



INTERPOL

Committee: INTERPOL

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1. Introduction

Pablo Emilio Escobar Gaviria was a Colombian drug trafficker and one of the biggest criminals in history. Having control over four fifth of the drugs smuggled into the United States, he was the most powerful and richest criminal of his time.

Escobar cooperated with various drug smugglers, he would take the produced product from his partners and smuggle it through his own safe routes, which he had established through enormous amounts of bribery. In the 1980s, it was quite impossible to put Pablo Escobar on the court and penalize him, as the members of the justice and security departments were either too scared to take action or were getting paid.

As the International Criminal Police Organization, our mission will be to arrest Pablo Escobar and his associates. The members of the committee are agents and police officers from both the Columbian and the American governments that have either already been involved in the case or only newly assigned.

1.1 Definition of Key Terms

Extradition: The action of deporting a convicted criminal on legal terms

Parliamentary immunity: A system, in which members of the parliament cannot be prosecuted until a superior court or the parliament agrees on removing their immunity

2. Body

2.1. Historical Background

Following the Harrison Narcotics Tax Act of 1914 in the US, Colombia forbad the production and distribution of coca and marijuana as well. However, coca had a cultural significance for the Colombians and they kept on planting it. The political

instability and uneven distribution of incomes were the primary reasons the country has such a criminal history, with smuggling and drug trade leading the list.

The US regulations on the Mexican border in 1975 had made it very difficult to smuggle through the border, which was a great advantage for the Colombian drug lords. The United States had control over almost the whole South America, leaving Colombia and Bolivia to compete over the top place on the drug market. Apparently, Colombia took the lead, with 70% of the drugs in the US originating from there.

Colombia was difficult to regulate. There were many conflicts, coup attempts and uprisings all over the South American continent going on, and the Colombian guerillas did not seem to be calming down after the Cuban Revolution. Violence was a part of daily life, even without the contributions of drug cartels.

Pablo Escobar spent his adolescence in the city of Medellin, where he would later form the famous drug cartel. There, he had started committing smaller crimes like selling counterfeit lottery tickets and cigarettes before he started working for other people. After he started kidnapping for ransom, he got engaged with other contraband smugglers and worked for them until he worked his way up to smuggle his own drugs through the routes he established. The demand for drugs was growing apace in the 1970s and this rapid increase of demand led to an even bigger production of drugs in depths of the Colombian forests.

2.2. General Overview

A powerful drug baron of the time, Fabio Restrepo, was murdered in 1975. It was highly suspected that Pablo Escobar was responsible of his death. With Restrepo's death, he seized great power and control in the field and eventually formed the Medellin Cartel with a small group of friends and followers. Coca paste would be purchased from Bolivia, Peru and other South American countries, be processed in the "factories" in the green forests of Colombia and be transported to America. These factories were almost impossible to see with bare eyes from any plane in the deep, tight forests, so the producers felt free to expand them as much as needed.

Escobar used planes, submarines, trucks and even people to carry his packs of cocaine. If a package was caught, he would bribe the policemen. For most, he was invincible: If he couldn't bribe the police, he would bribe the judge. If he couldn't bribe the judge, he would bribe the politician. If he couldn't bribe any, he would get them killed and gain his freedom again. When he was caught transporting 18 kg of

cocaine paste from Ecuador to Colombia, his attempt to bribe the Medellin judges failed. He was freed from jail when the case was dropped because of the suspicious deaths of the two arresting police officers. After this incident, he adopted the “silver or lead” philosophy, which could be translated to “Either take the money or I will blow your head off.” This resulted with the death of three presidential candidates in a single election.

Pablo Escobar eventually started telling his family and friends that he wanted to be the president of Colombia. With the help of an acquaintance, Alberto Santofimio Botero, who was a member of the Colombian Liberal Party, Escobar started getting involved in politics. He won the hearts and the votes of the poor people of Medellin by financing football fields, schools and healthcare centers in the poorer districts of the area. Partly because of this admiration towards the “Colombian Robin Hood”, partly because of the unconcern of the bribed media for the background of an admired congressman candidate, the public had no consciousness over how Escobar found the fortune to help the poor. He had established a taxi company to draw away any suspicion from his wealth. When he was selected to the congress in 1982, which would give him parliamentary immunity, the source of his fortune has started to be questioned. The press exposed his connection to drug trade and the Colombian Minister of Justice Rodrigo Lara Bonilla denounced his background in a congress session, forcing him to resign. The minister was assassinated on Escobar’s order in his limousine by two hitmen on motorcycle.

His whim to politics has been a strategical mistake that drew the spotlight towards him. He was now being chased by the police and the US government was putting increasing pressure on Colombia. In this period, he got 600 Colombian police officers killed. He even hired the communist guerilla group M19 to attack the Palace of Justice in 1985, resulting in the murder of more than 100 people including top-lead judges and combustion of the documents and files on many drug smugglers including the associates of the Medellin Cartel. The prevention of the extradition of the drug smugglers was also aimed through this attack.

At the height of its power, the Medellin Cartel was making more than 60 Million American Dollars a day. Ten percent of the cartel’s cash had to be written off because rats had “sneaked in and eaten the bills”. The Forbes Magazine announced Pablo Escobar as the seventh richest man in the world, drug traffickers all over Colombia were paying him up to 35% of their profits for successfully smuggling their products into the US. Bribery was now in every unit of the government: even some soldiers that were supposed to be going after Pablo Escobar were his informants. Along with

the bribed ones, poor folks of Medellin were partly sided with him voluntarily because they felt sympathy for him.

