

## How to Remake the World: The Radical Life of Francis Jennings

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Writing at a time when a younger generation of historians challenged “consensus history,” Francis Jennings helped to reimagine colonial encounters in North America.<sup>1</sup> Reacting against racist depictions of Indigenous peoples as savages to be tamed or slain, Jennings built an irregular but influential academic career based on scrupulous archival digs and an eagerness to overturn conventional wisdom. He was also an intellectual attack dog. Whether insisting that Puritan leaders falsified or destroyed the treaties they negotiated with Indigenous peoples, accusing historian Francis Parkman of lying about his source material in order to depict Indigenous peoples in the worst possible way, or comparing anthropologist L. H. Morgan to Joseph Goebbels, Jennings’ rhetorical vitriol owed as much to the soapbox as to the seminar room. Still, he was among the most influential historians of colonial America for many years, motivated, in his own words, by “curiosity and a strong sentiment against racism.”<sup>2</sup>

But there was another Francis Jennings, one that he alluded to in his final book, *The Creation of America*. At the end of a career motivated by “a strong sentiment against racism,” Jennings recalled an early encounter with it, one in which he was partially implicated. On the book’s opening page, he told a story involving his previous career as a history teacher, “in a rough high school for slum boys.” In an effort to enliven the classroom, he showed his students “an ‘educational’ film on the Revolution.” The teenagers groaned, as the actors portraying revolutionaries “declaimed about refusing to be slaves, my students’ eyes glazed over. My students were black.”<sup>3</sup>

While this recollection might have simply been an arresting way for an anti-racist academic to introduce his scholarly swansong, another memory points in a different direction. Later in the book, Jennings offers a critical evaluation of Thomas Paine, suggesting that, notwithstanding “exhortations about principles, *Common Sense* is a demand for power.”<sup>4</sup> Paine’s rhetoric masked a desire to consolidate a revolutionary movement, which meant casting aside those who did not fit; Quakers, in this case. Jennings’ gloss on the famous pamphlet yielded the following intervention:

May I be permitted a personal note? In my youth, I, too, joined a revolutionary party—one that advocated the dictatorship of the proletariat which, in practice, became the dictatorship of men

controlling the party. I survived its ultimate collapse in disillusion. Though I had and still have respect and admiration for the political foot soldiers who sacrificed so selflessly for that party's inspiring professed goals, I came to acquire strong distaste for authoritative government by persons considering themselves to be holders of the only true faith, *whatever it may be*.<sup>5</sup>

Although it is never mentioned by name in the text, Jennings was referring to the Communist Party. Jennings became a Communist as a college student in Philadelphia, during the late 1930s Popular Front, and he remained a Party member until 1952. For many of these years, he taught at Benjamin Franklin High School in Philadelphia, a mostly black public school, and he was a member of the Philadelphia Teachers' Union (TU), the most left-leaning organization of teachers in the state of Pennsylvania. Along with perennial demands like higher salaries and smaller class sizes, the TU was an early advocate of school desegregation, eliminating racism from public school textbooks, and similar egalitarian goals. Jennings was its president from 1948 until its dissolution in the early 1960s. Throughout that time, its executive board contained many Communists, Jennings among them.

The connective tissue that bound Francis Jennings' first career as a high school history teacher to his second career as a professional historian was not the history, but a politics of anti-racism. The curiosity that animates this article is Jennings' understanding of his own scholarly work as truth-telling, not as politics. If knowledge is a form of power, as Howard Zinn (another "radical historian" of Jennings' generation) argued, then Jennings' reconstruction of pre-Revolutionary American history certainly constituted a political act.<sup>6</sup> But Jennings drew a sharp distinction between his own history in the Communist Party (CP) and his professional work in the academy. I argue that this self-understanding was a result not only of his disillusion with the CP, but of the anti-Communist politics of the early Cold War years. Unlike many of the radical historians that emerged in the late 1950s and 1960s, Jennings had been deeply immersed in the Communist subculture, leading Party units and front organizations in an ill-fated effort to remake the world. He was also a casualty of McCarthy-era anti-Communism, not only losing his job as a public high school teacher but also being summoned before the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC) to account for his politics. These experiences shaped his later reinterpretations of colonial America and channeled his outrage at the "mainstream" historians he accused of dishonesty and racism. Indeed, I suggest here that his Party work and his encounters with racism and inequality in the Philadelphia school system sharpened his critical lens when it came to interpreting America's colonial history. However, Jennings' own reflections on his past politics and scholarly present evince an understanding of politics as something opposed to truth. To make this case, I bring a variety of archival sources—portions of Jennings' declassified FBI file; records of the teachers' union that he led between

1948 and 1954; articles he wrote for political periodicals; transcripts of his testimonies before HUAC and the Philadelphia Board of Education; and his correspondence with friends, family, and comrades, from as far back as 1941 up to his death in 2000—into dialogue with selections of his scholarship.

Situating Jennings among the radical historians of the 1960s and 1970s creates descriptive and interpretive challenges.<sup>7</sup> For example, Jennings was not merely an outsider to historical professionalism during these years, he was also an outsider among the ostensible “radical historians.” As he worked on his dissertation and first book during these years, the profession’s revisionists worked on “not so much new facts as a different set of significant problems requiring study, and different notions of what constituted a solution.”<sup>8</sup> The notion of using Marxist theory as a tool of historical analysis was foreign to Jennings. He rejected Foucauldian theory out of hand. While remaining a man of strong personal views, he retreated from public politics just as the New Left became ascendant. While Howard Zinn plunged into the politics of the civil rights movement in the 1960s, and wrote about it, Jennings immersed himself in the archives. By the time Zinn set out to write his *People’s History of the United States*, he had Jennings’ *Invasion of America* to draw from, which he did.

Jennings, however, cared very much about “new facts.” Meticulous reconstructions of colonial American history accompanied his rhetorical aggressiveness. His “revisionist” monographs were the fruit of enormous archival research. The entire point was to integrate Indigenous peoples into American history and make the entire enterprise of academic history a more honest, truthful undertaking.

Many of Jennings’ contemporaries pondered the relationship between politics and scholarship. Richard Hofstadter, for example, suggested that it was a continuum.<sup>9</sup> A plurality of acceptable positions existed on the continuum; only the poles should be out of bounds. Seven years later, in the wake of the student occupation of Columbia University, Hofstadter made a plea for university professors to cling to one end of the continuum. The university should be reserved for scholarship, he told Columbia, with politics excluded.<sup>10</sup> Howard Zinn—who, unlike Hofstadter, never abandoned his radical political commitments—rejected any pretense of neutrality. He sided with his friend and fellow activist Noam Chomsky in the belief that politics and scholarship went hand in hand. Understanding what belonged in the classroom or the textbook was, for a radical historian like Zinn, a product of steady interaction between those settings and the world outside the university. Other one-time radicals like Daniel Boorstin, Eugene Genovese, and Moses Finley accommodated the tensions between scholarship and politics at other points along the continuum. Professional academics and political activism might exist in tension with each other, but they could certainly coexist.

Jennings’ experiences as a “political foot soldier” with the CP and a casualty of anti-radical politics mattered because they preceded his commitment to academic professionalism.<sup>11</sup> The figures mentioned so far—Hofstadter, Zinn,

Boorstin, Genovese, Finley—did not experience the full panoply of leftist experiences that shaped Jennings: around fifteen years of Party membership, wartime service, leader of multiple CP front organizations, and testifying before HUAC. Unlike most radical historians of his generation, Jennings carried his radical commitments into the postwar period, but disavowed that orientation before joining a much younger generation of Marxist scholars in the academy during the 1960s and 1970s. His path-breaking first book, *The Invasion of America* was published in 1975, when Jennings was 57 years old. He came of age politically during the era generally associated with the Old Left and matured as a scholar as the New Left emerged. He was not part of the network of “radical historians” associated with William Appleman Williams, *Studies on the Left*, or the Socialist Scholars Conferences of the late 1960s. Given this, the present article aligns with Ambre Ivol’s effort to rethink standard generational interpretations of the American left.<sup>12</sup> Following Ivol’s call for a focus on “sociological and historical characteristics” to replace the standard Old Left-New Left distinction, I focus on a sequence of concrete historical experiences that yielded a distinct orientation to historical craft as a politics of truth.<sup>13</sup>

Some of Jennings’ contemporaries demonstrate the importance of sequencing scholars’ professional commitments in relation to their radical politics outside the academy. Among the radical historians of his generation, William Appleman Williams and David Montgomery provide useful comparisons. Although Williams and Jennings were born only three years apart, their professional trajectories parted ways early on. Williams never joined the CP, and he entered graduate school in 1947, after his military commission had ended. His scholarly relationship with Marxism was tangential, but he was every bit as revisionist in his histories of American diplomacy as Jennings came to be in his histories of colonial America.

