

Synopsis Of The FBI's Investigation Into Aris Nyad

From January through July 1943, the FBI investigated Aristotle Z. Nyad for espionage. Agents examined Aris's activities from May 28, 1940, when he arrived in the United States from Greece, to his January 1943 arrest in Beverly Hills. Agents conducted interviews in New York, New Jersey, Illinois, and California.

Aris's criminal records and the records of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service list the following aliases: ARISTOLES NYAD / ARISTOTELIS NAIDIS / ARISTOTLE NAIDES / ARISTOTLE ZIZON NAIDIS / ARIDTOTELIS NAIDIS

This synopsis begins with a timeline that I condensed from the FBI's interviews with Aris's acquaintances. It ends with a timeline abstracted from Special Agent Albert Spradling's interview with Aris himself. I had to keep the two timelines separate because Aris's claims are unreliable. We can't consider any of his statements true unless a reliable source corroborates them.

1940

May 11 — Leaves Piraeus, Greece, as a crewman aboard the SS Nea Hellas.

May 28 — Arrives in New York, promptly deserts.

Oct 5 — Marries Mary Kalamaridis in New Jersey.

Oct 16 — SELECTIVE SERVICE REGISTRATION

Registered with the Selective Service in Hoboken. Miss BEATRICE BUCKLEY was Chief Clerk, Local Board No. 9, Hoboken, New Jersey.

- Aris gave his address as 314 Washington Street, Hoboken, New Jersey
- Gave employer as KONDES BROTHERS,* 703 East 134th Street, New York City.
- Social Security Number: 104-12-7871.
- He said he was married, made \$25/week, and gave it all to his wife.

Dec — Aris files a Selective Service questionnaire. He states that he

- was born 6/16/19 in Athens, Greece
- was educated in Athens with **two years of commercial study at the University of Athens.**
- **served Royal Greek Air Force 1937-1940, with NO OTHER MILITARY SERVICE.**
- was married. His wife said he married her only to become a U.S. citizen, a statement she later retracts.
- Had a room in Hoboken, New Jersey, in 1940, but lived most of the time in New York City.

They classify Aris 4-C. Class 4 was "Unacceptable for military service"; 4-C was "Any alien."

* Kontos Bros. Wholesale Grocers was at that address- in the Bronx.

Aris said that he worked in a Greek restaurant in New Jersey. He claimed that after his marriage, he worked in Hoboken for a time but became dissatisfied and decided to come to Los Angeles to find work. He said he was unable to find a job because he wasn't a U.S. citizen.

1941

STEVE CHALKAS, owner of the Steve Chalkas Fur Studio, 267 North Rodeo Drive, Beverly Hills, said that he first met Aris in **1941**, when a Mr. TED MICHAEL, partner of the Topper's Jewelry store of Santa Monica, California,* brought Aris around. Aris told CHALKAS that he came from a prominent Greek family, had been stranded in California, and needed some help. Aris told Chalkas that he'd flown in the Greek Air Force and wanted to go to Canada or England, where he might again join some branch of the Greek Air Force.

Aris said that he stayed in Los Angeles from the first part of 1941 until he enlisted in the Canadian Air Force in November 1941.†

Aug 29

The Immigration Service first got wind of Aris in August 1941, when the Santa Monica Police Department held him for investigation of his immigration status. He gave his name as ARISTOTLE ZISON NYAD to Immigration Inspector RALPH COLER. He said his name in Greek was NIADIS, his father's name was ZION NIADIS, his mother's EFROSINI EUTROBI, and that both parents were born in Greece. He said he had one sister, ANYA(?) NYADIS(?), living in Athens, Greece, and had no relations in the U.S.

Shortly afterward, a Mr. MAITLAND connected with the British Consulate in Los Angeles, and Captain BENWEIGH[?][BENWAY], R.C.A.F. Recruiting Officer, Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel, arranged for Aris to enlist as a sergeant in the Royal Canadian Air Force.‡

Nov 27

Aris departs from Blaine, Washington, for Canada.

Dec 4

The Los Angeles Office of the Immigration and Naturalization Service receives **a letter from Aris**, postmarked at Brandon, Manitoba, Canada. Aris writes that he had enlisted in the Canadian Army and that his serial number was **R-143284.§** He gives his address as #2 Manning Depot, Brandon.

