It wasn't so bad when Cuba turned communist, or when Castro executed thousands of Cubans . . . or even when they set up about 20 missile bases, and aimed all the missiles at the United States, but when Castro refused to let the Havana book stores sell brother Bobby's newest book, that was the last straw.

Actually the President began to get a little concerned when he noticed that all his security agents were speaking Spanish. Then one day he told Caroline to go outside and play, pointed at him and said "Yankee Go Home."

Kennedy has the situation well in hand now. He has quarantined Cuba. I just hope "Dr. Kennedy" has the right medicine for these "sick" people. I'm afraid there may not be any medicine for their sickness. I'm just glad I'm not the one who has to nail the quarantine sign on Fidel's front door. I bet Fidel has a few "shots" he would like to give JFK, but not from a needle.

The President has laid his plans through. He has blocked the Cuban ports, he is checking all the Russian ships for weapons, and our armed forces are ready. If all this fails, as a last resort, he is going to ask Harry Truman to take over the presidency again. Then JFK will just sit back and hope Castro makes a nasty remark about Margaret Truman's stinging.

Actually, Kennedy was going

to place Truman in charge of the Voice of America, and let him air some speeches to the Cuban people, but our assistants couldn't translate some of Harry's "language" into Spanish.

Actually Castro's missiles aren't loaded with atomic warheads, only hot tomatoes. . . they're going to burn us out. Television has been filled with news about the Cuban situation. Every program is interrupted with special news reports.

I tuned in the middle of several shows this week—I don't watch TV much, and so I'm not familiar with the programs. Is there a show called "Sing Along With Nikita?" How about "Ben Castro?"

The Gazette even put out a special edition on the Cuban situation. We stayed up all night getting it together. We sold them on the streets the next day. I'm afraid we didn't do too well. Our salesman kept complaining about his feet hurting—he looked pretty bad too—he needed a shave. But he was the best we could find—I'm afraid your brother Jim just wasn't cut out to sell papers.

Well, there has been some excitement in the field of city government. Gastonia wanted to annex Lowell, and Lowell wanted to annex Gastonia. So they have reached a compromise. Dallas is going to annex both of them.

Lowell couldn't provide enough sewer lines for the people. Lowell said they could too provide the sewer lines. Gastonia says it has much more sewerage than Lowell. Lowell says they have the most sewerage. It's really a stinking situation.

Much more has happened, but I can't remember it all. Oh, yes, remember how much winter grass seed I put down in my front yard. You told me I was putting down too much. I laughed it off and spread away and watered it night and day. Well, you were right. I overdid it. I couldn't get it to stop growing. We're the only house in town with wall to wall grass. First, I mow the grass outside and then I mow the living room.

Well, that's all for now. We are looking forward to seeing you and your husband when you return to civilization. . . on the other hand . . . if this is civilization . . . my advice to you is to stay in the mountains.

Love,
GARLAND.

P. S. Please tell your husband to return the engine to my car. It won't run too well without it and Bonnie is getting tired of pushing. I don't know why he took it after the reception. I had no thoughts of following you to the mountains. . . I always have the wild glint in my eye. . . I was born with it.

Communist Push For Atheism

—Ralph McGill—

A few days before the opening of the historic Ecumenical Council in Rome the Soviet Communist party called for a more effective campaign against religion. The news paper Pravda, official voice of the party, editorially demanded that "greater attention be given to the training of qualified propagandists of atheism."

McGILL
training of qualified propagandists

disto of atheism, to atheistic instruction of all members and Komsomols (Communist young people) to make everyone into a militant anti-religionist."

The editorial could be described as quite frank. There are, it said, a great many Soviet people still in the captivity of religious ideology. Prejudices of the past and superstition prevent these people, said Pravda, from fully developing their creative strength in labor, in public life, and in the construction of communism. The people further were reminded that Pres-

mier Khrushchev had called for a rigid system of scientific atheism that would reach all areas of religion and halt the spread of religious news, "especially among children and youths."

WITHIN DAYS after Pravda's somewhat angry editorial Moscow provided evidence of the persistence of religious sentiments in Russian people. The Robert Shaw Choral appeared in the Kremlin's theater as a part of the United States' cultural exchange program. The audience was deeply moved by the Choral's religious music, particularly Schubert's Mass in G and the Negro spirituals. The Soviet Deputy Minister of Culture commented on the occasion given the Choral: "Although we are not a religious state," he said, "we Russians understand things of the spirit."

