

# Pablo escobar the king of coke questions and answers movie review sample

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a. Pablo Escobar's history of violence led to his ascension towards the leadership of the Medellin cartel. The lack of law and order in the Colombian countryside – where much of the drug trade has been going on, provided a favorable environment for Escobar's brand of violence. He started rising through the ranks of the Medellin cartel when he traded drugs with then-cartel leader Fabio Restrepo. With the knowledge that he is taken too lightly for looking like a “ street criminal” in the eyes of the cartel, his notoriety for violence soon enabled him to get Restrepo out of the scene by killing him. Such has enabled him to gain recognition from among members of the cartel, effectively sealing his seizure of leadership. His highly violent stance in running the cartel enabled him to have greater control of drug trafficking activities in Colombia (Pablo Escobar: The King of Coke, 2007).

b. Pablo Escobar maintained his hold of the cartel through his reputation of fearsome violence. He had no qualms resorting to brutal means of force in getting what he wants, and that forms a large part of maintaining his leadership in the cartel. Taking on the illegal yet massive drug demand, mostly coming from the United States of America, in an ironhanded manner, Escobar complemented his repressiveness by maintaining a Robin Hood-style image of giving back to the people of Medellin. Using his enormous wealth, he built sports facilities and schools, invested in real estate and even sought to enter the city's political scene using his popularity. In that way, he was able to gain the support of people in Medellin while he continued on his trade that ran in a bend-or-break manner (Pablo Escobar: The King of Coke, 2007).

c. Pablo Escobar placed himself at war against the Colombian government when he killed Justice Minister Rodrigo Lara. When Escobar took his seat in Congress, Lara started to condemn his entry into politics for being a notorious drug trafficker. Lara's condemnation, issued on various kinds of media including TV and newspaper, opened an inquiry into Escobar's lifestyle. Soon, he went out of office and had some of his properties seized by the government. His fall from political grace prompted him to have Lara killed. Through hired gunmen, Lara – already helped by the United States of America, died inside his automobile through gunshots. The result led Colombia to launch attacks against Escobar (Pablo Escobar: The King of Coke, 2007).

d. In a bid to prevent extradition to the United States of America, Pablo Escobar kidnapped several Colombian dignitaries, among them then-Vice President Francisco Santos. He pressured the government against his extradition by threatening to kill his hostages. Pressure went back to him and he surrendered himself on the condition that his extradition be made illegal. He released the hostages, turned himself in and imprisoned in a custom-made prison called La Catedral. The Colombian Constitution underwent amendments in his favor banning extradition of locals to foreign nations (Pablo Escobar: The King of Coke, 2007).

e. The explosion of Avianca Flight 1803 instigated by Pablo Escobar prompted the United States of America to send stronger intelligence and search support to Colombia. The airplane, in which then-presidential candidate Cesar Gaviria is a scheduled passenger, exploded while on flight

after a deputy of Escobar blows off a bomb first thought to be a listening device. The blast, which killed all 110 people on board, contained two American citizens as casualties. Given the sheer propensity of the incident, America deemed Escobar a “clear and present danger” that have to be dealt with immediately (Pablo Escobar: The King of Coke, 2007).

Under the presidency of George H. W. Bush, the United States of America modified its policy towards drug trafficking – from tracing and blocking drug shipments to targeting leaders of drug cartels. In order to facilitate that, an executive order disallowing the assassination of foreigners received a new reinterpretation, which allowed for assassination in the event that the foreigner poses a grave security threat. Such modification prompted America to send further arsenal to Colombia that boosted intelligence and search for Escobar and the rest of his cartel (Pablo Escobar: The King of Coke, 2007).

f. Pablo Escobar arrange for his arrest by way of kidnapping several Colombian dignitaries, which included the nation’s vice-president. His move – made as a desperate response to the weakening operations of his contingent due to intelligence and search forces of the United States of America closing in on him, entailed him to negotiate with the national government for demands. The four points of his demands are the following (Pablo Escobar: The King of Coke, 2007):

Imprisonment in La Catedral – La Catedral is a sanctuary located on top of a mountain that served as the Medellin cartel’s headquarters while he was imprisoned. The activities of Escobar’s cartel did not meet any decline during his stay in the prison, as he gave out commands from said facility. Hence, his

transfer to said facility prompted those who are involved in his capture to call their operations a “ failure” (Pablo Escobar: The King of Coke, 2007).