* A 1947 Santa Monica City Directory [shows Topper Jewelers](#) at 1411½ 3rd Street. Today, that address is on Santa Monica's Third Street Promenade between Santa Monica Boulevard and Broadway. The directory shows Theo Michael living at the same address.

† In other words, no battling Nazis after Germany invaded Greece, or being one of 26 survivors of the Battle of Crete, or otherwise doing any of the heroic things he claims to have done during WWII.

‡ Alasdair Maitland was a vice consul in Los Angeles' British consulate in 1941. See "[London Girl Weds British Vice Consul.](#)" (Maitland was best man.) [Captain Ernest Leo Benway](#) organized the Hollywood, California, R.C.A.F. recruiting drive.

§ This is the serial number of Private Lionel Block of Port Credit, Ontario. The 19-year-old was killed in action in Italy and is buried there in [the Cassino War Cemetery](#).

Dec 27

Aris is apprehended at Rouses Point, New York, while attempting to enter Canada from the United States. He says he's a Greek citizen, had been in the U.S. for four days, and had entered from Canada at the same point on December 23, 1941. At that time, he claimed to be an American citizen.

1942

Jan – release and flight (Aris finally gets to fly!)

Aris was held until sometime in January 1942, when he was released on a \$500 bond paid by Greek “friends” in New York. He disappeared until Beverly Hills Police arrested him a year later. His “friends” lost their \$500.

During his year on the lam, U.S. Immigration authorities contacted Canadian officials, who furnished a Letter of Authority dated February 11, 1942, authorizing Aris's return to Canada. A U.S. Warrant of Deportation dated October 3, 1942, was issued in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, directing Aris's deportation to Canada after they caught him. This warrant was in effect as of his January 1943 arrest.

~April 20 - Annulment

Mary Nyad files a petition to annul her marriage to Aris.

Early Summer – ARIS'S TOOTHACHE

Chicago dentist [Dr. C. K. ANTONOPULOS](#) (Aris called him Dr. N. T. ANTONOPOUNOS and didn't mention he was a dentist) tells agents that, in early summer of 1942, a young man who described himself as ARIS NOTARAS, called on him wearing the Royal Air Force uniform with a Greek insignia on his shoulder, and requested the removal of his lower right molar. Doctor Antonopulos obliges. Aris relates his various heroic exploits, convincing the doctor of his valor and courage. Aris becomes friendly with the doctor, who wants to do everything he can for Aris because he had fought “so heroically for their country.” The doctor introduces Aris to some of his friends.

Aris shows Dr. Antonopulos a letter signed by a Colonel HAWK of the Royal Air Force, reportedly transferring Aris's pay to California. The doctor gave Aris \$97.00 for spending money and to pay for a new uniform.

According to the doctor, Aris spent most of his time in Chicago with “chance acquaintances of officers in the United States Army.” The doctor gave Aris the Luger “for hunting purposes.” MR. ARTHUR PETMEZAR [[Petmezas](#) — DS], proprietor of Sander's [[Lander's](#) — DS] Restaurant, 134 South Wabash Avenue, also took Aris in and was impressed by his Royal Air Force exploits. Aris spent quite a bit of time at Lander's restaurant, where he met the U.S. Army officers.

DR. ANTONOPULOS said that he believes Aris took a bus from Chicago to Cheyenne, Wyoming. Aris was there in September 1942, entertained by a GEORGE KISCIRAS.*

* George T. Kisciras of Cheyenne, Wyoming, two-term National Supreme Governor of the [American Hellenic Education Progressive Association \(AHEPA\)](#). FBI agents do not appear to have interviewed him. They may have just missed him; he [died in July 1943](#). The latest date stamp on the report is August 1943.