Jennings was a decade older than Montgomery, but their professional parallels are striking. They were both one-time Party members, both with connections to the Philadelphia area, both members of a CIO union before going off to grad school after Red Scare repression resulted in job loss. Jennings appeared before HUAC in Washington, DC in 1954; Montgomery protested against HUAC in Camden, NJ in 1955. Both had served in the U.S. Army, and both were involved with the American Veterans’ Committee (AVC) in the late 1940s. Post-HUAC, Montgomery studied working class history and got a tenure-track position right out of graduate school; Jennings studied Indigenous history and struggled to find such a position. What matters for understanding Jennings’ trajectory, however, is their encounters with Communism relative to their commitments to academia. Jennings joined the Party as a college student during the Popular Front and formally left it during the McCarthy years, and then only because of the demands of a loyalty oath, which I discuss later. He knew what it meant to immerse himself in the Party subculture, toe the Party line, and be compelled to testify before local, state, and federal agencies. Montgomery joined the Party in 1951, in the midst of the Red Scare, and quit in 1957. His departure from the Party was a consequence of FBI surveillance—

they had “beaten him,” he remarked, by following him from plant to plant, where he was a union organizer.<sup>14</sup> However, he never had to testify before a witch-hunting committee. No federal agency ever subpoenaed him. The trauma of blacklisting was not part of his life experience. The sequencing of these experiences matters for understanding how they came to approach academic professionalism.

A crucial consequence of Jennings’ embrace of the CP—from the Popular Front, through several changes of Party line, up to his encounter with HUAC—was a coming-around to a belief widely held by anti-communists: that one could not be a Communist and an intellectual at the same time. There was nothing necessary about this shift, of course. “Eric Hobsbawm,” a recent review reminds us, “was a historian and a Communist” and saw no contradiction between the two identities.<sup>15</sup> Jennings saw the embrace of the former as a rejection of the latter. In the final section of this article, I demonstrate how Jennings sometimes went beyond this claim to suggest something broader: that being a historian meant insulating one’s scholarship from politics entirely. The insistence by authorities—governmental and revolutionary—during the early Cold War years that politics could not be meaningfully separated from any other facet of life echoed through Jennings’ scholarship and his self-reflections in complicated ways. His understanding of scholarship as truth-telling and his occasional belief that truth-telling was incompatible with politics rest in tension with the political task that he set for himself: debunking a racist narrative about the country’s past and setting the historical record straight.

### **Francis Jennings the Communist: From College to the Army**

Francis Paul Jennings, known to almost everyone in his adult life as “Fritz,” was born on September 19, 1918 in Pottsville, Pennsylvania. Like most places in Pennsylvania coal country, Pottsville was the setting for widespread industrial strife during Jennings’ childhood.<sup>16</sup> Although neither of Jennings’ parents were involved with mining, there is plenty of evidence of financial hardship in his family. His mother, Della, raised Fritz and his three brothers full-time, leaving his father, James, as the sole breadwinner. While his father at one time had money, working for an insurance company, criminal records show that, between 1924 and 1935 Jennings’ father was charged with “reckless driving, larceny, fraudulent conversion, forgery, and three counts of uttering and publishing worthless checks,” although he did not stand trial for any of these crimes.<sup>17</sup> As a result of James Jennings’ troubles, the family became nearly destitute. Fritz was the oldest of the four Jennings children and, rather than get a job to help the family, he studied hard and won college scholarships. After matriculating at Temple University, it became clear that the tumults of labour unrest and the more general sense of deprivation that surrounded him during his childhood had primed him for what the FBI euphemistically called “disaffection.”

At some point between his arrival at Temple in 1935 and his college graduation in 1939, Francis Jennings joined the Communist Party. His college years overlapped almost perfectly with the Popular Front period in the United States. During this

time, the CPUSA rebranded itself an anti-fascist organization, committed to fighting racism and “economic royalism,” while toning down its critique of capitalism and the Roosevelt administration.<sup>18</sup> This was also the period of Earl Browder’s leadership, when the slogan “Communism is Twentieth Century Americanism” imagined new possibilities for revolutionary ideals as well as for the American creed.<sup>19</sup> As a college student, Jennings was an early leader of the American Student Union (ASU), the first mass-based American student organization, which included many Communists and Socialists in its ranks. He served on Temple’s Peace Council and led antiwar demonstrations on campus. Under the aegis of the ASU, he and some friends also started a book co-op, which became so successful so quickly that Jennings barely went to classes during the spring semester of his sophomore year. He also became president of the Young Communist League’s (YCL) Pennsylvania affiliate.<sup>20</sup>

After short stints as a general labourer at a Castelli Company factory, an office worker for the WPA Recreation Program, and a mimeograph operator at the Philadelphia Navy Yard, Jennings began teaching history at Philadelphia’s Benjamin Franklin High School in September of 1941. Three months later, his priorities changed, as they did for so many other Americans, when Japanese planes bombed Guam, Honolulu, Pearl Harbor, and Hickham Field, Hawaii. By this time, Jennings was also one year into his marriage to Joan Woolcott, a columnist for the *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*, and several months into fatherhood. He was classified 3-A, meaning that he did not have to serve on account of his having dependents. But he was ready to suspend his teaching career and enter the service immediately. After both the Army and Navy turned him down, on account of poor eyesight, he reported in person to the Selective Service board and requested a change in classification. Selective Service reclassified him as 1-B, and he began basic training in Fort Eustis, VA in October of 1942. During the war, his CP unit placed his name on a list of Party members whose membership was unofficial while serving.<sup>21</sup>

Jennings’ politics followed him into the service. When it came time for deployment, he was kept behind, while everyone he entered Fort Eustis with was sent to the front. It was not uncommon for the armed services to keep Communists and fellow-travelers, suspected or real, away from combat duty.<sup>22</sup> Jennings fell into this camp. In an effort to get her husband up to the front, Joan Jennings wrote a letter to President Roosevelt, explaining their situation. Her husband’s commanding officer called him into his office after he (Jennings) had filed an application for Officer’s Training School. The officer asked Jennings if he was a Communist; the FBI had come around, asking questions. In her letter to the president, Joan was willing to concede membership in “progressive organizations.” “In college we were members of the American Student Union, and, after graduation, we took part in the local council of the American Youth Congress.”<sup>23</sup> They had also worked for Russian War Relief. Each of these groups was known at the time to have Communist-dominated executive boards and many Communist and fellow travelling members. How-

ever, Joan denied that either she or her husband were Communists. In any case, the intervention had some impact. While Jennings never saw combat, he was transferred to an Army hospital in England in the summer of 1943. He spent the rest of the war there.

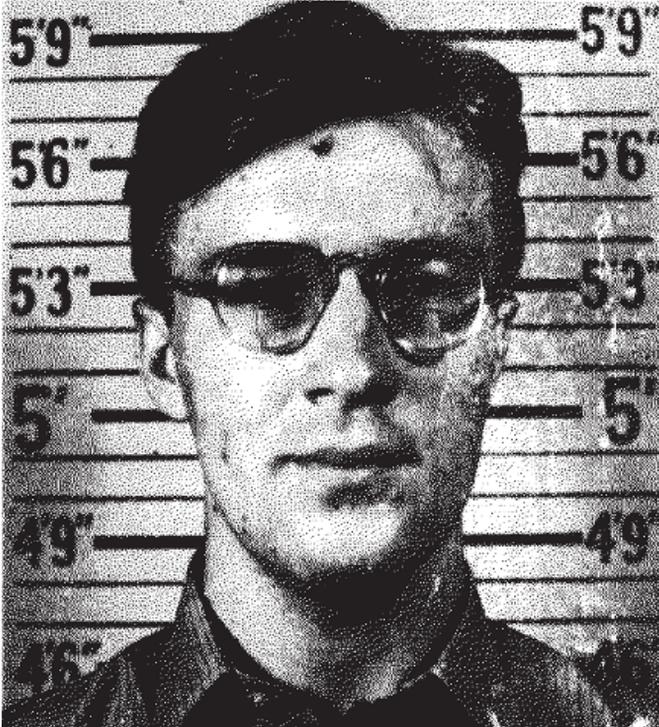


Fig. 1: Francis Jennings, age 23.<sup>24</sup>

The FBI had Jennings under surveillance for the rest of his time in the Army and for decades thereafter. In fact, his file reveals that the FBI first took an interest in him as early as 1941. Back then, Jennings had been treasurer of the Philadelphia Youth Council, an anti-war organization. He was also on the mailing list of the Washington Book Shop. The Book Shop was a bookstore that, unusually for its time, openly sold Marxist literature, hosted leftist public speakers, employed people with CP connections, and welcomed patrons regardless of politics or race.<sup>25</sup>

But the most revealing facet of his FBI file is that the Military Intelligence Division of the federal War Department launched a “disaffection investigation” of Jennings in March of 1943. To probe the depth of Jennings’ “disaffection,” federal investigators interviewed his professors, administrators, former bosses, landlords,

friends and neighbors. One investigator interviewed Temple University's Dean of Men, Conrad Seegers, at some length. Early in his time at Temple, Jennings had confided in Seegers and asked for his help and advice. Seegers described Jennings as shy and reticent at first, particularly as he endured a serious case of acne, but increasingly assertive over the years. He was someone who "rebelled internally at the social conditions that made his family and its background inferior to others."<sup>26</sup> This rebellion, Seegers believed, found its expression in Communism. Dean Seegers reported that Jennings supported the Loyalists in the Spanish Revolution, that his animosity toward Fascism was more pronounced than his attraction to Communism, that he never talked about overthrowing the government but that he cared principally about social reform, and that he admired Norman Thomas and Franklin Roosevelt. He stated that Jennings was trustworthy, "a loyal citizen of the United States," and "conservative" when it came to foreign policy.<sup>27</sup> He informed the investigator that Jennings was an idealist for whom becoming a social studies teacher was a means of furthering his ideas about social reform. He willfully took some jobs "where he would have to labor, so that he could understand the problems of the working class of people."<sup>28</sup> Seegers' successor in the Dean's office, Claude Bowman, supplied federal investigators with a letter Jennings had written to Seegers in September of 1941, just when Jennings had begun teaching high school. Apparently referring back to Seegers' earlier prediction that Jennings would be a Republican within a decade, Jennings told his former confidante that:

