

0. PABLO ESCOBAR and NATIONAL POLITICS - Story
Preface

1. YOUNG PABLO ESCOBAR

2. PABLO ESCOBAR BECOMES a DRUG TRADER

3. PABLO ESCOBAR - LOCAL HERO

4. PABLO ESCOBAR - THE PEOPLE'S LEADER

5. PABLO ESCOBAR and NATIONAL POLITICS

6. PABLO ESCOBAR - MURDER and MAYHEM

7. PABLO ESCOBAR and the WAR on DRUGS

8. PABLO ESCOBAR - A DOUBLE LIFE

9. PABLO ESCOBAR - NARCO TERRORISM

10. PABLO ESCOBAR SURRENDERS and ESCAPES

11. PABLO ESCOBAR - LIFE UNRAVELS

12. PABLO ESCOBAR in the EYES of HIS FAMILY



For a short while, Pablo Escobar participated as a Congressman in Colombia's legislature. This image depicts him, on the right side of the photo, at a Congressional hearing. By 1984, however, his Congressional career was over since news of his earlier arrest, for drug trafficking, became public. Image online via Colombia Reports.

In 1982, Pablo Escobar told a gathered political crowd:

This is the night for renewal because we will not allow any of our lists [of candidates] to be contaminated by rotten politicians and backward and incompetent elements. ("Pablo Escobar's Private Archive".)

Pablo's plan was to get elected to a seat in Congress. If he were part of the government, he would have protection (from extradition) with parliamentary immunity. But ... running for a seat in a national election also meant that Escobar would be scrutinized as a potential candidate.

Although he helped poor people, Pablo also had a different kind of reputation. It was that other reputation—for which he could be extradited, by another country, for drug-related offenses—which worried Pablo.

If he were elected to Colombia's Congress, that position could help him. His political aspirations and motivations backfired, however, when public scrutiny brought to light parts of Pablo's life which he'd wanted to keep private. Luz Maria, Escobar's sister, describes what this meant for her brother:

He died convinced of the fact that politics ruined his life because some things that he didn't want uncovered came out. Like how he obtained all his money. (From interview included in "Pablo Escobar's Private Archive".)

Pablo's primary objective was to make sure that the Colombian government would not sign an extradition treaty with America (where much of the cocaine, from his illegal business, was distributed). By backing a 1983 presidential candidate who would make that happen, ostensibly to protect others from extradition, Escobar was actually trying to protect himself.

He explained his motives, at the time:

It's unfair that people who commit a crime in one country be judged in another one and convicted with sentences that do not exist in Colombia. ("Pablo Escobar's Private Archive".)

Working with the newly elected government, Escobar continued with his efforts to prevent an extradition agreement between Colombia and the U.S. In one hearing, he said:

I want to ask you all on behalf of our citizens, sovereignty and human rights, your help fighting the extradition treaty. ("Pablo Escobar's Private Archive".)

In the midst of all the national arguments, back and forth between both sides, a newspaper printed Escobar's picture—from his 1977 arrest as a drug trafficker.

It became clear, at least to some people, why Pablo was fighting so hard against the extradition agreement with America. He was more concerned about himself, and his own protection, than he was about the actual treaty with the U.S.

Even worse, people opposing Pablo's position accused him of murdering the police officers who had earlier arrested him. Luz Maria, Pablo's sister, remembers those days:

My mom called me in despair and said: "Pick me up because I'm going to see Pablo." And she got him out of bed and said, "Come. I need you to explain this."

He sat down calmly and said: "Mama, those two detectives were the ones I had trouble with, and I didn't kill them, but since I'm in trouble with the Secretary of Justice, they are saying I did."

And, to comfort Mama, he said: "Don't worry. I like to be in the press. Don't you see how important I've become?" (From interview included in "Pablo Escobar's Private Archive".)

His importance in national politics, however, would soon end.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/PABLO-ESCOBAR-and-NATIONAL-POLITICS-Pablo-Escobar-Narcos>

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<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/PABLO-ESCOBAR-and-NATIONAL-POLITICS-Pablo-Escobar-Narcos>

Media Stream



Pablo Escobar as a Colombian Congressman

Image of Pablo Escobar, serving in Colombia's Congress, online via Colombia Reports.

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