October — Chalkas Furs and The King of Greece

The next time that STEVE CHALKAS saw Aris was in **October 1942**. Aris was in Beverly Hills, wearing his Greek Naval Airman uniform. He tells CHALKAS that

- he's in the Greek Air Force and had been stationed with the Greek Detachment of the Royal Air Force in Canada for approximately two months.
- **he was then transferred to the British Isles as a personal flyer for the King of Greece.**
- **he had then flown the King of Greece to the United States, and he was now in California to further the cause of Greek War Relief.**

Aris begins frequenting CHALKAS' shop from about November until December 29, 1942. Aris was constantly broke and asking Chalkas for loans, but he said that a Greek government check would arrive any day. CHALKAS said he loaned Aris about \$40 or \$50 because he believed Aris's story that he was serving Greece as a Lieutenant Commander in the Greek Air Force.

Lieutenant Commander Nyad says: "Don't Worry About The Money."

Aris told CHALKAS he wasn't in the reserves. Instead, he **"was with the regular Navy and therefore had a lifetime job and that CHALKAS need not worry about his money."** Aris "never appeared in the shop, other than in one of his various uniforms and **constantly reminded them that he was to be referred to as Lieutenant Commander.**"

Life with the Luftwaffe

ALEXANDER BACKHAUT, an employee of Steve Chalkas Fur Studio, also first met Aris in **October 1942**, at CHALKAS' shop. BACKHAUT was born in Vienna, Austria. He spoke German well and said that Aris spoke it well, too. Aris told BACKHAUT that

- **he spent six months in the German Luftwaffe in Potsdam, Germany.** Aris shows BACKHAUT a document purportedly signed by the German Flying Corps. The document states that Aris had flown with the Luftwaffe for 6 months and had graduated from its advanced flying course.
- he was in Germany for a long time. During that time, he remained in constant contact with the German Luftwaffe command. **(Aris later claims he was trying to root out spies and saboteurs.)**

The Beverly Hills Hotel (Sep 28, 1942 – Jan 12, 1943):

from Mr. E. J. CALDWELL, Manager of the Beverly Hills Hotel, Inc.,

- He'd known Aris since approximately **September 28, 1942**
- Aris called himself Lieutenant Commander ARIS NOTARAS of the Greek Air Force.
- Aris appeared at his hotel in the uniform of a Greek Air Force Officer.
- Aris arrived with a young woman, purportedly his wife. They checked into a suite. Aris said that, since he was employed by the Greek Government, he would make the arrangements to pay as soon as his funds arrived.

- About two weeks after the couple moved in, Aris’s “wife” approached Mr. CALDWELL and informed him that she wasn’t Aris’s wife. Her name was MARY SCHENIDER, and she wanted a separate room.
- Caldwell asked Aris to pay his bill. Aris said he couldn’t but that [Mr. CHARLES P. SKOURAS](#), President of the National Theater Amusement Company, Inc., * 1609 West Washington Blvd., Los Angeles, California, would pay it if the Greek government didn’t come through by **December 3, 1942**.
- The bill was not paid by **December 3, 1942**, so the Board of Directors of the Beverly Hills Hotel asked SKOURAS to pay the bill (\$543.14). A few days later, a check from SKOURAS arrived for that amount.
- SKOURAS believed Aris was an officer in the Greek Air Force. SKOURAS told CALDWELL “that he would appreciate any further courtesy that CALDWELL could show this man.”

1943 — Arrest, arraignment, imprisonment

Jan 5 — Aris appears on Ginny Simms’ radio show (see below)

Jan 12 — NYAD arrested by Beverly Hills PD and U.S. Immigration Agent.

Jan 29 — Interviewed. Admitted illegally wearing a Greek Naval uniform.

Feb 2, 1943 — Complaint filed by USA. Authorized on this day by Assistant U.S. HOWARD V. CALVERLEY.

Feb 3, 1943 — Aris was arraigned before United States Commissioner DAVID B. HEAD. Aris pleaded guilty to the illegal wearing of the Greek uniform. Bond was set at \$1000.

Feb 9, 1943 — AGENT SPRADLING interviews Aris, who signs a statement admitting the illegal wearing of a Greek Naval uniform and obtaining money by false representation.

March 1, 1943 — Arraigned before Judge LEON R. YANKWICH, U.S. District Court of Southern California, and entered plea of guilty to illegally wearing a Greek uniform Sentenced to “six months in prison of jail type.”