It is against this setting that we can turn attention to the Ecumenical Council. Delegates are emphasizing the need for Christianity to come to grips with the human predicament as complicated by the psychological and emotional pressures of our time and situation.

Joseph Stalin, at the peak of his war-time power, once asked in scornful tones, "How many divisions does the Pope have?" That Christianity does have power is everywhere evident. Even in those communities where it is not being used, the potential power is to be seen. The fact that it is apathetic instead of vigorous calls attention to Christianity's neglect.

Both Pope John and the Archbishop of Canterbury recently commented on the failure of the Christian church vigorously to participate in issues where Christianity and morality are involved.

THERE IS A growing demand that religion be made more relevant to the lives and needs of people. There is an insistent demand that organized Christianity everywhere take a stand against all sorts of human discrimination. The Roman church has noted that as man reaches further and further into space he may find persons on other planets. These may not have the same physical form as that

possessed by earth's creatures. They may or may not have developed religion. They may not be of the same pigmentation as earth's people. What will the Christian church of earth do if such persons are discovered and communication established?

It is an exercise in humility for Christians to consider their history and faith. Until 50 A. D., for example, it was not officially determined that Gentiles equally were entitled to communion with the Jews, who formed the great majority of the early converts. In the year 50 A. D. a council of young Christians met at Jerusalem and made this equality official. In the years since, it has occasionally become necessary for the church to restate this de-

cision. Both the Vatican and leaders of Protestant churches, for example, were called upon to deny claims made by proponents of slavery in the 16th and 17th century that the non-white slaves were really not humans. In the closing years of the past century there were those who publicly described the former slaves of our own country as not being human beings.

If the Ecumenical Council and the debates inspired by it in all Christendom succeed in making Christianity more relevant to life, the principles of Christianity will reach even into Russia and to whatever we may find in the yet unexplored universe. (Distributed 1962, by The Hall Syndicate, Inc.) (All Rights Reserved)

ACROSS THE ATLANTIC

By
Hank Bassewitz

Asheville, N. C., is on stage in Zurich, Switzerland. Two weeks ago Thomas Wolfe's "Welcome in Our City" was first performed at the "Zürcher Schauspielhaus," for the first time since the evening of May 11, 1923 at Harvard, where Wolfe was studying playwriting under professor Baker, and where his fellow students were not very much impressed by it. The German translation of the title is: "Willkommen in Allamont." Up to now it has been quite a success.

After all it is a risk to put on stage the work of a 22-year-old American student who wrote this drama before O'Neill changed the American theatre art, before Bert Brecht found his formula of expression of our century in the so-called epic theater. Thornton Wilder was unknown in 1923, so was Jean Anouilh, the famous French playwright. In those days Faulkner and Hemingway were beginning to write. The now leading Swiss dramatists, Max Frisch and Friedrich Dürrenmatt, were eleven and one year old.

At that time the gigantic student from Asheville wrote the technically gigantic play of "Niggettown" (as it was first called: 31 talking roles, 13 only acting roles and seven times changes of the scene).

MAY BE THAT is the reason it was not played between 1923 and 1962. There are few theater groups which can even dream of such a personage. It has become, in the contrary, the style of modern theater to keep the roles of a play in small numbers. The good reason for that being that the problems of our time are not so much those of society, of classes, which are best shown in a mass of people, but the subject for the modern poet, as a rule, is the individual. The trouble of one single soul is of greater importance to us than the tensions in a group or in the realm of state and power. Wolfe, in those days still convinced that his genius would rise on the wooden boards of a stage, conceived "Niggettown," however, in the broad scene of an epic novel, thus putting the prejudice to his further great career.

The foreground issue of the play is, as you probably know, real estate and city development in Asheville. Business and politics are colluding to make the Negroes sell their property for an expansion of the white district. The drama does not come out of this issue so much as it does exist in the skillfully designed characters of the human beings who are involved in the issue: the Negro doctor Johnson who loses his daughter, and finally his life to Lee Rutledge the son of his counterpart, the white Mr. Rutledge.

Today is my birthday anniversary—my 62nd to be exact. I was born in Asheville, Oct. 17, 1880. The intervening years have been good to me. While, of course, not as active as I once was, I still have the use to some extent at least—of my several senses—am able to read and write, converse with my friends when they drop by to pass the time to day with me and discuss the happenings of days past, present and to come.

