

How to Walk Across America on \$17

A JOURNAL RECORD OF A FOUR MONTH SOLO
WALK

SAN FRANCISCO

TO

NEW YORK

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DEDICATION

Dedicated to Cecili Antares who was developing in the womb during this walk and has become a beautiful young woman..

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1 THE VISION

In the fall of 1986 UNICEF (the United Nations Children's Fund) sponsored an around-the-world torch run, titled "The First Earth Run". Its theme was Peace For Our Children. Native Americans started the flame using flint. The torch was carried on the east and west coasts but not in the interior of the US. I worked for UNICEF under the direction of Oz Crosby doing logistical planning for the portion of the run that took place between San Jose, California and San Francisco. The flame was maintained in three miner's lamps. One of the lamps had to be opened to get at the flame in order to light the torch. When the lamp was opened it was very susceptible to being extinguished by the slightest breeze. Even with two lamps as backups it could get quite scary on occasion when two of the three lamps were accidentally extinguished. This happened on the San Jose to San Francisco run.

After the run had completed in December, an NGO I was part of, Pathways To Peace, with help from members of the Baha'i faith retained the flame with the intention of establishing a perpetual peace flame in San Francisco. The flame had been continuously burning now for several months.

At this time I was renting a room in a home outside of Sebastopol, a small town some 55 miles north of San Francisco. I owned an old car that barely ran. I often drove to a restaurant some five miles away for dinner, not having the desire (or ability, for that manner) to gather food and prepare it.

On this occasion, just at dusk, as I had done so many times in the past, I walked to my car prepared to drive to the restaurant. My car refused to start. I now had two choices. Go hungry or walk to the restaurant.

I decided to walk. It didn't seem like that big of a deal. The road was a winding country road. I should be able to walk the five miles in an hour or

so. I had no awareness that this short walk would change my life forever.

I found the walk to the restaurant pleasant though it seemed long. After I finished my meal and headed back, dusk had turned to night. The sky was filled with brilliant stars. It was December but it wasn't cold. I walked, thinking about the new relationship I was in, and thinking back to my time volunteering with UNICEF on the First Earth Run. It saddened me that so few people showed up along the route between San Jose and San Francisco even though we had distributed over 4000 flyers. There were more police guarding the crowds in Hong Kong than Americans along the more than 40 miles. In the midst of these thoughts a new radically different thought entered, coming as a vision. I would carry the eternal flame back to the UN. I would do it by walking the more than 3000 miles. The flame was a flame of peace so I would do a walk of peace.

After the initial excitement passed the vision seemed a bit crazy. The longest I had ever walked in one day was 14 miles hiking with a friend in Yosemite Park. I would turn 55 this coming summer. I was an engineer living a relatively sedentary life and I was in the midst of a new relationship. I could come up with dozens of reasons not to act on this vision. However the vision came with overwhelming intensity. It refused to go away. It was exciting to consider doing something that defied logic and would take an enormous amount of personal strength, physical, emotional, and mental.

When I got home I called Avon, the director of Pathways to Peace. I expected an "are you crazy?" Her reaction was somewhat mixed but more positive than I expected. After talking with Avon I called Susan. This would be difficult for her and yet if she was not supportive, the walk could not happen. She sounded enthusiastic and I could also hear her sadness at the prospect of several months apart. Later, in January, she became pregnant but continued steadfast in her belief that the walk had to be done and done in 1987. It was as if we were each doing an archetypal act. My epic journey and her bringing a new life into the world.

2 THE VISION BECOMES REALITY



Deciding to do a 3000 mile walk is one thing. Working out the details on how to make it happen can be quite daunting, even for an engineer. An uncle I was fond of had a favorite saying, “the damn fool didn’t know it was impossible and went and did it anyway. I needed to bring out the damn fool inside of me but also use my engineering skills.

The first decision was when would it start and when would it end. Susan and I decided that it would end at the United Nations headquarters in New York city and that a propitious day to arrive would be September 15, the International Day of Peace. We quickly also decided to begin the walk at the San Francisco Civic Center. The total distance was around 3000 miles depending on the route. I arbitrarily chose 25 miles a day to walk. It seemed

reasonable although I had never in my life walked that far in one day, much less every day for several months. Dividing 3000 miles by 25 miles a day came out to be 120 days or four months. That would make a starting date in mid-May. The closest Sunday was May 17. That would be the day. We then spread out the maps.

The shortest distance and the easiest walking would be to take Interstate 80 that goes from San Francisco to New York city. There were several reasons not to do it. First, it would be extremely difficult to get the necessary permission. It is uniformly prohibited to walk on Interstate highways. Getting permission can range from easy to almost impossible. Second, I've driven I80 across the country many times. It is a very, very boring drive, going through some of the least attractive country. Third, Interstate highways bypass all the hundreds of small towns that I would like to walk through. Finally, I would like to travel on roads that I've never been on before to make the walk more interesting and exciting.

I finally choose a route that takes me across the country directly. I head straight east out of San Francisco, cross the Sierra mountains through Yosemite Park, continue east across Nevada, Utah, Colorado (passing through Denver), Kansas, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana (Indianapolis), Ohio, Pennsylvania (Pittsburgh), New Jersey and New York. I take a green highlighter and trace the path, choosing a town each day that is roughly 25 miles away from the last one. Some are less than 20 miles, some more than 30. Through Nevada and Utah there are stretches between towns where it will be necessary to carry enough food and water to last up to three days.

As I proceeded through the maps I marked the day I should arrive at each town. I anticipate when I reach New York city on the map I may be as much as a month off and will have to go back and readjust the daily miles until the arrival day falls on September 15. Miraculously the arrival date is precisely September 15 on my first attempt! I accept this as a very good omen.

While the planning is taking place, I'm also starting physical training. I decided the first morning to begin training by walking to the restaurant again. My legs were a little sore from the last walk but not enough to keep me from doing it again. I figured that it would take me about an hour and a half each way. How slowly the time went by. It seemed like an hour to walk a mile but when I glanced at my watch I was pretty much on schedule, only fifteen minutes since the last mile marker. Very discouraging. I was quite tired when I finally got back home and my feet were sore. Thankfully no blisters.

I did this almost every day for the next two weeks then invested in a pair of Rockport Pro Walkers. It was like walking on air compared to the shoes I had been using. I felt a little irritation while walking but not bad. However later, when I looked at my feet, I was horrified. Both of my heels had large

blisters and my left foot had two large, deep blisters on the pads under my toes. It would be two weeks before I could resume my walks. I had bought the shoes from a salesperson who obviously wasn't trained to properly fit the shoes and I also didn't know how they should feel when new. I learned the hard way. Better now than after the real walk starts. Being laid up for two weeks would be a disaster then. I learned two very important lessons. One, the shoes should feel loose. Don't tie the laces tight or even snug. The idea that they will adjust after wearing them awhile doesn't hold for serious walking. Two, stop wearing a new pair of shoes the moment they begin to feel the slightest bit uncomfortable.

I took the shoes back and got a pair a half size bigger. A different salesperson spent a lot of time with me and this one knew his business. I also called Rockport and got help from them. They agreed to furnish shoes for the entire walk. The salesperson said that one, or at the most two, pair should be enough. Rockport said anywhere from two pairs to ten pairs depending on how I walked, the terrain, the temperature, etc. (I actually ended up using six pairs).

Later I put in a call to Robert Sweetgall of Creative Walking. He is a technical advisor to Rockport Shoes and has walked across the country more than once. His first response was that I was crazy to even consider the walk. I had chosen the wrong route at the wrong time of year and I weighed too much. My feet would take too much of a beating to survive. He suggested that if I was really serious I should take a week off and go down to the Mojave desert and walk twenty-five miles a day there. After he found that I wasn't dissuaded, he offered a lot of good advice. I had never really considered taking a back pack and he strengthened my belief that it wouldn't be possible. His suggestion was that I carry only a fanny pack. However this would mean having a support vehicle which I wasn't intending to do.

As an engineer I love technical challenges. It is very apparent that I can't carry the necessary supplies on my back without arranging for water drops at least in some parts of the country. I want to do this walk entirely solo so there is really only one solution. I need to pull a cart. The idea seems very reasonable to me although most of my friends do not agree. For some weeks I make paper sketches intending to build it myself then am forced to the realization that I do not have enough time or the equipment to do it properly. I finally settle on a bicycle cart manufactured by Blue Sky in Oregon. I use their basic cart, which has a nylon covering for lightness, but replace the nylon with an aluminum enclosure so that it can carry more and be secure from theft.

By February I've extended my daily walks to 16 miles. I'm no longer having any foot problems. The walks tire me but are not exhausting. I've learned to cope at least somewhat with the boredom. My mind is beginning

to slow down to the four mile an hour pace. Finally I successfully do one 25 mile walk. This is the only one I do during the entire preparation stage

Efforts to obtain sponsorships of the walk were for the most part unsuccessful. There were no corporate sponsors willing to back a walk of peace. Mile sponsorship totaled less than 300 miles by the time the walk started. Susan and I moved into our own place on the first of April and came up with the first month's rent only through Herculean efforts and last minute help from close friends. Money to purchase the cart did not come in time to allow me to try it in advance or to get used to pulling it. However, we were so committed to doing the walk that we agreed I would start it regardless of how prepared I was at the beginning.

Carrying the flame across America could be a logistical nightmare. The flame holder, which was a miner's lamp, had to be fed at least once a day with kerosene. While the lamp was being filled the flame was exposed and could be blown out very easily. Since this was a flame that had been maintained continuously since it was originally struck at the UN, letting it go out would destroy much of the symbolic impact. I decided to carry a second lamp as backup even though it doubled the effort and weight.

The final preparations are almost complete. We purchased a cheap tent from Sears and picked up the cart. I received several vital pieces of information. Pull the cart like a rickshaw. Rickshaws have been used for thousands of years. If there was a better way, it would have been discovered long ago. For extra pulling power use a belt around my stomach, not my back or shoulders. A woman channel gave me a reading. She said that if I thought I was doing the walk, I would fail. The Great Spirit is doing the walk. I'm just the motor. Instead of me thinking I'm walking across America, I just imagine that I'm simply lifting my legs up and down and the world is turning under me.

Suddenly it's mid-May and the day to start my journey has arrived.

3 THE FIRST STEP IS THE HARDEST

SUNDAY, MAY 17 MILE 0



The walk starts on a foggy day in San Francisco in front of the civic center. At noon, a small group of friends and me hold a minute of silence. At 12:01 Susan and several close friends join me for the two mile walk to the Bay Bridge connecting San Francisco with Oakland and points east. We drive across the bridge (not being allowed to walk on it) and I briefly leave Susan and friends behind. At this time the cart that I'm to pull for 3000 miles is in the back of a station wagon, so I begin the walk through downtown Oakland alone and almost unnoticed. I'm overwhelmed with

emotion. The walk, for which plans and preparations have been underway for many months, is actually happening! A dream is suddenly reality. But the reality is like no other I've ever experienced. Twenty-five miles a day, seven days a week will have to be walked for the next four months with only a three day rest in Denver and two days in Indianapolis. Deserts and mountains, heat and cold, loneliness and fear all have to be overcome. Am I up to it? I believe that I am but a nagging voice in the background creates doubt. The cart was finished only two days before so that I've never walked pulling it. I can't make it across the desert without the cart since it will be impossible to carry enough water on my back to go the 100 miles and more that separates many towns in Nevada and Utah. To my knowledge no one has ever walked across the country pulling a cart before so there is no one to give assurances that it is possible to do. There are no plans to have anyone else along and in fact a major premise of the walk was that it will be entirely solo except for help I may get from people I meet along the way.

In addition I'm not carrying any credit cards or reserve funds. Last minute needs have consumed almost all the money that has been raised for the walk. I have less than twenty dollars in my pocket when I start out. Will people along the way really help? All my life, I've relied on my own capabilities. All of a sudden I'm transformed into a human mule entirely dependent on others. I profess to believe in a supreme being whom I believe supports (and directs) this walk. Will He come through? It's one thing to make verbal statements about one's belief but I'm putting my faith on the line and I have doubts.

The first day ends quickly since it is a short 18 miles. I've been doing almost daily 15 mile conditioning walks and since I'm not pulling the cart, the day's physical exertion is comfortable. Susan meets me along the way and we spend the night at the home of a friend.

MONDAY, MAY 18	MILE 18
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The next day starts early. Susan is still carrying the cart—we are going to meet for lunch—so I walk briskly, soon leaving the desolate black communities along MacArthur boulevard behind as I enter the affluent neighborhoods along Lake Chabot. Soon these too are gone and I'm walking in a country setting along the lake. This also does not last long as I come into Castro Valley and find Susan waiting for me along the road. We have lunch together, making conversation but both caught up in the drama that is unfolding. We will meet again in a few days in Yosemite Park but then six weeks will go by before we will see each other for three days in

Denver.

After lunch we find Wilderness Supply and the ingenuity of Ron Wayne and David Thomas produces a harness for the cart that allows me to attach a belt around my waist for extra pulling power. Although this harness is designed and put together in just a few minutes, it lasts the entire journey with no problems.

Susan and I sadly part and I head for Livermore, for the first time pulling the cart. I feel conspicuous, awkward and a little foolish. I've been able to walk relatively unnoticed until now but the cart brings immediate attention. We did not have time to make a sign for the cart and, except for my "Walk of Peace" T-shirt, I look more like an ice cream vendor than anything else. My total time pulling the cart previously has been for a few hundred feet and I'm filled with trepidation and concern now that I'm actually pulling it. To my overwhelming relief it pulls and steers easily. My confidence that I've made the right decision skyrockets and I'm filled with elation for the first time.

My map mileage for the day is 23 miles but the many detours I have to make as the road parallels Interstate 580, first on one side and then on the other, add several more. Only once during my training period have I walked over 20 miles and as the afternoon wears on, fatigue begins to set in. To compound matters I've chosen Foothill boulevard as one of the frontage roads and soon learn why it is called that. Several miles of up and down give me a chance to try out the cart harness (I normally pull the cart like a rickshaw, using the harness only when pulling up hill). I'm supposed to spend the night with a Bahai family in Livermore and am scheduled to arrive there early evening. Early evening comes and I'm still miles away. Finally around nine o'clock I arrive, bone tired and sore, having traveled close to 30 miles. Bob and Marge W.'s greeting is warm and friendly, the first of many similar meetings with Bahai's all across the country who are outstanding in their devotion to Peace and their willingness to work to make it happen. They have a hot tub with a powerful Jacuzzi and a half hour sitting in it begins to loosen some of my stiff and sore muscles.

TUESDAY, MAY 19

MILE 41

The next day is scheduled to be 30 miles. I know now that it will be longer than that for the same reason as yesterday—negotiating frontage roads along I580. In addition the Altamount Pass looms before me, the first major climb of hundreds I am to face on the walk. When I start walking I'm so stiff that I walk like a robot, unable to bend my knees or back more than a little. I'm scheduled to stay with another Bahai family this evening so that

I'm committed to making it to Manteca. I start the day with feelings of dread wondering what kind of state I will be in when it ends.

The day is warm and bright blue. An hour after starting most of the stiffness disappears and although I'm a little sore I feel good. Just before starting up the Pass I come to a railroad trestle that provides some shade. I discover that the top of my cart makes a wonderful place to lie down. I'm soon fast asleep. Ten minutes later I awake feeling very good, ready for the challenge just ahead.

To my amazement there is little resistance from the cart as I climb the grade, almost as if it is being pushed. This feeling comes often during the walk and I somewhat humorously thank God for helping by pushing the cart for me. The Altamount Pass that I had dreaded so much is a pussycat and I climb it in great spirits becoming more convinced than ever that I have a chance of really completing the walk. Around noon Bob, from the family I stayed with last night, unexpectedly drives up with sandwiches and inquires how I'm doing. His kindness makes the day even brighter and I crest the Pass a little later gloating with the ease in which it has been done, then heading down to Tracy convinced that I will eat up the remaining miles to Manteca. In Tracy, I down a large milkshake and a giant root beer, rest awhile and head out for Manteca. It is now four in the afternoon, I've already walked over twenty miles and am feeling a little tired but still good. There are over 10 miles to go but it doesn't seem as if it is going to be very difficult, certainly easier than yesterday. I'm getting in shape fast!

An hour later my good feelings disappear to be replaced with utter fatigue. I still have about seven miles to go. It seems as if it will take an eternity to finish. Just at dusk I'm forced to enter onto Interstate 5 for two miles. An afternoon wind is blowing and each time a big 18 wheeler comes by at high speed I'm buffeted tremendously. The buffeting and noise are completely overwhelming. I'm angry and on the verge of tears. Dear God I'm only into my third day. 119 more to go. It doesn't seem possible now that I can do it. I don't want to do it! This hell just isn't worth it.

I finally exit I5 into the outskirts of Manteca. But where is it? The town isn't right at the exit as I expected. This final blow is too much. I finally find a small bar, collapse onto a stool and drink a quick beer, then call the family I'm to stay with. They live over a mile away and ask if I want to keep walking. I reply by asking if they have a vehicle large enough to carry my cart. Fortunately they do. I arrive at their home in a virtual stupor. There are other friends of theirs coming over. After eating, I recover some of my energy, meet their wonderful friends and end up feeling almost human. A warm talk with Susan ends the day as I drift into a profound sleep.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 20

MILE 71

The next morning, just before leaving, a friend of theirs stops by and is introduced to me. He asks me how I'm doing financially and although I have only a couple of dollars left, I answer, "Just fine." As soon as the words are out of my mouth I regret them. They have come automatically, from a place inside myself that doesn't depend on others and is ashamed to admit I need help. I vow at that moment to THINK next time before making such a hasty reply and feel that it will do me well to go hungry the rest of the day as punishment.

As I limp out of Manteca, stiff and sore again and head east on highway 120 toward Yosemite park, Rose Albano from the Manteca Bulletin stops me and asks if I would mind being interviewed. My first interview of the walk!

I try to share with her why I'm doing the walk. She listens carefully and asks many thoughtful questions. Over the following months I will be interviewed many times and usually find the reporters to be courteous, accurate and interested. Not what I was expecting. As the walk progresses across the country I find that most of my preconceptions and fear about who will be the good guys and who the bad, are wrong.

People say, "well maybe nothing bad has happened yet but wait until you get further east" and after I get further east, "wait until you cross the Mississippi" and after I cross the Mississippi, "wait until you get to New York city."

The day is warm and beautiful. Oakdale, my destination for today is only 21 miles away. The road is level and the traffic much lighter and slower. After an hour of walking the soreness and stiffness disappears and I'm in high spirits. In the afternoon, Wayne K., who has heard about the walk on the radio, stops and talks awhile and donates \$10 so my foolish act of the morning is canceled out.

I'm scheduled to spend the night at the home of Leslie B. in Oakdale and I actually arrive there before dark and not exhausted either. She and her friend prepare a gourmet meal with fine wine and I have an entire guest house to myself. It rained briefly while we were eating and, after a warm bath, the wet, green smell coming through the window lulls me quickly to sleep.

THURSDAY, MAY 21	MILE 92
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The morning is so enjoyable and Leslie prepares such a wonderful breakfast and shows me their beautiful new home they are building and

soon to move into, that I'm late in starting. I'm supposed to cover 27 miles but come up short as dusk descends. This is my first night alone. I pull the cart up to the top of a bluff overlooking the highway and unload the tent. With some trial and error I get it up and then spend almost an hour pulling burrs and grass seeds out of my heavy wool socks. Another lesson learned. Take your socks off before struggling through high weeds. I'm somewhat uncomfortable camping so close to the highway but I feel I'm not visible from below and this eases my fears.

I awake not knowing how far I am from Chinese Camp, my previous day's destination. There is a non-functioning odometer on my cart that is supposed to give me this information. There hadn't been time to check it out before starting the walk. I'm ravenous but have little food with me and have been counting on eating in Chinese Camp. After walking some three miles, I spot a sign in the distance that looks as though it might be attached to a restaurant. My joy increases as I get closer and see it is indeed a restaurant. A giant breakfast raises my spirits tremendously. Before me is a climb that I know is not going to be a pussycat. I had struggled up it several times in a car, once in a VW van that overheated and stalled several times on the way up. Four miles of steep switchbacks snaking up the side of the first foothills of the Sierra mountains. As the morning progresses, Mellones Reservoir comes into view. Several boats crisscross the lake, some pulling water-skiers. I can't help being filled with self-pity contrasting my impending ordeal with their carefree day.

Around noon, to my utter amazement, a car stops beside me and Paul F., a close friend, sits smiling at me holding a bag of sandwiches. He has taken the day off and drove from the Bay area out to where I am to see if I need help. What incredible timing! The four mile climb is just ahead and Paul offers to take the cart up to the top and leave it at some secure place. Now I will only have to get myself up, a far less challenging task. Paul is back in a half hour telling me that he has left the cart at the Groveland Motel. We say good-bye and he heads back to San Francisco after telling me that Anya, his wife, plans to drive up tomorrow to help get me through Yosemite. A finer couple doesn't exist.

As I start up the climb, there is suddenly a choice. A two mile long shortcut would cut the climb to the top in half. Very steep and direct with signs warning RVs and campers not to take it. Pulling the cart I wouldn't have considered it for a moment. However now I don't have to pull it and besides I'm filled with energy from the meeting with Paul. As I walk by the turn off I suddenly make up my mind and abruptly turn right heading up the steep road.

In a few minutes I begin to regret this decision. The day has turned quite

hot, I'm soaked in sweat and am breathing very hard. My legs ache with every step. Every few hundred feet I have to stop and rest. Finally I find that if I breathe deeply in time with my steps I can get enough air. Step, breathe in deeply, step, breathe out deeply, step, breathe in deeply. When the climb is at its worst, breathe in, one step; breathe out, one step. Not so steep, take two steps per breath. Easy climb, take four. This helps tremendously. The aching almost stops and I find that I can keep going much longer.

When I reach the top I'm elated and very, very tired. I walk some more and arrive at Chinese Camp where I eat a large meal, getting some of my energy back. Two and a half hours later I make it to Groveland, recover my cart and start looking for a place to spend the night. Dusk is coming on rapidly. I'm more tired than I thought it possible to be. As soon as I stop moving, aching and stiffness return. Think it would be a good idea to call churches in the area. Someone will surely put up a peace walker for the night. Most do not answer, finally one suggests that I try door-to-door. The city park looks inviting and I decide to call the police department to see if it would be OK to stay there, but there is no listing for the local police. The phone booth is outside a small restaurant and, thoroughly frustrated, dusk turning darker and darker, I ask if they know whether it would be all right for me to stay in the park for the night. Seeing my T-shirt, they start asking questions about what I'm doing. Soon a large glass of milk and turkey sandwich is in my hand, followed by another when the first disappears. The owner invites me to have breakfast in the morning and one of the persons working there said it would be fine for me to spend the night on the church lawn next door to where she lived. It is already dark when I find the church and I am soon in a deep, exhausted sleep.

SATURDAY, MAY 23

MILE 130

In the morning I limp down to the Groveland Motel, where they had offered to let me use a shower. I don't see how I will be able to do any serious walking this day, but the shower helps a little. While at breakfast I meet David and Anne who were on the great cross country peace march of 1986. I met several more across the country and it was always a time of warm sharing and a special camaraderie. They are always excited that someone is carrying on the tradition of keeping peace awareness alive. I am also always re-energized and the encounters have a way of happening just when I'm in a particularly low point.

I have never liked to wear a hat and believed that my head would get acclimated to the sun. These first few days tell me otherwise so before

leaving town I spend three of my precious few remaining dollars on a floppy blue hat that remained with me for the remainder of the walk, gathering a bald eagle feather on the way.

The walk today continues upwards. More and more evergreen forests; clear, cool air. It is Saturday, there is a big rock concert happening this evening just outside Yosemite park and all day dozens of bikers go by, most waving and flashing the peace sign. Again not what I was expecting.

Around noon Anya drives up. For the next few days I will have company and assistance with the cart. Anya today and Susan arriving tomorrow. She will stay with me until we get to Lee Vining on the other side of Yosemite. Happy days now, sad ones later but I don't want to think about that now. Anya and I share some food that she has brought along, sitting alongside the road. As we sit talking, a spinning beer can, half full, flies by getting us wet. We glance down the road in time to see a pickup filled with laughing young men. The first happening of this kind so far. Anya and I look at each other and shrug. A thoughtless act more than a malicious one we agree but it is hard for us to be in their shoes. In such a situation it is easy to be angry or resigned and hard to be understanding. And yet it is such understanding in the midst of a diversity of opinions and actions that brings peace. We cannot bring an end to conflict by engaging in conflict ourselves even though it might seem necessary or desirable in the moment. Conflict finds fuel in conflict so to bring an end to it, give way and surround it, smother it. This does not mean passivity, inaction. It does mean coming to terms with one's fears and insecurities. It is only in this way that an individual can find profound peace within his or her self, the first step toward peace in the world.

Anya and I agree that she will go on ahead and try to find a place to camp. We will not make it to Yosemite but should get close. The road continues its upward climb and increasingly as I look away from the road I can see deep valleys below showing me how far I've climbed. Then the road points sharply down, the ravine cut by Yosemite creek. In great frustration I can see in the distance that the other side of the ravine is a mirror image, going upwards as steeply as it now goes down. If only there was some way that magically I could go straight across! I'm also learning that going steeply down is in some ways even more difficult than going up. The cart wants to overrun me. It has no brakes and holding it back means jamming my feet into the road at every step. This sends a shock wave up my lower back which soon protests strongly. It will be eastern Utah before brakes are installed.

Anya reappears as I am working my way up the other side. Once again the team of Paul and Anya saves the day. We manage to fit the cart into the

back of her Celica. Anya reports that she has found a beautiful place for us to camp for the night. It is farther away than I can walk this day, so after covering a few more miles and putting a small bottle alongside the road to mark my stopping point, I gladly climb into her car and we head for the camp site.

Soon after reaching it, we have a warm, bright fire going. The evening grows chilly as soon as the sun hides itself among the tall trees that we are immersed in. Stars, brilliant and close, soon appear, so bright that they look like fireflies dancing from tree to tree. We sit and talk quietly, not wanting to intrude on the night and then climb into our sleeping bags, huddling close for warmth.

SUNDAY, MAY 24	MILE 155
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Susan drives up the following morning (the start of my second week) as we cross into the park boundary. The day passes joyfully and every two or three miles Susan and Anya are waiting with food and drink. Susan has the cart in the back of her car, so walking is not difficult even though steadily upwards. That night we camp near Yosemite Creek, all of us in high spirits. Firewood is extremely scarce so we all scour the area in increasing circles until enough wood is collected for a blazing fire that lasts just long enough to have a good meal. Sleep comes easily and we awake early the next morning. The day is overcast and cold. After breakfast, Anya takes her leave and heads back to San Francisco, while Susan and I repeat the ritual of yesterday. She drives two or three miles ahead and waits for me with something to eat and a warm drink.

As the day progresses the clouds grow closer and darker and then large, wet snowflakes begin to fall. The evergreen trees quickly take on a Christmas look. It has been years since I've seen snow falling and this is a special treat. However the snowfall grows increasingly intense and as I continue my ever upward climb—I am now around 8,000 feet—passing cars start to throw out a wake of muddy wet snow. This isn't enjoyable at all. Finally the wake becomes a wall that sometimes hits me from head to foot. I try to walk as far off the road as possible to avoid being hit, but by now there are several inches of snow on the ground and walking is difficult. We finally decide that to continue like this is madness. Susan reports that ten miles down the road it is barely snowing. Tomorrow morning I can come back and make up the 10 mile gap. As the afternoon wears on and we approach Tuolumne Meadows campground where we have intended to spend the night, it is clear that the snow and wet ground will make camping out an unenjoyable experience. We easily talk ourselves into getting a cabin

for the night.

The "cabin" is a tent with a pot-bellied stove and a wooden floor, definitely not intended for winter use. Still it is dry and if we stay within a couple of feet of the stove it is also warm. My feet and legs are very sore and are soon soaking in a pail of hot water and Epsom salts. Walking several miles in wet shoes and socks is not recommended, at least not when your feet are already protesting their treatment over the previous week.

TUESDAY, MAY 26	MILE 195
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A hot shower, food, and a comfortable bed revive our spirits considerably. We are soon in a profound sleep, our legs and arms tangled together, drawing warmth and love from each other. During the night the snow continues to fall and when we look at the amount of snow on the ground the next morning we feel there is little chance that the road will be open so that I can walk the missing segment from yesterday. Miraculously it is and soon I'm walking through an unreal world of white snow and white mist. Tops of trees are hidden as are the distant valleys and mountains that would otherwise dominate the landscape. There are few cars, for the most part I am alone, the stillness broken only occasionally by snow falling from overloaded branches. Although I've often come to Yosemite, it has always been in the summer. It is the end of May but it could just as well be the middle of winter for the whiteness that surrounds me. It takes three hours to travel the ten miles missed yesterday and to meet Susan, waiting for me just to the East of Lake Tenaya, unbelievably beautiful in its snowy setting.

Now before me stretches the last segment before cresting the Sierras at almost 10,000 feet. Susan again resumes going ahead two miles and waiting. The climb is now through wooded areas for the most part, occasionally broken by Tuolumne Creek as it winds, first on one side of the road and then on the other. The unrealness of the morning is gone. Now is fatigue, extreme at times, and cold. The two mile segments seem much longer. The altitude bothers me, it is difficult to get enough air into my lungs. I can't imagine what it would be like if I was faced with also pulling the cart. Thank God for Susan's help.

The summit can't be very much further, at most five or six miles. My legs and feet are saying no more, please. It seems as if I've been walking for a long while since the last stop. Where is Susan? Then I see her, far ahead. In all this time I've only walked a mile or so? It can't be possible. As I approach her car, all of a sudden I see through the trees ahead, something that looks like a roof, a small building. Can it possibly be? It is! The summit with its small ranger station. I collapse into the car. Susan hadn't seen it,

didn't know that the climb was over, was wondering why I was so happy. We celebrate for a while and then I head down the east slope of the Sierras. Tioga Pass—eleven miles of seven and eight percent grade—I dread to think what it would be like to have to climb that.

When you cross over the Sierras there is a dramatic, immediate, change in the appearance of the land. Water laden winds blowing from the Pacific drop large amounts of moisture on the western slopes so that they are covered with lush green forests. The eastern slopes are sparse, covered with sagebrush and a few quaking aspens where there is water. Coming down Tioga Pass road, I drop four thousand feet in altitude. Quickly, the snow disappears, to be visible only on the distant peaks. The air temperature steadily increases. My jacket comes off, then my sweater. Summer returns in the space of a couple of hours.

My delight in finally having the incessant climbing over with gradually gives way to dreading the shock wave going up my back at each downward step. The fronts of my legs begin to be quite painful. Going steeply down may be a lot easier on your heart and lungs, but it's much harder on your legs and back as I learn over and over again. After three hours of this pounding, the road finally levels out and at dusk I'm within a few miles of Lee Vining. Susan and I find a motel, and eat a good meal trying to make the most of our last night together. As the last few hours hurry by we try to put on a good front but it is hard to put aside the sadness that we are feeling.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 27

MILE 217

In the morning we hastily construct a crude sign for the back of the cart, identifying the "Walk Of Peace" and suggesting to passersby that their donation will help to make the walk possible. It is afternoon before we are back on Highway 120 and we invent as many last minute excuses as we can to avoid that final moment of parting. Then there are no more and there is nothing left but for her to drive away, heading back to an empty house, carrying a four month old new life within her, wondering how she will be able to come up with the rent every month plus act as a pathfinder for me. In many ways the task now in front of her is more difficult than mine.

