



Walter Mencken's

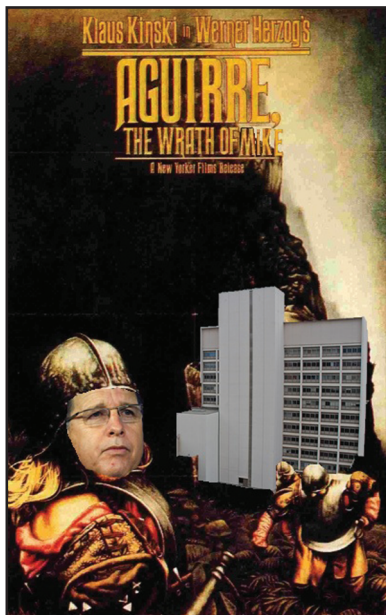
SD ON THE QT

Almost factual news

History Repeats Itself

Famed Director Werner Herzog Remakes His Classic Film Aguirre, The Wrath of God; Sets Story in Modern-Day San Diego

FORMER *SILK STALKINGS* SOUNDSTAGE, NATIONAL CITY: If at first you don't succeed, try, try again — as long as you can get the financing.



Fresh off his gargantuan flop remaking Abel Ferrara's 1992 cult classic *Bad Lieutenant* as the Nicolas Cage-starring head trip *The Bad Lieutenant: Port of Call - New Orleans* (\$2 million domestic gross on a \$25 million budget), famed German director Werner Herzog has announced his intention to remake his own 1972 cult classic *Aguirre, the Wrath of God* as the Mike Aguirre-starring conspiracy thriller *Aguirre, the Wrath of Mike*. And in a move that might merit a conspiracy thriller of its own, he has convinced the San Diego Board of Tourism to help him fund it.

"The first *Aguirre*," explains Herzog, "was the story of one

man's descent into madness as he sought to do the impossible — penetrate the unfor-giving and perilous Amazon jungle and discover El Dorado, the legendary city of gold. Though it is a work of my fevered and yet dispassionate imagination, I based the story on a historical figure: the Spanish soldier Lope de Aguirre. Recently, while checking the Wikipedia entry on my film for any pranksterish inaccuracies — a chore I find tiresome but absolutely necessary for my artistic integrity — I chanced upon the entry for [former city attorney] Mike Aguirre — another historical figure! As I read, the parallels

proved too striking to resist. The lush locale, the impossible quest to penetrate the deadly bureaucratic jungle and discover America's Finest City, the mad grab for power, and the ultimate descent into madness, proclaiming one's greatness to a pack of monkeys. Though the production of the original had been a harrowing nightmare, I knew I had to try again. I am like an Old Testament prophet, repeating my message of doom and destruction again and again, in the vain hope that it will be heard and heeded. Also, you know, I was already in town for *My Son, My Son, What Have Ye Done*."

Though currently work-

"A Madman's Quest"

ing as a lawyer with the firm Aguirre, Morris & Stevenson, Aguirre himself was only too happy to take on the task of playing himself in the film's lead role. "I still believe that my cause was just," he told *SD on the QT*, "and while my efforts proved maddening and ultimately futile, I appreciate Mr. Herzog giving me the chance to get my story on film. Plus, I totally loved *Rescue Dawn*."

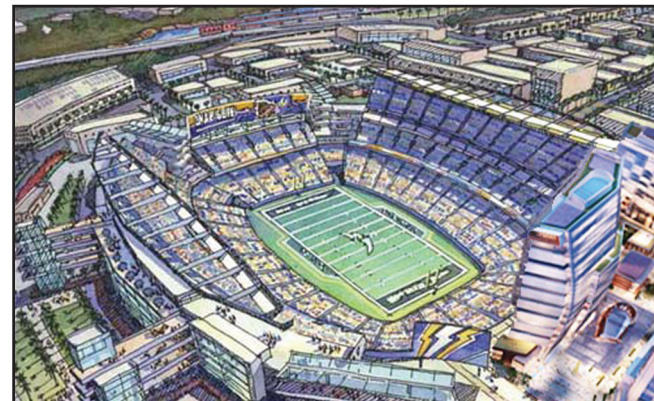
The real coup for Herzog, however, was the securing of over \$4 million from the San Diego Board of Tourism to aid in the film's financing. A spokesman for the board declined to comment aside from spitting on the ground and scowling at the mention of Aguirre's name, but after a couple of Stone IPAs, Herzog was willing to shed some light on his good fortune. "It is a classic testament to the power of art to simultaneously condemn

and flatter. Aguirre is happy to get his story told. The board is happy to show Aguirre talking to monkeys. And Herzog is happy to make his movie. We start principal photography in a week."



Bolt From the Blue

In a Surprise Move, Mayor Sanders Unveils Proposal



to Combine New City Hall with New Downtown Chargers Stadium Complex

"Everybody wins!"

WHO PLAYS WHO

GADFLY EDITION



Beau Bridges played a musician who couldn't quite crack the big time in *The Fabulous Baker Boys*.



As city attorney, **Mike Aguirre** couldn't quite clean up City Hall in San Diego.



As Father Barry in *On the Waterfront*, **Karl Malden** fought corruption and greed.



Don Bauder covers media and financial news for the *Reader*.



In *The Roaring Twenties*, **James Cagney** became part of a vast network of corruption and crime.



Matt Potter keeps track of San Diego's old-boys' network for the *Reader*.