

She Takes a Long Walk for Peace

MMOTORISTS who stop to chat when they see a woman in blue garb walking along the shoulders of the nation's highways will find her friendly, fluent in the use of words, and always willing to answer questions.

Across the front of her tunic is lettered her name, "Peace Pilgrim," and on the back the message:

"Walking 25,000 Miles for World Peace."

She says she tells motorists who stop to chat with her that she is walking a pilgrimage for peace—13,500 miles counted so far. Because that is usually their opening questions. How far has she walked, and why?

HER ARRIVAL in Sacramento yesterday was not to a strange community. She was here in 1955, almost four years ago to the day, and at that time had counted 5100 miles of travel.

She reported she now has walked in the 48 states, the 10 Canadian provinces, and has visited Mexico. She says she doesn't claim any more than the 13,550 miles because that is as many as she has actually counted since the pilgrimage was begun in 1953.

Her pilgrimage was started in 1953 on this vow:

"I shall remain a wanderer until mankind has learned the way of peace, walking until I am given shelter and fasting until I am given food."

Averaging 25 miles a day, she has walked as many as 50. She never asks for anything; it has to be given. She reports she owns only the clothes she is wearing, and doesn't belong to any organization.

HER BIOGRAPHICAL background is unimportant, she states . . . where or when she was born, or her education, or "what I used to do." She will say she was born in this country, and has never been out of it except to visit Mexico and Canada.

She considers her name "Peace Pilgrim" emphasizes importance of the mission instead of the individual.

Her hair had already turned to silver when she started in 1953, she said, and her weight has not varied from 115 pounds. She is 5-feet, 4 inches in height.

She wears canvass shoes with crepe soles—now her 17th pair. Her other garments are blue, because that is the color of peace. They are, besides the tunic, shirt and slacks.

Lots of people stop to offer a ride—which she won't accept. But she likes drivers to ask questions because it gives her a



"PEACE PILGRIM"—the only name she will acknowledge—gives a wave as she completes another leg of her long walk. The back of her tunic gives the reason and goal of her journey.

chance to explain her mission.

Her trip from San Francisco was by a 100-mile route, because she had to go by way of Golden Gate Bridge and Marin County. Foot travel is not allowed on San Francisco Bay Bridge.

She walked into Sacramento from Davis yesterday about 5 P.M. She didn't put in a full day, she said, because of a speaking engagement at a church.

Walking on the shoulder of the highway on the left-hand side

facing oncoming traffic, "Peace Pilgrim" explains she has had "many wonderful experiences, but never had a bad one." It seems strange, she adds, but she has never been even nearly hit by a car.

Her "luggage" consists of comb, toothbrush, map and often some unanswered letters. Her trips have taken her through many a rainstorm, some snow storms and a few dust storms. When it rains? "I won't melt, my skin is waterproof."

When the foot journey started, Peace Pilgrim says she covered 5000 miles the first year, but since has been slowed to 2000 miles because of mail to answer and speaking engagements. On this note:

"I have faith that by the time I have walked the 25,000 miles, the tide of world affairs will have turned slightly toward peace."

"This is a crisis period in human history. We who are living today must choose between a nuclear war of annihilation and Golden Age of peace."

Peace Pilgrim will stay here until Wednesday, then will travel to Stockton. One of the first orders of business today will be to pick up mail addressed to her in care of General Delivery, Sacramento Post Office.

Mail is addressed to Peace Pilgrim, Cologne, N.J., and from there is forwarded "wherever I am." She also will send a newsletter free of charge to any who write and ask.

Peace Pilgrim stayed last night with friends she met in Sacramento on her previous visit. She has a speaking engagement Wednesday at 8 P.M. at the chapel of Pioneer Congregational Church, 2700 L Street. The public is invited.