

Slaughter of Gestapo

The Shell Oil Building is about 10 stories—a modern office building. Here the German Gestapo were quartered during the German occupation. Through the Underground—the British having dropped a parachuter in Denmark—arrangements were made with the Danish patriots to bomb the Shell Oil Building on a specific day in February, 1945.

When the day arrived, it was foggy, which made flying impossible, so new contacts were established and the raid was “laid on” for the following month.

The Nazis held a number of Danish patriots as hostages on the top floor of the building, doing this to preclude the possibility of bombing. The British were so informed and were asked to try to hit the side of the building, to save the Danish patriots.

They sent 18 Mosquitoes—2 Rolls engines, 2,000 H.P., liquid cooled, built by Packard Motor—which carry 2 bombs, 4 20mm cannons, and 4 machine guns. Then the Mosquitoes came in, bombed the side of the building and killed 120 of the German Gestapo, while the Danish patriots on the top floor escaped. Of the Mosquitoes, 6 were lost.

The Danes and the British bemoan the fact that on the day of the raid there was a funeral of one of the important Germans, and so many of the Gestapo were out of the building, but the Danes were delighted that the Gestapo headquarters were destroyed, and give the Australian wing of the British RAF the freedom of the city whenever they come to Copenhagen.

Sights in Copenhagen

The British Town Major arranged for our hotel and mess in Copenhagen—at the Terminal Hotel. We observed as we walked about the city that the people all looked exceptionally well. While

one sees no one expensively dressed, there appears to be no poverty.

Never had I seen so many bicycles. There are hundreds of thousands of them (official count, 400,000 in the city). Most everyone in Denmark owns a bicycle, regardless of financial station. They carry no license plates, are left parked about the roads and streets, railroad station, etc. No one seems to steal them, for stealing a bicycle in Denmark is as serious as rustling cattle in our West.

During the occupation by the Germans, the King rode horseback through the city each day without guard. When asked why he did not carry a guard, his reply was, "The bicycle riders of Copenhagen are my guard. They will never allow anything to happen to me."

The Danes were great patriots. Except for a few, they never bowed to the Germans.

We had tea at a sidewalk cafe—the most delicious prawns, or small shrimps, I have ever eaten. We dined later at a small restaurant, the Coq d'Or, where we were served an excellent meal with the finest smoked salmon I have ever tasted, and well-prepared, delicious chicken.

We inspected a large air-raid shelter, which one sees everywhere about the streets. There were assembly halls, washrooms, sleeping quarters, etc. in the shelter, again built on the principle of the beehive.

On Copenhagen streets you see thousands of boys admiringly examining our Army trucks.

Copenhagen restaurants, theatres, etc. close at 9 p.m.—they are conserving electricity on account of a serious coal shortage. In the hotel there were no lights in the hallway, no hot water.

Commander Vincent tells us some of his many flying experiences in 70 trips over Germany. He says flying a bomber is like operating a taxi-cab. Never did he see another plane in all his night bombing missions—friend or enemy. A curious incident happened when he was returning from a bombing raid over Bremen. One of his pilots saw a suspicious farm wagon moving

down the German road and swooped to "shoot him up." A farmer standing in his front yard, fired a rifle, which made a lucky hit on the magneto of one engine and made that engine useless. The boy managed to limp home safely with one engine.

Monday, August 6

We toured the shops. They have excellent merchandise not too expensive, although much more expensive than in our shops. The food stores are loaded with delectable foods, and every shop is immaculate. The railroad station was clean as any other place. We visited the Tivoli Police Yard in which the quisling HATJO was interned, and were told he would have his neck stretched.

Copenhagen has a population of 1,000,000 people. There is a definite coal shortage. When you are allowed only one bottle of beer in the restaurants, it is explained that it takes coal to brew beer—accordingly, the shortage.

I asked to see the poorer sections of the city and was taken to see a series of beautiful blocks of modern flats about 7 stories high. Each small apartment has a flower box on a small veranda. The small flats for the workmen cost about \$20 per month. Unskilled workmen get about \$3,000 a year. We are told there is no poverty in Copenhagen. The Government collects high Income Taxes on over 6,000 kroner per year, which is roughly \$1,200.

The Germans, we were told, marched out of Denmark after V-E Day—a march of about 175 miles to the border. There are about 2,000 D.P.'s in Denmark.

One sees amusing sights on the street—nicely-dressed women pedaling bicycles, and in many instances a little pram was attached to the rear of the bicycle in which a baby was taking its airing.

A Danish patriot, Mr. H. Blandholtz, drove us about the city, showed us all the points of interest—the docks, the boulevards, the Anglitterre Hotel (the best in the city). Then he drove us out to his home—a modern, very clean, middle-class home, perfectly appointed in every respect.

Our host said to me, "We are a clean people. We teach our children to wash always before meals. We preach cleanliness."

He said, "We need coal very badly. We are forced to burn peat and unless we can get coal, our industries cannot function for export."

Our host then drove us out to a little suburb called Klampenborg, and we stopped at Bellevue Terrace, a beautiful hotel on the Baltic. Here we could see the Swedish coast, fifteen miles across sea.

Wherever one goes, he is given beer. First you drink schnapps, which is a distilled caraway seed drink, fiery like vodka, and then after your schnapps, you drink beer as a "chaser."

The British are everywhere in Copenhagen—they are again starting to do business. Britain, of course, buys butter, bacon, and farm products from Denmark.

In the evening we entertained RAF officers and their girls at the Coq d'Or restaurant—the check for the fine meal for twenty, with appropriate wines, etc., was \$100.

All over Europe you are told that Copenhagen and Stockholm are the two best cities in Europe today.

Strafing on the Flight back to Bremen

Tuesday, August 7

Noel Vincent, with another marvelous Mosquito, flew us to Bremen. We flew over the gorgeous Danish farm lands, across the Baltic, and entered Germany at Lubeck. The Mosquito will only accommodate two persons—the pilot and the navigator. The navigator sat on an oil can between my legs while I sat in his seat alongside Noel, the pilot. We were cruising at 350 miles an hour at an altitude of about 200 feet.