

By 'WILLIAM PENN'

First guy on Fast Ed: He's my man!

TIS A CLEAR AND just thing, I believe, to return my successor, Edward Rendell, to the governorship of Pennsylvania. Few governors have been as industrious in my colony's history, especially when faced with such a despised Assembly.

Permit me to state my case.

What must first be understood is that *"government, like clocks, go from the motion men give them."* And Edward's clock has been in constant motion since he was first elected governor in 2002.

The man just doesn't stop. If he isn't wolfing down a cheese-steak with voters in Philly, he's schmoozing it up with the Scotch-Irish farmers out in Punxsutawney. Somehow, he's still managed to achieve most of his top initiatives.

Take, for example, his environmental program. Edward secured a \$625 million bond deal called "Growing Greener 2," which is being used to preserve open space, improve drinking water and finance other environmental projects.

From where I stand atop Philadelphia's City Hall, we can use a program like that. There's no open space for the gardens I had planned in what was once my

"green country town."

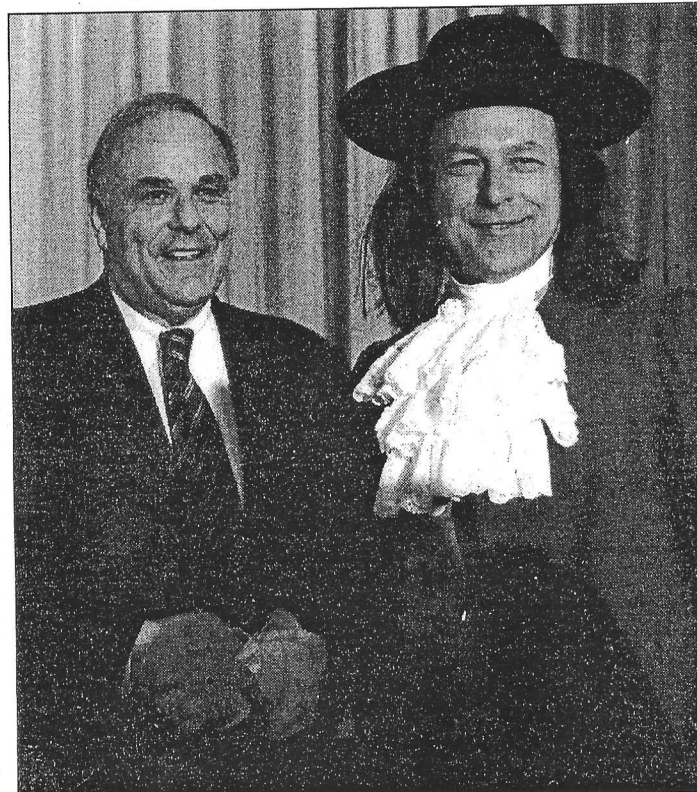
The Delaware smells like a London sewer, and I certainly hope that the putrid, greenish-yellow puddles I see in courtyard below isn't drinking water!

Edward has also taken heed of my counsel that the *"virtue of any society is based on the way it treats its elderly and its youth,"* especially today when it seems like it's the elderly who are taking care of more and more youth.

That's why he has increased state aid to provide full-day kindergarten to more than half the children in Pennsylvania, extended health-care coverage to uninsured children and, beginning next year, will provide low-income senior citizens with property-tax relief.

All of these measures have been achieved while working with an antagonistic Republican General Assembly so noisy in their dissatisfactions that the only thing they can agree on is a pay raise for themselves! I had similar problems.

Tho' I begged and pleaded with them, the Assembly refused to pass any measure to secure the quirents owed to me by the



The guy (at left) with the commonwealth's first chief executive (as portrayed by author Bill Kashatus).

settlers. Instead, the ingrates imposed a new constitution on me, stripping me of everything but

my undergarments.

Edward is not so dependent on them, though. He has amassed a

campaign treasury huge enough to choke one of my prized hogs. With \$13.7 million to his credit, would have been happy to sell him the whole damn colony and throw in Camden as well!

Having said that, I must admit that I am much less pleased about Edward's plan to fund his very worthy programs through slot-machine gambling. That's the kind of Machiavellian thinking that gives politics a bad reputation.

WHAT'S MORE, he would let my good friends, the Delaware Indians, in on the action, refusing to entertain their proposal for a casino. Nobody's perfect, though.

Take his opponent, Mr. Lynn Swann. He talks a lot but lacks an effective message. Nor does he possess any real political experience. Come to think of it, he'd be better suited to serve on City Council.

All things considered, though, I'd urge you, the stewards of my colony, to vote Edward Rendell for governor.

Nothing is better for thee than Fast Eddie! ★

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