March 20, 1943 — **ARIS IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY JAIL**

FBI agents searched Aris’s luggage and found

- three uniforms:
 - **A Greek Naval Officer's uniform**, white with the corresponding white hat to match; attached to this uniform was the flying insignia of the Greek Air Force and on the hat was attached the insignia of the Greek Navy.
 - A khaki uniform containing the same insignia
 - **Royal Canadian Air Force uniform**, blue, with the Greek Air Corps markings.
 - Aris stated that he’d been wearing several Greek uniforms around Los Angeles and vicinity. He said that he’d done no harm in wearing them, that he was with the Greek Air Force at one time, and that he believed he was entitled to wear the Greek uniform.
- WHITE and SMITH (see below) find a fourth uniform in Aris’s room, a black one decorated with the gold cord of a Lieutenant Commander in the Greek Air Force. This

* I can’t confirm that “National Theater Amusement Company, Inc.” ever existed. Skouras presided over a company called National Theatres.

uniform also had the Greek Flying insignia, the Greek flag on the right shoulder, and the word "Greece" on the left shoulder.

- 200 rounds of ammunition, including
 - 50 rounds of .30 caliber automatic rifle ammunition
 - 100 rounds of 12-gauge shotgun shells

Beverly Hills Police Received A Tip About Aris

Captain WHITE of the Beverly Hills Detective Squad Police Department and Special Agent SMITH of the Los Angeles Immigration Office received a complaint from [STEVE CHALKAS](#) of Beverly Hills, California, regarding his living with several women in Beverly Hills.

WHITE and SMITH went to the Beverly Hills Hotel and found no women with Aris. But they learned that he was in the U.S. illegally. They found the Luger in his possession (containing three rounds in the clip and two more in Aris's "grip"). Also, Captain WHITE learned that Aris had [appeared on the GINNY SIMS \[SIMMS\] radio program](#) and that VICTOR KNIGHT of the BLOW Company would be able to substantiate Aris's having appeared in uniform to give the broadcast.

KNIGHT, Manager of the BLOW Company, Columbia Broadcasting Studios, Sunset and Vine, Hollywood, met Aris through Mr. CHARLES SKOURAS. KNIGHT interviewed Aris, who said

- he was Lieutenant Commander ARIS NOTARAS of the Greek Air Force
- **he was one of the 26 Greeks who had escaped from Greece immediately after its downfall (likely referring to the [Battle of Crete](#), May 20 – June 1, 1941).**
- he would not appear on the radio program unless Mr. KNIGHT promised to keep his name a secret from the public, because he did not care to have any further Nazi reprisals against his large family in Greece. KNIGHT told Aris he'd get \$25.00 for his appearance on the program and that his picture would appear in the paper. Aris stated that it was fine for his picture to appear in the paper with Miss SIMMS, providing that his head was covered. According to Aris, this would prevent **Nazi reprisals** on his family. But **Aris wanted to hide his identity not to prevent reprisals from the Nazis but to prevent reprisals from those he'd fleeced in the U.S.**

[On January 5, 1943, Aris appeared](#) in full uniform on the GINNY SIMMS program on the N.B.C. network and informed the radio audience that he was a Lieutenant Commander in the Greek Air Force, although he didn't use his name.* Mrs. SIDNEY LOGAN (see below) had notes from his radio address. From the FBI report:

There is also a 3 page typewritten copy of the address delivered by subject. The first part of this address was by the announcer which described the speaker as being a Greek Commander whose name was withheld. He described him as one of the twenty-seven survivors from the original twelve hundred members of the Greek Royal Navy Air Force.

*Aris's appearance got plenty of press. Two examples: ["One of 27 Surviving Fliers Of Greece Is on Radio Tonight"](#) (*Buffalo Evening News*), and ["Greek Air Ace Broadcasts Thrilling Appeal to Local Gathering at Carter"](#) (*The Cleveland Press*). I haven't located any of the photos from the broadcast.

According to the script, subject then described briefly the invasion of Greece by the Nazis and the resulting horrors and suffering on the part of the Greek people.

THE CLEVELAND PRESS, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 6, 1943

NORMAN SIEGEL



Greek Air Ace Broadcasts Thrilling Appeal to Local Gathering at Carter

The Greeks Had More Than Words: We saw a man cry last night. It isn't often given to man to cry. He's the stronger, more controlled of the sexes.