Naturally the past comes in for quite a bit of the conversation, though I am trying, as nearly as possible, to keep up with current events and take a peep occasionally into the future.

In my earlier years in Asheville, I attended school at the old Asheville "Female" College with which my father, the late Ben E. Atkins, was connected for many years as a teacher and later, as president. My uncle, the late Bishop James Atkins, was president and owner of the college for many years. I remember many members of the faculty during those years. Among them were Dr. Victor Kneringer and D. C. Falk teachers of music, and many others whose names escape me at this time. As a boy I attended classes in the primary department. Among those of the teachers I remember best were Miss Carrie Black and Miss Ellen M. Henderson, the last named of Logansport, Ind. During those years I remember many incidents of keen interest to me. My first attendance there were classes in the primary department under Misses Black and Henderson.

who again is living in the isolation of the sensitive and thinking individual. Preston Carr the governor serves as an example of a shallow existence who is living for and by public opinion. The race issue logically comes into the play, through the sociologist Hutchings who believes in the superiority of the whites — and through the unnecessary death of the shoe-maker Amos who is killed by bullet in a riot — and who had absolutely no part in the whole issue.

THE CAST in Zurich up to now has been a great success. There is good chance that other theaters of the German language in Austria, in Germany, or in Switzerland again will put "Welcome in Our City" on their programs. As Zurich has a very high reputation among European theaters, after this beginning the play might be translated into French or Italian or Swedish. The example has shown that Thomas Wolfe can be played even after 39 years — and that should be possible even in America, where no translation is necessary. There is, no doubt, much value to plays like "Send me no flowers." There is more value, however, to a play by the poet Thomas Wolfe.

Col. Gaston Gossips

By J. W. ATKINS

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It can surely be said that the official formula of reunification by plebiscite is an obstacle to the reunification of Germany, not a method of achieving it. That may be one of the reasons why so many people who do not want a big Germany pay lip service to it.

YET, DESPITE the unavowed but very general objections to German reunification, I for one believe that the two Germanys must be and should be reunited.

Like it or not (and many don't like it) democracy is on the march in the United States, and giving way before it are many traditional institutions. One of these is the college fraternity. Around the nation's campuses, there is a small but growing trend to eliminate the Greek letter groups.

In some instances, it is a matter of necessity, not of animosity toward the fraternities. The need for more classrooms and laboratories to handle the influx of students and to meet the needs of burgeoning knowledge in all fields is simply crowding

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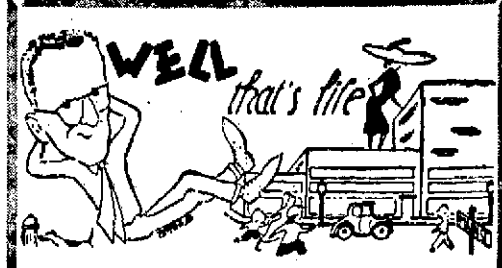
Like it or not (and many don't like it) democracy is on the march in the United States, and giving way before it are many traditional institutions. One of these is the college fraternity. Around the nation's campuses, there is a small but growing trend to eliminate the Greek letter groups.

In some instances, it is a matter of necessity, not of animosity toward the fraternities. The need for more classrooms and laboratories to handle the influx of students and to meet the needs of burgeoning knowledge in all fields is simply crowding

out many of them. Case Institute of Technology in Cleveland, for example, lacking unused campus space, has announced it will tear down all but one of its fraternity houses to make room for an expansion of teaching facilities.

Other schools, however, have decided that the fraternity system is outdated and constitutes a positive hindrance to the broadened functions of the today's modern college or university.

WILLIAMS College in Masse-



An Opinion That Goes For Naught

—By Bill Williams—

I am not usually sensitive to Mama's nonchalance over some of my mundane epiphanies.

She has her troubles — all four of them, Tommy, Ben, Judy and Beth. And when all of them descend with their own varied whinnies and Mama is trying to get supper on the table before Papa the Pig, there is ample reason to understand why she pays so little attention to me.

However, when she and I are sitting at the lunch table by ourselves—Judy and Beth having departed for the great outside, cookies in hand—there is no reason why Mama the Manager shouldn't give my mouthings at least a bit of attention.

But, there we were, the two of us, and the world was ready to fall apart.

Russian ships were heading on course for Cuba. Our own task force was standing ready to intercept. H-hour was near.

What was going to happen?

