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**"Freedom of the Press belongs to those who own one."**

*A. J. Liebling of the New Yorker*

April 6, 2002



### A Lesson in Terrorism

**A**

very rich terrorist, with massive political support from millions of people, is on the run. He has brutally killed thousands. He cannot be found as [because?] he moves from place to place with his entourage and conducts his business by cell phone. He considers himself the champion of

the downtrodden.

**Osama, meet Pablo Escobar.**

Pablo Escobar, the head of the Medellin Drug Cartel, was listed by Fortune magazine in 1989 as the fifth-richest man in the world. He masterminded the torture and killing of countless people – once causing the death of eleven members of the Columbian Supreme Court.

Terrorist? He ordered the in-flight destruction of an Aviana jetliner, killing more than 120 people, just to try (and fail) to kill a Columbian politician! He set off huge truck bombs in the middle of shopping centers, killing as many as 22 people at a time, just to spread terror. He said: "Terror is the atomic weapon of poor people." He murdered the prime candidate for President.

He was rich, owning nineteen homes in and around Callis, each with a heliport. His main home, for which the land alone cost \$63 million, could sleep more than 100 guests at a time. He was brutal. He once tied the hands and feet of a thieving employee and kicked him into the swimming pool at a cocktail party just to have his guests watch the man drown.

Mr. Escobar died with a bullet through his left ear ... possibly the result of a Delta Force sniper ... an American who was not supposed to even be in Columbia, but who, when the Columbians could not handle the job ...

It took many years to track down Pablo Escobar. Through his incredible fortune he had bribed half of Columbia.

**Commentary**

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Through his incredible brutality he had intimidated the other half.

When an elite police group of 200 was assigned in secret to catch Pablo, he had 30 of them assassinated in their homes within the first few weeks ... just to show he could penetrate the police secrecy.

He once surrendered to the authorities with the proviso that he be housed in a prison designed and built by him, with the guards to be paid by him ... and from which prison he eventually escaped, leaving behind his waterbed, widescreen TV, mistress, Jacuzzi ...

The United States provided many American-flown aircraft in the search, including U-2, SR-71, and AC-135s ... so many, in fact, that at one time there were 19 in the air at once and an AWACS had to be brought in to direct traffic. Even though Pablo was constantly located, the corrupt and inept military could never catch him. He had ears everywhere.

Eventually, Pablo's enemies in the police, the military, and in the competing Cali narco empire formed a small and elite Death Squad. The purpose of the group was to "take down the mountain" as Mark Bowden (author of *Black Hawk Down*) writes in his excellent book, *Killing Pablo*. The "mountain" was the labyrinth of informers, judges, politicians, lawyers and money-handlers on which Pablo's empire was built.

*Los Pepes*, as the Death Squad was known (People Persecuted by Pablo Escobar), brought terror to the terrorists. They killed as many as six in Pablo's empire a day for many months. They killed many of his lawyers until the remainder resigned. They killed his bankers, his business associates, his real estate agents, his drivers, his cousins, his in-laws ... they killed anyone who innocently had ridden in an elevator with Pablo. They left his immediate family alone but killed their tutor, their maid, their apartment manager, their son's best friend, just to show they could kill his family. They burned his banks to the ground, and his homes, and his businesses.

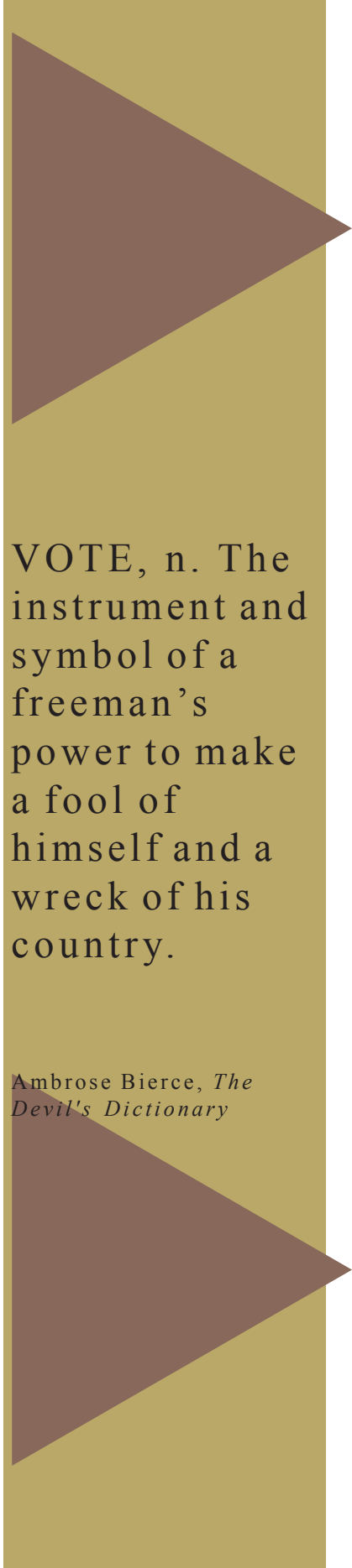
Their purpose was to terrorize the terrorist, and they did that until Pablo had no one to hide him, no one to represent him, no one to talk with except his son.

Then the authorities traced the phone calls to the son using sophisticated direction-finding equipment and "someone" killed Pablo.

As if by magic, the terrorism was ended.

There is a lesson here somewhere.

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VOTE, n. The instrument and symbol of a freeman's power to make a fool of himself and a wreck of his country.

Ambrose Bierce, *The Devil's Dictionary*