Escobar, chased by an army of police and military officers, fled to Panama. He knew Colombia would not be safe as long as the extradition treaty applied, so he had Luis Carlos Galan, the foremost supporter of the treaty, killed. Following his ideology came Cesar Gaviria, standing rather neutral on extradition but still fighting his best against drug cartels.

When Escobar finally accepted surrender in 1991 after years of chase, he applied some terms. He would build his own jail, which would be a paradise residence called "The Cathedral", he would choose his own guards and be able to invite guests. He continued to run the Medellin Cartel just as before while he was in "jail". He escaped from jail after he got two associates of the cartel killed, triggering the authorities to move him to an actual jail.

His run lasted another 16 months until he was cornered in Los Olivos and shot dead along with his bodyguards jumping from one rooftop to another.

2.3. Timeline of Events

1 December 1949 – Pablo Escobar was born in Rionegro, Colombia.

1 July 1973 – Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) was formed in the US.

1975 – Escobar got Fabio Restrepo killed.

Mid-1970s – The Medellin Cartel was formed.

2 May 1976 – Escobar and a few of his men were arrested.

1 October 1976 – Escobar got married to the 15 year old Maria Vallejo "Tata".

14 September 1979 – An extradition treaty was signed between Colombia and the USA.

March 1982 – Escobar got into the national congress as a member of the Colombian Liberal Party.

9 March 1982 – 3,750 pounds of cocaine was found in a warehouse at the Miami airport. (Biggest amount of cocaine ever expropriated in the US history)

10 March 1984 – A massive “drug factory” was uncovered in the Colombian jungles.

30 April 1984 – Colombian Minister of Justice Rodrigo Lara Bonilla was assassinated in his limousine.

6 November 1985 – Financed by Escobar, M19 guerillas attacked the Palace of Justice.

19 February 1986 – A former drug trafficker and DEA informant Barry Seals was killed by hitmen suspected to be hired by Escobar after giving away information about him.

November 1986 – Escobar was arrested again for drug charges, but the case was dropped.

18 August 1989 – Luis Carlos Galan was killed during a campaign rally.

1989 – Pablo Escobar had the Bogota Security Building bombed. It was also suspected that he was planning to assassinate George Bush on his visit to Cartagena, which did not happen.

1990 – Cesar Gaviria was elected as the Colombian president.

December 1991 – Pablo Escobar turned himself in on certain terms.

22 July 1992 – Pablo Escobar escaped while being transported to an actual jail from “the Cathedral”.

1993 – Los Pepes was formed, targeting Pablo Escobar in all means.

2 December 1993 – Pablo Escobar was killed during a gunfight.

2.4. Major Parties Involved

The Medellin Cartel was founded by Pablo Escobar, *the Ochoa Vazquez Brothers* and *Carlos Lehder*. The Cartel smuggled up to 50 tons of cocaine a week through the American border at times, gaining up to 60 million American Dollars a day. The cartel

was put under Federal Drug Task Force surveillance and by 1993, almost every member of the cartel was either put into jail or killed during gunfights.

Cali Cartel, a group of separate criminal units operating together, was competing with the Medellin Cartel over the control of the drug trade, while working with them at times. The cartel later formed *Perseguidos por Pablo Escobar "Los Pepes"* to target the Medellin Cartel. It is assumed that Los Pepes provided information to the officers, with which they tracked about 65 Medellin associates. It should be kept in mind that Los Pepes are great informants at times, although criminals, and they benefit from the downfall of the Medellin Cartel. The Cali Cartel took over control after the death of Pablo Escobar and the fall of the Medellin Cartel.

M-19 (19th of April Movement) was a Colombian guerilla movement that took nationalism and revolutionary socialism as ideology. The group is known for their Palace of Justice siege, where they took about 300 judges, law enforcement and security officials as hostages and burned down the documents related to drug related crimes. Their tie to the Medellin Cartel was never proven.

The United States of America had sent the special DEA agent Steve Murphy to be paired with the Colombian Agent Javier Peña to catch Pablo Escobar in Colombia before the actual spark. President Reagan was cautious and aware of the drug trade in the Southern America that was affecting the United States as well, he fought the narcoterrorism with the slogan "Just Say No". He also was an anti-communist, therefore had special interest in the case after M19 got involved.

Luis Carlos Galan was a Colombian politician supporting extradition. He was known for openly opposing the drug cartels and the narco influence on the politics of the country. He would not hesitate to address Pablo Escobar openly and therefore became a target. He was leading the polls for presidency when he was shot by hitmen hired by drug lords.

Cesar Gaviria was an economist and politician that served as the Colombian president from 1990 to 1994. He was Galan's debate chief before his assassination and followed Galan on his path against drug cartels after his death.

3. Conclusion

3.1. Previous Attempts

Through the years, Pablo Escobar has been a criminal extremely difficult to catch due to his wealth and power. Firstly, not many officers in Colombia were brave enough to arrest him despite the death threats they would receive. Secondly, once he was on the run with his associates, he went invisible. He owned hundreds of properties all over the continent and about that many informants in every unit of the government as well. Once he was almost found, Escobar would be given information about it and disappear again. His arrestments failed due to suspicious deaths or sudden changes of the officers' or judges' minds. That is why he could only be captured once he was shot dead along with his bodyguards while trying to escape from the police.

3.2. Points to Keep in Mind

- Interpol is not connected to any nation or government, serves therefore for the sake of security and justice only.
- As the committee has a unique parliamentary procedure, the delegates are required to read the Rules of Procedure carefully.
- The committee will be starting its meetings in the very beginning of 1982.
- Any of your co-officers could be under the influence of another power than the will for justice.
- Your family can be the victim of an unfortunate accident anytime and so can you.

4. Bibliography & Further Reading

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