



(Photo by Jim Burton)

# Peace Pilgrim's Progress

**NUMBER FOURTEEN**

**Peace Pilgrim, Cologne, N. J.**

## **NEW YORK**

I walked in the State of New York in the spring - from Buffalo to Albany to New York City. I started early enough to see Niagara Falls still in its icy winter coat - a wonderful experience. As usual I saw a second coming of spring, having seen it come much earlier in the south. As I walked through the lovely Finger Lakes region there were pussy willows and crocuses. As I walked through the foothills of the Hudson River there were lilacs and tulips. One of the highlights of my New York trip was speaking and staying for a day at an Episcopal Convent as I walked along the Hudson. The Indians figured in the history of New York, and a few of them are still there - in scattered settlements. Another highlight of my trip was a visit to some of them. The Shakers figured in the history of New York, but these gentle industrious people are all gone now. Only two of these celibate communities remain, one in Maine and the one in New Hampshire which I visited, and only a few silver-haired sisters are left - no brothers. Many others figured in the history of New York - the Dutch, for instance. Most school children know that New York City was once New Amsterdam. I spent a couple of busy weeks in the New York City area - met some interesting people and made some good friends. It is not hard to find your way around in Manhattan, and you can easily walk to most places of interest. When the population of Manhattan began to increase there was no place to go except up - and so Manhattan went up, up, up - and the skyline is unique. Since they are about the only place for gardens, tons of earth and bricks went up in elevators, and now the roof-tops bloom with flowers and support big trees. Although you may not want to live in New York City, it is certainly worth seeing. The United Nations building is an imposing sight. I ended my first cross-country walk there, and was shown around by a United Nations observer. This time I was not allowed even on the sidewalk in front of it with my lettered tunic. They have had so much trouble with demonstrations that no signs of any kind are permitted. We had a nice little peace walk in New York City, and the wide variety of peace groups there are quite active.

## **THOUGHTS ON WORLD PEACE**

A simple peace message is adequate - really just the message that the way of peace is the way of love. After we know that and live that all of our problems can easily be solved.

All people can be peace workers. Whenever you bring harmony into any unpeaceful situation you contribute to the total peace picture. Insofar as you have peace in your own life, you reflect it into your surroundings and into your world.

When I started out people said to me, "Aren't you afraid to talk about Peace?" But now they tell me what their peace project is. This awakening is most heartening - and most necessary.

We entered a new age when we discovered nuclear energy - an age in which we must choose between holding onto the war method and bringing upon ourselves mutual destruction, and giving up the war method and bringing upon ourselves a wonderful age as we use our efforts for higher purposes.

Just as a human soul that faces great difficulties also faces great opportunities for spiritual growth, so human society that faces destruction also faces the opportunity to enter a period of renaissance. It can

be truthfully said that we totter on the brink of nuclear annihilation, and yet it can be just as truthfully said that we approach the threshold of a golden age.

I think that, barring an accident, the wish to survive will keep us from a nuclear war - and I think both sides will change. We will move toward more economic and social democracy, and they will move toward more political and individual democracy. The ideal society has yet to be built - one which balances nicely collective well-being and individual well-being.

Our institutions reflect our immaturity, but then these immature institutions become solidified, and the people have to go way beyond them before they can be changed. The people of the world are somewhat beyond the institutions of the world now - but not yet enough to change them.

Some of my correspondents have mentioned the moralistic movies and literature from the other side of the world. Apparently if you want to build a stable society without religion you have to make it appear patriotic to follow moral principles.

A few really dedicated people can offset the ill effects of masses of out-of-harmony people, so we who work for peace must not falter. We must continue to pray for peace and to act for peace in whatever way we can, we must continue to speak for peace and to live the way of peace to inspire others, we must continue to think of peace and to know that peace is possible for thoughts have tremendous power.

## **THOUGHTS ON INNER PEACE**

After you have read all the books and heard all the lectures you must still be the judge of what is for you. Only if something within you says, "This is truth - this is for me" does it become a part of your experience.

Keep your life in harmony with the law of love - only in this way can you find harmony and help humanity, of which you are a part, to find harmony.

Nothing threatens those who do God's will, and God's will is love and faith - never hate and fear. Those who feel hate and fear are out of harmony with God's will and are likely to have difficulties.

Things which are not good are unstable and transient, containing within themselves the seeds of their own destruction. They fade away much more quickly when we remain in harmony ourselves and pray for those that we feel are out of harmony.

To those who feel depressed I would say: Try keeping your surroundings full of beautiful music and beautiful flowers. Try reading and memorizing thoughts that inspire. Try making a list of all the things you have to be thankful for. If there is some good thing that you have always wanted to do start doing it. Make a meaningful schedule for yourself and keep to that schedule.

Never think about your difficulties. Think about all the good things in your life. Forget yourself, and concentrate on being of as much service as you can in this world, and then, having lost your lower self in a cause larger than yourself, you will find your higher self - your real self.

Constantly the problems we need for our spiritual growth are set before us - but when we can say, "Thank God for problems which are sent for our spiritual growth" they are problems no longer, they then become opportunities.

Answer to one who thought I was being deprived of some of the "pleasures" of life: None of the things

I do not use were taken away from me. I just had no interest whatsoever in them, and so I did not include them when I was choosing a harmonious life.

There is a point of view which recognizes the experience of the earth life as you recognize the experience of one of your days - with days coming before and days lying ahead. Just as you know that what you did yesterday can affect today and what you do today can effect tomorrow, so the viewpoint I speak of recognizes that prior experience affects this earth life and that this earth life will affect future experience. To those with this viewpoint the world is orderly and just and operated according to law. When the governing laws are obeyed there is harmony and when they are disobeyed there is discord. This cannot be seen by those whose horizons do not extend beyond the earth life. To them the world must seem very unjust and very disorderly indeed.

The unembodied side of life is right here in another dimension. The two worlds intermingle. We are aware only of our world but they are aware of both worlds - usually. Some communication is possible for instance, we can pray for them and they can pray for us.

Those who identify themselves, not with the transient body, but with the indestructible reality which activates the body feel very secure indeed.

When God fills your life all limitations are gone, for then you have access to the Source of strength and supply and truth!

Every time bitterness melts from a human heart, every time barriers between people melt, every time barriers between groups melt, there is a triumph for the cause of peace - just as there would be if barriers between nations would melt. Surely some day all barriers will melt - and all men will recognize one another as brothers.

I am so happy to learn about the paths of service that some of my dear friends have found. Blessings on you as you reach out to serve God's children. The more you give, the more you will receive. Most important of all, as you give your lives to loving service you give your lives to God.

There is always a way to do the right thing!