



**CONFISCATION**  
Seventeen news-  
papers seized  
in one day.

1942

**EXTRA!**  
FIRST EVER  
PRESS COUNCIL  
FORMED!

1916



**EXILED**  
Prominent poet  
banished for  
inciting revolution.

1793

## *The Swedish Freedom of the Press*

# UNFOLDED.

No. 1

#ThisIsFreedom

**T**he freedom to express oneself in speech and writing is one of the basic human rights according to the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights from 1948. The Swedish Freedom of the Press Act was passed almost 200 years earlier, in 1766. As the first constitutionally protected freedom of the press legislation in the world, the act did not only declare freedom of the press, it also gave the citizens the legal right to scrutinise and share public documents according to the ground-breaking principle of public access to information. And all of this more than twenty years before the passing of the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen (1789) and twenty-five years before the passing of the First Amendment in the US (1791).

*'The freedom of a nation is always proportional to its freedom of the press, so that one cannot exist without the other.'*

Cleric and parliamentarian **Anders Chydenius**, 1766.

*'The freedom to think and to express one's thoughts stands above all else. It is the living breath of humanity.'*

Publicist **Torgny Segerstedt**, 1934.

### TOP OF THE CLASS?

Recurrently ranked among the top countries on any global freedom of the press index, the story of Swedish freedom of the press has in fact been both unexpected and eventful. This unique timeline exhibition reveals how Swedish freedom of the press came about and focuses on some of the advances and setbacks that have shaped it. In the words of Swedish writer August Strindberg: 'Persecution of the press and freedom of the press go hand in hand.'

It was true when it was written in 1881. In many parts of the world it still holds true today.

This is Sweden's story.