Removal of General Miguel Maza – Gen. Maza, the head of DAS (Colombia’s FBI), was removed as petitioner in his case against the government. Such made his case weaker and prospects of receiving further punishments further waned (Pablo Escobar: The King of Coke, 2007).

Banning extradition in the Colombian Constitution – The Continental Congress, which saw the banning of extradition in the Constitution of Colombia, prompted Escobar’s formal surrender and arrest by the government. He demanded for the illegality of extradition so that there will be no impediments to his operations (Pablo Escobar: The King of Coke, 2007).

Additionally, the deal did not include a ceasefire between Escobar’s side and Col. Hugo Martinez’ Search Bloc, which continued to destabilize his men further while he remains at La Catedral. The Search Bloc was not allowed to go nearer than 20 km to the mountaintop prison (Pablo Escobar: The King of Coke, 2007).

g. Pablo Escobar’s relative freedom in La Catedral enabled him to rebuild his cartel operations. As he attended sports events, spent time with his family shopping in the capital Bogota and held parties and executions inside his prison, he was able to reestablish his operations without fear of retribution from the government, to which his demands, when met with violations, were matched with threatening consequences (Pablo Escobar: The King of Coke, 2007).

h. In January 30 1993, a 220 kg bomb exploded in front of a bookstore in Medellin, killing several children who are buying supplies for school. This particular incident prompted both Colombian and American forces to go after members of Escobar's family. A splinter group, Los Pepes, emerged to utilize vigilantism to go after the cartel leader and anyone who is connected to him (Pablo Escobar: The King of Coke, 2007).

i. Pablo Escobar set off a 300 lb bomb in Bogota the moment his family was denied by authorities to exit Colombia. He feared that his family might suffer under the hands of both the Colombian-American contingent and the vigilante Los Pepes – who responded by killing members of the cartel leader's close association. Los Pepes, allegedly running under members of the Search Bloc led by Col. Martinez, ran under the collaboration between the AUC forces led by Carlos Castano and members of the Cali cartel, Escobar's rivals that allegedly funded the vigilantes (Pablo Escobar: The King of Coke, 2007).

j. The AUC, a paramilitary organization that formed part of Los Pepes as alleged by their leader Carlos Castano, worked hand-in-hand with the Colombian government to take down the FARC, which took over the reins of Pablo Escobar as Colombia's largest cocaine supplier. Such relationship was similar to the alleged connection between the Search Bloc and Los Pepes, in the sense that the Los Pepes acted on vigilantism in carrying their operations. They played "without any rules" and deployed on a personal scale against Escobar, although without any explicit admission that they are connected with the Search Bloc despite suspicious resemblances in terms of

the way they carried out their operations (Pablo Escobar: The King of Coke, 2007).

k. The FARC, as it succeeded the Medellin cartel as the largest supplier of cocaine in the United States of America, employed much of the techniques used by Pablo Escobar in running drug trafficking operations. The organization directly went against the Colombian government, waging war against the state as they sought to export cocaine in the same way Escobar did during his heyday. They used the same tactics – as laid out by ex-Vice President Francisco Santos, through instigating kidnappings, setting off car bombs and maintaining a climate of terror within the nation. In a similar light to Escobar, the government is going after the FARC with the help of America and the FARC (Pablo Escobar: The King of Coke, 2007).

## **References**

Pablo Escobar: The King of Coke (2007). YouTube. Retrieved October 26, 2012, from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Mb7MBz2AgY>