But there are times when men, as brave and strong as they may be, break down in tears. When someone dear has passed on. Even then, some men hold their tears within themselves. It was suffering, rather than death itself, that caused Rev. Fr. Chrysogonos Lavriotes, bearded patriarch of the Greek Orthodox Church, to cry last night. The suffering and starvation of a great people. His people, the Greeks.

Rev. Fr. Lavriotes was one of the members of the local Greek community in attendance at a reception and dinner at the Carter Hotel for young Greek-American boys in service, or about to be inducted. The gathering was sponsored by James Mylonas, state regional director of Greek War Relief. And the electrifying moment of the evening was the broadcast of a phone call from an anonymous survivor of the Greek Royal Air Force.

He spoke from Hollywood on Ginny Simms' radio program which weekly features calls from servicemen. While his call was placed personally to Mr. Mylonas, it was available to the entire nation through the medium of radio. This brave Greek hero remained anonymous because 11 members of his family are still in Greece, which is temporarily under the yoke of a brutal invader.

He told of the glorious defense which his country had put up against the Axis. He told of the starvation and misery that now exists there. Of

Greek girls, crazed by starvation, selling their bodies to the enemy for food, and proud fathers shooting their daughters rather than permit them to submit to this uncivilized humiliation. There were tears in the eyes of Rev. Fr. Lavriotes, who had spent much of his life in Athens, and tears in the hearts of every man in the room.

The tears shed by the spiritual leader of a noble people were for the suffering of his native land and its gallant inhabitants. The tears we felt were for more than that.

After hearing the commander's description of conditions in Greece, we felt like crying because of that American who stopped us the other day and complained that his gasoline ration board had called in his "C" card, giving him a more equitable classification. The Government couldn't do that to him, he shouted.

We felt like crying because of the American we know in one of the outlying suburbs who has a huge refrigeration plant where he has stocked an untold quantity of meat and other foods that will soon be rationed. He isn't "going to get caught short."

We felt like crying because of that American who is suffering from "\$25,000 ceilingitis." He had it all figured out. The Communists invented this inhuman plan. They sold it to the C. I. O., which in turn sold the idea to Mrs. Roosevelt, who then passed it along to the president. He wasn't worried about those other Americans whose earnings have been limited to \$50 a month in the Army. Anything to win the war, except his income.

We felt like crying because of those

Americans who still feel that the whole war business is an annoyance; because of the Americans who would still like to do business with the Axis tomorrow; because of the Americans who talk all-out effort but who fail to back their words up with all-out support.

We hope that these Americans were tuned to the program which caused Rev. Fr. Lavriotes to cry last night. His people have seen war. Fortunately, the majority of Americans know what the Greeks have learned through the horrible experience they are now facing. They and their Allies in arms will wipe the tears from the faces of the temporarily oppressed.

Nancy Jean Kimball, pretty blond instructor at the Arthur Murray Studios, last night became the bride of Lieut. (J. G.) William Billow. They were married in Lakewood. Lieut. Billow, who was an assistant manager of the Statler Hotel before entering service, is reporting for duty in Seattle. His wife will remain here for the present on the Arthur Murray staff.

Private Sights of a Public Sight-Seeer: Paul Lukas, who's able to go out again, helping Publisher Zoltan Gombos select a new suit at Halle's. Lukas plans to rest at the home of friends in Piqua before returning to his role in "Watch on the Rhine" when the show opens in Chicago on the 17th. . . . Genevieve Arth, head of the Arth Brass-Works, tossing a dinner for her sister before leaving for New York. . . . Lieut. Leonard Dodge stocking up on heavy Army shirts for his new assignment in the Dakotas. . . . Waac Edith Haines back at WGAR showing off her snappy uniform. . . . Bob Twitchell packing for a trip to California later in the week. . . . Jan Savitt's melody outfit, which now contains 22 performers, being booked for a one-nighter at the Aragon on Jan. 17. . . . The Ad Club receiving a striking honor roll board from Frank Addis. It will contain club badges of members in service. . . . Pat Patchen seeing George Zeninetz off to service. He's a naval Aviation cadet. . . . Simmons Thomas replacing Sid Applegate in the sax section of Sammy Watkins' Band, with Sid leaving for Detroit to enter the Navy. . . . A baby girl (Mary Kerry) for Corp. and Mrs. Franklin Allen Miller, Corp. Miller being the pianist in the popular Camp Perry Band. . . . Mary White back from a Barnesville (O.) holiday trip. . . . Pvt. Owen V. Parr, former Fenn College student, sending an "aloha" to Dean Margaret Knowles. . . . The Rotary Reminder campaigning for Rudy Ringwall as the new director of the Cleveland Orchestra. . . . Ben Goetz waltzing with his big daughter at the Vogue Room. . . . The B. M. Duncans checking out of their Gates Mills home.