As I head down the road, towards Lee Vining, retracing the road we have just come over, I'm filled with loneliness. In addition, my right leg wants to cave in at every step, the result of a very painful shin splint acquired on the way down Tioga Pass road yesterday. And now I am again custodian of the cart, patiently trailing behind me. Pulling it means I cannot swing my arms and the resulting gait seems awkward. I put as much weight

as I can on my left leg and pray that it won't give out before my right leg recovers. Soon I head south on US395, then a few miles later, east again on 120 curving around Mono Lake. This is stark desert country, the volcanic rocks surrounding the lake giving the appearance of a moon landscape. After walking only eleven miles, my sadness at leaving Susan and the pain in my right leg overwhelms me, and I pull off the road, trying and not succeeding to find a hidden and sheltered place to make camp.

Although I've pulled the cart down a dirt road several hundred feet and then off the road through sand to an area somewhat sheltered by large sagebrush, I feel quite nervous. There is no habitation around for miles. In this setting I am completely defenseless and there is no one within reasonable distance to help me. In the middle of the night a pickup truck drives down the dirt road and slows as it passes by. I awake with a start, my heart in my mouth, pulse racing. Is my tent visible from the road? Why are they slowing down? Digging down into the clothes bag next to my sleeping bag, I finally find the long bladed knife loaned to me by a friend. The truck continues down the road and I slowly drift back to sleep, anxious for the light of day, eager to be rid of the unknown night desert sounds and the aloneness.

THURSDAY, MAY 28

MILE 231

With the light of day, my fears abruptly vanish and I feel rather foolish for reacting the way I had during the night. Mono Lake is strikingly beautiful in the early morning light, a mystical scene out of the earth's distant past. Ahead of me for the first time since I started the walk is unknown road. From now on I will be traveling on highways that I've never driven over, each day a new experience. The road curves away from the lake heading southeast. Several miles ahead of me I can just make out a stand of trees and I set this as a goal. I will take a long break when I get there and enjoy the shade. My surroundings now consist of waist-high sagebrush. The day is going to be hot.

In the back of my mind is the nagging question, "Why should there be trees in the middle of desert land?" The obvious answer doesn't come at first, not until I'm confronted with the road climbing sharply upwards. The next several hours are exhausting as I climb back to 8000 feet. This time there is no help, no one miraculously comes along at the last minute to relieve me of pulling the cart. My right leg screams at me to stop this nonsense—fortunately my left leg is willing to keep going. Two aspirins convinces my right leg to be quiet for a while.

Several times the road heads downwards and I believe the ordeal is over

and then around the next bend, it decides to go back up again. After a few of these tantalizing previews of what must ultimately come to pass, I become quite angry at the road and yell at it to make up its mind, either go up or go down but quit teasing me.

At mid-day it is finally over. I am at the top. The road stretches ahead in a gentle downward curve. After eating and resting, my good humor returns. The afternoon passes quickly and soon I'm back down in sagebrush country. Two cars stop and leave me \$14 richer. This will allow me to buy a few provisions when I arrive in Benton tomorrow. As dusk comes on, I make camp along the road, not quite so nervous as the previous night.

FRIDAY, MAY 29	MILE 258
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I arrive in Benton mid-afternoon the following day. I'm excited because I will get a chance to call Susan and get a good hot meal. It is the first of a series of disappointments that will continue across Nevada. There is only a small restaurant that sells a few grocery items on the side. My provisioning is very limited. Several quarts of Gatorade, two gallons of water, some cheese, a couple of candy bars, a small block of ice. I'm carrying a small picnic cooler but find that it will keep things cool only for a few hours in the desert heat. After that I'm forced to drink hot water. Gatorade, not terrible tasting cold, becomes nauseating to drink after it gets hot. After eating and talking with Susan, I head out of town, determined to cross into Nevada before dark.

All during the day I have looked ahead at snow covered mountains. They are beautiful rising out of the desert and a bit unnerving because they refuse to move off to the side and I begin to wonder if I'm in for another major climb. Then, outside Benton, the road curves north skirting the edges of Boundary Peak at 13,000 feet and Mustang Mountain at 10,000. Picture postcard country to be absorbed at my leisure, far different from going by at 60 miles an hour.

4 THE HIGH DESERT BECKONS

It is late afternoon when I cross into Nevada. I leave California behind with a mixture of sadness and elation. I can fold up the California map and put it away. Somehow this seems like a major achievement. On the map of the US that I'm carrying, I've traversed about half an inch, a just barely noticeable green line, marked on with a highlighter. There are many, many more inches to go but now my friends can't jump in their car and reach me in a couple of hours. As the sun is beginning to set I see what looks like a small oasis in the distance. There is not a rest stop indicated on the map but this certainly looks like one. The timing couldn't be better. Then as I get closer there is a sign announcing 'Jane's Ranch.' Nevada has legal prostitution, I remember. Oh well, I don't have enough money anyway. I reluctantly continue and make camp just short of Montgomery pass. Another rough climb, not something I want to do at the end of the day.

SATURDAY, MAY 30	MILE 285
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I awake refreshed, in good spirits. The climb up Montgomery Pass is steep but my legs feel better. The thought of a hot meal when I reach Basalt just beyond the pass gives me encouragement. On the way up, I meet a small rattlesnake on the shoulder trying to get warm. We regard each other warily, as I move out into the road to go around him. This is my only encounter with a snake during the entire walk. I always sleep inside my small tent, more because of insects than the possibility of waking up with a snake for a bed mate, but I have to admit the thought is there, a needless one I'm sure.

On the way up, I pass a stalled big rig truck. The driver is standing by the cab waiting for help. I have to smirk a little as I go by. I almost yell out,

"Need a lift?" but stop myself in time.

Right at the top of the pass, 7132 feet, is a restaurant casino. This is fortunate because I discover a while later that the town of Basalt doesn't exist and the next town, Coaldale Junction is 22 miles away. I have little food in the cart and am counting on re-provisioning soon. Eat breakfast with a big-rig truck driver who provides lots of good information about getting over the Rockies and also warns me about truck drivers east of the Mississippi. He says they will try to run me off the road at every opportunity. Fortunately, I never found this to be true. In 122 days of being on the road up to 16 hours a day, not one big-rig truck driver ever failed to move as far out of the way as possible when going around me. I have the highest possible regard for them.

During the afternoon, a gale headwind comes up. After several hours of fighting the wind together with the stinging sand that accompanies it makes me quite emotional. I go from being very angry to being on the edge of tears. There is no way to get away from it, no trees, no habitation, just the incessant buffeting and strain of pulling the cart while feeling hundreds of needles stinging my face, arms and legs. Finally, in the distance I can make out a set of buildings and an hour later when I arrive at Coaldale Junction I find it also to be only a restaurant and casino. Two beers and a good meal raise my spirits considerably. The manager tells me that I can make camp behind the buildings. This turns out to be more of a dump site than anything else with several old rusting automobiles for companions but somehow being close to humanity is comforting.

SUNDAY, MAY 31	MILE 312
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The following morning, I celebrate the completion of two weeks. I'm forty miles from Tonopah. I believe that if I can get close, someone will come and meet me since I know that Susan is trying to find people who will put me up for the night and I'm scheduled to arrive there this evening. I haven't had a shower or a bed since leaving Susan in Lee Vining and the thought of being clean and sleeping in a quiet, comfortable bed away from the noise of the road makes the day pass quickly.

Towards evening I arrive at a rest stop 9 miles from Tonopah. I can see the town up in the hills and with binoculars, individual streets and buildings. Ten minutes away by car, an impossible distance by foot as late as it is and as tired as I am. There is a terrible disappointment waiting for me because I have expected that there would be a telephone and there isn't. No way to call Susan and tell her where I am and to find out who is coming to meet me. A while later a family stops and has a watermelon picnic. I go up

to them and ask if they would give Susan a call when they reach the town which they agree to do. They drive off and return a few moments later to ask if I would care for the rest of the watermelon. I had been secretly coveting it because it looked so cold and inviting. The day has been hot and the water in my cart is warm. The watermelon is delicious and refreshing.

There is a gale wind blowing and I try to shield myself behind some bushes alongside the restrooms. I'm sitting on my cart lid resting when a large black man walks up to me. I'm rather startled and somewhat nervous as he and I are the only ones here. We talk for a few minutes, he asks questions about the walk and then asks how I'm doing for money. I reply that I have only about two dollars. He offers four and apologizes for not having more to give. I haven't been very concerned since I am so sure that there will be people in Tonopah to help. A half hour later a crazy acting young man comes up and starts talking. Again he and I are alone and this time I am more than nervous. We talk for a long time and at the end he also asks if I have any money. His question sounds as if "do I have any to give him?", or even an implication that he might try and take it. I tell him that I don't have much and mention that someone has given me four dollars a short while ago. He replies that he can give me more than that and hands over a five dollar bill. I am stunned and quite ashamed. Once again I learn a lesson about preconceptions.

As dusk comes on and no one appears, I grow more and more angry. I am furious with everyone. Susan for letting me down, the group that sponsored me for not helping Susan, the people that continuously drive by without more than a slight wave of their hand or a nod of their head, the state of the world that led me to do such a foolish thing, myself for not having more sense. I wait until the last moment to make camp hoping against hope that someone will finally come. I have waited so long and with so much anticipation that I can't stand the thought of going another night without a shower and being forced to sleep in an uncomfortable sleeping bag on an air mattress that delights in going flat halfway through the night.

Finally as night comes on, I reluctantly and slowly make camp, tears welling up as my anger and frustration overflows. It takes a long time to go to sleep as I lay wallowing in self-pity. When I finally drift into a sound sleep, I'm rudely awakened by the sound of heavy rain. There wasn't a hint of clouds when I went to bed and so I hadn't prepared the tent at all. When I look outside all the lawn sprinklers are on. I have to laugh—the final coup-de-grace.

I reach Tonopah late morning, quickly locate the Mizpah restaurant, tell them I'm starved and completely dehydrated. There soon appears on my table a monstrous roast beef sandwich and two glasses of milk plus a pitcher of ice water. This helps considerably to make the world rosier. Then I reach Susan and she explains how much she has tried to find someone to help me. The Chamber of Commerce referred her to the local catholic priest who told her that Tonopah was too conservative for him to be able to help, he was sorry he couldn't do anything and didn't know anyone who could. She gives me the name of the person in the Chamber of Commerce who tried to find help, so I go over and talk to him. Bob is extremely gracious, quickly makes arrangements for me to get a shower at the fire station and offers to take my cart some miles down the road because there is a rather steep climb ahead of me. He tries to think of some way to pick me up at the end of the day and drive me back to town so that I would have a comfortable bed for a change but we just can't find a way. This is really disappointing since it will be at least a week before getting to Ely, over 170 miles away. There are two small towns on the way but I'm becoming very cynical about towns on the map that are written in small letters and only have a tiny circle showing where they are. They have a way of ending up being one casino in the middle of nowhere.

An additional disappointment is that no one has offered financial help. After eating the large lunch, I'm back down to only a few dollars. I buy some canned goods, look longingly at a four dollar canister of cocoa mix and additional sterno cups to heat my food, neither of which I can afford (I am now unable to cook anything because I've used up the supply of sterno cups I started with—all of my money has to be used for food), and fill up several one gallon plastic containers with water. Bob and I lift the cart into the back of his pickup—he will meet me later in the afternoon—and I head east again, at least for a few miles free of the cart. The road slopes downward for some miles and then begins a rather steep upward climb. I hope that I will reach the top before Bob arrives with the cart but this doesn't happen and I am reunited with my constant companion half way up. I make camp as dusk falls and eat a meal of canned corn, canned peas, a small can of tuna and some crackers.

TUESDAY, JUNE 2

MILE 364

On the map the road passes through the Toiyabe National Forest, so the following day I'm looking forward to seeing trees again even though it probably means a steep climb. There is also a rest stop where I assume I can replenish my rapidly diminishing water supply. The good news is there

is no steep climb, the bad news is there are no trees. When I finally arrive at the rest stop it is to be greeted with "Water Not Potable—Do Not Drink" signs. There are a few trees which are being irrigated by a windmill close by. They don't have enough leaves to create much shade. Today the windmill makes a few revolutions at a time as a slight breeze comes up producing a half of cup of water every few minutes out of a small plastic pipe at the base of each tree. I gather all the small twigs I can find, make a fire and boil about a gallon and a half of water which will have to last until I get to Warm Springs some twenty miles away.

As I'm waiting for the water to finish boiling, a camper drives into the rest stop and an older couple gets out, looking at me warily. After several minutes the man comes over and greets me, then relaxes as he realizes what I am doing. They give me several pieces of fruit and a joyful cold drink. The woman wants to give me more but her husband tells her, "what if we have a breakdown on the road and don't have any water?" When he is momentarily distracted she hands me more bottles of water motioning for me to hide them. They also give me a five dollar bill as they drive off. This will provide about two days food, but it will be tomorrow before I reach Warm Springs.

5 PASSING THE TIME



US 50 the loneliest road in America

Nevada has more mountain ranges than any other state. They stretch north and south, spaced at intervals of twenty miles or so. Sometime during each day I'm faced with climbing over one of them and each presents the same ordeal. At the top, I can look off into the distance to see the road winding downwards, then across a relatively flat valley for several miles, then upwards again as the next range presents itself. The upward climb always seems endless. As the road starts upwards, the mountains tower above, then hour by hour there is less and less above and more and more below. Finally, when there is nothing more above me, I know I am close to the summit, but often the road continues for several more miles, following a ridge line, refusing to go down. As each curve approaches, I'm sure that the summit is just around it. Then, in the distance, a small green square will be visible and on the other side of the road a small yellow one. I'll heave a sigh of relief guessing, usually correctly, that the green square is the summit sign and the yellow square is the sign warning trucks to use low gears as they start the descent. At the summit, I look eastward, hoping against hope that the next valley will last for many, many miles and am always disappointed.

The effort of climbing occupies my attention totally, either by concentrating on getting enough air or watching my progress toward the next goal, a telephone pole or fifty fence posts down the road or a rock outcropping or if I am terribly fortunate, something that looks like it might provide shade. At each goal I rest for a few minutes, except in the morning, when I am fresh and filled with energy, I may skip resting.

Going down is always exhilarating and in the same way that going up seems endless, going down never takes enough time, especially the short while during each downward spiral when the slope exactly cancels out the cart pulling effort and it follows behind me with no effort. Then the valley stretches before me, several hours of just walking, squinting my eyes to pick out the next mile marker, one every fifteen minutes or so, every other one a five minute rest stop, although again if it is in the morning I may go seven or eight miles before stopping.

During these periods of relatively effortless walking, time slides by slowly. I invent games to pass time and if I win the game there will be a reward. If there are at least fifty cans on the side of the road during the next mile I can take a rest. If a lizard runs across my path in the next fifty steps, Susan really loves me.

Sometimes I watch my two feet moving down the road. They don't seem to be connected to me. Muscles are beginning to appear on my legs that ripple with each step and I watch them but they seem foreign. I look to

my left and watch the shadow of the cart moving down the road. The movement is smooth because the inertia of the cart smooths out the jerkiness of walking and so it looks like it is moving of its own accord, following along patiently behind me. Sometimes I watch a telephone pole or fencepost as it crosses the distant mountains, starting ahead of me and then following it until it passes behind me and then shifting my glance ahead again to pick up the next one. I watch grasshoppers for long periods of time. They start jumping out of my way several feet in front of me, leaping high into the air and landing on the road haphazardly, spinning around several times or rolling over and over before regaining their feet. Others jump away from the road, many of them hitting the steel guard rails producing a constant din.

I observe more and more how the environment around me reacts to my passage. Insects, birds and animals, all acutely aware of my presence, sometimes a quarter of a mile ahead of me. This is open range country and cattle often mill about on the road. Cars coming by are ignored, have to push their way through, blowing their horns. These often are large animals, it is calving time and there are many cows with new-born calves. I'm very apprehensive in the beginning, if a cow or bull decides to come after me there is no place to go. Instead they fearfully move off the road hundreds of yards in front of me and then race away, ears back and tails up, mothers leaving their babies to follow as best they can. Why they are unafraid of cars but terrified of me, I never know.

I watch trash along the road. Perhaps the most prolific trash in the west is Budweiser beer cans, a dubious honor for Anheuser Busch. A close second is fast food containers of all kinds, Styrofoam trays, Big Gulp cups (which never fail to send me into a fantasy imagining them filled with ice cold drinks), and disposable diapers. Lots of tools, car parts. Clothing of all kinds. Once in a great while a few coins--two or three dollars' worth in three thousand miles.

I always wave at cars as they go by. Most acknowledge my wave but many with almost imperceptible nods or the slightest raise of one finger off the steering wheel. Absorbed in their glass and metal world, intent on getting from here to there in quick time, oblivious or uncaring about the drama taking place which intrudes into their awareness for the briefest fraction of a second. Days go by with no one stopping. During the first few weeks, most of the people who stop are Europeans on vacation. When I finally ask a young man from Australia why he stopped and Americans don't he replies that he guessed, "we appreciate eccentrics more than you do."

I should be lonely but I'm not. The high desert landscape is so stark and

empty that time and space lose meaning. An entire day can pass without seeing a tree or a building or any sign of human presence, other than the road I'm on and the occasional car going by. Mile after mile after mile of foot high sage brush and the ever present next mountain range punctuated with little green mile markers and every so often a big white sign proclaiming, "Caution—Open Range Next Fifty Miles." I walk from dawn to dusk, then pull my cart as far as I can through the sand, make camp, eat what little food I have, unroll my sleeping bag and lay in the dark. The stars are so bright that I can see them through the tent walls and the night is filled with foreign sounds, little sounds being more unnerving than big ones, sometimes the bellow of a cow or the howl of a coyote, then the slightest sound of movement outside the tent. I can hear my blood coursing through my veins. Finally I drift off to sleep. Days merge into one another and become unreal.

My connection with the Great Spirit, with God is very close and intimate. He/She does not seem to be "up there" but rather all pervasive. Perhaps because the high desert embodies the Absolute, at once complete nothingness and, at the same time, everything. I am completely at the mercy of the desert and yet miracles continue to happen. I am taken care of. Far more than at any other time of my life I have become part of my surroundings. I am truly living in the moment.

6 WALKING AND MIRACLES

The day is very hot. Nothing to look forward to this day as there is no way to reach Warm Springs before tomorrow. Just grit my teeth and put some miles behind me. The sun is relentless. I get a little crazy sometimes with the frustration of not being able to get away from it. The only shade occurs late in the afternoon when the sun is low and I can fit myself into the shadow thrown by a large highway sign.

During the afternoon a highway maintenance truck stops and Jim L. offers a drink of Cool-Aid. I can't find the words to express how wonderful it tastes. Jim says that I will be passing his home the following day and should stop by; we can share another drink. He also tells me about a hidden place to take a refreshing bath in Warm Springs, known by most truckers regularly passing by.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3

MILE 385

It is early afternoon the next day when I reach Warm Springs. It's closed! It obviously never was very large but at least there used to be a restaurant. The building is still there, the sign is still there but it hasn't been open for some time. To say I'm disappointed would be a massive understatement. The next town, Currant, is 67 miles or three days away. Nothing on the map indicates a rest stop or any source of water before then. I have very little food, certainly not enough for three more days. I'll run out of water early tomorrow. I am almost in tears. I'm certainly being tested and I'm not enjoying it at all. The one bright spot is that the phone alongside the restaurant building still works and a call to Susan cheers me up a lot.

There are several large trees nearby and a small creek with HOT water running in it. The creek goes into a small building and exits on the opposite side. This is the place to take a bath that I've been told about. Inside the building, the creek flows into a large carved out hole, deep enough to submerge oneself. It is almost too hot to be in, but after a few minutes of getting used to, feels great.

I spend a couple of hours sitting under the trees, taking a leisurely bath and eating a few pieces of fruit and some bread and cheese. My spirits slowly revive. I dread leaving this small oasis. Three days of desert stretches

ahead of me and I have to absolutely put my faith on the line. I know I'm not in any real danger because I can always flag down a car if worse comes to worse but I've vowed not to ask for help and breaking the vow would, in my mind, greatly lessen one of the major reasons for doing the walk.

The afternoon is even hotter than yesterday. The humidity is so low, less than 5%, that the skin on my right arm and hand, which always faces the sun, is beginning to look like the skin of a lizard. I have a continual dry hacking cough and many nose bleeds. Towards evening, far in the distance I can just make out something that looks like buildings and then as I get closer, trees. And then a sign saying "Rest Stop 3 Miles Ahead." I am flabbergasted at my good fortune. There is nothing on the map showing a rest stop here and to have one suddenly appear just at the end of the day, just as I'm almost out of water seems like a miracle. And the water at this one is abundant and drinkable. In addition there are several residences nearby and I suddenly realize that this is where Jim L. and his family live.

I make camp and then walk down to his house. I am greeted warmly by Jim and his wife Launa and she soon has a quart of iced Cool-Aid ready which seems to me like the nectar of the Gods. Later, as I'm preparing to leave, they ask if I have enough food. I answer honestly that I don't have much. Launa goes into their kitchen and returns a few minutes later with a large grocery bag filled with canned goods, packages of Cool Aid, sugar, candies and gum, fruit—more food than I've seen since starting out. I am speechless. Earlier in the day I had almost nothing, now there is enough to get me easily through the next few days.

THURSDAY, JUNE 4

MILE 412

Even with enough food and water, the next two days are difficult ones. The road is continually up and down and strong afternoon headwinds are adding to the difficulty of pulling the cart. Then as it turns out, I seriously misjudge my water consumption; I am drinking a lot more as a result of the hills and winds. About three in the afternoon on the second day I spot in the distance, nestled in the foothills of a rather large mountain range, what I assume to be the town of Currant. I guess it to be about 10 miles away and in a moment of foolishness decide to drink the rest of my water, preferring to ease my thirst now and drink again when I get to Currant. I guess it will take another two to three hours.

Although the road does not seem to be climbing much, I've already experienced many times that the road can even appear to be going downhill when in fact it is going steeply up. This road definitely is going up. And then the Gods of all the winds conspire to do me in. A gale headwind

begins to blow. It is alive, it seems, deliberately and maliciously tormenting me, laughing at my struggle. Now I can't stop, no matter how much I want to. There is no more water—I'm breathing big gulps of air in my struggle against the road and the wind and each outward breath carries away some of my precious moisture. Soon my mouth is completely dry and my tongue, normally sitting quietly in my mouth unnoticed, feels like a dry stick which I want to spit out. A part of me has to laugh. It seems ludicrous to me that I should be this thirsty. All of my life, water was just THERE. You walked over, turned a spigot, held a glass under it and voila, water. Or you pulled into a restaurant or fast food place and got something to drink. No big deal—not even a little deal!

In addition, there are no cars going by. I've always held the knowledge that if I got into REAL trouble I could wave down a passing car. But now hours are going by without a car passing. Amazing considering that I'm on a cross-country US highway. Apparently, all the cross-country traffic is on Interstate highways and only local people use this road.

So I continue to struggle against the wind, having no other possibility. Slowly, agonizingly, the town grows closer. Then I can make out a restaurant sign. I can't even consider the possibility that this town also, like Warm Springs, is closed. After an eternity, I pull my cart into the restaurant parking lot and stagger in. At one end of the restaurant is a bar. I walk up to it, sit down and ask the bartender for something to drink. Without a word, he fills a pitcher with ice and water and sets it in front of me. I promptly empty it. He asks me if I want more. I said, "how about a beer." He pours one, which I down in one gulp. He pours another, compliments of the man at the end of the bar, which I also down in one gulp. A third appears because the last one had "too much foam." I drink this one a little slower but feel as thirsty as when I came in. A fourth is compliments of the bartender, a fifth for the road. Then, swaying a bit, I walk over to the restaurant section, sit down and order dinner. With coffee. Lots of coffee. My thirst seems endless. I keep telling myself that I'll get sick if I keep drinking so much, but I don't care.

As I am eating, I feel a tap on my shoulder and, turning around, see a man, obviously an Indian man, looking at me. He introduces himself. Ian Zabarte of the Western Shoshone Nation. He says that I've been walking in his country for several days (I immediately have the image of Indians up on the mountain ridges watching me as I go by, like the Westerns I once loved to watch). He says that there is a weekend celebration taking place at the Duckwater reservation and he would be willing to take me there if I would like to go. I tell him I would love to. We pile the cart into the back of his pickup and drive to the reservation, some 20 miles. A couple of hundred

people are there. Campers and tents in a big circle. It is already dark when we get there, so I pitch my tent, working by feel. Ian then took me to his home and gave me a quick history of the plight of the Shoshone Nation. Like most Americans, I had a vague awareness of the injustices suffered by many American Indians at the hands of our federal government. Now it is very different. I am on the Duckwater reservation, in his home and more than that, I got there by walking. I had spent several days in his country, would spend several more. Not watching it pass by, sitting in a car but walking on it, feeling the sun and the force of the wind, the hurt of the sand striking my skin, the beauty and starkness of the land and the ability of this land to take away even my right to enough water. For a little moment in time I am living at this most elemental level experiencing what many of their lives consist of every day. It is not hard for me to feel their frustration and anger at the injustices heaped upon them over the years.

By a treaty negotiated in 1863 they were given title to land which now covers much of Nevada, and some of California, Utah, Idaho and Colorado. This land is principally desert. It requires many acres to support one cow. The Shoshone have traditionally been nomads. They cannot maintain their traditions if they are confined to a reservation and in fact they have not been. The treaty has not been overturned by the courts. It has simply been ignored. Lands have been taken, not by due process, just simply taken. Then in 1979, acting as trustee, the federal government sold their land for them for \$26 million (held to be the value of the land in 1872). They have refused to take the money. However the courts have since held that they cannot contest the sale of their land. Appeals have gone unheeded.

During the night it rains hard, soaking my sleeping bag and everything in the tent because I have not anticipated the rain. To keep my tent dry on the inside it is necessary to carefully install the ground cover so that no part of it extends beyond the edge of the tent. If it does, water runs off the side of the tent, then pools between the tent bottom and the ground cover. The tent bottom is water resistant but not water proof. For all practical purposes this means that water comes through more or less as if it were a sieve. On the other hand the tent was on sale and considering our financial condition, it was this tent or nothing

SATURDAY, JUNE 6	MILE 460
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The next morning, at breakfast, I sit next to a very old Miwok Indian. He proudly points to his two remaining teeth, explaining how he had lost his teeth while repairing fish nets. His voice is soft, slow, and melodious. I

sit mesmerized, listening.

Later, Ian returns me to Currant. He has some shopping to do in Ely, about 50 miles east. We arrange that he will keep the cart until he meets me on his return. This will give me a chance to climb to Currant Summit at 7000 feet without having to pull the cart. However to my dismay he returns while there are still several miles between me and the summit. The climb is quite steep going steadily upwards mile after mile. The road passes through a canyon cut by a river. Spectacular cliffs on either side, wild roses growing alongside the river rushing downwards. Once again, I'm amazed at the optical illusion presented by the road which often seems to be going down instead of up. I watch the river rushing, what my vision says is upwards, but which my logic can't agree with. Several times I check my cart to see if a tire has gone flat because it is pulling so hard. Then, as I release my hold on it and see how much it wants to roll in the same direction as the river, I'm forced to admit that the road really is going upwards. So many times during my weeks walking through Nevada, Utah and Colorado, I refuse to believe that my eyes can betray me so strongly as I struggle to pull my cart along a road that just can't be going uphill.

Far above me, hawks circle, their cries echoing and re-echoing from cliff to cliff. I stop for a few minutes and lay on top of the cart, watching them with binoculars, picking out one and following it for two or three minutes until I feel myself lifted upwards and join them in their slow circles, completely losing myself.

Finally, I see the welcome green and yellow signs telling me that the summit is just ahead. I rest for a while at the top looking at the valley stretched out below, the road visible for perhaps twenty miles or more. The next mountain range is at least a day's journey. I start out, moving rapidly downhill, not quite at a run but fast enough that a mile marker goes by every ten minutes. There is a long stretch of road of just the right slope to cancel out the cart so that I pull it with the handles resting on two fingers of each hand, thanking myself over and over for not deciding to take a back pack instead, as so many had advised me to do.

During the afternoon, the sky rapidly fills with billowing white cumulus clouds. The cloud bottoms turn from white to gray to black and soon there is a distant rumble of thunder. Then I can see rain slanting down from several clouds, punctuated by brilliant flashes of lightning, then much more distinct claps—not rumble but BANG. I think about the fact that my cart handles are metal and the cart is mostly aluminum and wonder if a lightning bolt will find it, then decide that considering all the other chances that I've taken, getting struck by lightning isn't very likely. Soon the smell of sage, always present but subtle, becomes overwhelming, mixed with the fresh,

cool smell of new rain. I welcome the clouds for hiding the sun for a few minutes. The rain dodges around first behind and then ahead of me, then zeroes in. I watch the wall of rain move across the desert towards me, moving lazily, so that for a little while I think I will outdistance it but it catches up with me and I'm soon drenched. But the wetness feels good, to be cool for a while, even cold is a welcome relief. Much different than the previous night, laying in a soggy sleeping bag, shivering.

At dusk I make camp, pulling my cart off the road, through the sand which is fairly hard packed so that pulling is not impossible, until I have several hundred feet separating me from the road. There is almost no traffic at night, except for a few 18 wheelers going by fast. Still I feel more comfortable being in the dark, out of range of headlights. Tomorrow I'll reach Ely, almost 170 miles from Tonopah. In the whole of Nevada Tonopah and Ely are the only two towns on this road that have more than 50 people. I am looking forward to Ely with mixed emotions. It will be wonderful to mix with people again, perhaps have a good meal. On the other hand, I have almost no money, not enough for even one meal and I'm not sure what Susan has been able to accomplish. I don't want to be disappointed again as I was in Tonopah, so I'm steeling myself to expect the worst.

SUNDAY, JUNE 7	MILE 485
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I reach Ely late in the afternoon the next day. Ely is located on the eastern slopes of the Egan mountain range. I've looked forward with some dread to Murry Summit at 7300 feet, just before the descent into Ely. It is difficult but I'm in good spirits and once into the climb, gloat somewhat at the power in my legs now which can pull myself and the cart over these mountains without becoming exhausted. The downward side is several miles long and the miles fly by. Towering cumulus clouds look like more thunderstorms but the storms never materialize and the clouds keep the day cool.

Ely is the most attractive town since California. Trees and lawns. I didn't realize how much I missed them. When I reach downtown I call Susan. She hasn't come up with a place to stay but does have a telephone number for me to call. That number leads to the number of the local United Methodist Church. They very kindly pay for dinner and breakfast at a nearby restaurant and lodging in a downtown hotel. I'm filled with relief and gratitude. No repetition of Tonopah. True, the room is plain and the bath is down the hall but it feels like the finest hotel in the world as I sit in the bathtub and soak away a week of dirt. God, how I love water. Water to

drink and water to bathe in, what an unbelievable luxury. There is only seven dollars to spend on dinner. I'm still hungry when I finish but realize that it could have been much worse if there hadn't been a charitable church to take care of poor strangers passing through.