Your political predictions cannot yet be said to be fulfilled, since although I have modified some of my views since leaving school and even to an extent agree with Mr. Willkie on certain matters of foreign policy, yet I cannot be described in good faith as a staunch Republican. However, as I remember, you allowed ten years for this conversion to take place. Perhaps, in the eight remaining years both the Republican Party and myself may have altered a little more.<sup>29</sup>

Jennings' reference to Willkie is particularly telling. Before he ran against Roosevelt on the Republican ticket in 1940, Wendell Willkie was a business-friendly Democrat frustrated with the president's expansion of executive power. When CP leader Earl Browder was under indictment for passport fraud, Willkie publicly defended him. He supported equal rights for African-Americans and, as his 1943 collection *One World* makes clear, he was anti-imperialist and internationalist. Jennings was as willing to flaunt respectable mores through an embrace of Communism as he was the more iconoclastic mores of Communism by admiring (if not voting for) Wendell Willkie.<sup>30</sup>

Sixty years later, Jennings recalled his collegiate politics a bit differently. The ASU was the site of organizational work that he remained proud of. When former ASU member Leo Rifkin reached out to Jennings to convince him and Joan to attend a reunion on the west coast, Jennings was ambivalent. "We were not all one big happy family in ASU," he told Rifkin, "and some of the old animosities are likely to surface again."<sup>31</sup> In spite of his concerns, he confessed that he understood the impulse for the reunion. "The student union was an exhilarating experience," he wrote, "and it prepared me well, if sometimes ruefully, to understand what has happened since. Indeed, I think it made me a better historian than I would have been by going the strictly academic route." Years later, he told an old friend from his college and teachers' union days that the sectarianism of those years had left some scars. "I figured that the national affair would just be an occasion for Yipsels [Young Socialists] to crow, and I prefer to lick my wounds in private."<sup>32</sup> The book co-op he recalled as being a learning experience, but one that had its drawbacks. "I had spent so much time on that thing that I nearly got kicked out of college for bad grades," he recalled.<sup>33</sup> He remembered his encounters with the dean with less fondness. "While at Temple, Dean Segers called me in to his office one day for a talk," he wrote to a former union comrade. "After softening me up with man-to-man intimacy, he asked me if I was a Communist. I, like a dam fool, wanted to be open and forthright and said yes. I found out later that he turned me in to the FBI."<sup>34</sup>

When it came to Communism, the young Francis Jennings was neither a dupe nor an apostate. Like the young radicals of Robert Cohen's *When the Old Left Was Young*, he immersed himself in the Popular Front-era student movement.<sup>35</sup> He led peace demonstrations at a time when anti-fascism, not pacifism was the Party line.<sup>36</sup> To be certain of Jennings' commitment to the Party line (or lack thereof), we would want to see evidence of his responses to the signing of the Hitler-Stalin Pact in 1939, which encouraged Hitler's imperialism, and the breaking of the Pact in 1941, when German armies invaded the Soviet Union. No such evidence exists. While he was politically committed to ideals regarding racial equality and fairness distinctive to many people who joined the CP, he was less concerned with the Soviet Union which, by the late 1930s, was a spiritual homeland to most American Communists. Both Jennings and Joan did volunteer work for Russian War Relief, to be sure, but his FBI file is otherwise empty of references to active support for the USSR. Although he voted for Franklin Roosevelt, he liked Wendell Willkie enough to grapple with the possibility of voting Republican in 1940. And, as mentioned above, his former dean clearly detected something "conservative" in his approach to foreign affairs. His discussions with Dean Seegers suggest that he imagined there to be a sharp distinction between domestic politics and foreign politics. In this respect, he differed from Willkie, who believed that "the great new political fact" in 1940 was the essential identity of the two: "Whatever we do at *home* constitutes foreign policy. And whatever we do *abroad* constitutes domestic policy."<sup>37</sup> In any case, Jennings was still coming into his own as an adult in the early 1940s, and he embraced Communism on his own terms, not the Party's.

### Jennings the Teacher Unionist

After Jennings returned to the US in October of 1945, he resumed teaching at Benjamin Franklin High School, but he did not teach the teenagers he had begun with in 1941. Instead, he requested work in the veterans' program. Many municipal school systems across the US offered courses for returning war veterans who had yet to receive their high school diplomas, required extra credits before enrolling in college, or wanted to take vocational training classes. Jennings specifically requested to work with this demographic. Only in 1948 did Jennings return to teaching teenagers. From then until his high school teaching career ended in 1954, Jennings went back and forth between the veterans' program for adults and the regular high school. Jennings had requested to work with veterans because he saw them as potential Communists. He belonged to the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) and the American Legion, along with the AVC, and he saw in them a fruitful mechanism for promoting Communist ideology. Much as his college work tied the social circumstances of his life as a student to his CP activism, in the ASU and the YCL, so too did Jennings build on his experiences as a war veteran to create a radical path for himself.<sup>38</sup>

On October 28, just four weeks after his honorable discharge from the Army, Jennings spoke about his plan for war veterans at a Party convention at the Philadelphia Commodore Hotel. He told the convention that returning veterans were having a hard time, and that the Party could be a powerful force for channeling their resentments. At that moment, soldiers believed that strikes were keeping them overseas, and a thousand had signed anti-strike pledges. Meanwhile, the government kept soldiers abroad as a check against Soviet power. Veterans, Jennings said, must be told the truth about this, because organized labour is currently being blamed for everything. "Every veteran coming back must be treated as an 'only child,'" he told the conference. "This should be first in the agenda," and the Party should promote demobilization for the principal reason that that is what most soldiers want. On December 7, the poet and CP stalwart Walter Lowenfels told an FBI informant that Jennings was "in complete charge of veteran propaganda put out by the Communist Party in the Philadelphia area."<sup>39</sup> Initially, Jennings sought to recruit other CP veterans into the Legion and the VFW, intending to use these new members to arouse interest in the CP and build influence in these groups. All correspondence pertaining to veterans' affairs was sent to Jennings' home address, in an attempt to avoid any suspicion of affiliation with the CP. Jennings began holding regular meetings of the Veterans' Commission in his home. In March of 1946, Jennings again addressed a panel on veterans' affairs for CP District 3, this time at Philadelphia's Metropolitan Opera House. The gentle approach to veterans that he had suggested in October had turned into a more "tough love" stance. He criticized the GI Bill of Rights for its provision of veterans with \$20 per week each week for a year, "inasmuch as it is making the veterans lazy and very few of them are working or even considering taking a job at \$35 or \$40 a week when they can loaf and receive \$20 a week." Jen-

nings “suggested that the Communists fight the veterans’ theory that the Government owes them a living.” He concluded with his advice to get Communists into the Legion and the VFW.<sup>40</sup>

After a few years of fruitless effort with veteran recruitment into the CP, Jennings redirected his energies outside the classroom toward the Philadelphia Teachers Union (TU). The Philadelphia TU was the most left-leaning organization of public schoolteachers in the city. In 1941, the AFL-affiliated AFT had expelled Philadelphia’s Local 192, along with two of the New York locals, as a result of their close affiliation with the Communist Party. Several years later, while Jennings was overseas, the ex-Local 192 entered the CIO’s United Public Workers (UPW) as Local 556. By this time, the union had built a reputation for activism around civil rights and academic freedom. It masterminded the drive for a state tenure law and spearheaded a state-wide organizing drive to build a state teachers’ federation in the late 1930s. The union’s members elected Jennings union president on May 14, 1948, and he remained in that position until the union dissolved in the early 1960s.<sup>41</sup>

Although Jennings voiced his union’s position on higher salaries, smaller class sizes, and related workplace issues with appropriate assertiveness, nothing brought out the aggressive tone that would later become distinctive of his scholarly writing quite like racism and academic freedom. He once sent a “file of correspondence about discrimination in the employment of staff in the School District of Philadelphia” to Walter Biddle Saul, the president of the city’s Board of Education.<sup>42</sup> Philadelphia’s City Council had, several months earlier, passed a Fair Employment Practices Law into existence, which prohibited discrimination in employment because of “race, color, religion, national origin, or ancestry” and created a Fair Employment Practices Commission to investigate accusations of unfair hiring practices.<sup>43</sup> Jennings sought to ensure that the new ordinance would apply to the public schools, only to be told by a Board of Education member, Tanner Duckrey, that it would not. “Frankly,” Jennings told Saul, “on receipt of [Duckrey’s] letter my first impulse was to explode in a rage against what seems on the face of it to be a cynical piece of buck-passing.”<sup>44</sup> The union, he wrote “has a well established policy against discrimination, and we shall not be satisfied with any condonation of it, no matter how piously phrased.” “The system of gentlemanly agreement has perpetuated rank injustice in race relations for too long,” he concluded. “The time for polite, kid-glove treatment of the issue is past.” He wrote to the Secretary of the Board of Education, Add Anderson, to express the union’s concern that the Board had no explicit policy regarding “human relations in the schools,” by which Jennings meant race relations. “Officials of the Board and responsible administrators have indicated that in many situations an unofficial policy, which we hold is a bad policy, exists,” Jennings wrote. The assumptions of the Board’s policy are “that bigots must be appeased; that white and Negro children must not be allowed to intermix freely when the likelihood exists that some race-minded individuals will raise a fuss over it; that Negro teachers must not be appointed to ‘white’ schools if some ante-bellum

hate-monger would thereby be offended.”<sup>45</sup> A quarter of a century later, Jennings would similarly rail against the piousness and gentility of the racism he detected in the Puritans and their twentieth century defenders in the historical profession.