Aris's Lady Friends

Mrs. SIDNEY LOGAN* of South Pasadena met Aris when she worked at NORTH AMERICAN AVIATION, which produced Mustang airplanes. Logan said Aris asked a lot of questions about them. She also said that she had heard conversations between Aris and a Captain NATTON, United States Army, who was assigned to the Fourth Interceptor Command Unit in Los Angeles. Logan thought that Aris “pumped” Captain Natton. Logan later recanted her claim that Aris was hunting for secrets. She said he had “merely been showing the usual interest in the employment of a person with whom he was keeping company.”

Logan's maid, Mrs. MALMBURG, spoke and read German. She read the identification card that Aris said showed his connection with the Luftwaffe. Malmburg thought the card looked authentic. In Aris's FBI interview, he said that the identification didn't exist, he'd never been in Germany, and he'd never been connected with the German air force.

However, Chalkas said Aris told him that, as part of his Greek Army aeronautical training, he had been sent to Potsdam, Germany, to receive advanced training and become a staff officer in the Greek Army. Aris also told Chalkas that, after this training, he **joined the French Army** for a time. ALEXANDER BACKHOUT, the Chalkas employee, said that Aris knew Potsdam well and spoke German with “good sentence construction, showing he had a thorough knowledge of the language.”

Aris went out with other women who worked at aircraft plants. One was **LURLYNE VICKERS** of Beverly Hills. Vickers said that when she knew Aris — around December 1942 — she had been employed by the DOUGLAS AIRCRAFT CORPORATION, Santa Monica. She knew him as ARIS NOTARAS and had gone out with him once or twice. He had visited her several times. She became suspicious when she learned he spoke German. VICKERS also said that he had told her one evening that he'd just been in a car accident, had removed some personal papers from his car, and wanted to leave them with her until the next day. She looked at the papers and saw several typewritten letters from an organization called “**The United War Relief**,” as well as letters from the Red Cross. **She also found many letters from other women.** She said Aris appeared to be extensively engaged working for Greek war relief. Aris showed her a booklet describing the horrors resulting from the Nazi and Italian invasion of Greece. She said the booklet was marked “Confidential - For Use of Hellenic Government Only” and contained photos showing the injured and dead.

LOGAN's friend, Mrs. ELIZABETH DOOLEY, worked at the DOUGLAS AIRCRAFT COMPANY, Long Beach, California. She said that she met Aris NOTARAS through LOGAN and had seen him once or twice. DOOLEY recalled Aris saying he'd visited DOUGLAS' North American plant and taken a tour, but she didn't believe him.

* Mrs. Sidney Logan, born Mary Sydney Perkins, came from a wealthy family, which may explain Aris's interest in her. Sydney's father, Arthur Perkins, taught well-known actor Kay Kyser how to play polo (the kind on horses). Sydney inhabited the fringes of Hollywood and found her way into several gossip columns, one of which alludes to Aris: See Hedda Hopper's “Looking at Hollywood,” [August 17, 1943](#). Also see Jimmy Star's “[R-K-O Bids Actress' Yarn](#).”

Summary Of Agent Albert Spradling's Aris Nyad Interview

I include this summary separately because you can't believe a word Aris says. Given the penalties for espionage, he was more honest than he would have been otherwise. But he still lied.

