

Mildred Ryder of Intentional Low Income Group. As a "Peace Pilgrim," makes Extensive Travels

Mildred Ryder, apostle of the simple life and coordinator of the intentional low income group of tax refusers, has returned to her home from a long summer hiking trip.

Her hike traversed the entire length of the Appalachian trail, a footpath through mountainous wilderness from Maine to Georgia, a distance of over two thousand miles. The trip of course required most of the summer.

Mildred recommends such activity for free people who want to find new horizons in life and perhaps prepare for the "hardships" of life during and after World War III.

We reprint here an interview by Steve Allison of Peace Pilgrim (Mildred) over radio station WPEN, Philadelphia, Pa., concerning the summer travel:

STEVE: "I want you to meet Mildred. This summer she walked the entire length of the two thousand fifty mile long Appalachian Trail, and she is the first woman to have accomplished this feat. In case you don't know, the Appalachian Trail is a rugged wilderness footpath which follows the Appalachian mountain range from Maine to Georgia. Well, Mildred, was it an enjoyable experience or was it a trying experience?"

PEACE PILGRIM: "Oh, it was a very enjoyable experience, and a very educational experience and a very inspirational experience. I don't mean there were no hardships. There were some, of course. But they were just a part of the whole wonderful experience, and it wouldn't have been as wonderful without them."

S: "You spoke of it being an educational experience. In what way would you consider it educational?"

PP: "In many ways, Steve, but let me mention one thing that I think is important. Life on the trail, which is not insulated from nature as life in the city is, tends to make you realize what the actual essentials of physical well-being are—such

as warmth when you are cold, a dry spot on a rainy day, the simplest food when you are hungry. Since you carry your food, sleeping equipment and so forth on your back, you learn very quickly that unnecessary possessions are unnecessary burdens. This is a lesson that I hope all hikers will carry home with them, because it is true in every-day life as well as on the trail that material possessions much in excess of need tend to become burdens."

S: "Mildred, you mentioned in one of your letters that, since you live in voluntary poverty, you make your contribution to society in service. I was wondering how all the varied knowledge which you gained this summer could be used to serve society."

PP: "Well, Steve, I don't want to sound like a pessimist—because I'm really an optimist—but the people of the world are devoting their time and their treasure to the manufacture of weapons of destruction—a million fiendish things they have invented, each one more deadly than the one before it—our cities do display air raid shelter signs, our papers do carry estimates that about seven million people in the United States will probably be homeless. If you'll allow me to read a sentence from my little bulletin, I think I put the world situation in a nutshell when I said, 'Humanity, with fearful, faltering steps, walks a knife-edge between abysmal chaos and a new renaissance, while strong forces push toward chaos.' In a world situation like this, I think one who wishes to be of service might well learn a little about out-of-doors living, simple nutrition and so forth."

S: "Getting back to hiking, Mildred, as wonderful as you say your experience this summer was, I don't think you'd consider doing it again, would you?"

PP: "I wouldn't consider doing the Appalachian Trail right now, Steve, but I would consider doing some more hiking. In fact, I have another hiking trip all planned—and this time it's definitely on the optimistic side—it's a peace pilgrimage. There is hope. (May I read just a little more from my bulletin?) 'While we watch the storm clouds gather and prepare for the storm, let us never forget that the sun still shines behind those dark clouds, and may somehow break through before the storm descends. I see sunshine in the tireless work for peace of a few devoted souls. I see sunshine in the real desire for peace in the heart of humanity, even though the human family gropes toward peace blindly, not knowing the way.' I think that those of us who have found the way to peace should be shouting it from the housetops, and with this thought

in mind I undertake my peace pilgrimage. Starting January 1st, I shall walk from Los Angeles to New York and then to Washington, D. C., and talk to everyone who will listen to me about the way to peace. I'm even planning to wear a sign, the back of which will read 'Walking Coast to Coast for Peace' and the front 'Peace Pilgrim.'"

S: "Leaving the subject of hiking for the moment, Mildred, let me ask you this question. What is the way to peace?"

PP: "I guess you expect me to give you a long talk on very important things like world government, economic adjustment, disarmament and so forth—and of course on my peace pilgrimage I'll be glad to discuss these things with interested people—but what I shall emphasize most is the simple, basic essentials of peace. Again let me put it in a nut-shell—'Overcome evil with good, and falsehood with truth and hatred with love.'—The Golden Rule would do as well.—Please don't say lightly, 'These are just religious concepts, not practical.' They are laws governing human conduct, which apply just as rigidly as the law of gravity. If we insisted on attempting to disobey the law of gravity chaos would result, and if we insist on disobeying these laws governing human conduct, chaos will result."

The "family" of low-income pacifists is growing or at least more members are corresponding with Mildred. Her mailing list now has reached fifty. Their exchange of experiences has become a real inspiration to one another. Mildred's address is 2672 White Horse Pike, Cologne, N.J.

Charges Against Kern Reduced

The felonious assault charge against Dick Kern, who was arrested and beaten up by cops for distributing leaflets, was reduced to simple assault by Magistrate Thomas H. Cullen Oct. 22. The case will come up some time in November. The judge acted after Kern's attorneys, Conrad Lynn and Royal France, pointed out that even in the complaint the only "weapon" Kern was accused of using against the cops was his shoes. The felonious assault charge carries a minimum jail term of a year and a day. Simple assault is a misdemeanor. The arrest occurred Sept. 30 during New York's A-bomb raid drill.

We regret the delay in printing and mailing of the last several issues of the *Peacemaker*. The printing presses which are ordinarily available to us at publication time were all tied up in extensive commercial runs. After the Christmas season we expect to be back to normal.

—THE VOLUNTEER STAFF

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