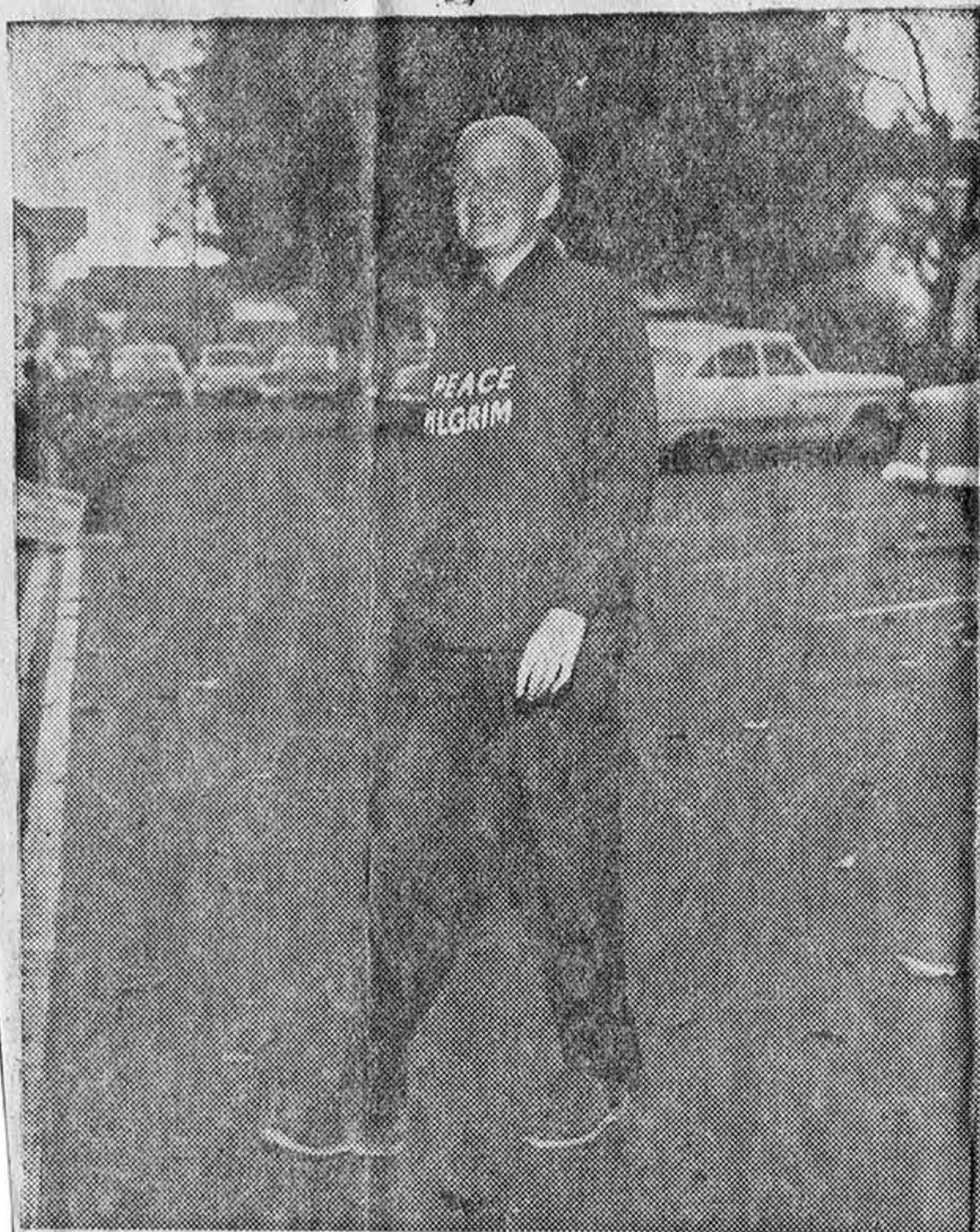


Walking For Peace



She's called the Peace Pilgrim. By day or night she walks the highways talking for peace and love. Six years ago this unidentified woman dedicated her life to walking for world peace. So far she's walked thousands of miles and has covered all the states. She spoke last week in Santa Cruz at the Town House hotel.