Agent SPRADLING interviewed Aris on February 9, 1943, "and informed him of the statements which had been gathered against him. **Subject stated emphatically that he did not have any connection with the German Luftwaffe, that he had at no time flown in Pottsdam, Germany, and that his only motive in informing people that he was a German was that he wished to catch some saboteurs and spys [sic] in the United States.**"

Aris "stated that he would like to make a full confession." From his statement:

1925-1936

Attended school in Athens

1936

Immediately after leaving school, he joined the Royal Greek Air Force. "After three years training, I became what is equivalent to a Second Lieutenant in the Greek Air Force."

1940

Jan 27 — RANK EXCUSE: Not a Lt. Cmdr but "I would now hold that rank."

The Greek Air Force presented me with a paper stating that I was a Second Lieutenant in the Greek Air Force and was being returned to civilian life until they might need me in a time of emergency. **I wish to state that I was not a Lieutenant Commander in the Greek Air Force,** but had I stayed with the Air Force until the present time, I would now hold that rank.

Mar 15

I secured a Greek seaman's passport and went to Egypt, staying there for approximately one month.

Apr 15

I returned to Greece from Egypt. My uncle, **Major General MIXOLOPOULOS**, Chief of all the Greek Police, secured for me a seaman's passport, so that I could continue my travels -- this time to New York City, United States of America.

May 10

Leaves Piraeus, Greece, aboard SS Nea Hellas.

May 28

Arrives NY Harbor

May – Excuse For Desertion

I decided to stay here in the United States for the next trip of the boat, that is, with a seaman's passport I was to return to Greece when the boat returned, but so many other fellows had been staying for several months until the boat would return that I decided to do the same thing. I realized it's wrong, but since others had done it I figured I might as well follow in their footsteps. Then four days after the boat left, Italy declared war, and I had to stay in the United States because the Mediterranean Sea was closed. (FBI description: **Shortly after the ship sailed, Italy declared war against the United Nations, and Aris learned that his ship was unable to return to Greece and was also unable to return to the United States.**) *

Oct 5

Marries Mary Kalamaridis

Oct

I wrote to my family in Greece and requested that they send me all of my military papers, and I took them to the Greek Consul on the **26th of October** and told him of my situation.

1941

Aug

I came to California and met **Captain HENWAY, R.C.A.F. [BENWAY]** Recruiting Service, and he took my papers to a **Mr. MAITLAND**, of the British Consulate, and they sent them to Canada, where I was accepted as a flyer in the Royal Canadian Air Force on **November 29, 1941**. I immediately went to Canada and began training.

Dec 20

Several of the flyers were coming back to the United States for Christmas, and I decided to come along . . . I stayed in the United States until approximately **December 27, 1941**. When they stopped me at the border going back to Canada, I forgot to tell them I was an American citizen, but told them I was a Greek, and so I was held by the United States Immigration authorities.

Excuses For Flight

Several Greek families of New York State, whose names I do not care to mention, put up a \$500. bond for me, which released me from jail. I stayed around New York State as long as I could, and since all of these families had been giving me money. I felt that I couldn't take any more from them, so I returned to New York City, for I did not know that I was doing wrong in skipping out on my bond, but thought that I was doing the right thing. It has been explained to me now that those people had to pay \$500. to the government due to my skipping this bond.

* This is a magnificent lie that Aris leavens with enough truth to raise it into plausibility. The Nea Hellas sailed from New York [on June 8, 1940](#), bound for Piraeus. Two days later, Italy entered WWII when it joined Germany in its invasion of France. But that didn't stop the Nea Hellas. It arrived in Lisbon [on June 17](#) and began sailing from there rather than from Piraeus. She made four more trips between Lisbon and New York before the British Ministry of Shipping bought her to aid in the war effort. ["British Ministry of Shipping Buys Nea Hellas," Chicago Tribune \(Chicago, Illinois\), March 27, 1941.](#)

1942

Feb 29

I returned to New York City. I was wearing my R.C.A.F. uniform around New York and was visiting them. I put on civilian clothing and worked in N.Y.C. I thought I could further the Greek cause by putting on the Greek uniform and helping in that way.

