

# The Mysterious 'Paul Maris'

Ten months after handsome "Paul Maris" succeeded Alvin Duskin as president of the flourishing Duskin women's knitwear firm here, he made a hush-hush trip to New Jersey to testify how he had been recruited into a Mafia-controlled international securities ring.

It was the second time that Maris, 38, under his true name of Gerald Martin Zelmanowitz, had testified as a prosecution witness against Mafia figures and had admitted his own involvement with their illegal traffic in stolen securities.

In the interim, Zelmanowitz had divided his time—under his new identity as Maris—to a life of ease with his family in a Pacific Heights apartment and a second home in Sonoma.

He commuted from home to business either in his Rolls Royce or Mercedes Benz.

Maris was unavailable for comment at either address yesterday. There was no answer from his Laguna and Washington Street apartment, and the telephone at the Sonoma home had been disconnected.

A New York newspaper, however, reported that a man identifying himself as Maris had called the paper, confirmed he was Zelmanowitz, and said he was afraid for his life.

"My entire cover is being destroyed and torn apart... at this moment I am traveling very far and very fast," said the caller.

His true identity as a New Jersey hoodlum surfaced

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Friday in replies to the suit which he filed himself against his ouster as president of the knitwear company he had renamed as the Paul Maris Co.

Maris became president of the former Duskin concern in January, 1972, after Creative Capital, one of the nation's larger investment

companies, became major stockholder.

On April 20 of that year, he was escorted from company headquarters and manufacturing plant at 510 Third St. here, by private detectives employed by stockholders critical of his management.

Ten days later, Maris filed a \$5 million damage suit alleging breach of his management contract.

In its cross-complaint filed last week, Creative Capital named Maris as Zelmanowitz and revealed that his testimony in 1970 was a key to the conviction of New Jersey Mafioso chieftains Angelo (Gyp) DeCarlo and Daniel (Red) Cecere.

At time of the trial, Zelmanowitz was living in a \$200,000 home in Short Hills, N.J. He, too, was under indictment for the transportation of \$1.9 million in stolen securities but was granted immunity from prosecution in return for his testimony against former confederates in crime.

Immediately after the trial Zelmanowitz vanished. Maris, however, appeared in San Francisco to ingratiate himself into the treasurer-controller position of the knitwear firm and, eventually, into its presidency.

Duskin said he had first met Maris in 1971. It was a time when Duskin was moving away from his career as a successful fashion designer to becoming a campaigner for environmental causes.

Maris, as recalled by Duskin, came forward as a volunteer organizer of the City's anti-highrise faction.

"He struck me then as an outgoing guy, someone who was dynamic and had a lot of charisma. But there was also a mystery about him.

I never thought I had all the answers."

Last October, after his ouster from the knitwear firm, Maris appeared in U.S. District Court in Newark under his true identity to testify against Anthony (Fat Tony) Salerno, Mafia figure accused of taking part in the stolen securities

ring.

Zelmanowitz Maris was under heavy guard by U.S. marshals during the several days of his testimony in October.

However, he was unable to identify the defendant as the man he knew as being involved with the securities.

He "fingered" another man as the person he knew as Salerno. Charges against the Mafia figure were dismissed.

The testimony had included Zelmanowitz' reference to himself as a securities thief and former business partner of Louis Saperstein, 63, a man with Mafia connections found dead under mysterious circumstances in 1968.

Saperstein also was an associate of DeCarlo and Cecere, against whom Zelmanowitz testified in 1970. The Mafia leaders were sentenced to 112-year prison terms.

In 1968, Saperstein had written the FBI that he was the victim of a Mafia extortion plot. Shortly afterward he was found dead with what one investigator termed, "enough arsenic to kill a mule."

In its counter complaint, Creative Capital alleged that Maris had misappropriated more than \$200,000 of company funds, with some of the money allotted to pay his household servants.

See article by Orr Kelly, "Government Witnesses in Danger Given New Lives," (NYT 26 Apr 75, filed Infiltrators,) on how such people are given new identities.