Sometimes Jennings found himself torn between the local and global, in a manner familiar to leaders of radically leftist organizations across the globe. As a union leader, he understood the need to advance the interests of his members. As a radical, he understood that the oppression he fought against was not unique to the United States and that the goals of his union and its members were bound up with those of others. Under his leadership, the union contributed funds to the Red Cross on the request of the American Council for a Democratic Greece, which supported the Communist rebels fighting in Greece’s civil war.<sup>46</sup> It co-sponsored events promoting nuclear disarmament and international peace. It was also on the African Aid Committee’s mailing list. The African Aid Committee was the fund-raising organ of the Committee on African Affairs, the brainchild of W. E. B. Du Bois and Paul Robeson, which promoted anti-colonial struggles in Africa. Du Bois and Victoria Garvin wrote to Jennings to solicit funds from the union in support of striking black mine workers in Nigeria. They wrote that “the membership of your union, particularly the Negro workers” would likely be interested in contributing, if only they knew about what was going on.<sup>47</sup> Jennings was torn between what he saw as his duty to his members and his admiration for the Committee’s cause. “Many considerations which need not be enumerated make it inadvisable for the union to take up an issue which will seem to many members to be distinct from the aims and purposes of an organization of teachers,” he wrote to Du Bois. “However, my personal conviction is that your organization is performing an important service.” He wrote the Committee a cheque for \$10.<sup>48</sup>

Another of Jennings’ endeavours was helping to lead the Free Jenkins Committee. The CP had organized the Committee to campaign for the freedom of Bayard Jenkins, a 19-year-old African-American ice deliveryman who had been convicted of murdering Kathryn Mellor, a writer and artist, in her Philadelphia apartment. Jenkins had initially confessed to the police before pleading not guilty in court, claiming that his earlier confession was the product of police intimidation. A jury found him guilty, and he was sentenced to death. Two weeks later, a gravedigger living in Saganaw, Michigan came forward to confess to the murder. By the time Jenkins’ attorney formally requested a new trial in May, the CP had begun publicizing the case. *The Pennsylvania Worker*, the Party’s weekly regional supplement to its national publication, and the *Daily Worker*, published articles about it. Jennings was on the Free Jenkins Committee executive board, as it organized several demonstrations outside City Hall. Their efforts were to no avail—Jenkins was retried and sentenced to life in prison. Later in the spring of 1949, the Free Jenkins Committee merged with the Civil Rights Congress (CRC). In 1951, when the CRC launched its We Charge Genocide campaign at the United Nations, the Jenkins case was included in its evidence of “mental harm.”<sup>49</sup>

Jennings was also active when it came to teachers’ freedom of political as-

sociation. He mobilized his union to defend two teachers who lost their jobs for political reasons in the spring of 1950. Dorothy Albert was a high school English teacher in Pittsburgh, and Lee Lorch was a professor of mathematics at Pennsylvania State University. Albert entered the national spotlight when the former undercover FBI agent Matthew Cvetic told HUAC that Albert was a member of the CRC and the CP. The Pittsburgh Board of Education suspended and dismissed her. Albert admitted to the school superintendent that she was a member of the CRC, but she denied that she was a Communist. When the Board of Education held a public hearing on her case, she read a prepared statement calling attention to her competence as a teacher, but it was to no avail. Subsequent appeals went as far as the State Supreme Court, which upheld her dismissal in November of 1952.<sup>50</sup> Lee Lorch, meanwhile, had been a mathematics professor at Penn State University since the fall of 1949, after NYC's City College had turned him down for tenure. When he moved to take the job, he invited a black family, Hardine and Raphael Hendrix and their son, to rent his residence, an apartment in Manhattan's segregated Stuyvesant Town. The insurance company that owned the complex refused to honor the Hendrixes' rent cheque. Penn State had already interviewed Lorch about his activism at City College, where his efforts to desegregate Stuyvesant Town had led to some of his colleagues labeling him a trouble-maker. "Accommodating the Hendrixes, a college official told him, was 'extreme, illegal and immoral, and damaging to the public relations of the college.'" <sup>51</sup>

In response to the Albert and Lorch cases, Jennings led his union into battle. He told the TU's executive board that the Albert case was "our fight" and recommend having the union's full membership vote to file an amicus brief in Albert's case, ask for a standing committee on academic freedom, write to the Pittsburgh school board "decrying this attack on academic freedom," disseminate the story of the case to local community organizations, and provide financial assistance toward Albert's legal fees.<sup>52</sup> A day after that membership meeting, Jennings attended a two-day Pennsylvania Conference for Jobs, Peace, and Civil Rights in York, PA, representing his union, at which Albert and Lorch were guest speakers. Jennings also represented his union as part of a delegation that traveled to State College, PA to attend a meeting of Penn State's board of trustees on the Lorch case.<sup>53</sup>

Moreover, Jennings also wrote columns in the TU's bulletin about the two cases. He noted that Albert had publicly challenged the Board of Education to prove that she had ever said anything demonstrating disloyalty to the US government. No evidence was forthcoming. The Board "made it quite clear that neither her competence as a teacher nor her ethics in the classroom were at issue," he wrote. "Only her personal life was concerned." Furthermore, the CRC campaign that Albert had been most closely associated with was a prominent one. "She was accused of having participated in meetings the object of which was to gain freedom for Mrs. Rosa Lee Ingram, a Negro mother who was sentenced to life imprisonment by a jim-crow jury for defending herself against rape. Miss Albert affirmed atten-

dance at these meetings without hesitation.” He was just as scathing with regard to the Lorch case. “The Negro guests of Dr. Lorch had committed no fault save that of being born,” Jennings wrote, “but the administration at Penn State felt that it was bad for the college’s reputation to keep on its payroll a man who insisted on behaving like a decent follower of the Golden Rule when the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company—Lorch’s jim-crow landlord—decreed that he must bow to the Rule of Gold.”<sup>54</sup>

As the anti-Communist politics of HUAC, Joseph McCarthy, and Pat McCarran entered the national spotlight, “Little McCarran Acts” and “mini-HUACs” sprouted up in state legislatures across the country. Pennsylvania’s version was established by the Pechan Act. The Act provided for a mandatory loyalty oath for all state government employees, made it an offense to be “knowingly a member of a subversive organization or a foreign subversive organization,” and forbade anyone “as to whom on all the evidence there is reasonable doubt concerning his loyalty” from state and federal governments.<sup>55</sup> As the first version of the Act wound its way through the state legislature, Jennings led the union in opposition. “This is the language of the Inquisition,” he wrote. “A doubt is only as reasonable as the man who does the doubting. This ‘reasonable doubt’ provision...puts teachers and government employes at the mercy of the political party which administers the ‘loyalty’ programs” and “would give rise to a class of teachers dedicated to expediency rather than truth: teachers whom students did not trust, working in an atmosphere of mutual suspicion, with spies in every classroom.”<sup>56</sup> In a development that surely chagrined Jennings, the VFW and the American Legion were the Pechan Act’s most persistent champions. Pennsylvania Governor John S. Fine signed the Pechan Act into law on December 22, 1951. Jennings, along with over 200,000 other public employes in the state, swore the loyalty oath in March of 1952.<sup>57</sup>

The Pechan Act was part of a series of anti-radical government actions in Pennsylvania that led up to Jennings’ appearance before HUAC in February of 1954. Like other Philadelphia Communists, Jennings formally resigned from the Party the day before swearing the loyalty oath, so that he could take it without perjuring himself. But local, state, and federal authorities were well aware of his radicalism by this time. On January 29, 1953, the Superintendent of Schools, Louis Hoyer, summoned Jennings to his office for a meeting on February 5. In the meeting, Hoyer asked Jennings if he had ever been a member of the Veterans’ Commission of the Communist Party. Jennings refused to answer. Over the course of the next eight months, Hoyer conducted more interviews with suspected Communist teachers, all of whom answered the summonses but refused to answer questions about their political commitments. During the first week of November, dozens of teachers received subpoenas to appear before HUAC. Twenty-one testified when HUAC visited Philadelphia from November 16 to November 18; most of the rest, including Jennings, testified in Washington, DC in February of 1954. Two days after HUAC had concluded its Philadelphia visit, the Philadelphia Board of Education

voted to suspend 26 teachers, including Jennings, from their jobs. The Board justified its unanimous decision to suspend Jennings following his refusal to answer Hoyer's questions in February. "It is inconsistent with a teacher's civic responsibility," the charges read, "to refuse to answer questions relating to his loyalty when the purpose of the questions was to determine his fitness to be a public-school teacher." Earlier that same day, before Jennings had been notified of his suspension, he disrupted on-going budget hearings in the name of demanding higher teacher salaries: "We are now at the point where the prospective teacher must resolve to sacrifice his constitutional rights and accept the status of second-class citizenship in order to qualify for an overworked and underpaid profession."<sup>58</sup>