Jun

I bought a Greek Air Force uniform at a New York store. I put it on and wore it around New York for about a month. I had no money, and so I again appealed to various Greek families in New York City to help me out. **On the representation that I was a Lieutenant Commander in the Greek Air Force these families very willingly helped me out. All of this time I was trying to help Greek war relief by appearing at various homes throughout New York State and soliciting their aid for the Greek cause.** They, of course, thought that I was a Lieutenant Commander in the Greek Air Force.

~ Jul

I went to Chicago, where I visited Dr. N. T. ANTONOPOUNOS,* a Greek doctor. While visiting with him I purchased another Greek uniform, which had the markings of a Lieutenant Commander in the Greek Air Force upon it. While in Chicago, I visited various Greek families, who upon the representation that I was a Lieutenant Commander in the Greek Air Force, I told . . . that I was helping the Greek cause. Mr. ANTONOPOUNOS made me a present of a German Luger and ammunition while I was there and I have carried this at various times, both on my person and in my baggage.

~ Aug 27

I left for Los Angeles and arrived in Los Angeles the **29th of September, 1942**. On the way out I **visited all the Greek families that had been recommended to me by the Greeks in Chicago and New York**. I told them all that I was a Lieutenant Commander in the Greek Air Force, and they would give me the money to pay my bills and to entertain on. **During this entire period of time from June 1942 until I reached Los Angeles on September 29, 1942, I wore either my white or brown uniform with the insignia of the Greek Air Force upon it.**

At Reno

"At Reno Nevada, I met a girl named **MARY SCHENIDER**, and she decided to come with me to Los Angeles as my wife. We took a room at the Beverly Hills Hotel, Beverly Hills, California, registering as man and wife, and lived together for two weeks. **I assumed the name of Lieutenant Commander ARIS NOTARAS because I did not care for people to know my real name.** I knew that I was doing something wrong, and I figured that if I hid under the name of NOTARAS my friends in the East would not recognise it.

Stories to SKOURAS — ESCAPE FROM THE GERMANS

"After I had been in Los Angeles for a day or so, I went to see Mr. CHARLES SKOURAS,

* Dr. C. K. ANTONOPULOS, a dentist. Aris apparently had a bad toothache.

President of **GREEK WAR RELIEF**, and explained to him that I was a Lieutenant Commander in the Greek Air Force. **I also told him a story about how I had escaped from the Germans and had been able to slip over to the United States.** I told him that I wanted to help the Greek cause. On the basis of that I was a Greek Officer, Mr. SKOURAS loaned me various sums of money amounting to forty or fifty dollars, and he further paid a hotel bill for me [??] amount to \$543.41 at the Beverly Hills Hotel.

On January 5, 1943, Mr. SKOURAS assisted me in getting to appear on the GINNY SIMS Radio Program to speak on my experiences in Greece, and also to tell the people about Greek War Relief. A speech was prepared for me on the basis of what I had told Mr. SKOURAS about my experiences in fighting for Greece, and I delivered this speech over the radio. Many pictures were taken of me at the radio house that night with Miss SIMS. **I asked them not to print a picture of my face, explaining to them that it would endanger my family in Greece. However, the real reason was that I knew that it was wrong to appear in this uniform at the radio station.**

During the four months that I have been in Los Angeles I have received quite a bit of money from various Greek families here. I do not care to give the names of all of these families, but one man who assisted me a great deal was Mr. STEVEN CHALKAS, 267 North Rodeo Drive, Beverly Hills, California. During the period from November 1, until December 30, Mr. CHALKAS advanced me between \$10. or \$15. Some of the other people who helped me are Mr. TED MICHELE, Manager of Topper's Jewelry Store, Santa Monica, California, \$10.

All of these people advanced me money on the basis that I was a Greek Officer in the Greek Air Force.

On January 12, 1943, I was picked up by the Immigration Officials and the Beverly Hills Police and taken to the County Jail.

After his arrest, Aris gave the FBI copies of three purportedly official documents written in Greek:

1. "Copy from the Criminal Register," i.e., his criminal record. It listed no crimes.
2. A Greek "Order to March," i.e. ostensible evidence that he had been in the Greek military.
3. A Greek birth certificate-like document.

The FBI sent the three documents to its Technical Laboratory in Washington, D.C. Analysts translated them and compared them to similar documents. The laboratory couldn't establish their validity.

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