Paul Harvey had just gone off, preceded by other news of the minute. I sipped my soup. Mama was interested.

"What do you think's going to happen?" she asked. Graphically, I put my napkin to my lips, laid it on the table, and cleared my throat.

"Well, there won't be any shooting," I said.

SHE PUT UP A BRIEF argument and then lapsed into semi-somnolence as I proceeded to undergird my argument.

"I foresee the Russians proceeding with their ships until stopped by this country," I said. "And the only way we'll stop them is by firing a warning shot across their bow. Then, they'll finally turn around and head back, screaming all the way. That, of course, will be the signal for one of the greatest mouthings this world has ever known, and the man who'll do it is Khrushchev. . . ."

I talked for a minute or two longer. And then I brought my argument to a close.

I paused, waiting Mama's rebuttal. She was deeply engrossed in thought. Her brow was wrinkled by the effort. Finally, my Phi Beta Kappa wife turned to me and said:

"As chairman of the grab-bag committee at the school. . . ."

THE OTHER DAY, Mama looked in the mirror and told me she had just plucked out a grey hair.

Now I know why. She shouldn't allow these world situations to get her down.

LAST WEEK, Attorney Henry Whitesides won a long and drawn-out battle for a client. The suit was over how much money the client was to receive from the state for land condemned for I-85.

In the first trial, the jury had awarded the client the full amount. The judge, however, figured that the figure was too high. He set aside the ruling.

In the following trial, last week, the jury again awarded generously to Whitesides's client.

It had been a trying ordeal so Henry decided to take his wife, Rose, and his off to Florida for a brief vacation.

On the way down, Henry struck up a conversation aboard the plane with a man who turned out to be a rancher from Dallas, Tex.

When the rancher found out Henry was a lawyer, this is what he said:

"You know, maybe I need a lawyer. The City of Dallas is going to take 287 acres of my land for a water reservoir lake. They want to pay me \$63,000, but the land right beside it is bringing \$1,000 an acre."

Oh, no. . . .

LITTLE PUGH AND RUBY HAWKINS of 807 West Second Ave. are going off to a convention in Asheville Tuesday.

They've never been to this type of convention before, so they really don't know what to expect.

You see, Pugh and Ruby are dwarfs, "little people," and the convention is a convention of "little people."

Pugh and Ruby have never allowed their diminutiveness to hamper their spirit or activity. Pugh is a salesman for Beveridge Sheet Metal and Ruby is a secretary in the office of Lory Baptist Church.

They have two sons—Ray, 16, a five-foot-nine normal lad; and Roger, 12, who stands three-feet-ten on the ruler.

Ruby is four-feet-two and her husband is four-feet-eight. Her comment over his being taller than she? "Oh, he's the tall, dark and handsome type!"

That's life, brothers.

—Don Oakley—

College Fraternities Are Losing Ground

chusetts, over much opposition from alumni and fraternity undergraduates, will begin taking over next year the room and board and social functions of the 13 fraternities on its campus.

While fraternities will still be allowed to operate, it is believed they cannot very well continue to flourish if deprived of income from feeding and housing members.

The college trustees explain that the fraternities are playing a "disproportionate role" in undergraduate activities. Despite efforts to erase the "rig-

orous and humiliations of the caste system," such as banning discrimination clauses, the program of democratizing the fraternities was consuming more energy than it was worth.

College fraternities are not the same as they were a few years ago. "Hell Week," when new members are initiated, is now generally known as "Help Week," and is devoted either to useful work around the fraternity house or in the community. Pledges are sent on clothing or toy collection drives for the needy rather than on

ridiculous scavenger hunts.

MANY FRATERNITIES have responsibly attempted to deal with the discrimination problem. Some chapters have even had their national charters withdrawn for admitting "undesirables."

But it seems to be a case of too little and too late. The social fraternities, as opposed to the Greek letter societies based on scholastic or professional accomplishment instead of background or popularity, are being squeezed by the

OFF THE RECORD

BY JIM ATKINS

A rapid transition has taken place in this nation during the past week. It began last Monday night at a time shortly after 6:00 p. m.

A young, serious-minded man—a man who has been both cursed and praised in recent months—stepped behind a microphone and in front of a TV camera and in crisp, blunt, New England tones told the world that our country was threatened and that we had grown weary of being patient. We were taking steps to eliminate that threat.

For many of us it took a day or two for the full impact of that message to sink in. When it did, our feelings were mixed. We were glad that our President was finally flinging the gauntlet back to the Reds. We were 100 per cent behind him.