Sleeping is immensely enjoyable. This is the first bed I've slept in since leaving Susan. No roaring trucks in the night to wake me, no sleeping pad to deflate, no constant turning to try and find a comfortable position. And....no stars shining through the tent walls, no smell of sagebrush wafting in the cool desert night air. Some small part of me is beginning to like the desert aloneness, the uncompromising harshness, the continual testing of limits.

MONDAY, JUNE 8

MILE 511

In the morning, I eat a very satisfying breakfast and spent all but 89 cents of my remaining money at the Laundromat. It is a hard decision, spending food money to wash my clothes but it seems important to maintain a reasonably clean look and I will have to take my chances on getting donations soon. This is a walk of faith as much as a walk of peace.

There is an immense Farmer Jack store just before the edge of town. I wander up and down the aisles, looking for the best way to spend my remaining 89 cents, weighing maximum protein (a piece of cheese perhaps) against something refreshing to drink. I've almost settled on a large can of V8 when I notice several video poker game machines. This after all is Nevada where gambling is legal. Maybe with some good fortune I can leave with a bag of groceries, not just one can of juice. It takes several minutes for me to lose 50 cents. I'm chuckling as I leave the store with 39 cents and no V8. It is obvious that God isn't going to bail me out by gambling.

The day again is pleasant and cool. In the afternoon the morning's wispy white clouds turn into towering thunderheads, and the boom of distant thunder echoes back and forth against the mountain sides. Mercifully the rain stays away. In the afternoon an English couple stops and talks awhile, then donates \$3. I feel much better with something besides a few coins in my pocket. I make camp at a rest stop at the top of Connor's Pass at 7300 feet and get the tent pitched just as rain drops start to fall. The rest stop is in the middle of towering pines and is far enough from the road so that I don't hear road noises. It is strange but I feel more psychically comfortable here than the previous night in Ely. The ground is a soft bed of pine needles, the air is cool and filled with the scent of pine and the rain just enough to create a quiet patter on the tent walls.

Dinner is a can of tuna and a cold can of peas, still no stove to cook on. I could have made a fire and would have if I had a can of stew or chili

or something besides peas and corn. On the other hand I chose these just because they tasted reasonably good not heated and also because I can get several cans for the price of one can of something with meat in it. I depend principally on tuna and cheese for protein along with a good restaurant breakfast whenever possible.

TUESDAY, JUNE 9

MILE 534

During the night a camper drove in and in the morning I'm invited over to share breakfast with them. Hot coffee, how good it tastes on a chilly morning. Since breakfast had been hot coffee and cold cereal, I'm looking forward to another hot meal. A few miles down the road is Major's place, looking like a town on the map but I learn is only a restaurant-casino. The road is downhill all the way, cut through rock, and I watch the rock strata patterns unfold as I walk along. The cool air, downhill road and striking scenery fill me with more and more energy.

All of a sudden I am filled with the awareness of how we allow ourselves to be victims. I've done this all of my life, am doing it right now as I walk across the country without the means even to eat enough, sleeping at night often in fear of being alone and unprotected. Now, filled with tremendous energy, nothing seems impossible to do. There is no reason to be afraid. The walk will turn out fine as will the rest of my life. It is totally up to me. I only need the intent, be unwilling to accept less.

Major's Place, a small building at the junction of US93 and US6/50, is at the foot of the mountain range I've just descended from. The owner, an older woman, well-creased by the desert, is the only person there. I ask her to prepare the largest breakfast she can for \$3. Her response tastes very good. I leave, full for the moment, back down to 39 cents, very little food left in the cart, heading for Delta, Utah, 127 miles away over what I've been warned will be the worst part of the Nevada-Utah desert. As I go by, several truckers parked off the road yell, "what kind of ice cream do you have? and laugh uproariously."

Two hours later, a small yellow pickup pulls off the road in front of me and two women come running towards me. The younger of the two, Briar W., comes up and throws her arms around me saying how glad she is to see me and that I'm walking across the country. She then tells me that she had been on the Great Peace March the previous summer and is delighted that someone is doing something this year. They ask me if I have enough food, they have a lot of extra and could I use some? In a few minutes my cart is filled, then as we part, the mother of the younger woman says that she had financially supported her daughter's walk across the country and would like

to support mine. She presses some bills into my hand as they say good-bye. As they drive off, I count \$40. They are also Bahais which I believe to be quite a coincidence. Even in unplanned ways they are turning out to be major supporters of the walk. In ten minutes time, I've gone from penniless and out of food to having everything I need and more for the five day trek to Delta. Before the day is done, two other people stop and add another \$15. I now feel almost rich. This is by far the most money I've had since starting. The result of my changed attitude or coincidence?

I am walking across a flat valley for a long time. Clouds are building continuously and then I can see areas all over the valley where rain is slanting down from the clouds. Ahead of me is Sacramento Pass. I'm not especially concerned because the map says it is less elevation than the one I had gone over yesterday. As I begin the climb, the rain finally catches up with me, hard rain with lightning and thunder. Then the road becomes very steep and stays that way for several miles. I finally reach the top, soaked and exhausted, not feeling omnipotent anymore. As I start down, the rain ends, the clouds hovering around the summit. My energy soon returns and I end the day feeling good. Tomorrow I will cross into Utah. Utah won't be a picnic either but I feel confident now that I can finish the walk and that nothing I will face in the future will be worse than what I've already been through. I am getting stronger every day. I still wake up stiff and sore, still have severe leg pains now and then, but every day is better, not worse and knowing that my body can heal itself while walking 25 miles or more every day is tremendously encouraging.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 10

MILE 564

In the morning I have a decision to make. The main road bypasses Baker which on the map is the last indication of humanity before Delta. Going to Baker however will cost three additional miles. Fortunately the decision is fairly easy to make. When I get to the junction of the main road and the road to Baker, now five miles away, I can see that there is more than just a casino. There are a lot of trees and I can make out several buildings. I have enough money now to be able to eat as much as I want. As I walk down the road I try to prepare myself for the possibility that there won't be a restaurant and I'm walking three extra miles for nothing, but I can't put down my excitement. Then when I get into town, I see that not only is there a restaurant but there is also a food store. I go into the restaurant, order two large breakfasts and call Susan while they are being prepared. I feel a tremendous weight has been lifted from me, haven't realized until now how much I've been affected by not having enough

money to eat reasonably well.

After breakfast, I go over to the store and buy some frivolous food items, candy bars, lunch meat, and several quarts of Gatorade, then go out back and fill several gallon containers with water. I now feel fully prepared for the 95 mile trip ahead of me.

7 MOONSCAPE

I cross into Utah around 2 o'clock in the afternoon. A short distance into Utah is an unexpected roadside filling station, small store and eating counter. Once again I gorge myself. While I'm eating, the manager comes over and starts talking. She warns me that the trip to Delta is long, hot and desolate and she is concerned about my doing it. Then she refuses my payment for the meal and I begin to have warm feelings about the people of Utah, a feeling that I never need to change.

Later, several miles down the road, a car pulls off the road in front of me. A woman gets out and walks back to me carrying a can of Budweiser saying, "here, you need this." We talk for several minutes. Both she and her husband are truck drivers. She offers another beer, than some food, and finally hands me the feather of a bald eagle that she has had for many years. It will help to make my journey an easier one. I wear it in my hat until it flies off and disappears somewhere in the Midwest. She is an earthy woman, used to doing a man's job. She really touches my heart, though. Her generosity is spontaneous and asks nothing in return.

I continue down the road, a little tipsy from the beer. The road is now fairly straight and level but I can see ahead of me another mountain range. I decide to make camp at the foot of it and take on the ordeal of climbing in the morning. There isn't a pass indicated on the map so I assume that it won't be as bad as the horrible one of two days ago.

THURSDAY, JUNE 11	MILE 595
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The next morning the climb starts out reasonably well. After what is an acceptable amount of climbing I reach what I think is the top. I can see

the road going down, then in the distance it makes a short rise, then dips again. But when I start down, the cart doesn't start rolling on its own, I still have to pull it. Come on, I say, I've been fooled before but this is too much. The road HAS to be going down, not just a little but decidedly. But it isn't. It still takes a lot of effort to pull the cart. Then when I reach the "short rise" it turns out to be horrible. It isn't until I finally reach the top that I look back at the previous summit and see that I am now considerably higher. And now being here, the road is still not ready to go down but continues to wind its way upward.

The descent from the summit takes a long while. In places it is quite steep and holding the cart back is difficult. It is necessary to place my feet on the road with a very precise balance of heel and arch pressure to avoid a severe jar which in a short while causes my lower back to ache severely.

Then, rounding a bend, a valley such as I have never seen before comes into view. I can see the road stretching into infinity in the distance. There is not a bit of green to be seen anywhere. Dull reds, yellows and grays; immense buttes rising out of the flat valley floor. I feel completely insignificant and alone. I know that I have enough food and water to easily make it across and yet in this moment nature seems overwhelming. Awesome and majestic, the land will not take note of my passing any more than if I were a solitary flea passing through.

Almost at the bottom, a pickup truck stops and a quart of Gatorade is offered. They have seen me earlier and have gone back home to pick up a cold drink to give to me. While we talk, a UPS truck also stops and the driver hands me a gallon of ice cold water which the manager of the Stateline restaurant had given him to take to me. She relays that she will do this every day until I reach Delta. I am beginning to fall in love with the people of Utah.

The lower I descend, the hotter it gets. As I walk across the valley floor, I despair of finding any shade. There are a few clouds overhead moving at right angles to the road and occasionally a cloud shadow crosses the road in front of me. Then I see a shadow race down the slopes to the right of me, cross the flat ground and for a few blessed seconds, hide the sun, then continue across to the opposite slopes and disappear over the distant peaks. I am approaching a butte close to the road and, for the hour it takes me to reach it, keep hoping against hope that it will cast a shadow close enough to the road that I will be able to rest in it for a few minutes. But the shadow is several hundred feet away. Then I notice on the other side of the road an unbelievable small patch of green. A few bushes, head high at least. It too is several hundred feet from the road but I don't care. I work the cart over the edge of the road, strap on the harness and pull it through the sand

over to the bushes. There is a small spring forming a bit of a marsh, surrounded by bushes. I pull into the shade of one of them and stretch out on the top of my cart preparing to take a nap for a few minutes. I'm promptly bitten by a horse fly, then another, then by several mosquitoes. I leap up, spray myself with repellent until my skin is dripping wet and try to ignore their furious attempts to get at me. The horse flies come in fast, land on my skin, then immediately fly off as the repellent gets to them. Their bite hurts enough that I yell and having them bounce off of me unnerves me even when they don't bite. I go through an incredible period of trying to decide whether I prefer to face the sun or the bugs. It just doesn't seem fair to have pulled my cart through all of that sand only to be confronted with a fate worse than the sun. However after a few short minutes I give up and return to the road.

As dusk is approaching a huge lake comes into view. On the map it is indicated as a dry lake, Lake Sevier. Obviously the same rains which have elevated the Great Salt Lake to dangerous levels have been at work here. I camp at an overlook providing a striking view of the lake and the surrounding mountains.

FRIDAY, JUNE 12

MILE 626

The next morning starts one of the ideal walking days that I so cherish. There is a long gentle downslope to the lake, effortless walking, the day not yet too hot. Then the road curves around the lake, perfectly flat mile after mile. Even though the water is alkaline and lifeless, the presence of the lake somehow enlivens the surroundings and makes them much more friendly than yesterday. As I walk past the lake, there is a just perceptible whooshing sound overhead. A large Air Force bomber, flying very slow and very low, painted black, hugging the terrain, passes over the road and disappears in the distance dodging between the mountain peaks. A minute or so later, another and then several more at intervals, crossing the lake, over the road and through the mountains. The whole scene is completely unreal, something out of science fiction, the moonscape I am walking through and the alien machines flying overhead.

This is the day that many people are most concerned about. Susan had called the Mormon center in Salt Lake City to ask if they could help. They gave her the name of the Mormon Bishop in Delta who in turned notified the local supermarket and a filling station that I was out there somewhere and would anyone who was heading west take along some water? Susan had also called the Utah state police and ask them to help. So early in the

morning a highway patrol car stops and hands me a plastic gallon jug full of water that had been frozen. They said they didn't want strangers dying alongside the road. A short while later a car stops and I'm given another gallon of water and a ten pound bag of ice. Later in the day, a road maintenance crew stops and gives me a gallon of water. Then the UPS truck stops and drops off one gallon of water from the manager of the restaurant and two gallons of ice water from the farmer I had met earlier. Then she comes herself, driving 70 miles to give me a quart of apple juice in the middle of a bag of ice. Then another gallon of water from someone who had gotten the word at the supermarket. Finally at the end of the day a woman stops and asks if I need water. My cart has gallon jugs of water stuffed everywhere. I start to say that I don't, change my mind when I see the expression on her face.

"Could you use a gallon, I ask?"

"Not really, I brought them for you—they said you needed water", a little irritation in her voice.

I take them from her and wait until she drives off before opening my cart for fear she will see the inside. I end the day with six unopened gallons of water after splurging all day, drinking until I'm bloated, wiping my face with wet towels, wiping the dust off my arms and legs. I'm laughing to myself most of the day.

Midafternoon I encounter another marsh. The road passes through it for many miles. It is in the process of drying up. There are still some areas covered with water but much of it is just mud. Hundreds and hundreds of birds scream as they swoop back and forth, not liking my presence. Their cries are not pleasant and became less and less so as the hours wear on. I avoid horse flies by walking very fast and keeping myself covered with repellent. I'm developing a special dislike for them. They are slow fliers, circling several times, never more than waist high. They bounce against my legs once or twice, just the lightest tap on my skin. Then they land and immediately bite. YOWL, excruciating pain for a minute or two. They don't fly away so I always have the small satisfaction of killing them after they bite but it never seems sufficient revenge.

As dusk comes on, I start walking faster and faster, not seeing the end of the marsh and not wanting to make camp in the middle of it. Then something bites me. I believe it to be another horse fly but I hadn't seen it or felt it first. Then another bite. I stop, trying to see what it is. Immediately I'm surrounded with hundreds of mosquitoes. They are landing on me everywhere, three or four biting at once. I can't slap at them fast enough. I'm jumping up and down, stamping my feet, almost in a panic.

I make a dive for more repellent but can't find it buried in the cart. Then I spot my rain poncho. I throw it over me, pull the hood up over my head and stoop low enough so that it covers my legs. They are still coming up underneath but by moving continuously, stamping my feet and slapping at my face, I avoid getting into a complete panic.

It's clear that I can't continue walking. I spot a small sandy area and pull the cart off the road into it. The number of mosquitoes increases dramatically. Somehow I get my tent up, dancing madly all the while, then dive inside. The inside is filled with mosquitoes, while outside the noise of their wings is unbelievable, a living hell. It takes me almost an hour to kill the ones inside of the tent, many of them getting full of my blood before I get to them; another hour before the swollen areas on my skin subside. It's almost dark when I finally relax. Their din outside continues through the night. I take delight in spraying the netting on the tent openings where dozens of them are crawling. Pure warfare—where have my feelings of peace gone?

SATURDAY, JUNE 13

MILE 655

I thought the morning sun would chase them away. I wait until it is much later than I usually get underway, then finally have to confront them again. There are still hordes of them. I break camp, doing a repetition of my evening dance, pull the cart back onto the road and head down it at a fast lope. In a short while I leave the marsh and the mosquitoes behind.

I arrive in Hinkley mid-morning, load up my insides with cold drinks and a little food and continue on to Delta. The day is turning very hot. Long before I get to Delta, all the water in my cart has gotten very warm and I dump quite a bit of it (being careful not to let anyone see me). I stop at the first filling station I see and down two cans of ice cold soft drinks, rest under a tree for a few minutes, thankful for the shade, and continue into town.

As I am passing over a railroad overpass, I go by two men, a news reporter and a cameraman. For a brief moment I think they may be waiting for me, then chastise myself for having such a big ego. When I go by them and they don't say anything, I have some more words with myself about the art of being humble. Then a minute later they came running up to me.

"Are you for real?", one asked. I assure them that I am. They look at each other and agree that it might be more fun to interview me than cover the opening of the new power plant that they had been sent down from Salt Lake City to do. We spend a couple of hours together talking and sharing lunch. It is enjoyable to share my adventures with them, it has been awhile

since I've spent more than a few minutes talking with anyone.

Afterwards I walk over to a hardware store to look for a few camping supplies. I quickly spot a Coleman stove, a bit less than \$30 and a gallon of kerosene for the two lamps. That would leave me with less than ten dollars and I haven't as yet bought any food. My supplies are starting to get low again. The temptation is too great however, the thought of warm food and especially hot cocoa overrides the possible foolishness of not saving my money for food. And besides I have a place to stay tomorrow and probably the next couple of days after that. On the way out of town I spend all but a dollar and change on food. The manager of the supermarket comes over and said, "so you're the one everyone's making such a fuss over." He had been the person called by the Mormon bishop and had put up signs asking people to take water to me. My love for Utah continued.

A mile out of town I stop to look at my map again only to find it missing. I had been looking at it at the supermarket where I had called Susan. Since I've been annotating maps as a way of keeping at least some form of a journal there is no choice but go back. This particular map contains both Nevada and Utah and to leave it behind would mean I'd lose all of my notes since leaving California. I say a couple of unkind things about my absentmindedness, pull the cart partly off the road so that it won't be quite so visible and, leaving it behind, head back into town walking as fast as I can. The map is still in the phone booth where I left it. A half hour later it is over and I try to put the wasted energy out of my mind.

Shortly out of Delta, I leave highway 6 and turn south on 50. It is always with mixed emotions that I leave a particular road after weeks of traveling on it. It is a juncture, a turning point, like crossing a state line or a major river. A little sadness at leaving a friend and excitement at meeting a new one. The road has been pointing directly at a mountain range which I really don't want to cross but just before reaching it, the road turns and skirts along the foothills, remaining fairly level.

After making camp, I unpack my new stove and light it. How can I describe my pleasure at eating a hot meal and knowing that I won't have to eat cold meals again. I luxuriate over two hot cocoas. I'm broke again but it doesn't matter, life is very good.

SUNDAY, JUNE 14	MILE 672
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The next day is very hot again. The land isn't barren however but contains fields of alfalfa, dark green and sending out waves of perfume. Every few miles there is a roadside tree providing a few minutes shade. After an especially long time without shade, I spot in the distance a giant

cottonwood tree. It is somewhat off the road but I manage to pull the cart to it, then spend half an hour laying on top of the cart, watching the leaves and the clouds above as they move with the wind. When I finally tear myself away and start to leave, both of the cart wheels are flat. I have a repair kit with me, quickly find a puncture in both tubes, patch them and pump the tires back up. A few hundred yards down the road, one tire is flat again. Once again I find the puncture and fix it. Once again a quarter mile down the road, the same tire is flat. Before the tire stays pumped up for more than a few minutes I repair six holes. What a costly rest stop that was. How I come to respect the ability of thorns to decimate a bicycle tire. All the flats that I have across the country are caused by thorns, none by nails, tacks, broken glass or any man-made object.

As I approach Holden, a man walks from a house alongside the road carrying a large glass of ice water. While we are talking, a pickup stops and I'm greeted with, "are you the man walking across the country?" When I answered that I am, he tells me that he is Lester D., the local Mormon bishop, and would I like to spend the night with them? Since I've only spent one night in a regular bed since leaving Susan, I heartily agree. I am also totally out of money and have only a little food left. We pile the cart in the back of his pickup and drive to his home where his wife offers a warm welcome. Later, during dinner, a neighbor calls to say that I am on the evening news. We quickly turn on the television in time to hear that I will be on the next segment. I'm quite surprised to be on TV out of Salt Lake City, over a hundred miles away and even more surprised at how much time they spend covering the walk (you can view this news broadcast text on YouTube https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCscJz1URAvskU_o17U8-PkA).

Over dinner they tell me some of the stories of the Mormon trek to Utah, pulling their possessions in carts by hand from Illinois. They didn't have the paved road that I have. My walk pales in comparison.

After dinner I crawl into the bathtub and soak for a long, long time. How incredibly good something as simple as a bath seems to me now. Cool night air drifts through my open window and the rhythmic chorus of cicadas quickly lulls me into a profound sleep.

MONDAY, JUNE 15	MILE 687
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In the morning we drive down town and Lester shows me his church, simple and practical, nothing ornate not even a cross. Ninety percent of the people in this town are LDS people—Latter Day Saints. Righteous people, strong family ties, hard working. I learn that a Mormon bishop has a lot of

responsibility but receives no payment. In fact he continues to tithe. Therefore the bishops must continue to earn a living to support what are often large families, while at the same time spending a lot of extra time in the service of his fellow townspeople.

Lester drives me back to where he had met me yesterday and I continue my eastward journey.

This is the start of my fifth week on the road. A month behind me. One day behind schedule. I'm just beginning to feel at home on the road and now quite certain that I'll be able to complete the walk on time, barring any emergencies. My fears are gradually subsiding. Nothing bad has happened to me so far and I've met many incredible people. The desert is behind me and although I certainly experienced hunger and thirst, I was never in any real danger. I still have the Rockies to cross but I'm not too concerned as Susan is scheduled to meet me somewhere west of Denver and help me by carrying the cart over the worst sections as she did in the Sierras.

When I reach town, the road veers abruptly north and quickly merges with Interstate 15. There is a very wide paved shoulder and not too much traffic. Then the road turns upwards and it looks like I will have a rough climb. As I make the ascent, the wind blows more and more ferociously. But this time the God of the Winds is smiling at me for the wind is on my back. It blows in gusts so hard that I'm pushed forward even though I'm going uphill. I time the gusts, resting when they die down and trotting along when they are hard enough to push me. Soon I reach the top, the easiest climb I've ever made.

The descent is something else. I have to go along at a trot or get pushed over by the cart. It is a strange feeling. The road is going by much faster than it normally does and I'm so used to a set pace that I lose contact with the reality that it is me walking. It feels very much as if I'm a spectator, not much different than if I were sitting in a car driving. There is almost no effort, the wind is doing all of the work.

The day is still young when I see the exit for Scipio. I can see the town stretching out to the right, buildings on either side of a small road disappearing into the mountains. Highway 50 again, my companion for such a long while.

When I make the turn at the exit, the wind now comes at me from the side. There is so much dirt in the air that it looks almost like the smoke from a forest fire. It is uncomfortable to breath but doesn't sting much because the particles are very fine.

I stop at a small country store a quarter mile off the exit. There is a verandah along the front of the store and I pull my cart into the shade of it and try to get out of the wind. Two bikers are there talking together and we

strike up a conversation. One of them gives me a donation of five dollars so I finally have a little money again. Later others come up, some of them mentioning that they have seen me on TV, talk a while and donate a few dollars. I'm beginning to think that if I just hang out the rest of the day on this verandah, all of my money problems will be solved. It is almost uncanny, especially since no one had stopped for a long time.

Finally, my hunger and the increasing money burning my pocket conspire to take me inside where I rapidly consume two hamburgers and a quart of Pepsi. However, even inside, a couple walks up to my booth, ask if I'm the person they had seen on TV and give me a donation. The TV program had mentioned that I was totally dependent on people along the way for my support. I began to really appreciate the power of TV to reach large numbers of people, especially in an area like this of scattered small towns. One news broadcast has made an incredible difference in how people respond to what I am doing.

I'm again scheduled to stay with the local Mormon bishop, so after resting and eating I call him. He soon drives up, we lift the cart into the back of his truck and he drives me to his home. His home is too small and his family too large to accommodate a stranger so he has made arrangements for me to stay in the local hotel. However his wife has prepared a magnificent meal and it is a great pleasure to be part of this family. They reflect the best of what I remembered from boyhood of how country people welcome strangers and do their most to make them feel at home.

After, I'm driven to the Hotel Scipio. This is an old building which the owner, Frank McKittrick, is gradually renovating. The room is simple and comfortable. Two nights in a row in a comfortable bed. A new record.

TUESDAY, JUNE 16	MILE 702
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In the morning I spend a couple of hours trying to finally seal the still leaking inner tube. I had hoped to find a new one, but it is smaller than a normal bicycle tire and there are no replacements available in these small towns. I can't believe how foolish I've been not to have at least one spare along. The instant availability of almost everything in the San Francisco area had lulled me into not even considering that it might not be that way everywhere. I've come about 700 miles so far and one tire has all the tread worn off and is looking dangerously like it might go at any moment. The best that I can find is a hot vulcanizing kit. When I finish, there are seven patches on one of the tubes. It still goes flat every couple of hours.

As soon as I leave Scipio, the road turns south again. If the same wind

was blowing today, I would be heading into it and couldn't continue. Fortunately it has died down and the day is calm. The countryside is beautiful, rather mountainous but green for the most part. It is 27 miles to Salina. The last two days have been short ones, today will make up for it.

A few miles out of town, I walk by a horse whose curiosity and enthusiasm raises my spirits tremendously. He watches me intently then races along the fence separating us until he is ahead of me a bit and waits, his eyes always on me. He runs effortlessly, almost as if he is showing me how it is done—why are you going so slow and clumsily he says, why don't you just sort of float along like me?

And after a mile or so of walking in this beautiful high country I receive a reward that makes everything all worthwhile. Spread out for several miles to the right of the road is a green pasture framed in the distance by another mountain range. Perhaps a mile away are nine horses, wild it seems. When I see them, they also see me, raise their heads, form a line abreast and race at full speed toward me, veering into a single column just before they reach the fence alongside the road and then stop one after the other with their heads over the fence, intently watching me. When I pass them they again race away, heads high and tails streaming, then line up along the fence again a few hundred yards ahead and wait for me to pass. This continues several times until they are stopped by another fence. I am so moved by this experience that I'm oblivious to anything else for over an hour.

Later, I stop alongside a large lake to rest and eat. A woman stops, she is a bit nervous and explains that she knows she shouldn't stop and talk to strange men walking along the road, but her curiosity overcame her fear. She is a schoolteacher, lives in Richfield some miles south of Salina. I feel very proud of her even though she is like a deer, ready to bolt at the first sign of menace.

Still later in the afternoon, a young man traveling with two young women, driving from New York to California, stops to greet me. They are so filled with energy and so glad to meet me and talk that I can't help but to be caught up in their enthusiasm. I sadly watch them drive away, wishing I could join them, knowing they will be a few miles from Susan the next day. They promise that they will call her and let her know that I'm all right.

An hour later another car stops, pulling off the road several hundred feet in front of me. A man gets out and starts taking pictures. When I reach him, he identifies himself as a reporter for the Los Angeles Times. He had seen me by accident, he and his wife are on vacation, but he thinks there might be a story in what I am doing.

I reach Salina about seven in the evening and head for the first place that has something cold to drink. I drink four large glasses of Pepsi, one after

the other. The next two I'm able to take my time over. While I'm drinking them, I notice two men talking to each other and looking over at me repeatedly. Finally one comes over and asks if I'm the one walking across the country. After I reply, he yells over, "see, I told you I saw him on TV the other night. I walk over and join them. They had a bet going on whether I was the one or not.

For the third night in a row there is a family for me to stay with. These are Bahais rather than Mormons, equally warm and generous. It feels good to share with people and this day has been special. So many people have stopped to talk and at the same time I managed to cover the 27 miles that I set out to do. With all of that, I still have enough energy to spend the evening talking with my new friends. My stamina is definitely far greater than when I started this walk.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17	MILE 729
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In the morning, after eating a large breakfast, I walk into town, hoping to find a bicycle tire. A man stops and yells out that he wants to take me to breakfast, that he will meet me at the diner down the street. Over my second breakfast within the hour, he tells me that he and his wife had seen me on TV (I was beginning to appreciate that news broadcast more and more) and she wanted him to make a special point of looking for me. They thought I might be taking this road. He is a rather high-powered kind of a person and tends to dominate the conversation but even so it is fun to talk with him.

I am beginning to learn, over and over again, that people aren't really interested about my walk of peace. Some are very interested in me, where I sleep at night, how many shoes I've gone through, if bad things have happened to me. Most are equally interested in sharing their own experiences and I am starting to understand that the message of peace that I am carrying is relayed best by listening and sharing, not by trying to preach or pretending that I know something special about how to obtain it.

Peace for them often means getting the harvest in on time, having enough to eat, money enough to pay some bills. Peace in the abstract, like world peace, peace between nations, holds little interest. Not that people don't think it is important, it is just that when they are talking to me, who right then is spending every waking hour in the cause of peace, the conversation almost never centers around that theme. They don't ask questions about peace or what I think about it or how they might do something to help make it more of a certainty. They talk about themselves and they ask questions about me. People are interested in people far more

than they are in abstract themes.

I started the walk wanting as much as possible to remove myself from it so that the message would speak for itself. But in the end the message that I am carrying is me, that a person cares enough about something that he is willing to walk across the country in support of his beliefs. It matters far less what my beliefs are than the manner in which I am prepared to demonstrate them. This is what people react to, identify with, and want to support.

After breakfast, I shop in vain for the tire, then stop and get a milkshake in the local drugstore. Two women who work there want to take a picture of me standing with them and by the time all of this ends, along with a long talk with Susan, it is lunchtime. Incredibly, after two large breakfasts and a milkshake, I'm still hungry. It is one o'clock when I finally head out of town.

Just out of town, US50 becomes Interstate70 that will now be my home until I reach Denver. The road immediately starts to climb towards a summit that is over 25 miles away and almost 8000 feet high. I walk until dusk, then start to despair of finding a place to camp because the road has a continuous metal crash barrier that I can't get my cart over. When the barrier disappears, it is because there is a sheer cliff to take its place. Finally, just as it is really getting dark, there is an off ramp leading to an old battered dirt road. Close by there is a small creek and I get my tent up as the last light fades away.

Very soon a large truck comes down the off ramp and heads up the road. Several more follow at intervals, completely destroying the tranquility of the night. I finally see that they are the same trucks that have been passing me since I left Delta. Carrying coal to the new powerplant in Delta from a mine somewhere up this dirt road. The trucks travel at high speed, each making several trips a day and getting paid by the trip. At first they bothered me because of their size and speed and the fact that one went by every few minutes, either coming or going. However I soon recognized many of the drivers and started waving to them. Almost all waved back and several started blowing their horn even when they were going in the opposite direction and separated from me by a wide median. Friendship from a distance—I never met one of them in person.

THURSDAY, JUNE 18	MILE 764
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The next morning I continue the long climb to the summit. The day is cool and exceptionally clear, perhaps because of the altitude. It is close to noon when I finally reach it. I was hoping for a similar slope downwards on

the other side but such is not to be. It is much steeper and shorter, steep enough that going down it is not pleasant.

As I am making the descent a man stops and asked how I'm doing. He is driving a US Government car and for a moment I'm a bit taken aback not knowing what to expect. It turns out that he is a veterinarian working for the government. We talk for a long while. What struck me most about our conversation was that he told me about his trip to Russia a couple of months previous. He went there for an international conference and was amazed at how much the Russians looked and acted like us. He said the only noticeable difference was the language. He was filled with wonder that they could be our enemy. I suppose, like most Americans, he had built up an image of what an enemy must be like, especially one that was part of an "evil empire." It is easy to accept an enemy when their features are unlike our own, like the Japanese in WWII, the North Koreans and Chinese, the North Vietnamese. The Germans were like us but had committed so many atrocities that it was easy to hate them. Perhaps that is why hand-to-hand combat is so abhorrent. It's not easy to kill someone when you have to look them in the eye.

