

Washington  
Friday June 20-1969



PEACE PILGRIM WALKED IN DES MOINES

# Pilgrim for Peace Now Finds Herself On 'Popular Side'

By SUSAN SCHWARTZ

Peace Pilgrim is back — more optimistic than on her last cross-America hike to Seattle three years ago.

"I used to feel like a voice in the wilderness, now I'm on the popular side," she told a circle of silver-haired women at the Des Moines United Methodist Church.

**"CONGRESSMEN** are changing to peace positions. There's a spiritual awakening. There's a young people's rebellion — violence is just an infinitesimal part of it. It's a rebellion against war, against prejudice, against hypocrisy, against materialism.

"Let me tell you, I have trouble staying a penniless pilgrim." The solidly built, silver-haired woman has "25,000 Miles on Foot for World Peace" lettered on the back of her blue tunic. Her voice is rich and strong; she cups, steeples and points her hands as she talks.

"Once you try to get rid of material stuff, they pour it on you."

Peace politely refused to give her real name, age or much of her background. She said she is from a small town and has no near relatives.

**SHE BEGAN** living a simple life with few possessions 31 years ago and "I haven't had a cold or headache since," she said. "I'm the most secure person I know and I feel very rich."

She began her walks for peace 15 years ago, she said, after she suddenly had a mental picture of her blue-slacks, blue-tunic costume and the Los Angeles-New York route she should follow.

"Religious people would say it was a calling from God" she said. "Non-religious people would say it was my subconscious. A thing like that you interpret."

The first pilgrimage was hardest, she said.

"I faced death in a snow-storm, I was attacked by a maniac teen-age boy, I saw the inside of a prison when they questioned me to find out if I was a vagrant.

"I'm very well taken care of now. About three quarters of the time I sleep in a bed. I seldom skip more than three or four meals."

**NOW AND THEN** she still sleeps with leaves or newspapers for cover or washes her only set of clothes in a stream, she said. Her only possessions are a comb, pen and folding toothbrush, she said.

This is her fifth walk around the United States, she said. Between the first three, she took a year off for speaking dates.

"But with this terrible war in Vietnam I didn't stop at all between the fourth and fifth pilgrimages," she said.

She calls for more arms-reduction pacts, a world language, more efforts like the Peace Corps and "realistic research" for peace.

**SHE ALSO** calls for peaceful, creative toys for children and for housewives to "take it out on the vacuum cleaner or bake a batch of cookies" when they want to gossip or say something mean.

She plans to walk into Seattle tomorrow. She will speak at Fellowship Hall of the University Congregational Church at 10 a. m. Sunday, she said.