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'Peace Pilgrim' Walks To Help Bring About Goal

By Wally Trabing

Even the evil person is interested in peace now, because with the advent of nuclear warfare, his selfishness for self preservation is strong.

This observation came from a slight, mysterious little woman with neatly-kept silver hair, who calls herself the "Peace Pilgrim".

She has dedicated her life to wandering penniless along the country roads and super highways of the United States in an individual bid for love and peace.

The Peace Pilgrim spoke at the Town House on Pacific avenue Friday night before a group called Understanding Unit No. 9.

She walked into The Sentinel that afternoon for an interview wearing a plain blue slack suit with "Peace Pilgrim" on the front and "Walking 25,000 Miles for World Peace."

She likes publicity, well enough, but has a near obsession about her anonymity.

"Biographical details are unimportant—it's the message that I want to get across," she said with conviction.

Something happened to her in 1953 which led her into this strange life. This, too, is a secret. But it led to a nomadic series of journeys which have covered every state in the union as well as Canadian provinces and part of Mexico.

A woman, at least (a guess) in her middle 50's, she is a picture of health.

"I haven't had a headache or a cold in the past six years," she claimed.

"I never accept a ride while I'm walking along the highway. I have pledged myself not to accept more than I need, while others in the world have less than they need," she said.

If someone offers her food and shelter, she will accept. Incredible as it may seem, she said she has never missed more than four meals and is offered a place to sleep three-fourths of the time. She never carries money.

"Otherwise I sleep in a train or bus depot or I just sleep in the grass by the side of the road. When it's warm I sometimes walk all night," she said.

After being pressed for more personal information.

"But you're asking too much about me.

"I want people to remember the message and not the messenger," said the Peace Pilgrim.

"For me walking is praying. All prayer has effect, but prayer, backed by self-giving, multiplies its power, I believe.

"I am trying to do what one tiny little person can do through prayer and talking. I continually talk about peace and love to everyone I meet.

"The contrast in the world today is between the old ideology which is that evil is to be overcome by more evil—and the ideology, new in practice, that evil is to be overcome by good.

Spiritual immaturity is the cause of most the world's troubles.

"Peace first has to start within the individual, and then be reflected into the community and the world.

Along more secular lines, she believes that the establishment of a world language as a second language for all, and more interchanges of people, would help preserve peace.

Another intriguing idea of hers is the establishments of a peace department in the US government. "Well, we have a war department—why not a peace department?" she asked earnestly.

"Such an agency could consist of highly-trained experts who would spend their time seeking peaceful ways of resolving conflicts."

She acknowledged there are many organizations working for peace, "but not nearly enough."

"I expect to see world disarmament and peace in my time . . . you know there was a time when you could argue for peace on moral terms. Now with the atomic weapons, they are using terms of self-existence. You don't even have to be a good person to want peace now," she said.

Many churches have welcomed her as a speaker ("I am non-denominational and all churches are stepping stones to God") and she accepts transportation to out-of-way towns for speaking engagements. She is now walking to Palo Alto, then to San Francisco, Sacramento, and then back to Los Angeles.

Now on her 17th pair of shoes, she covers about 2000 miles a year—1000 in the summer in the northern United States and 1000 every winter in the west.

She has walked as far as 50 miles in one 24-hour stretch. Often, motorists seeing a grey-haired, elderly lady trudging along the highway, stop and almost demand that she accept a ride. They can hardly bear the sight.

"But I have no fear, and I walk in safety," she said. "I've never been molested."

By her graceful walk, one might suspect she was once a dancer, but she won't say.

Her forwarding address is Cologne, N.J.

And while John Foster Dulles talks peace to kings and heads of government, the Peace Pilgrim holds her daily conferences with the man who makes the cannon fodder and the wives who wait at home for news.