All 26 teachers suspended on November 20 were entitled to a hearing before the Board of Education. Jennings was the first to request that his hearing be public. "My hearing stopped being either private or personal when Superintendent Hoyer released his charges to the press," he said in a public statement before his hearing. "In his anxiety to try my case in the headlines, he deprived me of any real choice of a private hearing. All that I could keep private now is my defense."<sup>59</sup> Jennings' hearing was held on February 10, 1954. After his lawyer dealt with some preliminaries, Jennings himself testified. He told the Board that he had consulted with an attorney prior to meeting with Hoyer, who had informed him that the meeting with Hoyer was illegal and that he should not answer any of their questions about his politics prior to the Pechan Act.<sup>60</sup>

Jennings testified before HUAC on February 16, 1954. He refused to name names, and he refused to answer questions pertaining to his involvement in the CPUSA. After Congressman Francis Walter had established that the Teachers Union was expelled from the CIO because of "Communist domination," he asked Jennings who the union's executive officers were. Jennings refused to answer, "on the grounds of the 1<sup>st</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup> amendments." "Why don't you just say 'the Constitution?'" Congressman Walter asked. "That would save some time," Jennings responded. Jennings had already affirmed the (publicly known) fact that he was the president of the Teachers Union, a fact that yielded Walter's logic: "The union was expelled from the CIO because of Communist domination at the time you were head of the union. Am I safe in assuming that the reason why it was expelled from the CIO was because of you; is that the answer?" Jennings took the 5<sup>th</sup>, as he did in response to questions about his affiliation with The American Student Union, the Young Communist League, the Philadelphia Youth Congress, and the Civil Rights Congress. He did acknowledge his Party membership in a less direct fashion. He willingly answered the committee's inquiry as to whether he swore the Pennsylvania teacher loyalty oath in 1952, which he had. The loyalty oath, as Jennings and the committee both knew, forbade teachers from being members of "any organization that was subversive or was so inclined to overthrow the Government by force and violence." Jennings acknowledged that, had he been a party member when he swore the oath, "[i]t would have been perjury." "Were you a member the day be-

fore?” Congressman Gordon Scherer asked him. He declined to answer. These rhetorical contortions were typical of HUAC’s witnesses from the world of public education, nearly all of whom refused to name names and subsequently lost their jobs.<sup>61</sup>



Fig. 2: “Francis P. Jennings, president of the Teachers Union of Philadelphia, testifies today before House Un-American Activities Committee.”<sup>62</sup>

Jennings’ understanding of teaching as a means of being in touch with “the people” yielded to sheer exhaustion, a transition made worse by the political pressures he faced. When he read a review of the 1954 novel, *The Blackboard Jungle*, later adapted for film, he wrote to the reviewer to tell him how close to reality the book’s depiction of inner-city schooling had gotten. Four decades later, after a second career in the academy, he brought his scholarly perspective to bear on his years teaching at Benjamin Franklin High School, explaining his difficulties as a clash of cultures.<sup>63</sup> In a 1997 letter to the historian Gary Nash, he noted that while “working with slum black kids, as I did, I found that history was totally irrelevant to their concerns, except when I took up Frederick Douglass.” Even after retooling his American history course to make the American Revolution the centerpiece, his stu-

dents were unimpressed. “These kids were not really dumb,” he told Nash of the revelation that so many other privileged white teachers come to. “They were street-wise and clever enough about what interested them, but it was not my history; I had to conclude that a cultural block existed. Our U.S. history made no sense in their outlook.”<sup>64</sup> A couple of years later, he offered a similar reflection to another old friend, Erik Hemmingsen. “What we [teachers] offered was pie in the sky, and those kids resisted as strongly as old Wobblies,” he told Hemmingsen. “And reasonably from their point of view. School did not prepare them for a desirable future; it was a series of daylong contests with the teaching agents of the culture that actually held them down.”<sup>65</sup> Jennings would later use insights from anthropology—particularly in the spirit of Franz Boas’ replacement of race with culture as an analytical category—to advance his understanding of relations between the Indigenous and Europeans, and it became the lens through which he interpreted his own experiences in a Philadelphia high school classroom.

But it is equally important to consider Jennings’ involvement in the CP in evaluating his pre-graduate school years. Although he never expressed overt sympathy for the USSR, he did invoke the need to follow the Party line for the sake of advancing the CP’s mission. At a Communist Party meeting on December 3, 1948, Jennings expressed his frustration at the refusal of his union’s Communist members to do organizing work in just these terms: “we have to start emphasizing this fact that the Communist Party is a party of discipline. A decision is taken; you don’t make up your minds whether you’re going to accept them or not; you just do it.” In light of that fact, he asserted, the major question for Party members was “are you going to take the party line, or are you going to make up your own mind? And a man who makes up his own mind, whether he’s going to accept the decision or not, just ain’t a Communist, that’s all, and I think that that leads to certain conclusions also as to qualifications of Party membership...”<sup>66</sup>

That the author of iconoclastic scholarship that so acerbically deconstructed his professional elders once toed the Party line begs for reflection. Perhaps it was Jennings’ experiences with Stalinist organization that inculcated his revulsion toward ostensible authority figures, particular when the source of such authority so clearly combined ideology, dishonesty, and brutality. Jennings never discussed his abandonment of the Communist Party at length—the Pechan Law may have induced him to formally leave the Party, but did he see himself as a “small c” communist thereafter? One can easily imagine the gradual discovery of Soviet mendacity and that of his American comrades provoking outrage in the idealistic Jennings; after all, Jennings’ commentary in *The Creation of America* suggests that he never abandoned the principles that motivated his youthful politics. However cynically the CP exploited the righteousness of these values and causes—anti-fascism, anti-racism, freedom of political expression, and so forth—it remains the case that many Americans joined the Party precisely because it appeared to be the only political party that was willing to take them on. Jennings understood Communism strictly in

terms of its idealistic principles and in its materialistic analysis of social problems. While the CP's hypocritical authoritarianism helped inspire Jennings' distaste for ideological posturing, the acerbic tone of Jennings' scholarly writing is not far removed from the kinds of polemics that were part of his reading diet (and writing practice) as a CP foot soldier.

### **The Second Career and its Aftermath**

After his HUAC appearance and subsequent dismissal from his teaching position, Jennings redirected his energies in two ways. First, with the union now a pariah in municipal politics, Jennings committed the union not to policy matters but to litigation. Under Jennings' on-going leadership, the union's annual luncheons became fundraisers for the legal fees incurred by teachers appealing their Red Scare-related dismissals. In particular, the union reached out to its allies for financial assistance in the case of Herman Beilan, a high school teacher whose court case eventually made it to the Supreme Court, where it fell in a 5-4 decision.<sup>67</sup> The union's annual luncheons from 1954 to 1958 attracted other blacklist victims from Philadelphia and NYC, including Dorothy Parker, Barrows Dunham, Harry Slochower, and Irving Adler, education activists like Marion Hathway, former TU vice-president Arthur Huff Fauset, and allies from outside the world of education, including the journalist I.F. Stone and the singer Paul Robeson.<sup>68</sup> Jennings reached out to them, among many others, to finance Beilan's appeal, all the way to the Supreme Court. Many sent regrets, including the sociologist C. Wright Mills and the physicist Edward Condon. "I was amused by your reference to our 'wearisome struggle,'" Jennings wrote in response to Condon. "So many well-meaning people use hisfalutin rhetoric like 'heroic' and 'inspiring'; it is curiously refreshing to come across a realistically plain-spoken characterization by a man who knows what it's all about."<sup>69</sup> None of Jennings' efforts could forestall the union's demise. It dwindled to about 20 members by 1960, all of whom had been members since the 1940s. All were one-time Communists.<sup>70</sup>

Second, Jennings began work on his PhD. Having already earned his Master's degree in education from Temple in 1952, he entered a doctoral program at the University of Pennsylvania in the fall of 1954. For the remainder of the decade, he did double duty as a graduate student and union leader. By the time Jennings defended his PhD. thesis in 1965, the TU had disintegrated, and he was left with the academy and his family as his two principal concerns. Finding a steady job was not easy, as the blacklist was alive and well in the ivory tower of the 1960s. Jennings found short stints at Glassboro State College in New Jersey (1965-1966) and the Moore College of Art in Philadelphia (1966-1968), before landing a long-term position at Cedar Crest College, where he earned tenure in the spring of 1969.<sup>71</sup> In 1975, the University of North Carolina Press published his first monograph, *The Invasion of America*. This book began a rapid shift in Jennings' career from relative obscurity to the professional mainstream that he had been railing against for over

a decade. He accepted an invitation to head the d'Arcy McNickle Center in Chicago in 1976, where he spent the next five years. After that, he retired to care for his wife, who was ill with rheumatoid arthritis. They lived in Martha's Vineyard, where Joan's family had a house, until she passed away in 1988. It was, as Frederick Hoxie pointed out, "probably the most productive retirement" in the field.<sup>72</sup> *The Ambiguous Iroquois Empire* (1984) and *Empire of Fortune* (1988) completed his "Covenant Chain" trilogy and, after he returned to Chicago, he wrote *The Founders of America* (1992) and *Benjamin Franklin, Politician* (1996). After a brief stint in North Carolina, he spent his final years at a nursing home in Evanston, IL. There, he wrote his final book, *The Creation of America*.

