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MARATHON ACE SAYS HIS HOMELAND'S NEED IS DESPERATE

Runner Fights to Keep Greece in '48 Olympics

Slelianos Kiriakidis, the famous Greek marathon runner who is best remembered for his victory in the 1946 event at Boston, came to Detroit Sunday for another drive in his battle to preserve a tradition.

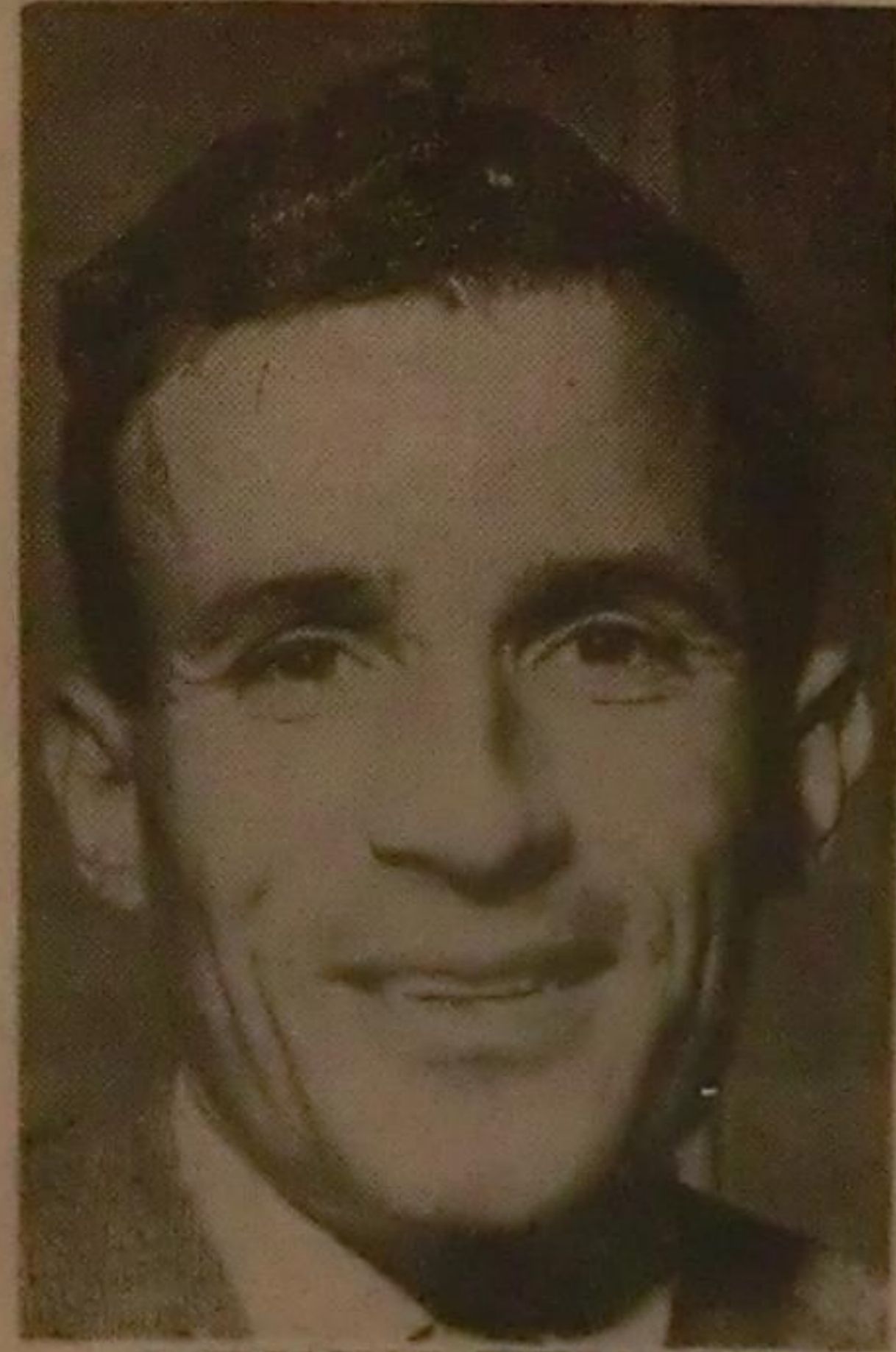
"My home land of Greece," he said, "is where the Olympic Games started. And, unless we get some help, it will be impossible for my country to be represented in the 1948 games in London."



CASTING ASIDE ALL queries as to his own feats—such as winning the Boston marathon, finishing 10th this year despite blistered feet and the fact that he holds the record of two hours and 49 seconds for the original marathon course in Athens—the young Greek unfolded a sad tale.

"The war has left my country in such a state that young athletes have not even running trunks, let alone shoes or the other things necessary for training," he sighed. "That's why we need help. We don't want to miss the Olympic Games. We never have."

With his friend Nick Londes at his side, the Greek explained that if he could play a leading role



SLELIANOS KIRIAKIDIS

in raising the \$50,000 needed to equip the Greek team and send it to London, it would be a far greater victory for him than any race he ever ran.



"I HAVE HAD my thrills," he pointed out. "When I got home in 1946 from winning at Boston, I was met by the Army and the Navy. I was a hero and folks cheered in such numbers that it took me eight hours to get home from the airport—a trip that normally takes less than an hour."

"I had hoped to win again this year," he said, "but my feet blistered in training and my leg muscles tightened up at the half-way mark. I was in pain all the rest of the way—but I wouldn't quit, even though I was way back in 10th place."

"And the Greeks won't quit—ever. We're going to go back to the Olympic Games. But we need financial help. That's why I am here. It is a tradition with us and we must carry on."

Kiriakidis will be honored by the Cyprian Society during his three-day visit. He plans to organize a Greek-American Committee during his stay that will help to raise the necessary funds.