The scenery is quite spectacular. Deep canyons, like miniature Grand Canyons, punctuated with red earth mesas. I would see them from a distance, then the road would wind through them, down into the valleys, then climbing to the top. It is arduous going, but I'm now in peak condition and as the road gets steep I go into my rhythmic breathing, push into the cart harness and trudge upwards. My legs no longer hurt during these times and it is only after many miles of up that I get really fatigued. The altitude has been over five thousand feet for over a month and the high altitude no longer bothers me. Usually a ten or fifteen minute rest will be sufficient to recover my energy. Now that the scenery is so awesome it is easy to get lost in it and miles go by sometimes that I'm completely unconscious of.

FRIDAY, JUNE 19	MILE 780
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The morning of June 19th, I'm approaching what is called the San Rafael knob, a particularly beautiful canyon area. Unfortunately there are millions and millions of tiny black gnats to greet me. I had encountered gnats before, a few of them flying around my head. They are mildly irritating. Repellent keeps them at a distance. These are not so inclined. My face and hands are oily from the repellent and sweaty from the heat. They land on me and then get stuck, finally dying. They fly into my ears, onto my eyeballs, up my nose. They don't bite which is my salvation, otherwise I probably would go mad. As it is, I endure them for as long as I can, then stop and wipe them off with a towel. After a few times of doing this I have

to reapply the repellent. The smell of it is almost as bad as the gnats.

After some miles I reach a rest area. A young woman calls to me from a VW van and motions to me to climb in. What an incredible relief to be free of the gnats even for a short while. She had also been on the Great Peace March of the previous year. She offers some food and we talk awhile, sharing experiences. This is the third time so far on the walk that I've met persons who had been on that walk. I'm amazed, to say the least, at the continuing coincidence.

Finally it is necessary to take leave and continue. Fortunately, the sun has reduced the number of gnats considerably and as the day progresses they become fewer and fewer. The scenery continues to be spectacular, a repetition of yesterday. The up and down also continues, very steep at times.

Then, as the sun lowers in the sky, the gnats start to return although not as bad as in the morning. However they bring along some friends in the form of deer flies. Whenever there are a few bushes, which I suppose indicates the presence of water somewhere, sooner or later the deer flies will find me. The repellent keeps most of them away although they will still come in and bounce off my legs. But once in a great while one either finds a spot that doesn't have repellent on it or decides to bite anyway. So I get very edgy and whenever I feel the little bump on my leg I stop. The fly will be circling around me, they're not really fast fliers, and I usually catch it between my hands, it losing its life in the process. It is hard to convey the satisfaction that gives me.

Somehow I believe that they have become the symbol of everything evil in my life, including that part within me that is not yet at peace. It is primitive and brutal. Their slowness and evident lack of intelligence in letting themselves be so easily killed, coupled with the excruciating pain of their bite when they get through my defense system, strikes a responsive chord within me that isn't nice at all. Mosquitoes don't do that. Certainly I kill them when given the opportunity. But I've gotten used to their bites and hardly notice them anymore. And they're fast and wily compared to the deer flies. Even the gnats don't get to me. They certainly are irritating in the extreme, but they don't impress me as having a malicious intent, more that they bumble into me and can't get away. I almost feel sorry for them.

Over the weeks of being on the road for 12-16 hours a day I have developed the ability to know what is coming behind me almost as well as if I could see. Usually I make a habit of pulling off the road when I know a big truck is about to pass. However, due to the irritated state I'm in from the insects and the up and down mountains all day, I hear a big truck coming from behind but just don't feel like giving way. The truck passes me

and slows to a stop. I begin regretting what I've done very much. There is no one around but him and me. I figure if he is peeved enough to stop an 18 wheeler, he must really be mad. I watch him get out and climb down. He walks around his truck, checking it over and for a moment I'm relieved thinking it is just coincidence that he has stopped close to me. Then he heads my way. I expect the worst.

"Hi", he says. "You're really famous. Saw you on TV and in several newspapers. Just thought I'd like to shake your hand." He shakes my hand and palms a rolled up five dollar bill into it in the process. Then he walks back to his truck without further conversation. As he climbs into his cab, I call to him.

"Thanks a lot—hey, what's your name?" And as he closes the door of his cab he calls back, "They call me the flea."

I'm really laughing as he drives off, both with relief and how once again my preconceptions have gotten blasted.

I'm up high when dusk comes. Too high for a lot of insects so it is enjoyable not having to close the screen flap of my tent. The night is cool, the stars incredibly bright as they always are at this altitude and this far from any habitation. I remember watching the milky way as a boy but it's never visible in the San Francisco Bay area. But here it's not only visible but striking in its intensity. My namesake star, Antares, the brightest star in the constellation Scorpio, is low in the sky, too low to be seen in the bay area but very clear here. A beacon and a friend.

SATURDAY, JUNE 20

MILE 802

I awake early. The morning is chilly and invigorating. Green River is 37 miles away and I have to reach it before the end of the day because I'm going to be out of water. I love the high country, it refreshes and fills me with energy so the thought of walking 37 miles is challenging rather than overwhelming. I have over 14 hours of light and even with rest stops I know I can average at least 3 miles an hour so it seems entirely possible to do although I've never walked that many miles in one day before.

The first miles go by quickly. The road is more or less level for the most part. Gradually off to my left, many miles away appears a giant cut in the earth, a deep, deep canyon. As I continue covering the miles, the canyon gets closer until finally I know that I will be descending into it.

And now I'm in it. How glad I am at this moment to be walking. Cars go by at high speed, the entire descent lasting some 5 minutes. There is one rest stop and a couple of turnouts where the view is exceptional and a person can take the same photographs that thousands of others have taken

standing in the same spot. For me, the descent lasts almost two hours and creates not only a visual memory that will last the rest of my life, but equally strong memories of the smells, the sounds and the physical exertion. The panoramas ever so slowly unfold, one after the other, each step adding a tiny additional view. Striking to me also is the evidence of the effort that went into carving this road, the thousands of side by side vertical striations on the side of the cliffs where drills penetrated them to create an even, six percent down grade and curves that can be taken at 55 miles per hour. Interstate highways always give the impression of man conquering his environment. If the mountain is too steep, carve it down to size, take it off the top and fill it in the bottom, steady on course, no sharp curves, blast away the obstacles.

The grade is 6 percent and it lasts for six miles. For big trucks with big loads, going down means low gear and heavy on the brakes. Soon acrid smoke is pouring out of the wheels with a sulfurous smell unlike and more offensive than the exhaust fumes which pour out also from engines sucking in gasoline or diesel fuel for the uphill pull or not being properly burned on the downhill run.

When I finally reach the end of the grade my back is aching from the effort of holding the cart back. It is clear to me that going over the Rockies will be foolhardy if I don't get brakes installed on the cart. I determine to do it at my first opportunity even if it costs me a day or two and I have to spend food money.

It is very much hotter now and as I cross over a small river I again feel the familiar bump of deer flies hitting my legs. It is now middle afternoon and I've already done what normally would be a day's walk. I'm about fourteen miles from Green River. The remaining water I have is hot and tastes so much like the plastic jug it is contained in that it is like taking medicine. Hunting through my remaining food supplies for something that contains liquid produces a large can of stewed tomatoes. I drink the liquid, eat a few of the tomatoes and throw the rest away. The liquid is salty, I know that I will regret it later, but just don't care right now.

I had assumed when I reached the bottom that it would be a level run to Green River. But then, 10 miles from it, I see in the distance that the road is going back up again steeply. I am enraged. I have just spent two hours keeping the cart from running over me fighting to get down and now I have to go back up again. I suppose my anger is from disappointment and frustration. Misguided expectations. Wrong assumptions. Can I ever learn to accept things as they are? I certainly am getting enough lessons but getting the point is coming hard.

I'm very thirsty as I head up the long climb. My thoughts are completely

absorbed with what it will be like when I reach town with its unlimited cold drink capability. I can taste the cold liquid, feel the ice in my mouth, drink and drink and drink.

Several hundred feet ahead of me a van pulls off the road. A young boy gets out, walks around to the side and sets something down on the road, then gets back in and the van drives off. I can't see what it is, it seems curious to me that he hadn't just thrown whatever it was out the window. Then when I get close I see that it is an ice cold can of Coca Cola, sitting there on the shoulder, dewy on the outside just like the ads. It is hard for me to believe that it isn't an apparition, I have finally gone too long without water. I pick it up and it is still solid and cold. I start laughing and saying over and over, thank you God—you work in wondrous ways. It really strikes me as some kind of a miracle.

The coke gets me over the summit. At the top I can see Green River in the distance. This time there are no more ups. A long slope down and then a few miles of level valley floor. No question now that I can make it. Finally the off ramp is visible, a half hour away. Then the half mile sign, the next exit sign, the long off ramp going down, curving under I70 and heading off to the left into town. At the bottom of the off ramp, a pickup truck stops and a man and woman come back carrying two cans of Cherry 7Up, "one for now and one for later." There is also a bag of homemade cookies. I drink one of the cans while we are talking, then after they leave I drink the other. I try to eat one of the cookies but my mouth is still too dry, it's like eating sand.

When I get into the outskirts of town, I stop at the first service station and buy another can of soda, then continue until I see a restaurant. I tell the young waitress to give me the largest glass of Pepsi she has and then keep a tab because I intend to drink several of them. She brings the first and starts to walk away. I call to her and hand the empty glass back to her. She waits until I finish the second one and brings a third. I say I will drink this one a little slower and order dinner. While eating, the owner comes over and offers a room for the night saying he also owns the motel right behind the restaurant. The waitress lost count of the drinks and says forget it, they are on her. I take a long leisurely shower, drop into bed and die.

SUNDAY, JUNE 21

MILE 839

Today is a very special one as I'm going to see a dear friend of mine who lives outside of Moab. Before leaving Green River, I stop at a Laundromat and while there start talking to an older couple from Ohio. She asks me about my impressions so far and I tell her that I've met many wonderful

people but am also concerned about the level of apathy I've experienced. She becomes somewhat angry and replies that she doesn't think I will see any of that in Ohio and reminds me of how rapidly America had mobilized when WWII began, that Americans may seem apathetic but come through when the chips are down. I don't reply but think to myself how wonderful it would be if we could mobilize for peace with the same dedication and energy that we do for war.

During the afternoon, I became quite concerned when I noticed how bad one of the cart tires had gotten. There was no tread left on it at all and now it was beginning to have a very noticeable bulge in one area which looked like it could blow at any moment. I still had not been able to find a tire of that size and dread what it will be like if it fails. Pulling the cart for several days with one tire flat isn't my idea of fun.

While I'm looking at it, a car stops ahead of me and a man walks up to me with a quart of cold lemonade, introduces himself as Andrew R, a friend of Mitchell (my friend in Moab). He is returning from the San Francisco area, had talked to Susan, knew that I was somewhere in this area and is delighted that he has found me. He notices the tire and suggests wrapping it temporarily with tape. I don't have any but in one of those continuing small miracles, we glance down the road and some 25 feet away laying on the shoulder is a sizable roll of black electrical tape. We cover the bulge up using all of the roll. Then he mentions that there is a bicycle shop in Moab that will have that size tire and could probably install brakes on the cart. He volunteers to coordinate getting it done. He has his young son Bijan along and we walk for half a mile or so, his son sitting on top of the cart and enjoying the ride immensely. We agree to meet tomorrow in Moab.

Then a short while later Mitchell drives up. How can I describe the joy of meeting a dear friend after so many weeks of being alone? We head towards his home and on the way meet the Colorado river. I watch it for a long while, unable to speak, filled with emotion. In my mind it marks the end of the desert, the beginning of the Rockies and a major transition point. Water has become so important to me that I am totally awed by the size of the river and the amount of water flowing in it.

Mitchell's home is a log cabin situated at the base of a red sandstone cliff. It is at the edge of a valley, filled with farms. There is enough water to irrigate so that the valley is green. However Mitchell's home is too high above the water table to make a well feasible. So he relies completely on rain water drained from his roof into two large tanks. Additional water has to be trucked in if it is needed. He has made a small garden. This was no small task since the ground is primarily large boulders. Tons of them had to be dug out first. The garden is carefully watered by drip irrigation. He

has a telephone but no electricity. His lights, refrigerator and hot water heater are powered by propane gas. All of this may give the impression that his home is primitive but this is not true. Windows look out over the entire valley with a magnificent vista. His home is furnished simply but in exquisite comfort. He has found how to live in harmony with his surroundings, taking little, working hard to be sure because the desert is not generous with her gifts of food and water.

By now I've learned to respect the desert. It has much to teach. One gains appreciation for what is truly important. One also learns that it is possible to live with little without being unhappy about it. One becomes strong in the desert, strong in spirit and strong physically. The desert, like the ocean, demands vigilance and respect. I grew to love it, its immensity, aloofness, starkness, its ability to purify.

MONDAY, JUNE 22

MILE 866

In the morning, Mitchell and I drive into Moab and join up with my friend of the previous day. They take me over to the bicycle shop. A design for a brake on the cart is quickly conceived and is soon underway. Tires and tubes are removed and replaced and a thorn resistant liner is added between each tube and tire. While I'm waiting, I walk across the street to the natural foods store. I'm told to take anything I need—there is no charge. In a couple of hours the cart is ready; tires that will last the rest of the journey and brakes that will make going downhill pleasurable at last. There is no charge for all the work either. Wonderful people.

Too soon we drive back to the highway and I'm on my own again. This is a difficult parting. I don't want to be back on the road again. But in less than two weeks Susan and I will be together again, at least for a short while.

This is prairie dog country. Thousands and thousands of them. Carcasses are everywhere on the road. The humidity is so low that the remains desiccate rather than rot, remaining much longer than they would otherwise. Prairie dog sentinels stand on the shoulder of the road, making their strange bird-like chirping sound until I'm within two or three feet, then dash off across the desert sand. I fantasize about opening up a prairie dog repair facility. There are so many parts along the road that I'm sure I can fix any kind of damage. In fact many of them look like they just toppled over from fright, there is no visible injury that I can see. I walk along mile after mile completely absorbed in their antics.

At one point a car stops and a gentleman introduces himself as a ferry boat captain, piloting the ferry boat on Lake Powell. He opens his car trunk

and tells me to help myself to the food and soft drinks that are there. Then he apologizes for not having more and says that he and his wife are going to Grand Junction to shop and is there anything I would like them to bring me on their way back? Their kindness and generosity is monumental. They say they will stop on their return in a couple of days.

8 ACROSS THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 24

MILE 912

I see the sign a couple of miles ahead as a brown square. I try to figure out what it is since I haven't seen any highway markers that color and that size before. When I get within a few hundred feet I see that it is the "Welcome to Colorado" sign. This is a brand new state for me, I've never been in it before. I am filled with much more emotion than when I crossed into Nevada or Utah. It is such an incredible relief to know that the desert is truly behind me and that before too much longer I will start seeing trees and green again, not just occasionally but all of the time. And when I finish crossing this state the Rockies will be behind me. What will the climb be like? I should be crossing the continental divide in about a week. The prospect fills me with excitement and a little apprehension.

The country is almost immediately different than Utah. Gone are the red bluffs, the table mesas. As I drop down in altitude, closing in on the Colorado River and the canyon it has cut through the Rocky mountain foothills, I can see more and more the beginnings of the Rockies. Not high craggy granite mountains like the Sierras I had passed through. These are tree covered all the way to the top and are more rounded, showing their age. Just the same it is clear that I will very soon be starting the upward climb. Grand Junction at 4600 feet is the low point, in fact lower than any point since west of the Sierras. From Grand Junction until the continental divide some 180 miles east, there is a steady upward slope ending up over 11,000 feet at the Eisenhower tunnel.

By afternoon I am again at the Colorado river. Green again too, large trees, bushes, grass everywhere. The highway parallels the river and will for

over a hundred miles. How friendly it seems. I can feel the strain of the desert easing away, a feeling of coming home, the rite of purification by fire at an end finally. I really grew to love the desert, especially the high desert, but water touches some chord within us, perhaps because of our origins in the sea. There is excitement and challenge in the desert, it has a way of making you feel insignificant and humble and when you finally feel that you have been accepted by it, that it is not going to kill you, you can feel pretty high. But for me at least it never conveyed the sense of great peace that being close to water does.

Around four, a van stops and one of the most dynamic and energetic women I've ever met calls to me to get in. She introduces herself and said that there is a live TV interview scheduled at five and also a radio interview right now. It isn't until we are driving that I notice that she is confined to a wheel chair. Later I learn that both her and her husband are wheel chair bound. They are both incredible examples of how a handicap can be overcome. They are also Bahais and like so many Bahais, work diligently for peace.

In the evening, a number of their friends come over to share opinions and to listen to some of my adventures. Among them are people from the Great Peace March. Once again I'm amazed at how they keep turning up in my life. It sometimes seems like half the people in the US were on that walk.

THURSDAY, JUNE 25	MILE 937
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In the morning, Mary Francis drives me back to where she had met me. A newspaper reporter meets us and does a short interview and then I'm on my own again, heading back toward Grand Junction where we have just left from. At the outskirts of town I'm met by a TV news car, the same station that had done the live interview the previous evening. They want to get a more in-depth story and spend over an hour following me, getting shots from all kinds of angles, including on an overpass looking down as I pass underneath. We finally stop in a fast food restaurant and continue talking as I eat. It isn't until months later that I learn the camera had malfunctioned and all the effort had been for nothing.

It's over ten miles from one end of Grand Junction to the other. The road is lined with all kinds of fast food and cold drink places. I'm like a boy in a candy store. Even though I have just finished drinking a quart of something or eating a hamburger, I have to stop at the next one in line. After so many weeks of deprivation, the temptation is too great. It takes most of the day to get through the city.

East of town, the road edges along a palisade and on the right side of the road is a beautiful valley cut through by the river. It seems completely idyllic after the starkness of the desert. As night descends, I make camp, feeling very good.

FRIDAY, JUNE 26	MILE 968
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The next two days pass pleasantly. Although the road is almost always climbing, I do not find it difficult. A seven thousand foot climb spread out over more than a hundred miles is not very steep. So far the Rocky mountains are proving to be rather tame. The Colorado river is almost always in view off to my right. The weather is hot but bearable. I'm undoubtedly in the best health of my life and feel perfectly fit. I had received some money at the gathering in Grand Junction and towns now come up at least once a day so I do not want for food. In less than a week I will be seeing Susan again. All in all I'm feeling very, very good. Saturday evening I pass through Silt and a little after dark am met by Bernie M., a minister from Glenwood Springs. He takes me to his home where I meet his wife and children and then get to spend a comfortable night in a bed, instead of a sleeping bag. In the morning he returns me back to Silt.

SUNDAY, JUNE 28	MILE 1024
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Shortly after starting out this morning, a pickup truck stops and an older man asks if I would like to join he and his wife for breakfast. Although I had eaten breakfast with the Bernie M. family, it doesn't take any coaxing for me to say yes to another. Bob W. and his wife have a small rustic trailer on a small piece of land and they spend a few days at a time there to get away from it all from Denver where their main home is. They are a great couple, in their seventies, but young and vital. After eating, they make me promise that I will stay with them when I reach Denver. When he drops me off back at the road he presses a twenty dollar bill in my hand, says he knows I need it.

A few miles later I arrive in New Castle and amazingly am still hungry so get a milkshake and hamburger. On the way out of town I meet the Bernie M. family again. He preaches at a small church in town which today is having an ice cream social. They promptly invite me to stay but by now I'm finally full and also anxious to get through Glenwood Springs before dark, so I respectfully decline.

I had known since before starting the walk that Glenwood Canyon, which starts just beyond town, might be closed to pedestrian traffic so as

soon as I get to town I check with the state police. They tell me that since it is Sunday, I can go ahead and start through. Glenwood Canyon is spectacular to say the least. It is a deep gorge cut by the Colorado River and extends for almost 20 miles. On the north side of the canyon walls, I70 is being constructed, the east bound and west bound lanes on separate levels cantilevered out from the walls so as to have a minimum impact on the environment and the scenic beauty of the canyon. Below the highway is a very beautiful bike path which at some time in the future will stretch across the entire state. This bike path meanders along the river, often within a few feet of it, the river in this area being filled with rapids and strikingly beautiful. Maintenance people told me that this is one of the most expensive stretches of interstate highway ever built.

On the south side of the river run railroad tracks with very heavy train traffic. The same train must pass through at least once a day because at least one train engineer started blowing the whistle when he passes by me—quite an ego boost.

Fortunately, as it is turning dark I find a sand bar where the river is slow and placid and make camp. Amazingly there are almost no insects, so I spend a luxurious night right along the river in a spot that must be one of the most beautiful in the world. I feel tremendously fortunate to be here, made all the more so having gotten here on foot.

MONDAY, JUNE 29 MILE 1050

In the morning the peaceful quiet canyon of the night before is transformed into a bedlam of activity as the construction workers start a new week. I'm able to walk for a few miles but am finally stopped and ignominiously loaded into the back of a truck and hauled to the end of the construction area. Then, as I'm again heading up the road, a small yellow pickup stops and who should come running up to me but Briar W. and her mother, the people who had been so extraordinarily kind to me back in Nevada. Even an interstate highway can take on the aspect of a small world. It is great to see them again.

As I continue out of the canyon toward Dotsero, the skies cloud over and a cold, wet rain begins to fall. This is not a pleasant rain and the poncho I have doesn't keep it out for long. When I get to Gypsum I'm wet and miserable. This is only a tiny town and I'm very concerned that it won't have a restaurant, but it turns out to have a very nice one where it seems that every one knows everyone else. They have good home cooking and the warm meal performs miracles. When someone notices my cart outside and what I'm doing, they buy my meal and so I leave greatly

cheered. In addition the rain stops while I'm eating.

On my way into Eagle, the next town, which is only a few miles from Gypsum, Bob W. and his wife drive by. They tell me to meet them at a restaurant just in town. They had just bought a new pickup and were returning to Denver. I'm still full from my meal in Gypsum but agree to meet them. I order what I think is a small Mexican plate but when it arrives it is huge. But a few minutes later it is gone. My appetite sometimes amazes even me. When we part Bob insists on giving me another twenty dollar bill plus another from his daughter who, although never meeting me, wants to support what I am doing.

The rain has returned in force and when I start out of town it is coming down in sheets. Immediately I can feel the water coming through my poncho. I walk for about a quarter of a mile getting colder and wetter, then realize it's crazy to continue and return to town. There is a cleaners in town so I go in and ask if they can waterproof the poncho. They tell me it will take about half an hour. Then I decide to get my sleeping bag cleaned at the same time, it's getting pretty foul. At the end, after everything is finished, they refuse to take any money and wish me well. In the meanwhile the rain has almost stopped. Once again I leave town, this time much more comfortable. A few miles out of town, I find a reasonably dry place and make camp. One more day closer to being with Susan.

TUESDAY, JUNE 30 MILE 1075

I arrive in Vail around three in the afternoon. There is a tourists information stand at the edge of town so I stop and ask about good places to eat and whether there is a laundromat in town. The woman attendant tells me a couple of places to eat at that she thinks are pretty good and not too expensive. As for the laundromat she says that there is one three miles back in the shopping center I had gone by. There are none in town. I got the distinct impression that a laundromat in town would not be acceptable. Walking into town, now in my third day since having a shower and admittedly looking a little gruffy, I get the impression more and more from the looks of people, both pedestrians and in cars, that they would prefer my stay to be a short one. Let's get this transient on his way. When I go into the restaurant, the waiter is polite enough but there is a slight air of haughtiness that suggests that he is serving me out of supreme politeness on his part. So I determine to make my stay a short one and camp somewhere out of town.

Then as I'm walking through the downtown area, I'm overcome with the thought that I haven't had a decent coffee latte since leaving home and if

there is any town in Colorado that would have one, this one should be it. Soon I spy a German desert and coffee house, the Tearoom Alpenrose. This seems like the ideal place. Inside there is a cocktail bar and I sit down at one of the stools. A very attractive young woman bartender comes and asks for my order. She says, sure they have coffee lattes. What she brings back later doesn't fit what I had in mind but she says she will make another if I tell her how I want it. The second one is great. I'm the only one at the bar and so we start to make small talk. She soon learns what I am doing and runs under the bar and into the outer room yelling for the owner and shouting that there is someone here who is walking across the country. Claus Fricke, the owner comes over and introduces himself and we talk for quite a while. The young woman in the meanwhile dashes out to find a reporter. Then a man who has been sitting at a table next to the wall, comes over and offers a room for the night at his home. The reporter, a young man by the name of Johnathan Staufer, from the Vail Daily, comes in and we talk for a long while, then agree that he will meet me in the morning and walk with me for a while as I leave town.

I spend several delightful hours at the Alpenrose. Later in the evening, Claus comes up to me and says that there is a wonderful classical guitarist playing upstairs that I must hear. I demur, pointing to my rather unkempt appearance. Upstairs is a gourmet French restaurant; I would definitely feel out of place. He insists that I go up and says my appearance won't matter. He shows me to a table close to the guitarist. As I listen to his playing I can't help getting tears in my eyes. After so many days in the desert where life for me is at a very primitive and unsophisticated level, the contrast is overwhelming. It is as if I've walked through the evolution of mankind from a survival level to the finest subtleties and nuances of life. I sit for a long while transfixed in this awareness.

Around nine I finally leave the Alpenrose, feeling in great spirits and more than a little giddy from several cognacs, complements of Klaus, the warm company of the young woman bartender who kiddingly says she would take me home with her if she had a suitable place (and I might have been tempted), the music and the conversation with Jonathan. I find a phone and top the evening with a wonderful talk with Susan. I have to find Gunter's home in the dark and because I'm a little drunk I barely remember his directions. I wander streets in the general direction that I remember him telling me, hoping for some clue. Finally I spot a house that looks like it might be the right one. I go up and try the door. It's open. He had told me to come right in, my bedroom is downstairs. I take a big gulp and walk down the hall, half expecting someone to start yelling, then find a bedroom that looks like it is made up to welcome me. I take a shower and go to bed,

wondering what I will say in the morning if it isn't the right place.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 1 MILE 1100
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Fortunately it is the right place, for I am greeted in the morning by Gunter and his charming and beautiful wife. We spend some time together sharing conversation and breakfast. I have to leave much earlier than I want to because of meeting Jonathan. They are. A wonderful and gracious couple.

Jonathan is waiting at the Alpenrose. Klaus has prepared several delicate pastries to take along and Jonathan has peaches. He suggests that I plant the seeds along the way in the manner of Johnny Appleseed. We head out of town, meeting several of his friends along the way. I remark about the many incredibly beautiful condominiums back against the slopes of the mountains surrounding Vail. He corrects me by saying they are single family dwellings. Vail is certainly not an example of poverty in America. Then we are joined by his photographer friend and we spend several minutes in a photo session. Finally on the edge of town Jonathan leaves me and once again I am alone. And once again my expectations are totally wrong. The town that I expected to reject me turns out to provide some of my most cherished memories.

Ahead of me today is Vail Pass at 10,600 feet. Vail itself is at almost 8000 feet so the climb doesn't seem that formidable. I'm walking on a bike path which much of the time is actually old US highway 6. It is beautiful and I'm almost totally alone. In the end the climbing is very difficult, sometimes so much so that the only way I can move the cart forwards is by turning around and facing it, walking backwards to get enough strength out of my legs to pull the cart.

At dusk I'm over the top and heading down. Now the bike path meanders in the median between the east and west lanes of I70 but this sometimes is almost a mile wide so that I'm only partially aware of the automobiles passing by. I make camp in a meadow close to the top. It becomes quite cold as soon as the sun sets. I remember this as the only night that I've ever slept with my sleeping bag completely zippered up.

THURSDAY, JULY 2 MILE 1118

When I unzipper the tent flap in the morning a sheet of ice falls off of it. I look outside and the entire meadow is covered with frost. The little creek running close by has icicles hanging from the banks. So I start out walking with a heavy sweater plus my down vest. But as soon as the sun rises

slightly, the frost and ice is gone as well as the sweater and vest.

I come down into Copper Mountain in time for breakfast with a monstrous appetite from the early morning walk. After eating a huge breakfast, I continue on the bike path which lasts for several more miles until I reach Frisco. It is difficult to rejoin the highway.

I have so much appreciated the absence of traffic and the quiet and solitude. It seems much more in tune with my walking. I always feel out of place walking along a busy highway. It is obvious that the road is designed for cars and not for walkers. A car covers fifteen miles while I cover one. Every half hour in a car equals one of my days. When I'm walking on a path free of autos, everything fits into place and I become a part of my surroundings. Walking alongside a busy highway I'm constantly jarred by the contrast between my pace and that of everyone else. There is no time for greeting or acknowledgment. There are obviously humans, part of my race, but they go by so fast that they become part of the impersonal machinery, they could as well be made out of plastic, mere robots with no life or soul.

The highway bottoms out at the small town of Dillon at around 9000 feet and then starts back up again heading for the Eisenhower tunnel at a little over 11,000 feet. I'm still somewhat tired from the ordeal of getting over Vail pass. On the other hand there are two tremendous rewards for me today. On the other side of the tunnel rivers flow eastward—the continental divide goes right through the middle. I will be over the Rocky mountains by the end of today. And most importantly, tonight Susan and I will be together.

After what seems only a short while a car stops and three women come up to me wanting to get a picture and asking how I am and offering me a cold drink. They say that the tunnel is very close now. I'm tremendously elated because it is going to be much easier than I had expected. So after they leave, I keep expecting to see the tunnel entrance around every bend. After several miles, it still isn't visible. I am setting goals as I usually do on hard climbs. Make it to the fifth telephone pole and take a rest. But as the climbing continues, increasingly I'm not able to make my goals. I need to stop every few hundred feet. Worst of all, the road is playing that old optical game of looking like it is going down when it is actually going up at a very steep angle. I don't know why it's so demoralizing but something happens inside when you think you should be able to coast downhill but instead you are pulling with all of your strength. In addition, cars going by are either putting out huge amounts of exhaust as they struggle upwards, or semi raw fumes as they go downhill with the engine braking. The wind is blowing in just the right direction to bring the fumes from both lanes over

to me.

It takes me five hours to go the seven miles up to the tunnel. The five hours take forever to pass. Even when I finally see the tunnel entrance it is another hour of arduous effort before I reach it. I had hoped to be well past the other side when Susan was due to meet me but it is already close to the time. I check in at the maintenance building because I had been told several times that it isn't possible to walk through the tunnel. I'm told that a truck can take me through whenever I want. But I'm very concerned that Susan will be in the west bound tunnel as I'm going through the east one and we will miss each other so I decide to wait a few minutes. And I really want to rest awhile.

After some five minutes of waiting, a car stops and she is running toward me. I must look almost dead. I've lost 35 pounds since the last time we were together. The 11,000 foot altitude and the effort of climbing took all of the color out of my face and I am completely exhausted. She looks at me shocked and concerned.

It's through the kindness and generosity of another Bahai couple that Susan is able to come and pick me up.