*The Invasion of America* was published just as "radical historians" were making their mark on the profession. Curiously, Jennings does not seem to have reflected much on their work, outside of the colonial history that he worked on. He was not interested in the critical tools that came to prominence during these years, content to deploy anthropological concepts and research strategies to the primary data he meticulously extracted from far-flung archives. The historically oriented political scientist Michael Rogin provides a useful counterpoint. His second book, *Fathers and Children: Andrew Jackson and the Subjugation of the American Indian*, was published in 1975, the same year as *Invasion*. Both books take up the settlers' brutality toward Indigenous peoples, Rogin during the Jackson administration and Jennings during the colonial period. Like their contemporaries doing "radical history," Rogin and Jennings sought to undercut triumphalist analyses of American democracy.

However, in many aspects, the two books could not be more different. For Rogin, sublimated family trauma underpinned the primitivist fantasy. For Jennings, it was raw power, greed, aggression, and imperialist ambition. Rogin's recourse to inner lives was the parallel to Jennings' deployment of culture as an analytical category. While Rogin gently criticized Parkman for an implausible psychological theory that obscured historical understanding, Jennings lashed out at Parkman because that same theory betrayed racist underpinnings, and because Parkman used primary sources with an intent to deceive. Jennings imported culture to better understand history and inoculate readers against ethnocentrism. What Jennings called "Francis Parkman's murky mind" was incapable of understanding the Indians, because of "an ideology of divisiveness and hate based on racism, bigotry, misogyny, authoritarianism, chauvinism, and upper-class arrogance."<sup>73</sup> The two scholars came to complementary conclusions through very different scholarly channels, deploying different rhetorical styles.<sup>74</sup> While Rogin's book was the product of a fairly traditional scholarly trajectory, Jennings' was the output of a blacklisted ex-Communist still working through the discontents of an intensely politicized early life.

Jennings was self-aware about the relationship between his radical political history and his scholarly undertakings. While writing the "Covenant Chain" trilogy, he reflected on what brought him to that project. His own recounting of events in "The Discovery of Americans" illuminates the force of will that it took for him to make intellectual commitments, as distinct from political ones:

Deeply smitten by Marxism in my youth, I was battered out of it before entering graduate studies, but not before experiencing newspaper accounts of events in which I had participated. . . . The discrepancy between the accounts and my personal observations enhanced a natural tendency toward skepticism. This tendency was later strengthened by the realization of how powerfully the Marxist ideology had obscured facts that stood contradictory to it, just as the free enterprise ideology had put nonexistent chickens in imaginary pots. It began to seem that all information, from whatever source, was unreliable.<sup>75</sup>

The combination of economic growth and expanding civil rights, it seemed to him, made both the “Marxist” and “free enterprise” understandings of the world more tenuous. “The world began to seem more ambiguous.”<sup>76</sup> In his accounting of himself, only one thing remained steady over the previous half century: “I confess to having acquired a deep and abiding hatred of racism in all its forms. This conviction I shall keep, and I hope that it is plain in all my writing. Since racism is the very antithesis of objectivity, hostility to it seems prerequisite to a professional, not to say decent, attitude.”<sup>77</sup>

A decade later, Jennings’ publication, “Which Way, History?” focused his critique on what he often called “mainstream” history. After lumping the postmodernists in with the “gurus” who did consensus history, Jennings railed against the profession’s gatekeepers.<sup>78</sup> The Red Scare was a time “when the nation’s power elite stepped in to draw the line separating history from non-history and made its sanctions painfully clear.”<sup>79</sup> As culpable as Richard Nixon may have been in such politics, Jennings saved his fiercest criticism for the historians who cooperated with HUAC. Daniel Boorstin had testified against his former comrades and roommates before telling the Committee that it had not “in any way impinged on *my* academic freedom.”<sup>80</sup> Jennings saw Boorstin’s later production of consensus-friendly history as going hand in hand with his HUAC testimony, just as Jennings’ own refusal to name names blacklisted him and ensured that his own scholarship could never reach a large audience. “Boorstin’s falsehoods are acclaimed as history, written by an eminent practitioner; the proofs of their falsity are dismissed as ‘controversial’ revisionism.”<sup>81</sup> Meanwhile, Jennings described Sidney Hook’s autobiography as “sleazily casuistical” and noted that the American Committee for Cultural Freedom, co-founded by Hook to deter intellectuals from Communism, was funded by the CIA.<sup>82</sup>

Through his observations of other scholars’ encounters with anti-Communist politics, Jennings had come to code historical revisionism as apolitical truth-telling and traditionalism as power-hungry mendacity. While Jennings might have come to this conclusion from his consideration of McCarthyism’s impact on the life of the mind, his own experiences with the Communist Party steered him in this

direction as well. American Communism and anti-Communism shared an understanding of politics as something that could and did permeate every aspect of life. In this way, these two ideologies also advanced their goals with tactics that induced their respective foot-soldiers to lie and dissemble. Given this, Jennings was probably being sincere when he testified before HUAC that he taught loyalty to the United States. He was equally adamant when a legislator asked him, "is that your idea of loyalty?" after he refused to answer a question. "I am not teaching loyalty at the moment," Jennings responded. "I am on the witness stand." Jennings came to see the difference between the classroom and the witness stand as the difference between truth and lies. Political oath-swearing could not generate truth-telling.<sup>83</sup>

Five years before his death, Jennings made his associations between politics and history even more clear. A graduate student at the University of Kentucky had written to him for a historical methodology class in which he had committed to write about Jennings' scholarly work. One of his advisors had recommended he write to Jennings because he had "had some interesting experiences, some of which may have influenced [his] approach to Native American history," including his experiences with HUAC.<sup>84</sup> In his response, Jennings affirmed the importance of HUAC for what was to become *The Creation of America*. "My new book (in a year or two) will be about the American Revolution, and it is indeed being influenced by my understanding of civil liberties as learned from HUAC."<sup>85</sup> He proceeded to write in *Creation's* preface that his work "was made possible by traditions of dedicated scholarship and freedom of discussion that have evolved in my native country."<sup>86</sup> As one historian notes, HUAC's interrogation of Philadelphia teachers in 1953-1954 "fully justifies the term 'inquisition' so often applied to it."<sup>87</sup> The goal of "ritual purification" required not simply a confession of one's sin but a key loyalty test: a willingness to cooperate with authorities in outing Communists and informing on them. Only these actions could demonstrate purity of motive, since a willingness to talk about one's own radical past independently of one's former comrades meant on-going sympathy with anti-American agents.<sup>88</sup>

The theme of tolerance echoes the hardships of Jennings' political past. In his discussion of Pennsylvania's 1776 constitution, Jennings went to great lengths to show how undemocratic it really was, despite many historians' high praise of it. In particular, Jennings emphasized the exclusion of the Quakers from public life. The constitution also made oath-swearing a suffrage requirement, which would have been unheard of under Quaker rule, given that "swearing oaths was intolerably sinful under the Quaker creed."<sup>89</sup> Also, their refusal to bear arms meant the payment of a hefty fee if they wanted to vote. The exclusion of the Quakers was a consequence of the Ulster Presbyterians coming to power in Pennsylvania. "To a degree," Jennings writes, "what has been touted as the rise of democracy in Pennsylvania can validly be seen in part as a program of revenge against Quakers."<sup>90</sup> For this reason, Jennings labels Pennsylvania a "People's Democracy." In the final chapter of *The Creation*, Jennings alludes to religious conflict in Pennsylvania to praise the fed-

eral constitution. “Tolerance was truly revolutionary” and, “in this one respect” at least, “the United States Constitution, as amended, deserves its reputation as a pillar of liberty.”<sup>91</sup>

The seventeenth century Puritans and eighteenth century Presbyterians clearly reminded Jennings of people he did not like. Were those people the Communists that dominated his social milieu for nearly twenty years with a rigid internal hierarchy and disciplinary focus? Or were they the anti-Communists whose often fanatical devotion to their cause did such damage to civil liberties during the Second Red Scare? The answer may be both. While these groups brought back bad memories for Jennings, the Quakers elicited sympathy. Jennings understood them as contrarian truth-tellers and dissenters in ways germane to Jennings’ own experiences. The rejection of oath-swearing evoked Jennings’ most painful experiences as a Communist and an ex-Communist under oath. The Pechan Act had forced him to swear a loyalty oath, making him choose between Party membership and jail, as it had for many of his friends and colleagues. HUAC and the Philadelphia Board of Education had compelled him into legal testimony that induced him to dissemble. It is no wonder that Jennings came to see politics as a corruptive, mendacious force, opposed to truth-telling.

