

Title: Topping, Nicholas Papers

Reference Code: Mss-1973

Inclusive Dates: 1930 – 2017

Quantity: 0.8 cu. ft.

Location: CV, Sh. 025

Abstract: Nicholas Topitzes was born in Milwaukee in 1918, the son of Greek immigrants. He graduated from Bay View High School in 1935. Before he enrolled at the University of Wisconsin in Madison, he anglicized his last name to Topping. He earned a Bachelor's degree in history and communications and also started work on a graduate degree. Concurrently, he helped in his parents' grocery store and taught in several high schools, but he never completed his thesis because he was drafted into the military when the U.S. joined World War II. With his educational background and ability to speak Greek fluently, Nick was assigned by the U.S. Army to serve as a counter intelligence agent in North Africa and the Middle East.

After the war, Nick opened his own Greek store. He sold hard-to-find imported food and goods from the Mediterranean and Middle East as well as books and music from around the world. Because his immigrant family endured hardships in the U.S. and because of his experiences in World War II, Nick became a strong advocate for peace and social justice causes. He served as chairman of the Milwaukee Area Council of the American Veterans Committee (AVC) and chair of a committee of the Milwaukee Branch of the N.A.A.C.P. He also marched with Fr. Groppi in support of open housing and protested U.S. involvement in Vietnam. Beginning in the 1950s, Nick also began promoting concerts for various ethnic, folk and rock musicians. He booked Milwaukee concerts for star acts such as Pete Seeger and Bob Dylan, and he brought the Beatles to Milwaukee in 1964. Nick passed away on May 9, 2007.

Scope and Content: The collection consists of newspaper clippings, newsletters, meeting minutes, correspondence and other ephemera detailing Topping's involvement with the AVC and NAACP. Issues addressed within the material include veterans' housing, fair employment and civil rights in general.

Access and Use: No restrictions

Language: English

Notes: The collection was donated by Nick's daughter, Alexandra Topping, April 2018, and was processed by Kevin Abing, August 2018.

PHOTOS: See M-251

Arrangement:

Folder Heading	Box #	File #
American Continental Congress for World Peace	1	1
American Veterans Committee, 1947 – June 1948	1	2
American Veterans Committee, July-December 1948	1	3
American Veterans Committee: Miscellaneous, 1948	1	4
American Veterans Committee: Newspaper Clippings, 1948	1	5
American Veterans Committee, 1949-1952	1	6
American Veterans Committee: Publications <ul style="list-style-type: none">- <i>The Citizen Vet</i>, March-November 1948- <i>AVC Focus</i>, Dec. 17, 1947 & July 21, 1948- <i>AVC Bulletin</i>, August 1948	1	7
Bay View High School and Miscellaneous Personal Material <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Includes class papers, track and field program, 1935 commencement program and a 1930 certificate for the Wisconsin Young People's Reading Circle	2	1
Campaigns for Alderman, 1947-1948	2	2
Carlos Cortez (Milwaukee Chicano-Polish artist) <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Includes an issue of <i>Wobbly</i> magazine (#3) and November 1984 issue of <i>The Spanish Journal</i> and a booklet of his poetry	2	3
Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), 1952	2	4
N.A.A.C.P. Milwaukee Branch, 1948-1958	2	5
N.A.A.C.P. Fair Employment Issues, 1948-1951	2	6
N.A.A.C.P. Newsletters, 1949-1955	2	7
N.A.A.C.P. Newspaper Clippings, 1949-2017	2	8
N.A.A.C.P. National Office Material	2	9