

Transcript of Mike Fisher and Ed Rendell Statements in *The Art of the Steal*

Mike Fisher: “I’m sure I saw the letter (from Richard Glanton, warning the Barnes would be ‘run into a brick wall.’) I’m not going to say that his predictions were accurate *per se*. But once he left, there was not the same level of drive with those who remained. And in the long run I thought that was going to continue to drag the Barnes down.”

“It was pretty clear to me they (the three foundations championing the move) weren’t just going to give 50, 70, 100 million dollars without getting control of the Barnes board.”

“I don’t know that we were ever as direct as saying, ‘We can take this (the Barnes Foundation) away from you.’, because that would take a court to do that, but I had to explain to them that, you know, maybe the Attorney General’s office would have to take some action, involving them that might have to change the complexion of the board. And, whether I said that directly or I implied it, I think they finally got the message.”

“And when they say-- you mentioned-- that it was portrayed that I was the bad cop and the Governor was the good cop, the Governor had the money and the Governor had some money he was willing to add onto it. So that automatically made him a good cop.”

“There was some money proposed for Lincoln to offset some of the perhaps perceived losses that they might have.”

Ed Rendell: “As I recall, it was about 40 million dollars. And I said, ‘You tell me what you want to spend the forty million dollars on.’”

“They weren’t blackmailed into agreeing with this at all. If you ask the Board, I made it abundantly clear – Mr. Scott and others—that they were getting this money regardless.”

“The foundation became fiscally impossible to sustain in its current location. I think it was three or four executive directors came in and tried to make the Barnes financially sustainable in Lower Merion. They failed.”

“You’ve got this magnificent collection being hidden away from the world. Down in Philadelphia, ten times more people a day can be able to see it. And then it’s too small, it’s too small, the building is too small.”

“And then you have the secondary benefit of what this would do to continue Philadelphia’s drive to be a great tourism and destination city.”

Rendell, cont.: “If you were to add the Barnes to the Parkway, there isn’t a couple in the United States or in Europe or in Asia who’s interested in arts and culture who wouldn’t come to Philadelphia for at least a long weekend.”

“This collection should be shown to as many people as humanly possible in the best, easiest to get to setting that we can do. This was always a no-brainer for me. It wasn’t a tough decision at all.”

“You can’t get enough people in because of the restrictions and the parking problems. They couldn’t get enough people into the Barnes to see it, to make it even close to financially workable.”

“It was going down the tubes and there was no soluble answer to its problems.”

“A man by the name of Ray Perelman, who was then, I think chairman of the Board of the Art Museum, came to see me, probably in the middle of my eight years as mayor and suggested that I get active in trying to convince the state to move the Barnes, for-- the Art Museum wanted to --obviously-- to run it and, the benefits to the city of Philadelphia, etcetera, etcetera, etcetera. So that was probably ’95, ’94, ’96 – in that area.”