Anna S.'s car is a Hyundai hatchback. By some miracle we stuff the cart and the three of us into the car. The tunnel is 70 miles from Denver plus another 20 or so to Boulder so that Anna has to drive almost 200 miles round-trip to pick me up. That she is willing to do it on such short notice is all the more remarkable. And this is the typical reaction of every Bahai that I met during the walk. They are not Christians and so are outside of mainstream religion in America and in numbers they represent only the tiniest fraction compared to most Christian religions in America but they have much to teach us.

I'm not a Bahai, nor a Christian, preferring to follow my own beliefs. My roots are in Catholicism and, in my teens, for several years wanted to be a monk. That has left me with a high level of spirituality. I left Catholicism because of its dogma and sense of possessing the Sole Truth. I do not now feel that any singular group of people, whatever they profess to believe in, have within their dogma the entire Truth, especially when they claim that someone else's beliefs are falsehoods. But I have never known a people who so universally seem to possess all of the attributes necessary to bring the world to peace than the Bahais.

Susan and I remain in Boulder for the next three days. The fifth is my birthday, which is one reason we had chosen to be together at this time. We both at once fell in love with Boulder. It has many of the attributes of our current home in Mill Valley. The couple we stay with will be life-long friends as will many others that we met. We wander aimlessly downtown, just enjoying each other and our time together. My fatigue gradually fades

away. We watch the 4th of July fireworks from the University of Colorado stadium with 80,000 other people and are awed when 80,000 matches are simultaneously lit—an old tradition. It is a time of letting go, of relaxation, of preparation for the second half of the walk, for even though it is only one third finished, Denver marks the half way point in many ways.

I am as good physically as I'm likely to become. I've crossed two major mountain ranges and over a month of desert. People tell me that it is now downhill all the way to the Mississippi. I can look forward to flat land for a long while. There are some rumors that Pennsylvania has some rough stretches but it doesn't seem possible that they can compare with what I've already been through. On the other hand there is still almost 2000 miles left and two and half months of walking and being alone. I know to a certainty that I am physically capable of doing it. Whether I'm psychically and mentally ready is something else again. Being with Susan now shows me how much I miss her and how difficult it is going to be not to see her for at least another month. We are supposed to meet again in Indianapolis for two days and finally in New York (as it turns out neither of these happened and it wasn't until I arrived back home that we were together again).

Some friends felt that I had already accomplished the walk and it would be OK to end it now. As much as that appeals to me, it is absolutely clear to me that I need to go the entire distance. It is perhaps a cliché to say that a lot of people are counting on me but I feel that way. Susan believes in me and feels that I can finish the walk and should. So many people that I've met seem to fulfill some of their own dreams in what I'm doing and I want to show them that it is possible to have dreams and make them into reality. So it never really entered my mind seriously to consider not going all the way.

We spend one evening with a group of people who are interested in the Peace aspect of the walk. This does not happen often and I've accepted that although people are interested in what I am doing they are much more interested in the personal challenge of walking across the country than in the reasons I am doing it. So it is good to share some of the symbolic aspects of the walk including the flame that I am carrying. A flame is lit from it that is to become a permanent peace flame in Boulder.

Another couple in Boulder provides me with a large quantity of Shaklee products including protein powder (part of a reducing plan), vitamins, sun screen and high energy candy bars. These turn out to be my primary food supply later as we shall see.

MONDAY, JULY 6 MILE 1140

This morning it is time to end our wonderful but very short stay together. Anna Scott once again drives us back to the Eisenhower tunnel and Susan and I very sadly say good-bye. I'm now two whole days behind schedule but feel that I can easily make it up in the remaining weeks. I have 12 miles of steady down. It is a nice present to start the walk again with. Now that I have brakes on the cart, walking down, even when it is rather steep, is quite easy. Without brakes this 12 mile stretch would have probably laid me up for a couple of days with a traumatized back. I keep thanking the good folks in Moab all the way down. It is early afternoon when I start walking today so when dusk comes I still feel energized and continue walking until I find a beautiful meadow area overlooking the road. Since this is an interstate highway there is a high fence along the road which greatly limits the possibilities for camping. Fortunately sometimes the fence is well back from the road, especially if the road is cutting through a bluff. So I'm very happy to find this rather secluded area just as it is turning dark.

TUESDAY, JULY 7 MILE 1166

Beautiful country again today as I approach Denver. A few stretches of strenuous up after the wonderful all down of yesterday. But the day is cool, even a few sprinkles, and I'm well rested so I don't mind the extra exercise. Finally I reach the summit of a long steep climb and Denver is spread out below me. Beyond Denver, to the east, is flatland as far as the eye can see. What an abrupt end to the Rockies. Again on one hand I'm overjoyed at the prospect of easy going and on the other I'll miss the beautiful mountains and the high country very much.

A car stops and a woman invites me to stop and talk awhile which I'm delighted to do. She is very interesting to talk to and I like her a lot. We agree to meet again in Denver where she lives. Her conversation brightens the day.

In the late afternoon a state policeman informs me that I will have to leave I70 as it is too dangerous for me to continue on it. On the other hand he tells me that I can take US 40 which more or less parallels I70 and is only lightly traveled. I take the next exit and am soon on the old road. It is in fact much more pleasant because of the lack of traffic. As it starts to get more and more dusk I get concerned because there does not seem to be any suitable place to camp. The road is cut on the side of a mountain so that the left side of the road is a bluff and the right side a steep drop off. Without camping right alongside the road, I'm not finding anywhere to stop. Finally I see a burned out restaurant on a hill overlooking the road. There are NO TRESPASSING signs all over but I feel that no one will

mind my spending the night here, so I pull my cart up the long winding road to the top.

The restaurant had been a large one, it must have been quite a fire that destroyed it, probably visible for miles. I feel somewhat uneasy spending the night because of the sense of death, even the death of a building leaves an aura behind. But there doesn't seem to be much choice and it is very quiet. After I'm situated a patrol car drives up and asks what I'm doing. After telling him about my walk and that I will be gone at dawn, he wishes me well and says I'm welcome to stay.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 8 MILE 1200

In the morning I walk into the outskirts of Denver, have a large breakfast and call the W. couple. They are delighted to hear from me and tell me they will meet me a short way down the road at a shopping center. It means I will lose almost another day's walking but I don't feel like disciplining myself to keep walking. So the walking ends after only a few miles and I spend the day with them. Such a delightful couple, if I have half their energy when I reach their age I'll consider myself very fortunate. We have lunch at a senior citizen's center that they are members of and am officially accepted as a senior citizen, having reached the age of 55 a couple of days before. I spend a relaxing afternoon and evening punctuated by a lively thunderstorm that I'm glad to miss being out in.

THURSDAY, JULY 9 MILE 1203

Now I need to get some serious walking done. One, I'm considerably behind schedule and two, Denver is sprawled out and I need to get through it and out in the country again in order to find a place to camp.

I am hoping that I will get some TV coverage here and in fact the W.s have tried to line up something but for whatever reason it doesn't happen. One reporter interviews me and takes a few pictures but that is the extent of media coverage in Denver. I'm later to regret that more strenuous efforts weren't made to get the TV coverage.

As the day progresses I'm also getting more and more disappointed that no one is approaching me and also no one is offering to make a donation. Bob W. had tried to give me another \$20 but I refused saying that they had already done so much I couldn't accept more. Finally a woman runs out of a car dealership and invites me in for a cold drink. We talk for a short time, have some pictures taken and she presses \$20 into my hand as I leave which I'm tremendously grateful for.

Later two young women stop and are very excited to meet me as they had been in Vail, knew Gunter and had read the article in the Vail paper that Jonathan had written. They lift my spirits considerably. I am still feeling pretty sad about being away from Susan again. The first opportunity for us to be together won't be until mid-August. That seems a lifetime away right now.

Around noon I call Sue, not really expecting her to be home, but she is and invites me to stop by. Her place is almost on the way and so I spend a very pleasant couple of hours with her sitting alongside a swimming pool and thinking how easy it would be to just forget about walking and sit back, relax and enjoy a lazy life. But a strident voice inside of me keeps telling me to get moving or I won't make it through town before dark.

One of the most difficult parts of the walk is forming close and warm friendships only to leave within a few minutes or hours. I'll walk through a small town on a warm Sunday afternoon and see couples and families enjoying each other, going for a walk (just a short one), sitting around in their back yard, going to a movie, playing together and I will walk by them, feeling distant and aloof, my life totally unlike theirs.

On one hand I so much want to be a part of that life and on the other know that what I am doing now is the only possibility for me. I sometimes think of Jesus and his cry, "if it be thy will, remove me from this cross", even though he went to his death willingly. I am willingly doing this walk but wouldn't it be great if I could be doing something else right now?

It takes a long time to get through Denver but when the city ends it ends quickly. Of a sudden I'm in the country again. At exit 295 I leave I70 and begin my journey on US 36. It will be eastern Ohio before I leave it. I70 is too impersonal to make me feel like I'm leaving a friend and I leave it gladly. Traffic on interstate highways is fast and loud. People are much too intent on where they are going to want to stop and share time with a stranger and few do. Going through a large city is exhausting both physically and emotionally. It is very difficult to walk on the street because of the traffic and often impossible to walk on sidewalks because of the high curbs.

I strongly relate to people trapped in wheel chairs because they are constrained in the same way as I, needing to get two wheels down over curbs and up over them and often this is just not possible with the way older sidewalks are constructed. There is no consistency either, there may be several blocks that are fine and then you are confronted with an impossible curb that forces you to backtrack in order to find a driveway you can go down, then out into the street, sometimes into heavy traffic. In any case it will be several weeks now before I will have to face a large city again.

There is a large truck stop at Watkins, just off of I70, where I enjoy a good meal and two large milkshakes. Afterwards I walk out of town and immediately start looking for a place to camp. After a mile or so, I spot an isolated area some distance from the road that has a tree overshadowing a flat area. There is a long stretch of white sand between it and the road but I see tire tracks crossing it and decide to try it. The sand is softer than I want it to be but once in it there is no turning back and after struggling for several hundred yards, I finally reach the tree which by now does not seem worth the effort to get there. But it is far from the road and quiet and I sleep very well.

FRIDAY, JULY 10 MILE 1234

In the morning, I neglect to do something that I am to regret for the remainder of the walk. I've gotten into the habit of taking inventory of my supplies as I repack them each morning but for some reason, this morning I don't and as a result leave one of the tent poles lying in the sand. From then on, the tent goes up looking askew and in a high wind it flaps a lot, threatening to fly off with me in it.

Today is hot. At mid-morning I reach Bennett and get a large milkshake at a small shopping center at the edge of town. A convertible drives up with three energized young men, long hair, a little wild looking. I nod to them and start to walk off but they come running up and start to ask questions. They are from Canada and are very enthused about my walk. I always have a tinge of self-defensiveness about the theme of my walk; especially in this part of the country it seems a little foolish and trite to be making a 'Walk of Peace', instead I ought to be helping harvest the wheat or doing something else useful. But they think what I'm doing is great—they don't feel Americans are concerned about peace nearly as much as the rest of the world and it is reassuring to them to see an American who is.

Six more miles and I'm in the town of Strasburg. These small towns so close together are wiping me out financially because I can't resist the temptation to get something when I pass through a town. I use them as a reward system, a carrot to get me several more miles down the road. So in Strasburg I get a bowl of soup and a glass of beer, spending almost three dollars in the process. I leave town chastising myself for not being more frugal. Then in eight more miles I reached Byers.

By then it is very hot. I rest under a tree just at the edge of town and prepare a Shaklee milkshake. A young girl comes from across the street and asks if I'm selling ice cream. I tell her sadly that I'm not, in fact at this moment I would like nothing more than to have my cart filled with ice

cream and other cold things. Her mother walks up as I'm telling her this and she offers some frozen bon-bons that I gratefully accept. I have an insatiable appetite for anything cold so that, when a few minutes later I pass by a fast food place on the way out of town, I have to stop and have one last quart of ice cold lemonade.

Until now US 36 is a small country road more or less paralleling I70. Just out of Byers, I70 turns south and US 36 hightails it for Indianapolis, some 1200 miles away, in just about a straight line. A wide road with wide shoulders and not much traffic, ideal for walking. Immense high plains wheat country. Many times I turn in a slow circle looking to the horizon and see nothing but wheat fields. It is hilly country but I expected that, still being close to the Rockies. I'm only a few days from Kansas now and all I've heard about Kansas is how flat it is so I'm looking forward to the opportunity to walk on flat roads. So far, except for one day in California, I've never had a stretch of flat country more than a few miles long.

A few miles out of Byers an older woman slows down her car as she approaches me and reaches out her arm as she drives by, handing me a can of cold Pepsi. Her good Samaritan instincts can't quite overpower her fears but at least we share a second or so of contact and I appreciate her thoughtfulness in whatever form it is presented.

Then ahead of me and off to the right, moving slowly across the fields towards me, is an immense wall of sand and dirt. I had witnessed little 'dust devils' before but this is frightening and there is no place for me to take shelter. Fortunately, most of it passes in front of me and the little bit that surrounds me is only irritating. Soon after I make camp.

SATURDAY, JULY 11 MILE 1268

Today is much different than yesterday. The town of Last Chance is over twenty miles away and even if there is a town sooner, I'm just about broke, less than two dollars. I don't have a supply of ice either so my Shaklee milkshakes aren't going to be as good as when they are ice cold. I expect that someone will stop during the day so that by the time I reach Last Chance I will have enough money for dinner. It has been west Denver since there has been any donations and it is time for my fortune to change.

The day is hot again, broken by some clouds. There are several more large dust storms visible but none of them surround me. Wheat harvest is in full swing. Giant combines crisscrossing the fields, combines and crews coming from as far as Canada to take part in the harvest. One machine, costing a half million dollars or more, can harvest over a hundred acres a day, the operator sitting in air conditioned comfort. Trucks filled with tons

of wheat kernels run up and down the road constantly, commuting between fields and storage granaries. I quickly learn the sound of a truck carrying a combine and move far off the road as it comes up behind me. This is not the time to make them pull over into the far lane to get around me.

It's almost dusk when I reach Last Chance. No one has stopped today. I find a few coins on the road during the day, so have enough money to buy a bag of ice and a quart size cola but nothing for food. I make a meal of some canned goods buried in the bottom of my cart—a small can of tuna, a package of noodle soup, a Shaklee milkshake. Not particularly good but my stomach is filled anyway.

A thunderstorm comes up during the night and I enjoy the sound of the rain and the coolness that it brings. I expect it to pass quickly and tomorrow to return to the heat that has been my constant companion for the last few days.

SUNDAY, JULY 12 MILE 1292

But in the morning it is still raining and decidedly not warm. The rain, instead of being warm and pleasantly refreshing, is cold and coming down hard. I wait hoping that it will end before I have to start the day, but it shows no sign of stopping and finally I go out into it. My poncho works for a few minutes and then gives way, the Scotch Guard treatment unable to keep the rain from penetrating.

As I head down the road, the rain increases in intensity and finally I'm as wet as I can get and it only remains to endure. A pickup stops and a combine operator, as sad as I'm about the rain, asks if there is anything he can do. There isn't, so after talking about the interrupted wheat harvest for a few minutes, we part. He doesn't ask me why I am walking on this road on such a miserable day, probably believing that I'm an itinerant looking for work and perhaps not wanting to embarrass me.

Later, a couple stops and hands me a cup of hot coffee through the window of their car. It's obvious that I'm much too wet to offer letting me get in the car and they drive off. They also don't ask why I'm on the road. I have to drink the coffee fast because the rain is coming down so hard that it is rapidly cooling it and the bit of warmth feels very good.

Around noon I reach Lindon. There is a small roadside rest, actually a memorial to a beloved town resident, that offers some shelter. From there I can look down a side road to a restaurant that offers warmth and food, but now I'm totally broke and, as hungry and miserable as I am, don't feel like begging. I have some hot chocolate mix and prepare a pot of it, hoping that the rain will end, seeing occasionally some brightening in the east, but then

it quickly turns dark again and the rain comes down hard.

As I sit under the awning of the little rest area, I recall a conversation I had with Susan yesterday. She had attended the summer director's meeting of Pathways To Peace and passed on to me how proud everyone was of what I was doing and how much they loved me. I suddenly get very angry. At that moment I feel there is probably no one on earth more supported and loved than I am. But the support is all symbolic. And I angrily tell myself that I would trade all of that love and support for a warm bowl of soup at the restaurant I can look at now but don't have the means to enter. I would trade it all for a rain garment that would actually keep out the rain and that now is well beyond my means to buy.

The instant I angrily tell myself all of this, it is as if I'm struck by lightning and I say in the next breath, "Thank you God for this lesson." And I instantly divide the world up into two kinds of people; wavers and stoppers. Out of every thousand cars that go by me every day there will be 999 wavers for every one that stops. And all of these years what group was I in? I wasn't a stopper for sure. I constantly drove by people alongside the road, walked by people sitting and lying in doorways with no place to spend the night, ignored pleas for help from the hungry and from those who help feed, clothe and house the destitute.

The purpose of my walk is symbolic, in fact Peace itself as a concept is symbolic and working as a Peace Activist is working in the abstract. Perhaps that is why there are so few Blacks or Minorities in the Peace Movement. Perhaps that is why I am not acknowledged when I walk through poor communities. It's fine to work for Peace when you have a full belly and a warm place to spend the night. When you don't, peace loses its appeal in favor of more immediate needs. Here I am, hungry, wet and cold for a few hours but knowing that it will end and knowing that if things get really bad, I can always go back home to Susan and my friends. What is it like for all of those who have no home to return to, who have no one that loves them and that have hunger and cold as a way of life? There can never be peace in the world while we ignore these people.

I vow at that moment to become a stopper.

As I sit waiting for the rain to ease off, I try and sort through my confused thoughts. What is peace, really? How would a true man of peace act? What kind of a person would he be? I will share with you what I came up with. Maybe it will sound a little hokey and maybe it's only the ramblings of a man soaked to his skin and shivering but here it is anyway.

9 A MAN OF PEACE

What are the attributes of a man at peace —I am using the word “man” as a synonym for a sentient being? Certainly there is a spiritual side which fills him with a feeling of oneness. Uniqueness certainly but not in a way that makes him feel superior, rather that he is able to see his role as he fulfills his part of the whole. He does not feel that his way is the only way, that his beliefs are the only true beliefs. There is room in his heart for all, for he loves the uniqueness of others as he loves his own. Above all he is just. He claims nothing for himself at the expense of others.

He is capable of anger but not of hate. He is angered at injustice, intolerance, bigotry, prejudice, cruelty and apathy. And he has learned the capability of anger to provide energy for change. Anger can be channeled into blind confrontation and destruction, both antithetical to peace. It can also be channeled into creativity, humor and example. He has learned that most people react more positively to leaders than to drivers, to words of encouragement, hope and what is possible rather than words of derision, prohibition and negativity.

The man of peace is strong but not belligerent. His strength shines through his eyes. His strength lies in his unwavering purpose and sense of justice. When confronted with intimidation, terror or even his own destruction he does not rely on his superior physical strength because the use of physical strength forces one side or the other to give way, to lose and in so doing, to become embittered and vengeful. Rather he relies on his wisdom, intelligence, even cunning so that the other either comes to appreciate his own folly or becomes a victim of his own evil. He knows also that resorting to violence in the name of peace or as a means to peace is a mockery and can never achieve its intended goal.

The man of peace attracts others through example. He does not try to coerce, proselytize or bribe others to follow in his footsteps. Not everyone

wishes to be of peace, not everyone believes that it is the right way or the only way to live one's life. Some are by nature violent, argumentative, and destructive. Some are bullies, bigots and tyrants. Some are weak, permissive and like to be victims. The man of peace has learned tolerance and until man has evolved further, men who embrace peace will have to live alongside those who don't. Those who don't can't be eradicated or ignored. They can't be bludgeoned into submission or placed in prisons to rot their lives away. If the man of peace bands together with other men of peace and men of peace stand united throughout the world, then men of violence will be in the small minority and will have no recourse but to vent their violence against other violent men which is as it should be.

The man of peace is not a man of fear. Fear ultimately results from the failure to come to terms with one's own death. The peaceful man has done this and has converted death from his worst enemy to his best friend. While loving life he accepts his death which may come at any moment and, realizing this, he lives his life to the fullest so that at the moment of his death he has no regrets and does not wish that his life could have been lived differently. Accepting death as his friend he becomes fearless and is immune from coercion, threats and acts of terror. He does not seal himself in a fortress, does not arm himself anticipating the worst and does not kill in the name of Self Defense, Vengeance, Righteousness, Justice, Peace, or God.

The man of peace recognizes no enemies. Those who would do violence to him are accepted as a necessary part of life which will exist until man has evolved beyond his primitive instincts. He is calm in his belief that as long as he remains true to himself and bands with others who hold the same belief, violence will beget its own end. Those who live by the sword will die by the sword.

Because of his fearlessness, the man of peace cannot be enslaved. Slaves value their life more than anything else. The man of peace values his integrity above all else. He does not bend his principles for convenience, including the right to continue living.

The man of peace is a man of action. This is contrary to what many people believe. He loves life and wishes to live it as fully as possible. He desires to share his good feelings and his riches with others. He loves his planet and all the creatures on it and he is willing to devote his life to preserving and enriching it. He loves his home and his country but he does not desire that his home or his country be richer or stronger than any other.

Above all, the man of peace is a man of goodwill and good humor. He does not take himself too seriously. He laughs readily and long. He is not so enlightened that he flies away from the earth. He is ready to poke into dark

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corners as well as appreciating the light. He is quick to laugh at his own faults but does not see the faults of others. He is a man of caring. And most importantly he is a man filled with love because, after all, peace and love are one and the same.

10 DISAPPOINTMENT IN KANSAS

Could I ever be such a person, I wonder? I'm certainly not there yet! One would have to be a saint. But it's nice to have something to work towards. Perhaps someday...

After a while, the rain slackens and I decide to continue. Within a few more miles, the rain stops and the sun returns. I take my wet things out of the cart and tie them to the outside, turning my cart into a moving clothesline. Around four I reach Anton. There is a small restaurant. By this time I'm so hungry for something other than Shaklee protein powder drinks and Shaklee high energy bars that I would have eaten out of their garbage can. In a fit of creative panic I decide to call Susan and get her credit card number and talk the restaurant into accepting it over the phone. Before calling Susan, I check to make sure that they take credit cards.

They don't. I decide to beg. I tell the waitress I'm walking across the country and am out of money and is there any way that I could have money sent later? She says go ahead and pick out something and she won't charge me for it—she says just don't make it a steak or anything expensive. So I choose a hamburger and a cup of coffee. When it comes I nibble it in small bites, trying to make it last as long as possible. She doesn't offer another and probably has no idea how hungry I am but she does offer a piece of pie and I savor it as slowly as I had savored the hamburger. I leave, still very hungry but satisfied now to make up the difference with more Shaklee protein powder. I walk until dusk and make camp, praying that tomorrow will be different.

MONDAY, JULY 13 MILE 1317

Today is different only in that it doesn't rain. No one stops so I have to continue living off Shaklee. At midday I pass through the town of Cope and the name certainly defines my situation. Grit your teeth and get through it time. Put one foot in front of the other and don't think past right now. By scouring through old clothes and the bottom of my cart, I come up with enough change to get an ice cream cone. This helps a lot although I have to turn my eyes away from the plates of food being carried to other customers. I am wearing my Walk of Peace "T" shirt but no one comes over to talk to me, no one ask any questions and no one offers a meal or a drink. What an incredible difference between my experience now and what it had been west of Denver. And now I really regret that more effort hadn't been spent in getting media coverage in Denver.

TUESDAY, JULY 14 MILE 1349



In Kansas

Today is a major turning point of the walk. Because of the actions of one individual, this day marks the end of my disastrous financial situation, and being forced to live off of Shaklee protein products (and in saying that, I heartily bless Shaklee and their representatives Jody and Robin S., because if

they hadn't been so generous my situation would have been far worse).

Around three in the afternoon I enter Idalia, almost at the end of Colorado. I load up with water at a filling station and they are kind enough to offer me cold drinks and all the ice that I need. Just as I'm getting ready to continue out of town, Oz Crosby drives up. I met Oz in the fall of 1986 and worked with him for six weeks helping coordinate the First Earth Run for its northern California segment. We have become good friends. Oz had seen me off in San Francisco and now has flown to Denver from his home in Florida, then rented a car and drove 160 miles to walk with me for the next two days. To say that I'm overwhelmed and overjoyed would be a massive understatement.

We look for a restaurant in town and find one a block away. There is a sign on the door "Closed Tuesday." The next is in St. Francis, 29 miles away across the border in Kansas. Without Oz the "Closed Tuesday" sign would have been fitting irony since I didn't have any money to spend in it. With Oz, we park the cart in the filling station, climb in the car and head for St. Francis, not a day away but simply one half hour.

Sitting in the cool restaurant talking with Oz and gorging myself, I let the events of the last few days slip away into memory and breathe a tremendous sigh of relief. I no longer have to put one foot in front of the other and endure. I'm sitting across from a 'stopper'. Life is very good.

After, we drive back to Idalia, trade his car for my cart and head east down the road. We walk for 17 miles, crossing into Kansas just at dusk. When he asks me how it is on the walk, I do a massive verbal dump until he says, "Stop, I can't absorb anymore—we've got all day tomorrow." We find a place to make camp, stay up late into the darkness talking and listening to the sound of combines. Since it is dry enough to harvest again, they run all night trying to get as much done as possible to make up for the lost rain time.

The transition from Colorado into Kansas is dramatic. The wonderful wide shoulder that I've been walking on since leaving Byers abruptly ends at the Kansas border. If I had known what is in store for the remainder of the walk, I would have been filled with dismay. As it is I'm mildly irritated and form my first bad impression of Kansas.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 15 MILE 1380

We walk to Bird City, close to 30 miles, talking a lot and trading off pulling the cart. It is a hot day, in the middle of nowhere. Tomorrow Oz has an important meeting to attend so that he needs to fly out of Denver later tonight. I can imagine that the whole experience must have seemed like a dream to him later. Oz is a marathon runner but walking almost 50

miles in a day and a half takes its toll. Well-conditioned running muscles are not enough to do what he did with no preparation. He has a lot of courage.

Oz is obviously moved by my plight. At one point during the day he remarks, "Pennies mean a lot to you don't they?" When you are hoping against hope to find a few of them on the road to make up enough change to afford 8 pounds of ice or a cold drink, they sure do. At another point he says, "I never realized that someone walking alongside the road might not have the price of a meal." Neither had I before starting this walk. We pass by someone looking destitute, perhaps have a moment of pity but quickly put them out of our mind perhaps with a tinge of embarrassment and guilt. After all, what can one person really do, there are so many that need help. And I have my own problems. But I can't complete this walk except for those who look beyond their own problems and extend a hand to me.

We are hoping to find someone in Bird City who will take Oz back to his car. We take turns holding up our thumb to no avail. Earlier in the day a woman had stopped and left her phone number with us in case we needed help so we call her and she graciously agrees to drive Oz back to Idalia. When we part Oz empties his pockets, handing me more money than I've seen since starting the walk. He also leaves me his gortex rain suit which is infinitely better than the poncho I've had to get by with so far, and a larger sleeping pad. His eyes seem a little moist, mine certainly are.

After he leaves I pull my cart to the city park and make camp. It is a wonderful place, quiet, with green grass and good water plus a bath room with hot running water. No shower but I can get clean. The last shower had been at the W's in Denver but by now I am used to camp rub downs with a wet paper towel. Not soul satisfying to be sure but effective.

Later I walk down town and find a tavern that serves hamburgers. I order two of them and a large glass of milk. In California it would have cost the major part of a ten dollar bill. Here the total comes to a little over three dollars. Chalk one up on the plus side for Kansas.

THURSDAY, JULY 16 MILE 1410

I'm sitting in a small cafe in McDonald, 8 miles from Bird City when the woman who had so kindly drove Oz back to Idalia, walks in. She has a bag full of fruit and has been trying to find me when she notices my cart outside the cafe. A special person.

The temperature is in the nineties but a wind comes up blowing very hard out of the south. I have to literally lean into it to maintain my balance. Once in a while it angles to the southeast making walking extremely difficult. Once when a large truck goes by at high speed, the shock wave is

so great that the cart lid is blown off even though it is attached with over a dozen screws. In addition I'm learning that Kansas, at least the part of it that I'm walking through is far from flat. Nasty hills, one after another, endlessly day after day. At the top you can look from horizon to horizon, giving the impression of flatness. You can also see the next six or seven hills stretching to the horizon, like the back of a monster dragon. The hills go steeply upward, as bad as the Rocky mountain passes, only lasting for a half mile instead of many miles. Then steeply downward again, so much so that I have to put the cart brake on hard to hold it back so that going down is no more pleasurable than up. In addition the road generally is in very poor condition, especially the edges. One county serrated the road, perhaps to increase traction, but the result is a constant bump, bump, bump, irritating in the extreme.

It takes two weeks to cover the almost 400 miles across northern Kansas. I'm left with few pleasant memories. It is a difficult time and a lonely time. Many days go by with no people contact. Very few are spontaneously friendly. Almost no one stops to talk. When I ask the few that do, why am I getting this reaction, the reply is that there had been a gruesome murder two years ago committed by a transient.

Another replies that I'm viewed as an eccentric and that eccentrics generally aren't liked. I am amazed (and still am) by the dramatic difference in the personality of different regions. The land visible from US36 from Denver to St. Joseph, Missouri is stark; wheat growing in the west and corn, milo and soybeans in the east. There are few trees except in scattered areas. The land cannot be called attractive without exaggerating. Most homes that I see are devoid of creativity, simple box structures constructed for utility and not for beauty. Yards are plain and not landscaped, with few bushes or trees. I wonder whether the land draws a particular kind of person who is content to live in this environment or whether someone who chooses to live there is gradually transformed, losing vitality in the process.

For most of the walk I'm left with almost total recall, in memory I can still walk the roads mile by mile, sights and sounds still vivid. I have succeeded in blanking out the 400 miles of Kansas almost completely. I can stare at a map of Kansas and not remember walking through major towns along the way. So I will share with you the scattered images that remain.

US36 is a poorly built and poorly maintained highway across Kansas. Much of the time there is no defined shoulder, the road surface is pot-holed and fractured. As best I can determine, road repairs are made by spreading asphalt on the road with a grader, and then depending on traffic to pack it down. The edge of the road often has a several inch drop to the ground

alongside. There is generally no attempt made to level the hills by taking off the peaks and filling in the valleys. When it was hot, as it often was, the road surface was soft so my cart wheels and my shoes wanted to stick to the road making it very difficult to maintain a good pace.

Although there are many rest stops along US36, they are also poorly maintained. One, in eastern Kansas, had not had the restrooms cleaned in perhaps weeks. I spent the night there and although I was several hundred feet from the building, the stench is overpowering. I spend a long time watching a spider weave its web. It is a beautiful web, perfectly formed and large. The spider worked very fast, running in ever increasing circles and tacking the spiraling thread to each one that radiated out from the center. It is still putting on the finishing touches when I give up and go to bed. In the morning it is all gone as if it had been a dream. Perhaps it was.

You can smell a pig farm for miles. I suppose the people who live and work on one get used to the smell. Perhaps in self-defense they lose their sense of smell. I've walked several extra miles in the dark to get clear of the smell before making camp. Pigs also are noisy animals and constantly bang against the metal feeders provided them. I often hear that noise first and began steeling myself for the inevitable smell which soon follows. Trucks which are used to transport the pigs leave a stench wake that can last for minutes, even when empty.