Jennings’ reflections on Benjamin Franklin provide still more evidence of his interest in the tension between politics and truth-telling. Nearly half a century before he wrote his biography of Franklin, he contributed a column about him to the *Pennsylvania Worker*. Writing under the pen name Paul Jenkins, Jennings made Franklin out to be “a man of the people,” driven out of Boston by the city’s “political authorities and the employing class” after he refused to reveal information about his brother James. Jennings accused “the big money boys” of falsifying Franklin’s legacy, suggesting that “[t]hey seek to set up a capitalist dictatorship,” whose way of life Franklin would have approved. But Franklin hated the “privileged, wealthy idle class,” according to “Jenkins.” His participation in the creation of the 1776 constitution of Pennsylvania—the same constitution that Jennings would criticize so harshly, 50 years later—and the Declaration of Independence testified to Franklin’s democratic credentials. Throughout this piece, Jennings writes in what might be called a left-populist vein today, positioning Franklin as a pawn of political struggle, standing outside of politics rather than participating in it.<sup>92</sup>

The full title of Jennings’ biography of Franklin reveals the distance he had traveled: *Benjamin Franklin, Politician: The Man and the Mask*. Now depicting Franklin as an egomaniacal genius, Jennings saw all that Franklin did—including the writing of an autobiography—as the product of political calculation. That Franklin was a “politician” above all meant, for Jennings, that the “man” always wore a “mask.” Indeed, one of the explicit themes of Jennings’ monograph is that Franklin was not an honest autobiographer. Jennings writes that Franklin’s *Autobiography* “is pollution in the wells of history, requiring a serious task of purification to save readers from the ethnic and political malaise.”<sup>93</sup> This made Franklin a distant

ancestor of the historians he detested. But it also made him sound like the early Cold War anti-Communists, who offered salvation through the ritual purification of testifying under oath. At other times, Franklin seems to bear more than a passing resemblance to the young Francis Jennings, like when he learns “the danger of offending powerful authority, and the humiliation of being wrong when the enemy was right.”<sup>94</sup> Jennings was as self-conscious about his attacks on his professional elders as he had been with regard to Philadelphia’s Board of Education, the financial community, and Congressional investigators. While Jennings eventually abandoned capital-C Communism, he continued to believe that *it* had chosen the right enemy; indeed, one similarity between Jenkins’ 1948 Franklin and Jennings’ 1996 Franklin is the populism. While “his vanity apparently caused shamefaced suppression of the way he had been duped when young,” the elder Jennings writes of the elder Franklin, “he seems more interesting than even in the way he turned about to become the people’s champion—a *human* champion, let us remember.”<sup>95</sup> Invoking humanity was a way for Jennings to bring together contradictory impulses in the subjects he admired, though it rarely touched those he saw as history’s villains.

Jennings characterized the key shift in his life as having been from Marxism to the academy. “Though I espoused that faith [Marxism] in my youth,” he wrote to someone who had inaccurately referred to him as a Marxist, “I left it in favor of scholarship and do not regret the change.”<sup>96</sup> Jennings saw Marxism as a doctrine for political action beyond the ivory tower and academia as a professional commitment to truth-telling. A life of scholarship does not preclude political involvement, of course, and Jennings certainly did not shy away from political engagement during his academic career. “A letter from me is credited with changing one vote in the Interior Department to make the Gay Head Wampanoags a federally recognized tribe,” he told one of his old union comrades. “Without that vote, they were rejected.”<sup>97</sup> He also helped some Delawares in Allentown, PA when the town sought to take over a building the tribe was using as a museum. He wrote to the mayor, explaining that “Allentown grew up in land swindled from the Delawares, and imagine what a smart lawyer could do with that fact if the Delawares should sue.”<sup>98</sup> Jennings understood his own calling to be a life of the mind. Being able to intervene in the politics of Indigenous sovereignty surely gratified him, but he never mistook such activities for his vocation.

Given Jennings’ personal history and the themes of his scholarship, it is not difficult to understand why he drew such a sharp distinction between political and intellectual endeavours. Jennings understood Marxism to be a political doctrine, distinct from doing scholarship or an orientation toward it. It was not an intellectual endeavour for the young Jennings, but an aspect of being involved with Communism as a political movement. Although he surely understood that there was a world of politics outside the Communist Party, his formative political experiences happened while he was a Party member. Marxism was a practice of the CPUSA, a political tool for creating a better United States and a better world, but the Party’s

orientation to knowledge was strictly instrumental. When it did not lie outright, the Party distorted, exaggerated, obscured, and obfuscated. Just as problematic for Jennings was the notion of a Party line, a line which, as we have seen, Jennings was not averse to following at times. In the context of his entire life's trajectory, toeing the Party line was a precursor to generalized suspicion of any kind of intellectual authority. Instrumentalizing knowledge could not be a part of scholarly production. His famously polemical prose was a byproduct of someone who believed in historical truths and saw the purpose of scholarship as the discovery and disclosure of those truths. For Jennings, scholarship conformed to the professional imperative to specialize in a particular area of knowledge acquisition and understanding. While such an imperative does not preclude political involvement, it does betoken a firm distinction between the two areas of endeavour.

To be sure, Jennings' final years were a time of political disengagement, but that had little to do with his long-ago abandonment of Marxism. A more personal, intimate loss was the critical factor. "I did not realize...how seriously I would be affected by Joan's death," he confided to Isadore Reivich, an old TU and Party comrade, "it quite disabled me for more than a year. Like a hurt dog, I just wanted to crawl into a corner and lick my wound."<sup>99</sup> Another old friend, his lawyer Harry Levitan, experienced a comparable loss when his wife, Elsie, passed away. "I have to go to the hospital in order to beat the onslaught of deep depression," he told Jennings. "I am sure you understand in view of your own loss."<sup>100</sup> He did, although he tried to put up a brave front. "I was running on battery" at Joan's memorial, he told Levitan.<sup>101</sup> Two years later, he made the link between Joan's death and politics explicit: "since Joanie's illness and final death, I have simply lacked the energy and urge to fight."<sup>102</sup>

That urge to fight ought to be understood more broadly than simply as an orientation to public politics or revolutionary struggle. It was a commitment to egalitarianism and fairness that permeated his entire life's work, from his college years until his death. Well before his wife's passing, Jennings had made scholarship the center of his engagement with the world. "What protagonists *did*," Jennings offered as a lesson of history, "supersedes what they merely *said*."<sup>103</sup> What, for Jennings, was scholarship: doing or saying? Sometimes, it seems as though he saw himself as a protagonist in history, as when he counts himself among "one of the strugglers" for "liberty and justice for all" as a young radical.<sup>104</sup> Jennings tended to see the world in terms of conflicting binaries—justice and injustice; natives and invaders; liars and truth-tellers; men and masks; science and superstition; doing and saying—that do not do justice to how these phenomena intersect with each other. As a new generation of scholar-activists shows us, truth-claims about American history are infused with power. Efforts to suppress speech on college campuses, prevent particular versions of American history from being taught in public schools, and restrict the teaching of racism, demonstrate the ongoing tension between professional and popular constructions of America's past. Jennings' occasional refusal

to see the professional production of history as a political matter evinces the damage done by his involvement in conflicting political movements—Communism and anti-Communism—whose clash left veracity as collateral damage.

### Conclusion

Francis Jennings entered the historical profession after nearly twenty years in the Communist Party. He was immersed in the Party's subculture, with all the socializing, arguing, reading, and line-toeing that it involved. During the years of his most active CP work, he was a public-school teacher, teaching history to underprivileged black children in Philadelphia. His encounter with HUAC brought his high school teaching career to a close, and it also left scars. The arc of his personal history prior to *The Invasion of America* molded the raw egalitarianism of his younger years into the fierce anti-racism of his adulthood. It shaped not only the content of his scholarly interventions—overturning accepted stories and racist myths with painstakingly archival research—but his polemical, controversial style. He called out his subjects and professional interlocutors for their mendacity, their immorality, their poor intentions, their racism. What his fellow historians presented as scholarship, Jennings insisted, was actually the politics of white supremacy, transposed from the halls of politics to the halls of the academy. His insistence on his own revisionism as truth-telling was a consequence not only of his immersion in Communist politics but of the scars left by his encounter with anti-Communism. His work with the Party taught him his anti-racism, but it also taught him the perils of Party-line thinking. Anti-communism drove him out of the Party and his career, but it also shaped his scholarly animosity toward intellectual authority. This animosity helps explain the polemical, conspiratorial tone that characterized some of his most famous writings, as he heaped scorn on people living and dead for their lies. His outsider status in the academy helps explain his willingness to attack his interlocutors, and his unusual trajectory makes it difficult to place him on the Old Left/New Left continuum. After he died, many scholars speculated that Jennings' polemical, acerbic tone prevented his work from reaching a wider audience and having more of an impact. However, he was an outsider well before his embrace of the academy that never fully embraced him. Jennings' youthful passage through the CP and HUAC yielded a view of truth as something opposed to politics, rather than a production of it. Anti-communism was the source of his politics of truth. Anti-racism was its objective.

