

The Danish Brigade in Sweden 1943-1945 - The Brigade's Press Quarter

Introduction

January 1945, a special Press Quarter was established with, following previous Danish conditions¹, mainly completely new tasks. The staff please Danish press people (journalists, photographers and radio workers) who had fled to Sweden. Later, the staff was supplemented by Swedish and allied press personnel.

The Brigade's Press Quarter

The brigade's press quarter consisted of:

Press officer with assistants (3), Press staff (8), Journalist group (7), Photo group (7), Radio group (4), Swedish group (12), Allied group (12) and Custody group (4).

The brigade's press officer was captain lieutenant SA Andersen, who was also head of the brigade's civil section. Editor Eb be Munck was head of the press staff.

The press people were dressed in the Brigade's field uniform and the Danish press people were also armed with submachine guns and/or pistols. Several of the people were also trained on recoilless rifles.

Uniformed pressmen were also known in other allied armies, whereas the armament was peculiar to the Brigade's pressmen. The reason for the armament was that the press should have the opportunity to defend themselves against possible attacks from HIPO people and the like.



*The brigade's press quarter in Malmö.
From Source 1.*

The training started with a basic military course at the depot in Sättra Brunn, during which the shooting training also took place.

To the surprise of many, several of the people were excellent marksmen; editor Kaj Otting from Berlingske Tidende was even among the Brigade's very best shooters.

Since then, the functional training took place at weekly evening meetings in Stockholm, where, among other things, the tasks were practiced through "war games".

Here the whole circuit was rehearsed - from reports from the front line/storm boat, over the more dry and official war communications, to colorful radio reports.

The press people were mobilized on 2 May 1945 and met in Malmö, where the Press Quarter was established. The Swedish and Allied journalists who were accredited to the Brigade also showed up.

Throughout its relatively short life, the Press Quarter had good support from the Swedish Armed Forces' press department, whose deputy commander and staff editor were also in Malmö.

From Malmö, people followed the developments in the following hectic days with lively interest, when all kinds of rumors were constantly swirling in the air; the development naturally culminated when the Freedom Message sounded from London.

The Swedish and allied journalists pressed to come to Denmark, and from the Swedish and Danish side, they saw "easy fingers" that these journalists illegally traveled to Copenhagen, on the night between 4 and 5 May 1945.

That same night, at 03:00, the Press Quarter left for Helsingborg, where they were ready to receive the Brigade when it arrived from the cantonment in Hækkeberga.

¹ An actual press service in the Army first saw the light of day at the Jutland Division's autumn maneuver in 1935. Read the story in FOV Newsletter No. 11, of 6 June 2003.

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Back home in Denmark, part of the Press Quarter's personnel accompanied the battalions that were sent to Southern Jutland and could continue their reports from life at the Brigade from here. Others returned to the jobs they left when they had to flee to Sweden.

Conclusion

Seen through the eyes of posterity, we must be the good press people, and especially the photographers, a big thank you. Without their contribution, there would hardly have been as many pictures of the Brigade as there actually are.

Sources

1. *The Danish Brigade* edited by Niels Grunnet and Bent Demer, H. Hirschsprungs Forlag, Copenhagen 1945. 2. *1½ years with the Danish Brigade* by lieutenant colonel PAF Norup (the brigade's chief of staff), Militær Tidsskrift 1947, page 271-308 and 353-406.
3. *The Brigade - The Danish Brigade in Sweden 1943-1945* by Knud JV Jespersen, Gyldendal, Copenhagen 1993, ISBN 87-00-14924-1.

Per Finsted



*The press staff at work - here probably mostly in the role of kitchen writer...
From Source 1.*

It is worth noting that the picture also shows the two types of armbands that were used after the transfer to Denmark. The field kitchen lots wear the Brigade armband, while the journalist wears the Freedom Fighter armband.