

'Peace Pilgrim' Trudges Long Path

By JOHN MURPHY

"I am in this world, but not of it."

The speaker of those words yesterday was a silver-haired, blue-eyed woman of middle age, alert of mind, who walks with the bounce and spring of youth without a penny in her pocket.

Her wardrobe consists only of a navy blue shirt, slacks and short tunic with pockets around the bottom.

In those pockets she carries her only possessions— a comb, a folding toothbrush, a map of New Jersey, some press clippings and some letters.

She has wandered on foot nearly 25,000 miles throughout the nation since 1953, starting from Los Angeles in her humble attire, which she calls "the garb of my mission," which she wears even in a church pulpit.

On the back of her tunic is the legend, "Walking 25,000 miles for peace."

On the front is the only name by which she chooses to be known—"Peace Pilgrim."

Her mission: "To walk as a prayer and as a chance to inspire others to pray and work with me for peace."

Her vow: "I shall remain a wanderer until mankind has learned the way of peace."

She is religious, but belongs to no church or denomination, although she feels "akin to the Quakers."

She is an ardent pacifist, but belongs to no pacifist group or movement.

She claims to have addressed groups representative of every major religious community and to have visited every town having a population of 25,000 or more in the continental United States.

"Peace Pilgrim" arrived here yesterday about 1 p.m., having left Plainfield four hours earlier. She walked to New Brunswick by way of Dunellen, New Market, Edison and Highland Park.

She met with newsmen at the Roger Smith Hotel to impart her views, goals, ideals and future plans, which include hikes to Perth Amboy tomorrow and to Long Branch this weekend.

She will spend July and August in New England for speaking tours. September and October will be spent similarly in Maryland and Delaware and she will arrive in Washington, D.C., Oct. 28—the end of her current 25,000-mile pilgrimage on foot.

Prior to leaving here, she plans to address a meeting of local pacifist groups.

As far as her personal history is concerned, she will only tell that she experienced "a calling from God to my life's work, peace," in 1953 after finding the making of money and acquiring of material things "meaningless."

"I have the greatest riches on earth—health, happiness and inner peace," she proudly, yet reverently comments.

Important Mission

She politely declines queries about such things as her real name, place of birth and where her past schooling took place. "Reporters will record such trivia about me, and this will detract from what is far more important than myself—my mission," she declares.

However, she'll quickly relate that she fasted for 45 days in 1954 for the cause of peace and broke her fast when President Eisenhower and British Prime Minister Churchill held preliminary talks on disarmament.

And she is equally quick to tell that she asks for nothing except directions from anyone, and has found lodging in her travels in everything from hotels to convents.

"Peace Pilgrim" believes that in addition to the Eisenhower-Churchill talks, her prayers have been further answered in part by two recent events: The Peace Corps and the signing of the partial nuclear test ban treaty.

These two things, she says, are what historians will most remember when writing about the late President John F. Kennedy.

Two further steps she would like to see are the establishment of a world language, which would be taught in schools everywhere, and a peace department in the President's cabinet.

In her political views, she terms Sen. Barry Goldwater a "dangerous man" to be president. She adds that if Gov. William Scranton and President Johnson run against each other, she'll "have to study Scranton's record before making a decision."

Some of her other views and comments on life, which she has imparted quietly throughout America are:

"The only thing I fear is a departure from God's law.

"He who is out of step may be following a different drum.

"All religions are stepping stones to God. They all strive for the same goal.

"Have as your objective the resolving of the conflict—not the gaining of the advantage.

"Be concerned that you do not offend—not that you are offended.

"The American Negro is winning his struggle through non-violence and love."