Kansas is the first state where I'm really confronted with meanness. During a hard rain, with water running a half inch deep down the road, a pickup truck approaching head-on swerves and passes within inches, throwing a wall of water over me. My feelings of peace are replaced by anger for a while. Some days later, an empty soda can thrown from a passing car, ricochets from my cart handle inches from my hand. This one only annoys, it is more the feeling of helplessness to make any reply to the rapidly receding car.

While resting and talking to two women cross country bicyclist in their early twenties that I've just met outside a fast food restaurant, the manager comes out and tells us to leave because we are getting in people's way. This just saddens me because the three of us have so much to share with him if he would just take a moment.

To balance the meanness, here is a story of great kindness. A farmer is examining his corn as I walk by one late afternoon. He walks across the road to me and starts talking. He says I'm welcome to stay at a picnic area that he has just beyond the corn field. I say, thank you but I want to get a few more miles down the road before ending the day. He says, it is a really nice place with a little pond I can swim in, and that some cross-country bicyclists stayed there last year. I thank him again and repeat that I need to get some more miles behind me first. He says that every year the town

holds its barbecue there and I really ought to consider staying. I look at the large irrigation pipe that I would have to get the cart over and the slightly muddy path that leads through the corn field to something I can't see and repeat my thanks but no thanks. He says, it's getting on towards evening and I have to stay somewhere. I look at the rapidly descending sun and say to myself that I can get up earlier the next morning and make up the lost time.

"OK, I'll take you up on it."

We lift the cart over the pipe and he says it's only about a quarter mile down the path. The path isn't as hard to pull the cart on as I had imagined it would be and it isn't long before it ends at the picnic grounds.

Picnic grounds hell, it's bigger than any park I've seen so far. The pond is a good size lake, with diving boards and rope swings. There is green grass everywhere with picnic tables and barbecues scattered around. He has to have spent many years building this wonder. I profusely thank whatever part of me had finally relinquished my need to get somewhere in a hurry. I make camp and jump in the lake. Not too cold, not too warm. Better than any bath or shower I've had since the walk started. I sleep wonderfully well, in perfect quiet, with the companionship of a large friendly dog who comes down from the house to check me out.

Another farmer, standing well above me alongside the road, and leaning on his pitchfork, watches me approach and as I walk by him calls out, "Shore is hot." I replied, "Sure is." He doesn't ask what I'm doing walking down this road pulling a strange cart or where I'm from or where I'm going. I must have been about the weirdest thing he has seen in a long while but his curiosity, if it exists, doesn't get the better of his tongue's reticence.

One aspect of Kansas that I really appreciated was their water. Kansas has the best water I've ever tasted. Most towns that I pass through do not need to chlorinate the water so that makes it even better. The state could make a lot of money exporting their water.

Another is food prices. They don't get lower. I have major dinners in small town restaurants for less than four dollars, including drink and desert. A huge surprise for me were Fireflies. They don't exist in California, at least anywhere that I've lived. We played with them as children growing up in the Midwest but I've completely forgotten that they exist. One evening, a few days into Kansas, they just appear, hundreds of them and I can see them through the tent walls much as I had seen stars in the high desert. Quite often I make camp in high grass that lays between the road and a farmer's fence and this seems to be their home. They always make the end of the day much more pleasant.

I had another big surprise one night. I had put my tent up right alongside a barb wire fence separating the road shoulder from a farmer's

field. I was trying to get as far from the road as possible. In the middle of the night I woke to a loud snuffling noise that seemed to come from right outside the tent. I poked my head outside and almost into the face of a very large buffalo who was intent on learning what the strange object was that has suddenly appeared alongside his fence. His head seemed very, very large, made more so by the dim light. I'm not sure who was more surprised! He had many of his friends lined up along the fence. I went back into my sleeping bag with my heart part way into my throat. Apparently their curiosity is satisfied because they leave soon after. There is no sign of them in the morning—another dream?

I had stopped in Fort Markley at a beautifully restored house with antique carriages and snow sleighs in the yard. Sue Christner was conducting tours and says that I'm welcome to go on the next one. After we talk awhile, she calls Jim Markley and he generously offers food and a shower, then talks to me for a long while, writes up a piece for the local paper and takes several photographs. A bright spot in the long journey across Kansas.

A very humorous event happened near Hiawatha. I started out for this town early one morning. It is 38 miles away and the day is blistering hot. After taking a break for a few hours during the afternoon, it ends up being one in the morning before I got there. My first real experience walking at night (and my last). As I got close to town I found I couldn't see the road signs in the dark. There is supposed to be a rest stop but I'm not sure where it is. At the outskirts of town, a police car comes screaming by going, I suppose, to an accident somewhere down the road. A few minutes later another police car comes by, then stops and backs up to where I'm standing. The woman police officer is laughing and tells me that the officer in the previous car had radioed that he had seen some kind of an apparition on the road and someone should check it out.

As it turns out, her stopping is a gift from heaven because I never would have found the rest stop on my own. It ends up being a mile down a road that exits off the main highway. There are no signs that would have told me. It's a large park with a lot of trees and some street lights so that I'm able to make camp without having to feel my way along.

I'm a milkshake lover anyway but walking on a hot road amplifies my desire greatly. On this occasion I'm several miles from the next town and very hungry when I see a sign advertising a restaurant in a town that is a mile or so off the highway. Normally I would have kept going, not wanting to walk the extra distance, but my hunger and thirst overcomes my distaste of the extra walking. The restaurant is a small one, more a cafe than anything and they only serve sandwiches and cold drinks. I order a

milkshake and cheeseburger. Both are huge and a dollar each. I think it is the best milkshake I've ever had, although my judgment may be tainted by my overwhelming desire for one. After another round I stagger back down the road not regretting the extra time and extra walking..

11 MISSOURI AND NEW FRIENDS

TUESDAY, JULY 28 MILE 1760

I cross the Missouri river into St. Joseph around noon. There is supposed to be a TV crew to do an interview and I wait on the bridge for almost an hour but they don't show. It is disappointing and at the same time this is the second major river of the walk and spending more than a few minutes looking at it increases the dramatic feeling of reaching another milestone. I feel so incredibly happy to be done with Kansas and am also looking forward to mail call. When Oz returned home, he sent a letter to over one hundred of his friends suggesting that they might like to send me letters (and perhaps cash) to several different locations that he had picked out, each one about a week apart for me and stretching from St. Joseph to New Jersey. This will be the first one. I don't know what to expect but am very excited.

I take the first exit after crossing the river and try to get my bearings. I walk down a street, spot a laundromat and decide to get some clean clothes while figuring out where I am. While there I call Susan and she gives me the Post Office location. In one of the continuing miracles of the walk, it turns out to be a few blocks down the street I am already on. There is a

large bundle of mail waiting. I put it into the cart determined to read the letters after I've found someplace to stay for the night. Susan told me that I would be able to stay at the Salvation Army and I feel it best that I check in as soon as possible. It wouldn't be easy to make camp in the middle of a city this size.

So I head downtown. As I walk by Bill's Tavern a young man comes running out and asks if he can buy me a beer. He had happened to glance out the window during the few seconds that I am visible. I say sure if I can buy him one. We walk in and he introduces himself as Kevin S. and then introduces me to Greg S. They had met earlier in the day. They are incredibly excited to see me. As I learn the story, I share in their enthusiasm. Kevin is a cross country bicyclist going from east to west, Greg is doing the same but from west to east. They had met by accident and thought it was such a great coincidence that they went down to the local newspaper. While being interviewed they find out that I'm supposed to be coming through town today because the same paper had interviewed me earlier. So when Kevin saw me walking down the road, he went wild.

We drink a lot of beer over the next couple of hours, and try to call the local TV station that was supposed to have interviewed me. We think that if there was a story before there is a major one now. But the station is closed for the day. Another table overhears our enthusiastic and loud conversation and starts asking us questions. Then they also try to raise somebody at the TV station and also don't succeed. But they do take up a collection for me. There are a half dozen or more at the table and I end up with a pocket full of bills. Bequeathed all this money, I invite Kevin and Greg to join me for some pizza. We continue to share road stories while consuming a couple of large pizzas, then find an ice cream stand and discover "blizzards" which if you haven't had one (and they're known by different names across the country) are milkshakes sort of except that they are guaranteed to not flow out if you turn the cup upside down and they come in dozens of flavors.

Kevin and Greg have a tentative place to stay for the night but then decide to join me at the Salvation Army so that we can have breakfast together. The place is downstairs and red hot since the day was over one hundred degrees. The room where we are to stay is small and windowless with bunk beds stacked two high and close. The air is moved by one large fan and the place smells of old clothes and urine.

For the three of us who spend most nights in the open air, the thought of spending a night in that room is inconceivable. We ask the attendant if we can throw our sleeping beds on the floor out in the sitting room and he agrees. We shower and settle in somewhat. It is now about one in the morning. Wakeup call is at six. We are still wide awake.

I sit down at a table and begin to open the letters I've received. The warm messages of encouragement and support and the money (over a hundred dollars) brings tears to all of our eyes. It is an incredible time of sharing not only between Greg and Kevin and I but also between all of the wonderful people, many of whom I've never met, and I and my two new friends. So we continue talking for another hour or more sharing experiences that can only be shared by someone who is doing the same thing. I don't think any of us realized how much we miss having someone who really understands. All of us are traveling solo and although we delight in sharing our experiences with others, it is very different when the other can only try and imagine what you are going through. In a way we became war buddies. Kevin says at one point that the single word that best describes our experience is "endure." Greg and I say amen, knowing exactly what he means.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 29 MILE 1778

After a few short hours sleep, we have breakfast together and finally reach the TV station. They agree to meet us out on the highway later. So the three of us head out of town, traveling east on US36, Kevin and Greg walking their bicycles, me pulling my ever present companion. They debate for a long while on whether to take a 60 mile detour down to Kansas City to watch a major league ball game, then after the interview is over, decide to do it. I envy the freedom of movement that bicycles give them and also the flexibility of schedule. Greg has no schedule at all nor any special itinerary other than eventually reaching the east coast. Kevin isn't quite so flexible since he is sponsored by the Real Dairy Corporation and is scheduled to make appearances across the country. I had set a daily schedule that is hard to meet at best (I'm still two days behind) and walking even a couple of miles out of my way adds an extra burden that I usually decide not to do. This is really hard sometimes because there are places to see and things to do a few miles off the main road that otherwise I would have taken the time to do.

Greg and Kevin finally and reluctantly climb back on their bicycles and rapidly disappear in the distance and once again I am alone.

The temperature goes over a hundred degrees every day for the next five days. Walking becomes almost unbearable. Kevin's word "endure" takes on added depth and meaning. In the beginning there is two or three hours early in the morning and just before dark when it is, if not cool, at least reasonable. But then it gets to where the lowest temperature during the night is in the high eighties and by 8 in the morning it is HOT already.

More and more the road retains the heat of the previous day. I don't know what the heat absorbed by and reflected off the black asphalt is but it must add another 20-30 degrees. Pools of molten asphalt ooze out and cover much of the shoulder and make the going even more tortuous.

Fortunately I have enough money now to buy ice and cold drinks. I typically go through 16 pounds of ice a day and two gallons of liquid. I'm constantly soaked in sweat from head to foot. Even with a head band, sweat, salty and burning, constantly drips into my eyes. Every half hour or so I stop and eat cups of ice and drink liquid, as cold as I can make it. I keep a towel filled with ice cubes around my neck and that helps considerably. Many people driving by throw up their hands in shock when they see me and a part of me laughs because none of them stop and it is probably because they think I'm crazy and I'm not prepared to debate that issue with them.

The humidity is also very high so that the air is not pleasant to breathe. Kevin or Greg had said that it is like breathing used air. Oppressive and musty. I try an umbrella to keep the sun off but rapidly find that the heat radiating from the road is worse than the sun and the umbrella bounces that heat back on me.

Missouri is hilly for the most part and I have to be very careful pulling up a hill. I can immediately feel waves of heat coming from my body and I start to feel faint. Since I'm a little giddy and nauseous most of the time anyway, there is a very fine balance between staying cool enough to keep from fainting and doing useful work. I find I can pace myself, choosing the amount of almost fainting that I think I can cope with without actually doing it, and keeping right on that edge.

At the beginning of the walk, I discovered Gatorade and liked it a lot. Now it is like medicine and yet it is vital to maintain my electrolyte balance and drinking Gatorade is the most practical way to do it. I also take potassium tablets and they make a dramatic difference in coping with muscle fatigue. I am now acutely sensitive to the needs of my body and if I start getting tired earlier in the day than I think is normal, it is almost always due to improper sodium and potassium balance.

Normally when I make camp I like to find a secluded spot under a tree or alongside a corn field or down a deserted dirt road. Now I look for high, clear, ground away from trees and fields because trees and fields block whatever breeze there might be. I always spend a few minutes before orienting my tent to determine what direction the tiniest breeze comes from and then face the tent that way with both ends open.

Getting up in the morning is a contest. Five o'clock in the morning is the coolest part of the day. This is when I can finally sleep comfortably.

So I wake up, wanting so much to just lay there and go back to sleep. Another voice says, "this is the coolest part of the day and if you aren't out there walking you'll regret it later." This voice always wins, so I force myself up and am on the road by six or so. Starting out that early should mean that I will have my required miles done by midafternoon but because I have to stop and rest and cool down every half hour or so, the day lasts till dusk.

So at this point you may well ask, "why don't you wait for the heat wave to break instead of continuing in this crazy way?" There are several reasons why I choose to continue. One, I've been on the road almost two and a half months now, have already crossed the desert, two major mountain ranges and 1800 miles and am only two days off my schedule. There is tremendous impetus to continue. And the thought of not being in New York on September 15th after all that I've already been through is totally abhorrent to me. Second, in my optimism, I keep expecting that the heat wave will break. If I can just get through today, tomorrow will be cooler. It can't get worse. It does keep getting worse but each day that I get behind me makes it more difficult to give up.

And finally there is a part of me that is very, very stubborn. This can be a curse but right now it's a blessing. I carry an image from boyhood of standing on the bow of a ship going through mountainous waves with rain and wind pounding me and shaking my fist at the gods, daring them to destroy me. It's not that I don't believe they can or will do it. It's a cry of defiance about my own impotence in the face of overwhelming odds. Because, in the face of those overwhelming odds, we claim our ultimate strength and it's far beyond what we believe is possible in saner times.

So I keep going, one foot in front of the other, get through the next few minutes, the next hour, this day. I have the money to stay in a motel but until August 2nd, the days don't end close to one and I spend the nights alongside the road or at a rest stop. But I end the day of the 2d at Macon. Outside of town, the Sky View Motel beckons me and I'm delighted to heed the call. Surprisingly I also have a bit of a misgiving since I'm now totally immersed in the heat, day and night and wonder if spending a cool night in comfort will soften me so much that I can't continue. On the other hand there is no way that I'm going to walk past this place.

I get a room which seems amazingly cold and then go into the adjacent restaurant-cocktail lounge and order a large margarita. I have that one and then another, all the while uncontrollably shivering. I feel that I will eventually get used to the air conditioning but it never happens. It is strange to feel so cold after so many days of suffering from the heat.

MONDAY, AUGUST 3 MILE 1905

I wake up early the next morning, think briefly about getting an early start, then promptly roll over and go back to sleep. By the time I finally get up, have a leisurely breakfast and am interviewed by the local paper, it is early afternoon. It is over 100 degrees again and the hours that I just spent being cool take a lot of the spirit to endure out of me. It is very difficult to get moving down the road, I really just want to hole up in the motel until the weather decides to get reasonable. I manage to dredge some bit of residual will from the depths of me and finally head out of town. I use as a carrot that I can stay in another motel tonight if it continues so hot.

As the afternoon progresses, clouds form and by late afternoon it looks like it might rain, in fact I can hear distant thunder. Just before dusk I pass through the town of Clarence and by now there are occasional drops of rain and the distant thunder is much closer. I decide to get a room in town, not because of the heat but because of the potential storm but the motel that had been advertised on road signs turns out to be closed.

There are two towns in the next 12 miles and I can possibly get that far before it turns really dark. As long as I don't need to make camp it doesn't concern me so much to walk into the night although I prefer not to.

Two miles out of town there suddenly appears a camping area. It isn't indicated on the map but down a short road are picnic tables and a level grassy area. It seems like a miracle; it will seem even more so in a while. The rain is falling steadily but not heavily as I make camp in the midst of some large trees. I eat a small meal and crawl into my sleeping bag. Soon after there is a flurry of big drops on the tent, then stillness, thunder in the distance steady but not too loud. The wind starts to blow, gusty and warm. Then the rain follows, heavy big drops. The tent flaps are open so I can feel the coolness of the wind and I zipper them up as rain starts to come in on my face.

A flash of lightning lights up the inside of the tent. I count the seconds until the clap of thunder sounds and figure at five seconds per mile that the lightning strike is almost a mile away. Then another, much closer. Then all hell breaks loose.

I spend the next hour or so hanging on to the top of the tent feeling for sure that both it and I are going to go sailing off at any moment. Flashes of lightning never stop and the claps of thunder merge into each other so that there is one long very loud constant roar. I can see the trees through the tent walls and I'm very sorry that I'm in the midst of them because they are bending over almost horizontal and I can't imagine how they keep from

breaking off.

By now everything inside is completely soaked and I really don't care. I'm frightened and at the same time completely fascinated by the intensity of the storm. I'm in a little cloth house which is doing its best to leave the ground and yet it offers symbolic security far beyond its capability to protect me. But I am also completely immersed in the storm, almost a part of it, diffused into the light and sound and fury so that if something happens to me I will be both the victim and the destroyer.

It finally ends. I spend the night laying in water. Fortunately it isn't cold so I'm not entirely miserable. I lay in my sleeping bag pondering what it would have been like if this small picnic area hadn't existed. If I had continued down the road and been hit by this storm, what could I have done, how could I've found shelter? The miracle of this place and its appearance at precisely the right moment is almost unbelievable. I thank God many times this night.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 4 MILE 1921

This day is one of those rare perfect walking days. Flat ground, warm wind at my back and a cool overcast day. The storm broke the heat wave and life is good again.

In the afternoon a state police car stops and a young officer walks up to me.

"Hi, where are you headed?"

"New York City."

"Where you from?"

"San Francisco."

"You walk all the way?"

"Yep."

"How long you been walking?"

"About two and a half months."

"Do you know you're not allowed to walk on the pavement?"

"No, I didn't."

"Well you have to walk on the shoulder. Actually you're not even supposed to be walking on the highway right of way."

The 'shoulder' consists of unmown high grass and weeds. I guess what makes it a shoulder is that it is a more or less level area before the descent into the ditch.

"Officer, there's no way I can pull this cart walking on the shoulder."

"The law in Missouri is that pedestrians cannot walk on the pavement so you'll have to walk on the shoulder. Besides that you're walking on the

wrong side of the road. You have to walk facing traffic."

I try to explain to him that during the two and a half months and 2000 miles that I've been on the road, I've developed a fairly sophisticated sense of what the safest side of the road is and it isn't only the side facing traffic. For example, I told him, if the sun is shining into the oncoming drivers eyes, I'm much better off to be on the other side of the road where the sun is at the driver's back. He replied that his job is to enforce the law and the law is that I have to walk facing traffic and I have to walk on the shoulder.

"Officer, I realize that but I've walked across five states now and I've always found a way to work out a compromise with the highway police. Who can I talk to ask for an exemption?"

"There's no one who will give you one."

"Officer, it's clearly impossible for me to walk 25 miles a day pulling this cart through those weeds. I have to be in New York by September 15th and I can't make it pulling the cart off the highway surface."

"Well, that's your problem. My job is to enforce the law and if you walk on the highway you're going to get arrested."

I am one day's walk from the Illinois border. This is the first time I've had any difficulty with the police. I know that I'm not going to walk on the shoulder so it is simply a matter of getting to the right person to get the necessary permission. If necessary I will go ahead and get arrested and then use media pressure to get me out. I can see the headlines "Cross Country Walker Goes to Jail." The circumstances would have to seem ridiculous to most people. I'm on the outskirts of a small town. I ask the officer, "I'd like to make a phone call—can I walk on the pavement long enough to get to a phone?"

He replied, "You'll just have to do it and see—you're liable to get arrested."

I continue down the road and turn off at the first intersection. I'm not arrested. The young officer drives off and I pull into a vacant lot just off the highway to consider my course of action. I decide I will call the main state police department in the capitol and see if I can get permission. If not, I'm prepared to try and reach the governor. In a few minutes the same officer drives up.

"I just talked to my superior and he says that if you are willing to take full responsibility you can walk on the highway." I think to myself who else but me can take responsibility. I certainly am not going to sue the state of Missouri because they don't keep me off the highway. But I say, "Thanks officer, I really appreciate it."

"Well I think you're doing a pretty brave thing, walking across the

country alone. I could never do that." He hesitated a moment and then added, "on the other hand I've done some pretty weird things in my life. Maybe I could do it."

"I'm sure you could."

"Well, I dunno—maybe." As he starts to drive off he yells, "Hey, if there's anything we can do for you just give us a call."

"Thanks a lot", I yell back.

I stay in town awhile, get something to eat and in deference to the young officer, decide to add a rear view mirror to the cart. Actually I've been thinking about it for some time. Although I've developed a keen sense of knowing what is behind me from my hearing, it certainly isn't as good as eyes. I purchase a big truck mirror, one of those curved glass ones that give you a big panoramic picture. It works wonders, especially when I walk facing traffic because I can tell if the oncoming vehicle can safely move into the other lane to get around me. If he can't I move off the road.

I reach Monroe City at dusk, find the Rainbow Motel, a wonderful place with a good room for \$14 and follow their advice to go down to a particular fast food place that has monstrous steak sandwiches that are out of this world. They are right on the mark. As big as the sandwiches are I eat two plus a lot of ice cold milk. I've covered 30 miles this day and have no difficulty going into a deep sleep.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 5 MILE 1951

I wake up late. There is a note on the door from a 16 year old girl who heard from the motel owners (Bill and Rita Garman) that I'm staying there. She says that she is sorry she has missed me. She is the feature editor for her school paper and wanted to learn more about why I'm walking. I'm sorry that I had missed her.

Bill Garman asks if I would like to join him for breakfast. We go downtown to his favorite breakfast spot where everyone knows everyone. The same people probably have come here every day for many years. Typical mid-America small town.

I don't get far out of town when a car stops. David A., a Monroe City high school teacher, inquires if I would care to join him for lunch. I say sure. I hide the cart, jump in his car and drive to his home where he proceeds to put together a huge meal. After the meal he suggests going into town and getting a quick beer. I say let's go. One beer leads to several more and as we drive back to where my cart is hidden, he suggests that I stay for dinner and spend the night. I'm not making much progress this day, but

with several beers in me, I don't really care, so I say sure, I'd love to. He says you can walk some more and we'll drive down the road and pick you up later in the afternoon. I manage to get most of the way to Hannibal before they come back. David and Lisa have just moved into their new house. When I somewhat impolitely ask what they had paid for it, I receive quite a shock. Their home, if it were in northern California, would cost at least five times more. If only I didn't love California so much. There are definitely advantages to living in the Midwest.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 6 MILE 1965

I make it into Hannibal, the town that Mark Twain made famous, by mid-morning. I'm now three days off my schedule. If I don't do some serious making up lost time, I'll have to forfeit the two day rest that is scheduled for Indianapolis. I'm supposed to arrive there in eight days. Not much time to get all the way across Illinois and half way into Indiana.

Actually it is almost a certainty that Susan won't be able to come up with the money to be able to fly out and spend time with me. This is going to be a great disappointment. I decide if that happens I will use the two day rest to make up most of the lost time and spend only the night there. As soon as I make that decision a great weight lifts from me. All of a sudden I am only one day behind. I'm certain I can make that up easily. So the disappointment of not seeing Susan can be partially offset by gaining two days on my schedule.

Even though I'm behind, I decide that I can't just walk through Hannibal without playing tourist and seeing the Mark Twain museum. The town has taken full advantage of its famous author and is too commercialized for my taste but it is a part of history and I enjoy being there.

The real high point, however, is just ahead. I am about to cross the Mississippi river. Crossing the Colorado and Missouri rivers was an emotional experience but it pales compared to crossing the Mississippi. There is no doubt that when I cross into Illinois I'm out of the west and into the Midwest. I've dreamed of what it would be like since planning the walk. It very nearly marks the two thirds point and I'm only a bit more than a month and a week away from completion. I also have the expectation that the roads will get much better now. Missouri had better roads than Kansas but surely the eastern states, being much richer, will have good roads.

I approach the bridge slowly, wanting to savor the moment as long as possible. Now I can see the river and it is very wide, as a majestic river should be. The bridge over it is neither majestic or wide. Green painted

steel trusses with a road bed having one lane in each direction. No shoulder, sidewalk or bicycle path and not enough room for me and a car in the same lane. I'm beginning to have some doubts about my rich state/good road theory.

There is nothing for me to do but pull onto the bridge and wait for the horns to blow or worse yet to be hit from behind. Cars immediately start to stack up behind me. They are polite enough not to assault me with their horns and patiently wait for an opening in the other lane to dash around me, four, five or six at a time. Now I'm sorry that the Mississippi river is wide and majestic. I would have enjoyed standing in the middle and absorbing the river for a while as I was able to do above the Missouri but there is absolutely no place to pull out of the traffic and so I'm forced to make my way as quickly as possible.

I make it across safely and enter into Illinois. I have a definite feeling of being on the home stretch. There is still over a thousand miles remaining and a lot can go wrong in the meanwhile but I breathe a big inner sigh of relief. Crossing the Mississippi is like reaching the summit of a very high mountain. It's all downhill from here. It's great to be naive.

12 THE LAND OF LINCOLN

Shortly after crossing, a car with California plates stops. A young family with small children, out from the San Francisco bay area. It is wonderful to make contact with home even for a short while. Quite a difference; when I was in Nevada and Utah I kept looking for the California cars to end because it meant I had truly put some miles behind me.

I spend the night in Kinderhook and make camp on the high school grounds next to a stand of trees. I go into town in the morning and enjoy a somewhat leisurely breakfast at a small family cafe, then mail Susan some of the money I received at the second mail drop in Hannibal. This is the first time that I'm able to support her since the walk started.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 7 MILE 1987

Today is the second momentous one in a row as I cross through 2000 miles; two thirds of the way officially now. The road is turning out to be a major disappointment. It is even worse than Kansas. Narrow, blind curves and hills with often no shoulder. Even worse, in many places there is a forty five degree bevel at the edge of the road going upwards so that it is impossible to pull off the side of it in an emergency. For the first time I am genuinely concerned about being hit. Although the roads are poorly made and maintained in Kansas and the everlasting small hills drive me to distraction, at least the traffic is light and the visibility good. Here the traffic is heavy, including many trucks highballing it, and the visibility exceedingly poor in many places. I wonder what bicyclists do to keep from being killed. Apparently no one walks or rides bicycles in the mid-west and east. From the beautiful trans-state bike way across Colorado to this. How can two states be so radically different in their appreciation of pedestrian and bicycle traffic?

To add insult to injury, in the afternoon a state police sergeant stops me for walking on the wrong side of the road. He doesn't go as far as the officer from Missouri did but he is adamant that I have to walk facing traffic which at that moment I'm not doing. None of my explanations do any good. In this area of hills and curves I'm crossing back and forth according to how I think I can be most visible at any point. He fails to see my logic or doesn't care. When I ask him if there will be a shoulder when US36 becomes four lane which I will pick up tomorrow and continue on until Decatur, he informs me that I won't be allowed to walk on it and

when I ask about getting permission he says that permission is never granted. No one has ever been allowed to walk or ride a bicycle on any 'controlled access' road in Illinois. I am stunned. Although, as a general rule pedestrians and bicycles are forbidden to use freeways in California, it is possible to obtain a permit and in Utah and Colorado I was allowed to walk on the Interstate without one. And until I reached Kansas I never walked on a road that didn't have a wide shoulder. I fume at the mentality that will force pedestrians and bicyclists to use roads that are not only dangerous but deadly.

A few miles later I reach Pittsfield where the state police headquarters is located. I spend half an hour talking to them, finally getting a more sympathetic ear. They don't relinquish the prohibition but do help to map out an alternative route and agree 'that they won't arrest me just for walking on the wrong side of the road.' This is the best that I can compromise on. The alternative route doesn't add any miles so I'm happy about that part, now all I have to do is keep from getting killed.

The road into Pittsfield is a perfect example of no pedestrian awareness. There are no sidewalks until right downtown. Neither does the road widen. But there are more and more parked cars and this forces me to move even more into the roadway. I breathe a tremendous sigh of relief when I finally reach the eastern outskirts. At dusk I find an old unused meeting house with a giant tree in the backyard. I make camp under the tree, completely sheltered and invisible from the road. It sprinkles a little during the night, just enough to make perfect sleeping conditions, cool with light pattering rain drops on the tent walls to lull me to sleep.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 8	MILE 2012
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The weather continues cool and overcast, perfect for walking. When I planned my route through Illinois many months before, I intended to bypass Springfield but tomorrow there is a big peace rally scheduled and I'm invited to attend, so now I swing north heading for Jacksonville at the end of today. It is a bit of a push but with the cool weather, I feel up to it.

Late morning I cross over the Illinois river. The bridge is under repair and I'm forced to pick my way through debris, finally being forced to stop and wait as the construction crew clears a path for the cart. I'm expecting that they will be aggravated at having to take time out but they are very cheerful and wave me on my way.

Later in the afternoon I have an opportunity to compare roads as I cross over US36. Looking down at it, I see the beautiful, wide shoulder and the highway heading in a perfectly straight line for Springfield. Four lane and

interstate highways are almost always constructed so that hills and valleys are leveled out to some extent. The roads I am forced to walk on, along with being shoulder less, are generally paved over whatever the terrain presents. There is no attempt to make the road level so that I feel doubly frustrated by having to walk on them.

A couple miles from the outskirts of Jacksonville, a small dog joins me. I greatly enjoy his company and marvel at his enthusiasm as he dashes out across a field then comes racing back, then runs down the road far ahead of me, urging me to hurry. If I only had a fraction of his energy I could make short work of this walk. When I get into the edge of town it is a different matter. He continues to dash out into the road causing cars to slam on their brakes and of course they believe that the dog belongs to me and why don't I control him or have him on a leash? People are blowing their horn and shaking their fist at me and I can only shrug my shoulders. This does nothing but anger them more. Finally I have a long heart to heart talk with the dog telling him that it is really time for us to part company and for him to return to where ever he has started from. He is greatly reluctant to follow my advice but my stern voice and demeanor finally convinces him and he slowly walks back, head and tail hanging low. My heart is heavy too as I realize how much I miss companionship, even that of a small dog.

Very ominous dark clouds are forming behind me and it is easy to tell that they are heading this way and fast. As luck will have it, the heavens open up just as I pass by a McDonalds and I manage to get inside before the worst of it hits. It is one of those fast moving intense thunderstorms that dump inches an hour and for the second time I offer thanks that I don't have to experience it walking down the road.