Still, when we realized the complete significance of his words, we got an empty feeling in our stomachs and we quietly wondered if this was it. Parents looked in fondly at their sleeping children—what did the future hold for them?

Old, forgotten scars of past wars were suddenly remembered. Books and newspaper articles dealing with atomic survival were brought out and couples talked seriously, and far into the night, about what to do in case the sirens wailed.

Thoughts that had been delegated to the far corners of our minds suddenly came back with startling clarity.

It did no good to tell each other that Khrushchev would have to be crazy to start anything, that our bases completely surrounded the Kremlin, that our planes were in the air at that very moment carrying deadly cargo, that our Polaris subs were prowling the waters off Russia with pre-designated targets, that our power and

might exceeds that of the Soviet Union—all of these things were true, but they didn't help a whole lot.

For the first time in years war was a "clear and present danger"—and this time we were talking about a different kind of war, one that involved the survival of the human race. We had read too many novels and seen too many movies on atomic war.

But gradually the lump is disappearing in our throats and the sick feeling in our stomachs is going away. We were scared, sure, and we still are. But the sun is still coming up every morning and the kids are still trudging off to school. The flag at the post office does not yet bear the hammer and sickle.

We don't like the situation any better, and the danger is no less, but we are learning to live with it. It is possible that we must learn to live with it for a long time. We cannot know.

America has not yet faced her "moment of truth". Freedom has not yet come to the crossroads, but we know, as we have known for a long time, that the battles fought over the centuries are not yet over—that brave men and women everywhere must still fight for the dignity of man.

When we gaze in once more at sleeping children, we know why we must face crisis. We cannot allow those children to be ground under the heel of a tyrannical dictatorship. They will have problems to face in life, some more than others, but they must be given a chance. Nobody should be able to tell them what to read, what to say, and what to think. The thought of war is horrible, beyond imagination—the loss of freedom is worse.

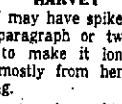
—Paul Harvey—

The Amazing Mr. American

more money so he can move back to the farm.

In his office he likes to talk about baseball, football, fishing. Out at the game or on the creek bank, he talks business.

He is the only guy in the world who will pay 50 cents to park his car while he eats a 25-cent sandwich.



Mr. American

AN AMERICAN likes to cuss his Government, but he'll fight any foreigner who does. He has more food to eat than anybody and more diet fads to keep him from eating it. His is the most civilized, most Christianized nation on earth, but he dares not deliver a payroll without an armored car.

In America we have more experts on marriage than any country in the world — and more divorces.

The amazing American allows enemies of his country to hide behind the Constitution while they seek to set fire to it. He's likely to fight them in Laos and tolerate them in Cuba.

He would not steal money from his neighbor, but he'll pay tax collectors to steal it for him.

He irrigates desert to make farmland, then puts the extra acres in a soil bank.

He spent 280 million dollars this year on tranquilizers — and an equal sum on pep pills.

He tosses beer cans out the car window, drops gum wrappers in the gutter, plants auto graveyards along the highways, hides a mountain or meadow with a billboard selling laxatives, then stands up at his civic club meeting and, with a lump in his throat, sings "America, the Beautiful."

YET, FOR all of that, the amazing American is still a pretty nice guy.

Despite all that he is not — because of all that he is — calling anybody "a real American" is still the highest compliment you can pay.

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Towards A German Policy

Walter Lippmann

The American decision to act in Berlin without unanimous agreement by all the Allies, provided West Germany cooperates, could be highly important.

There is some doubt about it because of the interview given to a German newspaper by the Defense Minister, Franz Joseph Strauss. The full text is not available as I write, but Herr Strauss appears to say that Germany will hold back unless all the occupying powers plus NATO have first committed themselves in a conflict. This uncertainty will have to be cleared up if the commitment on Berlin is to be fully activated.

Probably it will be cleared up. But, as important as this would be, it would not be enough. Standing firm in a showdown will not solve the Berlin problem, which is how to guarantee a good life of democratic freedom to half a city over a hundred miles deep inside the Communist world.

Either before a showdown or after it, it will be necessary to resume the negotiations with the Soviet Union which have been stalled since last spring.

The negotiations, of course, have no chance to succeed without the consent and collaboration of the West German government. For this, we must never forget, not only a Soviet and an Allied policy. It is primarily