By the time it ends it is already dark. I don't have a lot of money so have planned to camp out. I walk through town hoping to find a park or a large lawn area around some factory that is closed over the weekend. Nothing presents itself so when a motel appears I decide to spend an enjoyable night. When the clerk tells me the price of the room I'm a little shocked but then manage to talk her down to something I can afford by relating to her the 'poor man walking across America' tale.

As usual when I spend the night in a motel, I can't find the courage to get an early start. I'm supposed to arrive in Springfield by four. It is now clear that I won't make it on time.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 9 MILE 2040

Late in the afternoon, I'm met by a van and ride into Springfield and the

rally. It is not going to be possible for someone to bring me back in the morning so for the first time on the walk I will voluntarily not walk every foot of the way. Only three times so far have I been forced to accept rides; once crossing the Bay Bridge into Oakland, once in Glenwood canyon and once through the Eisenhower Tunnel. All of these together totaled less than 15 miles. Part of me is very reluctant to accept a ride except when there is no other choice. This is the part of me that sees the walk as a physical challenge and wants to be able to say that I've walked every foot of the way. Another part, not quite so macho, says that the purpose of this walk is not to walk across America, but rather to use walking as a way of meeting people that I would not otherwise meet and to provide some level of inspiration to those who would be open to it. It is much more important to attend this peace rally and share experiences with the people at the rally then to say no, sorry I can't make it because I'm behind schedule and have to keep walking. Besides I've already walked 2000 miles, I don't have to prove anything.

The rally is wonderful and once again most of the people there are Bahais. Perhaps no group of people in the world is so committed to achieving peace and so ready to act on their beliefs.

In the evening I'm invited to attend a Lincoln play at the New Salem State Park. This is a traditional summer occurrence and the plays take place in an outdoor amphitheater. Lincoln is buried in Springfield and, in contrast to Hannibal, one is struck by the feeling that the town stands in reverence but is not trying to become a commercial success from the fact that Lincoln lived and is buried here. The play is very good and has special meaning to me because it also is about Stephen Vincent Binet who did a lot of walking across our country.

I spend the night at the apartment of Paul D.. One of the more unfortunate happenings in Kansas occurred when a car full of quite inebriated young men ran into the side of my cart while it was parked in front of them. This severely bent one of the wheels which I managed to straighten just enough not to rub on the side of the cart but which still wobbles from side to side. Paul takes it upon himself to get the wheel straight and by doing miracles with the spokes he virtually succeeds. This was the wheel that the brake acted on and because of the severe wobble I had removed the brake mechanism. It isn't until later, much later, that I discover my incredible shortsighted stupidity. It had never entered my mind to simply exchange the wheels thus putting the good wheel on the side where the brakes are located. The only saving grace is that someone else didn't spot the obvious and point it out to me at which time I would have entered the ranks of the top ten sheepish feeling persons in the world.

MONDAY, AUGUST 10	MILE 2076
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I head out of Springfield towards Decatur. I'm to stay with another group of Bahais this evening and share in a small gathering. On the way out of town, I notice the signs pointing toward Lincoln's grave. This is one time when I'm really sorry to be on foot. I just don't feel I can take the extra time. It would have been an hour or less traveling by car but for me now it would take most of the day. So I sadly pass up the opportunity and continue on my way.

On the way to Decatur I pass by Camp Butler which is a military cemetery dating back to the Civil War. It was also a training camp for Union Soldiers and a prisoner of war camp. Conditions were terrible and over 8,000 Confederate soldiers are buried here. I feel compelled to stop even though it means I can't make it to Decatur without accepting a ride. For several days I've been reciting what I remembered of the Gettysburg address, "Four score and seven years ago..." When I open the door of the administration building this famous speech is immediately visible, the words impressed on a large floor to ceiling brass plaque.

I feel a tremendous kinship with those who are buried here, men and women who fought in every war from the Civil War to Vietnam. We honor these dead in the belief that their deaths helped to keep our country free and, for those who died in the two World Wars, their deaths returned the world to peace. But it should not be necessary to die in war to make peace possible. If we truly want to honor these men and women that "they shall not have died in vain" then we have a serious and compelling obligation to work for peace. It should not be necessary that conditions in the world become so out of control that only war and death can right them. It is our complacency, our apathy, our blindness to the plight of others that makes this possible. We, who live in this great and beneficent nation, blaspheme God's goodness when we take His great and bountiful gifts for granted; that we do not expect a quid pro quo. We have a responsibility associated with our freedom. If we want peace in our nation and in our world we cannot expect someone else to provide it. To the extent that each of us cherishes our way of life and the peace that it provides, EACH of us must put effort into maintaining it.

Setting the precedent yesterday makes it a little easier to decide to accept a ride and in fact I'm only a third of the way when I'm met and carried into town. By deciding not to backtrack I gain enough time to remain two days behind schedule. By now I'm committed to not taking the rest stop in Indianapolis which will put me back on schedule. Even knowing this I'm

still plagued with a sense of always being behind. At the end of each day I can never truly relax because I'm always thinking that if I walk a little longer I can make up some of the lost time. Always I have to weigh this against being sure that each day I can get up and be ready to walk another 25 miles. This is much different than an attitude of pushing to exhaustion in one monstrous effort, like doing a marathon. You have to be aware of your body and your limitations very intimately to be able to push to your limits without going over the edge.

I spend the evening with a group of Decatur Bahais, sharing some of my experiences, then spend the night at the home of Dave and Lethia and their son Ned who, although afflicted with multiple sclerosis and confined to a wheelchair, is intelligent, animated and cheerful, certainly an inspiration for me. I am struck by the contrast, and the similarities, of his and my existence. I'm trying to demonstrate that the simple act of walking can be used as a metaphor to accomplish great things. Ned is demonstrating that it is possible to live a happy and productive life even when confronted with an overwhelming handicap. His simple acts, because they require such effort, are demonstrations of the innate greatness of each of us when we refuse to be beat down, refuse to accept that something we dream to do is impossible.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 10	MILE 2115
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Interstate 72 parts company with US36 in Decatur, and US36 returns to its two lane status thus making it possible for me to once again walk on it. It now heads straight east on level ground. This is the beginning of level country and it will continue until eastern Ohio, a very pleasant change indeed, something that was supposed to have happened in Kansas.

I get a good 29 mile day in today. There won't be any more large towns or groups of people until Indianapolis so I plan on doing serious walking until I reach it.

It is dusk when I reached Atwood. This is a mail drop town so I need to find some place to camp within walking distance of town. The downtown section is about a mile north of the highway and as I approach the intersection of the road leading into town I pass a home where, on the second floor verandah, a couple are enjoying the passing evening. As I walk by they call out, "Would you care for some homemade ice cream?" They could have just as well asked if I wanted a million dollars. I yell back, "Sure" and head for the house.

Dale and Dorothy meet me at the door. They had heard about me on Decatur TV. We spend a very enjoyable hour eating ice cream, drinking

coffee and relating stories. They inform me that there is a park in town where I can spend the night and then invite me to join them for breakfast. It is completely dark when I head into town but, following their instructions, I have no problem finding the park and making camp.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 11 MILE 2144

When the post office opens in the morning there is a pile of mail waiting for me. I put a load of laundry in the laundromat and head for a cafe where I can enjoy a good breakfast and reading the letters. They come from everywhere, in response to Oz's request, most people having never met me but happy to provide words of encouragement and support, including financial.

After breakfast I stop in the newspaper office which is on the same street and receive a long interview from Doris Elmore. We walk down to the town scale. This will be the first time that I've ever weighed my cart. I had been telling everyone that I thought it weighed around 125 to 150 pounds but wondered if I was exaggerating. The scale master says, "your cart weighs 220 plus or minus 20 pounds." I'm shocked. Many people along the way have given me mementos, particularly books and the weight has kept creeping up. I determine at the first opportunity to send as much as I can home. In addition to being heavy the cart is also getting increasingly difficult to pack each morning.

Later, I have a second breakfast then continue east toward Newman. It is 29 miles away and it is already late morning. I can't make it without walking past dark but I'm determined not to lose any more time and decide to walk until I get there and then spend the night in a motel.

At dusk I'm still 10 miles away. I had made reservations earlier to make sure that there is a motel in Newman and that there will be a room available when I get there. I've already experienced trying to find a camp site after dark and it isn't something I want to repeat.

As it gets darker a car stops and Ken and his wife ask if I need help. I explain to them what I'm doing and that I need to keep walking. They insist that it is too dangerous. They are driving a station wagon which will hold the cart and I finally acknowledge that it would be better not to walk and accept a ride. They drive me to the motel, then join me for a milkshake at the cafe next door. I'm finding the people of Illinois to be extremely friendly and helpful. Except for the horrible roads, it is a great pleasure to walk through this area.

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THURSDAY, AUGUST 13 MILE 2173

The motel owner refuses to accept money for the room. My regard for the people of Illinois goes even higher. This is to be the last day in this state. My destination, Dana, is just over the border in Indiana. I am going

to be a little sad to leave this wonderful state.

In the afternoon I'm met by Carleton Cates, a Quaker minister who has a small church in Chrisman. He invites me to spend the night at his home. He doesn't have a car large enough to carry the cart and it would be rather inconvenient and perhaps even impossible for me to get to his home, which is not on the highway, before dark. We hit on the possibility of towing the cart. We lash the yoke to the back of his car, make sure everything is secure and tight and start off—slowly. We get up to 35 mph and everything looks good. The cart is tracking well and it doesn't look like a wheel wants to come off or anything else equally disastrous. I have all kinds of images of what can go wrong that would destroy the cart and make it impossible to continue the walk and another part of me, the engineer part, keeps saying that there is no reason to be concerned. The cart is built well and nothing should go wrong.

In fact nothing does go wrong and towing the cart provides much more versatility than was previously possible. This was not the last or only time it was done as we shall see.

Carleton, his wife Sandra and their four children are supported by a parish of less than 40. They don't have much in the way of material goods but their home is filled with love which they generously share with me. Sandra prepares a wonderful meal and afterwards we sit around and talk. I share my walk experiences and they share what it is like to be new in the community and just starting out as a new pastor. There isn't a large Quaker community here so everyone counts and everyone needs to do their share. As it is I'm amazed that such a small parish is willing to tithe itself sufficiently to support a pastor and his family.

It is more convenient for Carleton to bring me back to US36 after it has already crossed into Indiana so I miss the small thrill (sometimes big thrill) of seeing the "Welcome to" sign. It has only taken a week to cross Illinois but I am left with many memories, wonderful memories of people, perhaps more than any state so far, and terrible memories about the roads and the unawareness, complacency and just pure blindness that allows the condition of the roads to go unchallenged. Someone told me that Illinois spends more money on roads, per capita, than any other state and yet it has some of the worst roads I've ever been on.

13 FLAT ROAD WALKING ACROSS INDIANA

FRIDAY, AUGUST 14 MILE 2199

It takes five and a half days to go across Indiana. The road is quite level and straight for the most part, the weather warm but not hot. Altogether an uneventful time. I spend an enjoyable evening in Indianapolis with a Bahai couple and tour the Speedway which is a particular thrill for me. I've been a fan of the Indianapolis 500 since I was a boy. Its size and the number of people who can be accommodated is awesome. I walk part way into the city but it quickly turns into a dangerous game and I'm happy to accept an offer to ride to the eastern edge. The roads are better than those in Illinois but I'm not sure whether it is due to intent or simply because the flat terrain provides a better road with the same investment.

The terrain across Indiana is uneventful so my attention is drawn to other, smaller, things which might otherwise pass unnoticed. As I'm walking one afternoon I'm caught up in the circling dance of two white butterflies. Probably a mating dance. They circle round and around each other, drifting across a field, over the fence and across the shoulder of the road, crossing in front of me. Then I yell, NO—go back but it is too late and a second later one lies fluttering at my feet, dying and the other is stuck to the radiator of the passing truck, the driver completely unaware of the deadly drama he has participated in. I'm on the verge of tears. The exuberance of life is ended in a moment. Not maliciously, not knowingly, not accidentally even, but impersonally. And in a macabre minute I envision myself splattered against a giant radiator on a giant truck driven by a being oblivious to my existence. Is there really a God who cares about these two butterflies and who is saddened at their sudden death in the moment of a circling dance of joy at being alive? If there is, He really has His hands full. Does He care about their existence (and lack of) in the same way that He cares about mine? Or, more to the point, does He care about MY existence (or lack of) in the same way that He cares about theirs?

I also think about how the butterfly's evolution has not kept pace with our own. They easily evade my walking and even if I were on a horse in full gallop I'm sure they could get out of the way. A vehicle screaming along at 60 miles an hour is another story. Their survival mechanism can only be to create so many of themselves that they can suffer their losses and still avoid extinction. They will not learn to fly at 100 miles an hour.

But have we really kept up with our own evolution? Can our animal

bodies survive the accelerating pace that our intellect (that which makes us different than all other life forms) forces us to try to endure? Will we, in the end, be swept to our non-existence by an impersonal force, not of someone else's making, but of our own? A force which diabolically increases in intensity in direct proportion to our efforts to survive, because it is of us. Or can we slow down a little so that each of us has the time to enjoy and preserve the circling dance of two butterflies and in the process, our own circling dance of life?

Later, I meet another butterfly, this time a Monarch who has probably also been struck by some vehicle. He (or she) is trying to balance on the end of a blade of grass. I reach down and extend my finger and he crawls up on it. I sit on the side of the road in the grass for almost an hour while the Monarch rests on the end of my finger, his wings slowly moving, his life slowly ebbing. I know that I've been given a great gift, that I can spend an hour of my life with a dying butterfly. In the end I carefully place it on a twig shaded by a large leaf. It is not easy for me to start walking again.

For some weeks now I've been practicing talking to horses and cows. My horse dialect is doing very poorly, aided probably by the fact that during one attempted conversation, a man on a bicycle came up behind me, unnoticed by me for an embarrassing long time. I'm not sure which of the two, the horse or the man, was more amused by what I was trying to do. The man was polite enough not to say anything, probably thinking to himself that anyone who has spent this much time on the road has to be a little off.

However my mooing has come a long way and I now take great delight in bringing an entire herd of cows to their feet and over to the fence. I'm not at all sure what it is I'm saying but it is certainly having an effect. Usually there is one cow who refuses to join in and who furthermore refuses to even look my way. I exert all of my efforts on his behalf, trying different dialects. It is a little game—if I get him to acknowledge me before I pass out of range, all is well. Otherwise I will be subject to dire possibilities, far worse than stepping on a crack. Usually I succeed.

One afternoon I'm sitting in a roadside fast-food place enjoying a quart of root beer when a young woman strikes up a conversation. She is amazed at what I am doing and says, "I could never do that." I reply that I'm sure she can. She says, "No, I'd be too afraid." She has a young son along so I say, "What if your son's life depended on it?" She quickly agrees that she could do it then. All of us are capable of doing great acts when sufficiently motivated. In the absence of outside motivations that are thrust on us, sometimes unwelcome, we can provide our own. But it is easier to stagnate,

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be in a rut, and exist far below our potential.

I cross into Ohio on the 19th, now exactly on schedule and make a private vow not to slip behind again no matter what. With less than a month to go it will be increasingly difficult to make up lost time.

14 OHIO, RASPBERRIES, AND MORE

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 19 MILE 2327

I arrive in Greenville in the late afternoon intending to spend the night in a motel. Unfortunately the County Fair is in progress and there are no rooms to be had. To make matters worse, for the first time on the walk, I get lost. Driving around looking for some recognizable feature can be mildly frustrating in a car. On foot, pulling a cart, it can be maddening. After two or three miles of walking, sure that I know where I'm going but not getting there, I ask for help and get pointed in the right direction. There is a very large motel at the edge of town and my spirits rise again. They in fact do have a room but not at a price I can come close to. Neither are they into negotiating.

I go to a Dairy Queen close by and load up with milkshakes and hamburgers. Several of the people working there start to talk excitedly about the walk and someone calls the local newspaper. David Gould, the political reporter for the Daily Advocate, arrives and he soon has me trying to answer questions that no one has yet asked. Do I believe that the world will be changed by my doing the walk? Why have I chosen to do the walk in the United States? Why not a country like India or Africa?

I reply that the reason for doing the walk in the US is because I believe that we have the capacity to make substantial change in the world in contrast to countries that have much less prestige and wealth. On the other hand we tend to be a complacent country aloof from the cares of the rest of the world—even from the cares of many of our own people and it is necessary to break through that complacency. It can be a difficult process but just a few people keeping awareness alive can make a substantial difference.

After the interview, I head out of town hoping to find a place to make camp soon since it is rapidly getting dark. After walking several miles I pass a farmer walking across the road as he does his evening chores. He strikes up a conversation and then offers to let me make camp in his yard. However as we continue to talk, his son, who is a dentist in Greenville and lives a few miles down the road, drives up and soon offers to take me to his home where I can spend the night. I've been sleeping alongside the road since Indianapolis so I really appreciate the chance to get clean and have a good night's sleep in a bed. They are a devout religious family, very close

and they welcome me into their home in a way that quickly makes me feel one of them.

Everyone is up early the next morning. After a very good breakfast and sad good-byes, I head east for Piqua.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 20	MILE 2354
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This is going to be an exciting day because Sherry, a resident of Dayton which is below Piqua some 30 miles, is driving up to meet me. She was one of the three women who had stopped as I was climbing up to the Eisenhower Tunnel west of Denver. It is a great joy to meet people more than once on the walk especially separated by this distance.

I arrive in Piqua in the midafternoon, find a motel and call Sherry. She soon arrives with two friends and a big picnic basket. We drive around, finally find a park and proceed to have a picnic, interrupted not by ants but by several very persistent wasps. We find that if we ignore them and share some of our food, they prefer sandwiches to us and we are both able to have a good time. Once again time goes by much too quickly and they are soon on their way back to Dayton. I am never able to get used to forming intense friendships only to have the person disappear within a few minutes or hours. Most I'll never see again in person.

The motel manager calls the local newspaper. The reporter stops by in the morning. Being interviewed starts the day pleasantly. The weather is good, the road straight and level, it is a great day to put in some miles. The day is overcast, looking like rain a little but there is only a few sprinkles here and there. This kind of a day makes for almost perfect walking.

In the afternoon I pass by a large raspberry farm with a roadside stand that offers raspberry sundaes. This is undoubtedly my favorite fruit so I have to stop. The attendant, noticing my cart, goes and gets the owner, Bob Rothschild who invites me in for lunch. As it turns out he and his wife Sara packed up and left San Francisco some years ago, moved to Ohio and started this farm. It definitely isn't the usual corn, soybean or millet farm that pervades the area. Bob wanted to do something more interesting and also do something over which he had more control. It is wonderful and inspiring to see a couple who have the courage to take on a new life and make a success of it.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 22	MILE 2393
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This afternoon I'm picked up and taken into Columbus to share my walk with a gathering of Bahai's. An incredible meal is prepared at the home of Louis and Lynn Ma'ani. As it turns out Lynn is expecting her baby to arrive on the same day as Susan so I have an opportunity to visualize what Susan looks like. It is now over six weeks since we have been together. I'm missing her a lot and regret that we hadn't been able to find some way to be together in Indianapolis.

I spend the night at the home of Dr. Houshang Ma'ani, Louis's father. Once again the Bahais are overwhelming in their generosity and support. I need to reiterate that neither Susan or myself are Bahais and that all of this support comes as a result of their own efforts and their desire to work for peace in the world. Once, when I was talking to a group and lavishing praise on the Bahais for how much they are helping to make this walk possible, someone came up to me afterwards and chided me saying that other groups would have been equally willing to support me. My reply was simply, yes—but they didn't and the Bahais did. Their numbers in the US amount to a few thousand compared to millions of Catholics and Protestants and other non-sectarian groups professing to believe in and work for peace. Unquestionably there are individual demonstrations of support from persons representing the Catholic Church, United Methodist, Church of the Latter Day Saints, Quaker and others but only the Bahais took it upon themselves to set up a network across the entire country, arranging places for me to stay, groups to talk with, and media coverage where possible. Our country is filled with millions upon millions of good people, honest, hardworking, God fearing, and COMPLACENT. Content to live in a country that is founded on the principle of participation, a country "of the people, BY the people, and for the people", and content to let a few determine and fight for their rights and freedoms. Such a country will not long endure.

In the morning another of Dr Ma'ani's sons drives me back to highway 36.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 23 MILE 2423

During the next two days the weather turns increasingly cool and the straight and level road gradually disappears, to be replaced by hills, the forerunner of what is to be my fate in Pennsylvania.

During the morning of the 25th, I pass by a large cemetery. Instead of the miscellaneous collection of large and small tombstones which one normally sees, this cemetery is uniformly populated with small markers. My

curiosity getting the better of me, I stop and wander about the grounds. I am amazed to find time and time again that grave plots have been already laid out and the markers placed for couples who are now still young. "In Loving Memory of John Doe, Born October 6, 1952; Died ——— and his Loving Wife Mary, Born January 22, 1955; Died ———". This, for me, is an unbelievable affirmation of Till Death Do Us Part. Coming from where I do in northern California, where almost everyone has been divorced at least once before they reach forty, it is truly remarkable to me that a couple should be so convinced of the longevity of their relationship that they are willing to have side-by-side gravestones marking their future internment. At their young age that future event might well be fifty years or more away.

As a peace walker I am also struck by the irony of monuments that read something like, "In Loving Memory of John Doe, Born July 8, 1926; Died August 1, 1978; Corporal, One Hundred and Third Regiment, First Battalion, US Army". For all that this man accomplished in some fifty years of life, for the family he helped raise, for all of his loves and tragedies, for all that he learned and contributed to the world, what is he remembered for? That he was a soldier in a great war, probably a common foot soldier like millions of others. He didn't give his life during the war but this one event of his life is what he or his loved ones wish him to be remembered for. The honor of war still exists strongly in our consciousness. What is it we remember most from our childhood study of American History? The Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, The War Between the States, the Spanish-American War, WWI, WWII, the Korean War, the Vietnam War. Do any of us remember what happened in between? What dramatic events occurred between the War of 1812 and the Civil War? Do you remember? I don't. What are the dates in world history during which the world was overwhelmingly at peace? Why are we so fascinated and preoccupied with destruction?

As I walk, pondering some of these questions but not arriving at any substantial answers, I am suddenly struck by an obvious fact. It is not only during a shooting war that we suffer. Much of the time I'm walking on a US highway and much of the time it is in great disrepair. Every person who is killed as a result of the poor condition of the road is as much a victim of war as if he had been shot because the money that could maintain the road is spent instead on armaments. Every person that suffers as a result of poor education is a victim of war because the money that could improve schools is spent instead on armaments. This litany can go on and on. The billions upon billions upon billions of dollars that are spent throughout the world on national "defense" result in far greater cumulative hardship and suffering in the world than the relatively short periods of actual hostilities. We are all

victims of our fears and hatreds and bigotry's and our inability and unwillingness to appreciate and understand our fellow human kind. Far less funds are allocated to creating great negotiators and great statesmen than are spent creating great military leaders.

I think it's fascinating to compare the cost of peace and the cost of conflict. The world is currently spending several hundred billion dollars a year preparing for or engaged in conflict. How much would it cost the world to prepare for or engage in peace? Exactly zero! How long would it take? It could take no time. The world could see in one moment what a childish and idiotic path it has chosen to follow and could change its course in that same moment.

How much food and clothing, how many homes, hospitals, schools and universities could be purchased with those hundreds of billions of dollars spent each year on conflict? I leave it to your imagination and wonderment. But just for a starter, in 1983 the world spent over 700 billion dollars on its military. For this amount of money 14,000 major universities and hospitals costing \$50,000,000 each could be built each year; 14 million homes costing \$50,000 each; over 290 million people—approximately the population of the US—could be given 200 dollars a month for food and shelter (and most of the world can live comfortably on much less)!

And I think, why is our country at peace and the world isn't? Why is it inconceivable that one state could war against another as they once did? And the answer comes: because we have one government; because one state does not have the capability to wage war because they have relinquished that right for the greater good of all. Because we have a universal language so that all can communicate. Because, even though we are a country filled with diverse cultures, we feel a common bond—we are all Americans. Because we care about each other and, to a large extent, we are unwilling to let our fellow Americans suffer the loss of their inalienable rights.

So what is necessary for the world to be at peace? One world government. Countries must be willing to give up their sovereignty in the same manner that our states have. No country can have the military capability of warring on another without suffering the might of the world government. A universal medium of communication, one language known by everyone—that does not mean giving up one's uniqueness including language. A sense of kinship with everyone in the world in the same way that we now have for those of our own country. A willingness to compromise, to mediate, to give and take, to put ourselves in the other person's shoes. A willingness to look for and emphasize our common desires and traits instead of all the things that divide us. All of those things that we do now to have a successful relationship with the members of our

family, our community and our country. Our World is now too small to do less.

As this book is being reviewed for publication some 30 years later it is obvious to the writer that our country has its own ongoing mini-warfare between those that have and those that have not, between one ethnic group and another, between those that believe one way and those that believe the opposite. In the present time our country is failing in being a good example for the rest of the world.

After passing the cemetery, the weather turns overcast and late in the afternoon it starts to rain, not hard but steady. In addition I have diarrhea and I can tell you this is absolutely no fun when you're walking along a well-traveled highway and have to find a make-shift restroom in a hurry. After I decide to quit for the day, it takes me quite a long time to find a place to make camp. Finally an old deserted logging road leads off the road up into the surrounding hills and I find a site that has reasonable run-off and is well away from the main road. It rains all night off and on and is still raining the next morning. Everything is soaked and moldy smelling but I've no choice but to pack it all into the cart, wet or not.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 26 MILE 2504

Five hundred miles remaining! Twenty days to go, over one hundred completed. I can taste the end. In a way, the closer I get to the end, the more I disengage from the walk. I spend an increasing amount of time thinking about what it will be like sitting in the plane flying back to San Francisco. What it will be like walking up to the United Nations, knowing that in a few more steps, after six million have been already taken, it will be over. This same Wednesday three weeks from now and I will be looking back on the walk. It is hard for me to realize that it is soon going to end and yet, in the same way that all of those impossible summits finally ended, this walk will be over. While I am walking I choose a distant telephone pole or a sign or a house and I say to myself, see, you are not there yet but you soon will be. The time between now and then seems interminable but it passes and I say to myself, see, the time DID pass and now you are there and in the same way this walk WILL end. This dialogue helps a little.

How can I tell you what it is like to play with time this way? There is really nothing to do for hour upon hour except to play mind games.

Everything is slowed down tremendously. For over three months my world has moved by at four miles an hour or less. My psyche has adapted well and I don't freak out anymore thinking about the fact that if I was in a car now I could make it to New York before the end of this day. I have enough water now and it's so cool that I don't dwell on milkshakes hour after hour as I did in the desert. So I spend my hours flying in the plane, meeting Susan and being home, or walking through New York City. My psyche has left the walk behind. I'm still trudging along living this great adventure, meeting wonderful people and seeing new places every moment but my spirit has gone on to other things and other places.

It's raining hard now and even with the Gortex suit that Oz lent me, I'm soaked through. After walking a short while I reach the small town of Warsaw and spot a small restaurant called 'Grandma's Kitchen'. I feel a little guilty about going in because I'm dripping water everywhere. The place is full of people and they're all watching me, some of them trying not to. Their looks are not terribly kind. I take off the rain gear and sit at the counter, looking soggy and cold which I am. Then, after I receive my plate of food, the owner—Grandma herself—starts to ask me questions and soon the entire restaurant is warm and friendly. Grandma won't let me pay for the meal and one of the other patrons interviews me for a newspaper article. Then Grandma's daughter mentions that she has a large golf cart umbrella that she will be glad to give me. She runs home and gets it and I soon have it rigged on to the yoke. It works wonderfully well and keeps most of the rain off of me, at least the top half which is what I'm mostly concerned about.

The rain gradually slackens as I approach Coshocton. I stop at a McDonalds and while I am sitting there a young woman comes up to me and asks if I'm the one that belongs to the cart outside. When I assure her that I am, she introduces herself as Elaine Stevens and asks if she can join me. She enthusiastically shares with me a project that she is undertaking called, "All Of Us, Inc.". This one-year long project, to be conducted in Coshocton, will attempt to demonstrate that if the quality of living can be improved by improved inter-personal relationships, crime, vandalism, drug abuse, etc. will be markedly decreased. She will attempt to improve inter-personal relationships by using modern promotional and marketing techniques to focus on ideas that everyone can agree on. The project will attempt to show people how to manage their differences rather than reducing them. Elaine is concerned about world peace and would like to see this project grow from a model in one midwestern town to communities throughout the world. This is bringing peace from an abstract idea to something that touches each of us in a very personal way. I support her

wholeheartedly.

Late in the afternoon, a car pulls over and stops and Bill Norman, a United Methodist minister, asks if I would like to spend the night with he and his family. I'm delighted and spend a wonderful evening and night with them. Bill's situation is in stark contrast with that of Carleton Cates, the Quaker minister with thirty-odd parishioners. Bill's parish has over 600 people and his standard of living reflects the better support that he is offered. But he is equally friendly and sharing. And I hadn't been looking forward at all to spending the night in a soggy, smelly and cold sleeping bag. His timing is perfect, perhaps with a little help from the One who is watching over this walk.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 27	MILE 2525
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The rain begins again today but with the umbrella, it is only an inconvenience and I'm able to stay reasonably dry in spite of it. As I approach Uhrichsville in the late afternoon, the road changes to four lane divided with no possibility to find a camp site other than by taking one of the exits. Fortunately, someone stops before it gets dark and asks me if I need help. He tells me that there is a school athletic field in town that I can stay at and agrees to call the local police and let them know that I will be spending the night there. It is almost dark when I arrive but I find a nice flat area somewhat sheltered and make a comfortable camp. It rains on and off all night but not hard enough to get through the tent so I stay dry and the noise of the rain is pleasant to hear.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 28	MILE 2554
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Today is a new road day. I've been traveling on US36 for 1300 miles—ever since Denver. The highway ends at Uhrichsville. It's not that we part company, it going one way and I another. I've followed it as far as it goes. Back last spring, when all I had to look at was a bunch of maps, I chose the shortest route out of Uhrichsville, a road thin and squiggly on the map but heading due east. But then I hadn't pulled my cart up and down hills and hadn't experienced what it was like to walk on narrow, twisting roads with blind curves and no shoulders. Now discretion is much more a part of my life and I choose a different route, longer but wider and straighter. US250 heads southeast towards Wheeling, West Virginia. It's out of my way but it runs alongside Lake Tappan for many miles, beautiful scenery and level.

Around three in the afternoon, I reach the Tappan Marina and stop for a meal. The day has been cool and cloudy. I can see patches of rain falling on the lake but so far none have been overhead. While I'm eating, the manager comes over and offers a cabin for the night. I reply that I haven't covered much ground so far and need to keep going for a few more miles, thanks anyway. He says before you make up your mind look out the window. When I do, there is a black wall advancing across the lake which I sure don't want to be in the middle of so I accept his offer. They don't accept payment for the meal and offer breakfast also. As it turns out there has been a front page article in the Uhrichsville paper about the walk so they recognized me when I walked in. It's nice not to be a stranger.

The cabin is wonderful. I spend a relaxing afternoon and evening and get a very good night's sleep. As it turns out the black wall dematerialized before it got to the Marina and it only sprinkled the rest of the day and night. I'm left with some feelings of guilt about stopping so early but I managed to put them aside and enjoy the break.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 29	MILE 2569
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I'm scheduled to spend this evening with a couple in Wheeling. I call them and tell them that I'll be somewhere on US22 heading for Steubenville. This means a 40 mile each way drive for them because I'm not going to make it all the way to Steubenville before dark. My short day yesterday is the reason. But Jerry says they're happy to do it and he has a pickup so carrying the cart will be no problem.

At midday I leave US 250 and turn northeast on US 22. I'll be staying on this road long enough to become friends with it, well east of Pittsburgh. Right now it's a four lane divided highway, hilly but smoothed out. The rain is gone, the day sunny but not hot. I'm well rested and feeling great, like I could walk for a long, long while. Perhaps it's partially because I know I won't have to. Jerry drives up before dusk and we continue on the road into Steubenville in his truck. I can see that I wouldn't particularly like crossing the Ohio river—the bridge looks like a repeat of the one crossing the Mississippi. Jerry offers to bring me back up on the other side of the river and I accept even though it means again not walking some number of miles.

This area used to be the heart of the steel industry. The river is lined with shut down steel mills. There is sadness in this but the compensation is that the air is not cloudy with smoke and the rivers run clean again. What the cost has been in lost jobs and personal hardships I can only guess but it has to be monumental. These towns and cities along the Ohio and

Allegheny rivers have stories to tell but I do not take the time to hear them. Like so many people that I meet only for a moment but feel their impression ever after, so towns, cities, mountains, lakes and roads have all created indelible memories.

Jerry and JoAnn have purchased a few acres of land in the hills of West Virginia just east of Wheeling. This country is beautiful and densely green everywhere. Their land was relatively inaccessible when they bought it so he also bought a bulldozer, learned to use it well and carved out the road to his home, then built the house they live in.

I spend a wonderful evening talking with them and another couple who are close friends of theirs. Then in the morning we go to the "Ye Olde Country Church" in Wheeling where I am honored to be the featured speaker. I talk about some of my experiences on the walk and what I've learned about peace—not in the abstract sense but in the most personal way. I talk about the necessity of putting ourselves in the shoes of others if we are to reach understanding with the many diverse cultures in our world. Afterwards the Pastor says, "Yes, wouldn't it be wonderful if everyone in the world were Christian." This isn't exactly my point, in fact it is almost exactly not my point but I'm fascinated to see how we interpret what we hear in the context of our own truths, especially when it is our intent to agree with the speaker.

After, we drive up the east side of the Ohio river, have lunch together and take our leave. They are an incredibly kind and generous couple and it is very hard to say good-bye so quickly.

So now it is Sunday and I've left Ohio behind. I'm in West Virginia but this is one state I'm going to cross in very short order. Where I am right now it's less than five miles across and where my new friends have left me off on US22 it's probably less than two miles to Pennsylvania. I am very, very excited. Pennsylvania is really the last state for me to cross. Sure there is New Jersey but that's only a couple of days' worth and it will be so close to the end that nothing will matter anyway. Pennsylvania is the state that many have warned me about. Several cross country bicyclists have said that it was the most difficult state they had been in because of the sharp hills.

Tonight I'm due to be in Pittsburgh where there will be a large gathering of Bahai's. I'll walk as far as I can and then be picked up in the late afternoon.

15 YOU'VE GOT A FRIEND IN PENNSYLVANIA

SUNDAY, AUGUST 30 MILE 2603

And here is the "Welcome to Pennsylvania" sign. It happens so quickly that it is a bit of a letdown, it is upon me before I'm prepared. I try and work up an enthusiastic yell but instead continue on my way. There is nothing about the road to signal any difference. It's a four lane divided highway, concrete, with a wide paved shoulder and it's easy walking. The weather remains cool and sunny. About four, Mohammed picks me up. He doesn't have a big car but we manage to stuff the cart in anyway. As we get close to Pittsburgh I'm once again very glad not to be on foot. It would be exceedingly dangerous if not impossible to walk along this road pulling the cart. Often there is no shoulder and the road continues with only two lanes in each direction with very heavy fast traffic. I would have been terrified to say the least.

Coming into Pittsburgh is a lot like coming into San Francisco from Oakland. You cross over a large expanse of water (in this case the conflux of the Ohio and Allegheny rivers instead of San Francisco bay) and in the distance are the skyscrapers of downtown. I had pictured Pittsburgh as a dirty, smog encrusted city that only the most desperate would choose to live in. Perhaps in the past there would be some truth in my vision. Now however it is a very attractive city split into three parts by the Ohio, Allegheny and Monongahela rivers. There is a lot of green and where I stayed with Mohammed and Kirsten it is more than attractive. So once again my preconceptions got blasted all to hell. When will I ever learn?

The group of people, mostly Bahais, are diverse and exciting to talk with. The time goes much too quickly and once the evening is over, even though the apartment is small, I'm invited to stay the night. I hadn't really thought about where I would end up sleeping so I greatly appreciate their offer.

The next day I rest since I've gained some time by not having to walk into Pittsburgh and am not scheduled to leave until the first. A sizable collection had been taken last evening so that I have a fair amount of money. I am desperate to give for a change instead of always being on the receiving end and am finally able to convince Astrid and Mohammed of my sincerity. They reluctantly agree to let me host a meal at a nice restaurant. We find a Mexican place which sounds great even though I know it can't

compare with those I'm used to in California. After all, California has such a large Mexican culture that it should have the best Mexican food in America with the possible exception of Texas. But once again I am proved wrong. The food is as good as any I've ever had. Perhaps it is because I've become such a food hound and have lost any capability of being discerning but I don't think so. I spend a second evening and night at their apartment and the next morning Mohammed drives me to the outskirts of Pittsburgh before letting me out. It is just as scary as the road coming into the city. It would have been a walk lasting at least an entire day that would have had me on the edge of terror most of the time. It isn't difficult anymore to give up the notion of walking every step of the way.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1 MILE 2651
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Today, in many ways, is a long awaited one. It marks the start of the last month. Two weeks from today, I'll be in New York, God willing. If I look back two weeks it doesn't seem very long ago so I anticipate the time will go rather fast even though there is a strong sense of waiting for a pot to boil—the closer I get the slower time goes. And, now that I'm through Pittsburgh, there will be no more large towns until the big one itself. One last push and it will be all over.

I've been warned about the terrain in Pennsylvania and it isn't long before the truth of the warnings hit home hard. After crossing the Sierras and Rockies with summits over ten thousand feet, I'm strongly inclined to consider that the east coast has 'hills' but never mountains. The peaks aren't as high as the flat plateaus of Nevada and Utah from which the Sierra and Rocky mountains start. But after scaling the first real 'hill' with a peak of four thousand feet I have to admit that it fits all of the requirements of being a mountain including giving me one hell of a workout. The maximum grade that I experienced in the Rockies was seven percent and coming down the east side of the Sierras the grade was eight percent but at least it was down. In Pennsylvania there are grades up to nine percent and not all of them go down for me. So finally I swallow all of my western big mountain chauvinism and admit that what I'm crossing constitutes a series of mountains and in the aggregate they are as bad, or worse even, than anything I've yet experienced.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 5 MILE 2727

I spent last night in a motel in Hollidaysburg just south of Altoona and am scheduled to spend tonight in State College with some Bahai people. State College is farther than a day's walk so I'll be picked up some time in the early evening. In the middle of the afternoon I reach Water Street which, if you aren't walking or don't live here, would go by relatively unnoticed. For me, however, it marks the end of US22 which at this juncture turns abruptly south. State Highway 45 continues on in the same direction that US22 had been going. After walking on 45 for a while I gain a strong sense of why US22 had turned south—it is a lot more intelligent road, or perhaps less courageous. Highway 45 is very much like the road across Kansas which undulated up and down unceasingly but there is one big difference: the undulations of 45 are much, much steeper. I am now very happy that the walk started in California and not in New York because to face this kind of walking in the beginning would have been impossible.

As a result of the road conditions, I'm still over 20 miles from State College when Thad Phillips drives up. Right away we can see that we have problems. He is driving a new car with a standard trunk. There is no way the cart will fit inside and he doesn't have any rope to set it up for towing. In any case I would be extremely reluctant to tow the cart that distance over the kind of road we are on with the amount of traffic there is, which is considerable. We ponder the situation for a while and I finally have a thought which seems crazy at first but we can't come up with a better one. I climb in the trunk and hold on to one of the cart handles. Thad starts out slowly and the cart follows docilely behind, my arm remaining attached to my shoulder. We do this all the way to State College. There are moments, like when he has to slow down quickly and the cart wants to continue going but there is no place to go except through my stomach, or when cars follow and the people inside are obviously hysterical with laughter and I wonder seriously if they can see to drive, or when my legs cramp but we are going to fast for me to shift positions safely, but we do arrive in one piece.

The evening is a quiet one. No large group of people and I'm thankful for this after the day's workout I've been through. The day ends peacefully with a good meal, pleasant sharing of thoughts and deep sleep.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 6 MILE 2770

The rolling hills continue but not so steeply and I settle into a grin and bear it philosophy as much as I can. This is beautiful country, Amish farmland, land with a long history and I'm often delighted and intrigued to come across a small cemetery, right alongside the road with no fence, which has gravestones dating back to the Revolutionary war. History lives here,

not just in books but visibly evident in the countryside. The sense of history is heightened for me when I see Amish horse-drawn carriages go by, looking the same as they must have looked a hundred years ago, except for the big slow-moving-vehicle triangle mounted on the rear. I now have one also and have it mounted so that it projects two feet out from the side facing traffic so that a car has to be at least two feet away from me to clear the sign. Somehow this makes me feel much safer.

The weather is now overcast, cool, with light rain at times. Perfect weather for walking although the grayness casts a pall and takes away part of my spirit. The day is heavier, more ponderous, more a sense of one-foot-in-front-of-the-other, get through the day and let's get it over with-ness.

In Mifflinburg I spend the night in the city park where there is a pavilion and I'm able to put up the tent between rows of picnic tables under a large roof. A young teenager spots me and we talk for quite a long time. Later, after he leaves, a pickup truck drives up and I hear a voice, his voice, say, "see, I told you he's here, that's his tent over there." Apparently his friends hadn't believed his story of meeting a cross-country walker.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8 MILE 2830
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It is nearly dark. I am walking for miles along a road that goes steeply upwards on one side and steeply downwards on the other. The days are much shorter now and dusk comes early. I am beginning to accept that for the first time on the walk I'm going to spend a very uncomfortable night. As it turns darker and darker, my conditions for an acceptable place to stay get less and less but so does what is available. There is not a single spot of land that is even slightly level and big enough to pitch my tent. The road is so narrow and filled with curves that it will be impossible to walk after dark so I have to do something and do it soon. Finally, just as I'm getting ready to make camp even on a steep slope, I spot a grassy area. When I get close, it proves to be a large lawn and I start to put up my tent but then consider that I should ask permission from the owners. When I knock on the door an old man answers and his look is very wary. I imagine I look like the transient I am and, being wet, look even more scraggly. I tell him I'm walking across the country and can I please put my tent up in his yard. He doesn't look like he believes me and says, "well, I don't know—maybe it'll be all right. I say just a minute and run and get one of my brochures and hand it to him. His wife is asking him who is at the door and he is reluctant to tell her. Finally I'm able to convince him to let me stay by telling him I will be gone at dawn. I'm not sure that he ever did completely believe me and I'm not sure what I would have done if he had said no. By the time he

finally agrees it is completely dark. Fortunately by now I can put up the tent blindfolded so it's not a problem as long as I don't have to find a site in the dark.

In the morning the skies opened up and stayed that way hour after hour. When it first started to rain hard, I checked into a roadside diner and tried to wait it out but it soon became clear that it wasn't going to do it soon. Finally I resign myself to being soaked and head out. The umbrella works for water coming down from the sky but most of the water is coming in deluges from passing cars. The water on the road is two or three inches deep in places and even when cars slow down, which some do and some don't, a wall of water is thrown on me. The Gore-Tex suit normally keeps me dry but can't cope with this amount and soon I'm walking along as wet as I can possibly be.

To compound matters, I'm down to \$14 which means I can't spend the night in a motel which otherwise I certainly would have done. I walk through Berwick and then East Berwick hoping to find somewhere to make camp that might be reasonably dry. It begins to look like a repetition of last night as darkness comes on and the suburbs continue. I don't really want to pitch my tent in a parking lot and my first choice in the suburbs—a churchyard—doesn't appear. Finally in what is a repetition of last night, I spot a massive lawn area in front of a large building with the words "Maria Et Joseph" above the door. I go up to the door and, when a nun answers, ask her if I can please pitch my tent in their yard. She says she will have to ask the Mother Superior and goes to get her.

The Mother Superior greets me somewhat coolly and asks what I want. I tell her what I'm doing and hand her a brochure, then ask if I can spend the night in their yard. She says, "certainly not" and tells me to wait a minute. She goes back to her office. I don't know what to expect but once again it has turned completely dark and I can't conceive of trying to find another place to stay. I determine that whatever it takes, I am going to convince her to let me stay here.

When she returns she says, "I've made arrangements for you to stay at a motel just down the road. We can't let you stay out in the cold and rain and we're sorry but there is no room in this building." Then she says, "I'm sure that you can use a good breakfast in the morning" and hands me a ten dollar bill. I am really overwhelmed at her goodness, especially so since I had been expecting something entirely different. I was not looking forward at all to the prospect of spending a cold and wet night in a tent that now smells so moldy that I have to sleep with my face next to the open screen even if it means letting the rain come in. The shock of realizing that I will have a warm bed to sleep in tonight brings quick tears to my eyes. The

somewhat gruff manner of the Mother Superior disappears when she sees my tears and she gives me a hug and says a blessing.

The owner of the motel is equally kind and friendly and we sit outside for a long time talking. The rain has stopped and the night is warm. Later, after a warm shower, I crawl into bed and feel closer to God than perhaps I ever have. He is testing me certainly but never past what I can endure. His ultimate goodness is always evident and never more so than at a moment like this.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9	MILE 2852
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Today is the start of the last week of the walk. There will not be another Wednesday. Next Wednesday I will be preparing to return home. A little over 150 miles remaining, minuscule compared to the 2850 miles completed. It is now almost virtually certain that I will complete the walk on time. I should be feeling more and more elated but instead I have a sense of let-down. There is almost no challenge left, no mountain ranges to cross, no deserts to get through, no wondering about getting sick, about legs or feet failing to do their job.

I'm now on State Highway 9 heading southeast. I've been paralleling I80 for a couple of days and yesterday crossed it heading into Berwick. Now I cross it again. I have a strange feeling of homesickness being so close to I80 now because this interstate highway has its start in San Francisco and in fact I was on it the very first day of the walk as I crossed over the Bay Bridge heading east. We parted company immediately afterwards as I took a more southerly route. I'm also feeling some anger looking at the way it smooths out the hills and curves and how straight it heads for New York City, while I am confined to these back roads, presumably in the name of safety, that make no pretense at doing more than following whatever the landscape presents and are certainly not safe for a lone pedestrian pulling a cart.

I've been repeatedly warned about this stretch of road for several days now. It is supposed to have the worst climbs of all. I'm psyched up to expect the worst. South of Hazleton, I begin to climb. It's a long climb but not as steep as many I've already experienced in this state. Half way up I meet a most incredible couple. He is a young man with a lot of energy and a lot of words, all about God and the Bible. He is the son of the older woman. As outspoken as he is, she is as quiet. But her look shows the wisdom of a long life and as he speaks, she smiles at him, loving him in his zeal, content to stand quietly and listen. I'm so utterly struck by these two archetypes of youth and age. The outward going, confident, overwhelming and somewhat overbearing energy of youth, knowing that he is filled with

the truth because he has not lived long enough to have his truths confounded. The inward turning, quiet wisdom of age, knowing much but content to hold that knowledge within so that the brashness of youth overwhelms it. She has so much to share that I want so much to hear but there is no time. We part in a few minutes. I think she knows what is happening within me and she holds me close for an instant before going.

The trip down the other side of this mountain, called "Broad Mountain", is something else. Perhaps it got its reputation, well earned, from this side. During the several miles of down, I hold the brakes on the cart as tightly as possible and still I have to hold it back. The brake pads are smoking and at the bottom when I look at them there is over an eighth of an inch gone from this one descent. Once again I'm very, very glad that I'm traveling towards the East. I spend the night in Nesquehoning at the foot of the mountain. There had been a mail drop in Hazleton so I have enough money to stay in a motel. I am celebrating my last night in Pennsylvania.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10	MILE 2890
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I reach the town of Jim Thorpe early in the morning. On the other side of town, clearly visible, is a mountain. This is the bad one, I'm told, once again in this town where they should know. I rest awhile and head up the climb. I dread the thought of it, remembering what it was like coming down Broad Mountain yesterday and thinking that maybe this time it will be like that going up. On the other hand this is supposed to be the last significant climb of the walk. Everyone I've talked to says New Jersey is much more level than Pennsylvania.

I continue climbing but so far it is no worse than the climb yesterday, steady but not terribly steep. After not too long a time, the road levels out and I think to myself that the next climb is undoubtedly where it happens, where it really gets bad. I dread each turn of the road, expecting to see a steep upgrade ahead but at each turn the road remains level. Then it starts down and I start to get a little angry, remembering what had happened in Utah when the road went down but then started up again. And the same thing in Yosemite Park. It's bad enough to climb up and finally get to some height but then to give it away and have to do it all over again is terribly discouraging. As the road continues down, I get more and more frustrated knowing that I'm going to be forced to go back up again and then some. But then incredulously there is a sign that says, "Lehigh One Mile." I've been told that the summit is between Jim Thorpe and Lehigh. If that is true I've already passed over it. I can't believe it but as I continue to walk

and the road continues its downward journey until I can see the outskirts of town, I finally give way to the elation that I've been holding back. It is a pussycat. I had psyched myself up so high expecting the worst that I just can't believe how easy it has been. It is really over. The last mountain. And instead of going out with a bang, the mountains end with a whimper. And truly this is the last major climb. New Jersey isn't as flat as I was hoping for and there are good climbs right up to the George Washington Bridge but the mountains have ended.

At Lehighton I turn east again picking up US209. I reach the small town of Gilbert at dusk and call Marian R., the mother of Richard C., whom Susan and I had stayed with in Boulder. I am supposed to stay with her tonight but when I reach her home I learn that she had gone to the hospital earlier today as the result of a fall. However, Richard's brother-in-law who has a farm outside of Easton, New Jersey, some forty miles from where I now am agrees to come and get me and take me to his place where I can spend the night.

Richard Coppersmith's farm is a beautiful place showing the result of many, many, hours of hard and dedicated effort. I've spent time in New Jersey before but always in the immediate area of New York City. My memories are of a rather ugly industrial state. Nothing can be further from the truth as soon as you are out in the country. It's easy to see why it is called the garden state. Until I had the opportunity to walk through the state I thought that the term 'garden state' was made in jest or perhaps coined in the distant past but it is still appropriate, at least for the areas that I was privileged to pass through.

Richard Coppersmith's farm is within seeing distance of the Delaware Water Gap, a canyon cut by the Delaware River separating New Jersey from Pennsylvania and a National Recreational Area. The next morning we drive to a high hill a few miles from his home and can gaze across to the Water Gap, some twenty miles away. The view only adds to my awareness of once again having a preconception blasted away.

I spend all of the next day at Richard's farm, gladly accepting his offer to drive me to Hackettstown that evening where I can stay with William and Shirley Depp, close friends of Marian R.. This time I don't have an overriding excuse not to walk and decide to spend the day with Richard out of pure laziness rather than any noble purpose. It feels very good to let my discipline slip away for one day of rest and play and do it just for the sure hell of it.

16 COMPLETION

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12	MILE 2952
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Yesterday ended as pleasantly as it started. William and Shirley are very gracious people and made me feel immediately at home. I now am very well rested and anxious for the last push to New York City. Only three full days left before the BIG DAY and only today and tomorrow to walk alone. Oz Crosby will be flying up from Florida tomorrow and will join me for the last two days. I am now within an hour's drive of New York. It is hard not to break into a run like a race horse smelling the finish line. So very close and yet right now, at this moment, nothing is different. I still have to walk my twenty five miles today, still have to worry about a place to stay tonight, still have to dodge the same traffic and, to add a bit to the excitement, it is overcast and raining off and on. No one that I meet now comments on how far I still have to go as they were doing even a few days ago—that is different for sure but the distance that I've traveled is so incomprehensible that even for me it has lost its significance. When people now ask where I started from (and many do even though my T shirt says "Walk Of Peace San Francisco To New York") and I reply "San Francisco", most just get a rather dazed look and don't say much. They can relate where I am now to where I'm going, which isn't very far and therefore not worthy of much comment but where I've come from could be another planet. Many people I meet haven't ever been that far, even on a plane.

By dusk the rain is steady and unpleasant. Although there had been a few places where I might have made camp that I passed during the day, right now I'm in a suburban area that continues for many miles. There are several possibilities that I look for in populated settings; church and school yards and, on Friday and Saturday nights, industrial sites—big parking lots and big lawns with shrubbery that would provide some seclusion. But now as it gets darker and darker I'm walking past homes with small front yards and then shopping centers that are still open and with no possibility of finding a secluded spot. I have very little money and know that the motel prices that I've come to expect—fifteen to twenty dollars—are not usual here. Finally however I spot a rather seedy looking motel and decide to check it out. From the curious looks I get from a couple of women standing in open doorways and the sign at the check in counter giving prices by the hour, I guess that I'm going to spend the night at a thinly

disguised whore house but the price is right and at this point I really don't care. The walls are not very soundproof and I'm soon acutely conscious of how long it has been since Susan and I've last been together. In self-defense I turn the TV on with the volume up high enough to drown out the next-room sounds. Mercifully the couple next door have the room by the hour and are soon gone, not to be replaced by another.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13 MILE 2975
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It is pouring when I wake up and I dread the thought of a another day like the one I went through a few days ago but the Gods smile on me and the day soon clears and turns warm. I'm walking on US46 which will take me right to the George Washington Bridge on ramp. There are still stretches of 'country' but by the end of the day suburbia has totally taken over. Walking is getting more and more scary. There is almost no time that a sidewalk exists long enough that I can count on it and when the road is elevated off the ground there is often no walkway and no shoulder. I can't help contrasting this time with the long hours of absolute solitude out west. There is definitely no time for quiet reflection here. Navigating me and the cart is my all-consuming full time occupation. I hadn't expected it to be easy as I got very close to New York City and I'm not being disappointed.

Lea G., a Bahai woman who lives just north of the George Washington Bridge, has agreed to meet me and provide a place to stay for tonight. This is especially thoughtful of her since she is renting a room in a house belonging to another couple and had to get their agreement. Their home is an incredibly beautiful one located in the town of Alpine which is on the Palisades overlooking the Hudson River. It is difficult for me to accept that there can be such beauty in a country setting so close to the city. This whole area must have been strikingly appealing when the first settlers came and looked upon it.

When Lea meets me in Clifton we locate a gas station that agrees to lock up the cart for the night. The cart will not fit in her car and it is obviously impossible to tow it so we are fortunate to make this arrangement. I'm given a guest room that is the favorite sleeping place of the big German shepherd that shares the home and he and I spend some time before dropping off to sleep wrestling for a ball which he invitingly pushes into my hand as I lay in bed. Lea is downstairs playing the piano (she is a classical musician) and the whole setting feels exquisitely peaceful and good. This is a perfect way to end the last solitary day of the walk.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14 MILE 2995

Oz meets me at a restaurant in Clifton after Lea returns me to where the cart had spent the night. Lea had to battle traffic to return me to Clifton, then turn around and battle it again to get to her job. What a wonderful person. I'm overjoyed to see Oz again. So much has happened since the last time we were together crossing into Kansas. Oz is the only person present at the beginning, during, and at the end of the walk. That he would take the time to fly up from his home in Florida to spend two frightening and dangerous days walking with me says much for his friendship and support. Without his caring and his efforts on my behalf the walk would have been much more difficult, perhaps impossible. My regard and indebtedness to him can never be put into words.



My first look at the Empire State Building—I'm still in New Jersey

Soon after we start out, I notice that he is looking at me with a strange smile with his camera poised. It takes a moment for me to grasp what is happening. He has seen the New York skyline and is waiting for me to notice it. We are about ten miles away from the bridge. The empire state building is prominently visible through the haze. I'm speechless for a while and look at the vision with a smile that stretches from ear to ear. Then Oz and I hug, do a dance and climb up on an overpass to get a better view. It is really there and yet it has a Shangri La feeling as if it could disappear at any moment. My goal for the last four months is visible in front of me and

part of me refuses to accept that it can be almost over, in fact will be over at this time tomorrow. Right now it is very much not over. Walking is not enjoyable and now we sometimes have to cross two high speed lanes exiting to the right, waiting minutes for an opening to dash across.

There are only fourteen miles to do today to get to the bridge. By the middle of the afternoon we are in Fort Lee at the foot of the bridge. We find a neighborhood bar and enjoy a few beers talking and finalizing the plans for tomorrow. We should arrive at the UN around ten in the morning. Martin Bentz, the logistical magician of the First Earth Run, and who lives in lower Manhattan, will act as our guide through the city and will meet us at dawn.

Later, Oz calls Martin and we decide to go into the city for the evening. It has been over twenty years since I've been in New York. It is a tremendous shock to be in the midst of so much people energy after four months of being almost totally alone. I call Susan and let her know that it is go for tomorrow and how sad I feel that she will not be here to share the experience. She has decided that it would be too risky to take a plane flight so close to her due date. I had also hoped that my two daughters and son would be here but for one reason and another this also was not possible. Because of this I'm now planning on returning to San Francisco on Wednesday, the day after the walk ends rather than spend several days in New York as originally planned.

Oz and I return back to New Jersey and find a motel within a mile or so of the bridge. We leave word to give us a wakeup call at five o'clock. It is already close to midnight, I'm on total overload, mentally and emotionally but somehow drift off to sleep.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15 MILE 3010
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Oz and I are awake before the five o'clock call comes. It is still completely dark outside and quite chilly. Just the same I dress in my standard uniform of T-shirt and shorts and soon head for the bridge and New York City and the United Nations Headquarters where the walk will officially end some five hours from now. I'm shivering, as much from emotion as from the chill.

When we get to the bridge, the sky is just getting light although the sun

has not yet risen. The Port Authority had allowed us to stash the cart overnight in the terminal building. I had done this with some reluctance, thinking the worst—there wouldn't be anyone available to get it out of the room this early in the morning. We had been assured there would be and there is and so now Oz and I and cart are ready to cross into New York. Martin Bentz and Lea soon find us and somewhat ceremoniously we walk onto the bridge just as the sun begins its rise over the city. I'm still shaking and getting more and more into a stupor.

We leave the bridge and head downtown, following Broadway. Lea leaves us and returns across the bridge. She had gotten up this early just to walk with us as we entered into the city but then had to go to work. I feel honored that she cared that much, both for herself and as a representative of the Bahais. They have supported this walk literally from beginning to end, a wonderful example of faith in action.

We stop in upper Manhattan at a McDonalds and have an impromptu breakfast. Part of me is starved and part too nervous to eat. The food has no taste in my mouth but the hungry part of me gets its point across and I eat anyway.

I have to walk in the street because of the cart. Oz and Martin act as buffers, occasionally trying to set up a race between me and various food vendors who are also pulling carts—yelling to me, "C'mon, you can take him!" and starting to run. The other cart puller always looks totally perplexed and I'm caught in the dilemma of either trying to look dignified, which is impossible under the circumstances, or joining in with their fun.

We turn into Central Park where we can walk without worrying about traffic. Then the McDonalds coffee takes hold and Oz and I start desperately looking for a restroom. We finally spot one only to find the doors locked and end up using a bush alongside the building. I find this terribly funny. I have just spent four months walking three thousand miles in order to piss on a bush in Central Park. So much for idealism.

We leave Central Park and are now walking in downtown Manhattan. I know that we are close and the closer we get the more in a daze I become. We turn onto United Nations Plaza street but I'm totally oblivious to the fact. Finally Oz and Martin tell me that it is only another half mile or so. They are laughing and I can't understand why until I look up and see all of the flags waving in front of the UN Building. They jump in front of me holding a yellow ribbon between them and I pull the cart through it. The walk is over.

After much hugging, congratulations and smiles we walk into the UN. There is a small ceremony and I transfer the flame that I've carried across the country to a perpetual one to be maintained at the UN. During the

ceremony I look out at the audience and see Avon Mattison from Pathways To Peace. She had not been able to see me off in San Francisco but is here to accept an award given to PTP on this day, the International Day Of Peace.

We hold each other for a long time, then she introduces me to Sheldon, a man she had met just as I started the walk and whom she has grown to love. The three of us go to the meditation room, which a guard is kind enough to unlock for us. I fall on my knees in profound silent thanks. I have grown to know God in a new way, far more personal than before. We have each done our part to make this walk possible. He taught me many lessons, mostly showing me over and over that suppositions and preconceptions shut us in and create barriers to living a far richer life. I confirmed that all and any of us are capable of fulfilling a vision when we have the desire and motivation. He often didn't answer my needs in the comfortable way that I would have preferred but my needs were always met, often in ways that led to profound insights. As a result of the walk my life is changed forever.



Signing the lid of the cart at the UN, September 15th.

Left to right: Martin Bentz of UNICEF, Ruth Airey-Vidal, Berdine Jernigan, Oz Crosby and Jeremy Benson.

Photo by Lily Solmssen,

MICHAEL ANTARES



UN Dignitaries accepting the flame.

THE END

17 EPILOGUE

I spent that night in New York with Oz and Martin. Oz left the next morning and I returned to California in the afternoon. It took six hours to undo 122 days of walking. The plane covered in one hour three weeks of walking distance.

There is a song which you may know, one I've loved since I was in my twenties:

"In a wagon, bound for market, there's a calf with a mournful eye.
High above him there's a swallow, winging swiftly through the sky.

How the winds are laughing, they laugh with all their might.
Laugh and laugh the whole day through and half the summer's night.

Stop complaining, says the farmer, who told you a calf to be?
Why don't you have wings to fly with, like the swallow so proud and free?

How the winds are laughing, they laugh with all their might.
Laugh and laugh the whole day through and half the summer's night.

Calves are easily bound and slaughtered, never knowing the reason why.
But whoever values freedom, like the swallow, has learned to fly."

We can live our life like a calf, bound and ready for slaughter, victimized by our own fears and doubts, wishing and dreaming for what might be or might have been.

We can also live our life like a swallow. It is up to us. Pogo says it best. "We have seen the enemy and they are us." The limitations we are content (or discontent) to live with are of our own making. The hardest step of any journey is always the first one. It sometimes takes a supreme act of will to take that first step. But once we have taken the first, the rest come easy.

How do we learn to fly like a swallow? The first requirement is to travel light. Like a balloon, straining for the sky but held to earth with bags of sand, we cannot reach for the heavens when we are burdened with bags of

fears, frustrations, mistrusts, disbeliefs (especially in ourselves), wrongful assumptions, preconceptions and doubts. It may be terrifying to let go of all of these bags that yes, keep us from reaching for the heavens, but that also provide predictability and some security. After all, being chained to the earth provides knowledge about tomorrow, sad as tomorrow may be. Floating up to the heavens may be exciting and the rewards may be great but there is also a risk of falling. The calf knows where its life will lead. The swallow does not.