Jennings' politics of truth also helps answer a related question: how did a white middle-aged scholar come to play such an important role in overturning the racist consensus in the historiography of Indigenous peoples? I suggest here that his earlier life—as a teacher, a unionist, a Communist, and a HUAC casualty—primed him to intervene in battles over American history. Teaching black high school students by day and attending union, Communist Party, and other political meetings by night intensified his hostility toward racism. He cultivated his anti-

racism through political practice before he expressed it in his scholarship. Jennings' transition from Communist high school teacher to non-Communist scholar transposed his anti-racist interventions from the public forum to the ivory tower. And yet, as a Communist and then a blacklist victim, he never truly had a home in either sphere. An outsider to both, he was already 57 years old when *The Invasion of America* saw the light of day. If the work of Eric Hobsbawm demonstrates that "what the Communist could not do in life the historian can do on the page," Jennings' path evinces a similar if somewhat more complicated plight for the disillusioned ex-Communist.<sup>105</sup> As his Party life receded into his own history, his archival research yielded new possibilities for remaking the world, even as he came to see Communist politics as incompatible with the task. His life in the Old Left—from collegiate Communism to HUAC humiliations—sharpened his instincts for detecting racism in the scholarship he criticized and shaped the way he criticized it. Writing American history meant slicing through a romantic vision of America's past to get to the power struggles that shaped its character. The insistence on the historian's task as revelations of truth, the scrupulous archival digs, the treatment of scholarly engagement as dramatic confrontation; these qualities map his passage from revolutionary and Red Scare victim to professional scholar. Those same tensions yielded the most romantic words he ever wrote, in the final pages of his final book: "All men *are* brothers, and all women *are* sisters." In the end, small-c communism won out. "It would be best all around to discard the delusions of race and to accept the need to share power and cooperate," he concluded. "That will require a new and greater revolution."<sup>106</sup>

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**NOTES**

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<sup>2</sup> Francis Jennings, *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1975), 145, 180-185; "A Vanishing Indian: Francis Parkman Versus His Sources" *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 87, no. 3 (1963): 306-323; *The Ambiguous Iroquois Empire: The Covenant Chain Federation of Indian Tribes with English Colonies* (NY: Norton, 1984), 482; *Empire of Fortune: Crowns, Colonies, and Tribes in the Seven Years' War in America* (NY: Norton, 1988), 482.

<sup>3</sup> Francis Jennings, *The Creation of America: Through Revolution to Empire* (NY: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 3.

<sup>4</sup> Jennings, *The Creation of America*, 164.

<sup>5</sup> Jennings, *The Creation of America*, 165.

<sup>6</sup> Howard Zinn, *The Politics of History*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1990).

<sup>7</sup> Allan G. Bogue, "Systematic Revisionism and a Generation of Ferment in American History," *Journal of Contemporary History* 21, no. 2 (1986): 135-162; Jonathan M. Wiener, "Radical Historians and the Crisis in American History, 1959-1980," *Journal of American History* 76, no. 2 (1989): 399-434; August Meier and Elliot Rudwick, *Black History and the Historical Profession, 1915-1980* (Urbana, 1986); Gerald Zahavi, "The 'Trial' of Lee Benson: Communism, White Chauvinism, and the Foundations of the 'New Political History' in the United States," *History and Theory* 42, no. 3 (2003): 332-362; Andrew Jewett, "The Politics of Knowledge in 1960s America," *Social Science History* 36, no. 4 (2012): 551-581.

<sup>8</sup> Wiener, "Radical Historians," 405.

<sup>9</sup> Richard Hofstadter, "A Note on Intellect and Power," *The American Scholar* 30, no. 4 (1961): 588-598.

<sup>10</sup> Richard Hofstadter, "The 214<sup>th</sup> Columbia University Commencement Address," *The American Scholar* 37, no. 4 (Autumn, 1968): 583-589.

<sup>11</sup> Jennings, *The Creation of America*, 165.

<sup>12</sup> Ambre Ivól, "The US Left in Generational Perspective: A Study of Howard Zinn's Trajectory," in *Agitation with a Smile: Howard Zinn's Legacies and the Future of Activism*, 35-50 (Routledge, 2013).

<sup>13</sup> Ivól, "The US Left in Generational Perspective," 49.

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<sup>14</sup> James R. Barrett, "Class Act: An Interview with David Montgomery," *Labor: Studies in Working Class History of the Americas* 1, no. 1 (2004): 23-54.

<sup>15</sup> Corey Robin, "Eric Hobsbawm, the Communist who Explained History," *The New Yorker* (May 2019).

<sup>16</sup> Clement Valletta, "'To Battle for Our Ideas': Community Ethic and Anthracite Labor, 1920-1940," *Pennsylvania History* 58, no. 4 (1991): 311-329; Walter T. Howard, "The National Miners Union: Communists and Miners in the Pennsylvania Anthracite," *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 75, no. 1-2 (2001): 91-124; *Forgotten Radicals: Communists in the Pennsylvania Anthracite, 1919-1950* (University Press of America, 2005).

<sup>17</sup> Francis Jennings FBI file, 1933-1960, 100-HQ-72937 vol. 1, FOIA request to FBI, National Archives, College Park, Maryland, 71.

<sup>18</sup> Maurice Isserman, *Which Side Were You On? The American Communist Party During the Second World War* (University of Illinois Press, 1982), 9.

<sup>19</sup> Isserman, *Which Side Were You On?*, 9-10.

<sup>20</sup> *Temple University News*, "Text Savings Discussed," November 20, 1936; "American Student Union Elects Two Committees," November 23, 1936; "Book Exchange Had Its Start in Bedroom; Now Has a Store," January 27, 1937; "Students Sell Books to Co-op, Store Makes Good First Day," February 5, 1937; "Francis Jennings Elected New ASU Chapter Head," February 12, 1937; "Will Co-Op Close Shop?" February 12, 1937; "Discuss Co-Op's Future," February 17, 1937, Temple Digital Collections, <https://digital.library.temple.edu/digital/collection/p16002coll11/id/2150/rec/1>.

<sup>21</sup> Francis Jennings FBI file, 100-HQ-72937 vol. 1, 8-13.

<sup>22</sup> Ellen Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), 105.

<sup>23</sup> Letter from Joan Jennings to Franklin D. Roosevelt, April 26, 1943, Box 17, Francis Jennings Papers, The Newberry Library, Chicago, IL (FPJ 17 hereafter).

<sup>24</sup> Francis Jennings FBI file, 100-HQ-72937 vol. 1, 119.

<sup>25</sup> Francis Jennings FBI file, 100-HQ-72937 vol. 1, 1-3; Robert Justin Goldtsein, "Watching the Books: The Federal Government's Suppression of the Washington Cooperative Bookshop," *American Communist History* 12, no. 3 (2014): 237-265.

<sup>26</sup> Francis Jennings FBI file, 100-HQ-72937 vol. 1, 19.

<sup>27</sup> Francis Jennings FBI file, 100-HQ-72937 vol. 1, 21-22.

<sup>28</sup> Francis Jennings FBI file, 100-HQ-72937 vol. 1, 22.

<sup>29</sup> Francis Jennings FBI file, 100-HQ-72937 vol. 1, 23-24.

<sup>30</sup> For more on Willkie, see David Levering Lewis, *The Improbable Wendell Willkie: The Businessman Who Saved the Republican Party and His Country, and Conceived a New World Order* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2018).

<sup>31</sup> Letter from Jennings to Leo Rifkin, November 6, 1985, FPJ 1.

<sup>32</sup> Letter from Jennings to Isadore Reivich, April 24, 1995, FPJ 1.

<sup>33</sup> Letter from Jennings to Erik Hemmingsen, February 3, 1996, FPJ 1.

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<sup>34</sup> Letter from Jennings to Erik Hemmingsen, November 2, 1995, FPJ 1.

<sup>35</sup> Robert Cohen, *When the old left was young: Student radicals and America's first mass student movement, 1929-1941* (Oxford University Press, 1993).

<sup>36</sup> Francis Jennings FBI file, 100-HQ-72937 vol. 1, 20-21. Although Seegers claimed that Jennings led peace demonstrations, it is not clear exactly when he did so. The articles from the *Temple University News*, noted above, suggest that it was probably 1937, when Jennings held leadership positions in the ASU. It would have been quite a breach of the Party line had he done so in the name of the YCL prior to August of 1939.

<sup>37</sup> Wendel Willkie, *An American Program* (NY: Simon and Schuster, 1944), 22-23. Italics in the original.

<sup>38</sup> Francis Jennings FBI file, 100-HQ-72937 vol. 1, 99-110.

<sup>39</sup> Francis Jennings FBI file, 100-HQ-72937 vol. 1, 19.

<sup>40</sup> Francis Jennings FBI file, 100-HQ-72937 vol. 1, 122-123.

<sup>41</sup> Nicholas Toloudis, "How Local 192 Fought for Academic Freedom and Civil Rights in Philadelphia, 1934-1941," *Journal of Urban History* (2019): 941-960; "Pennsylvania's Teachers and the Tenure Law of 1937," *Journal of Policy History* (2019): 217-241; "Organizing Teachers in Pennsylvania, 1935-1941," *Labor History* (2019): 520-539. The appearances of Philadelphia TU members before HUAC are detailed in Philip Jenkins, "Teaching Americanism: The Purge of the Teaching Profession," in *The Cold War at Home: The Red Scare in Pennsylvania, 1945-1960* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1999); Francis Jennings FBI file, 100-HQ-72937 vol. 2, 32.

<sup>42</sup> Letter from Francis P. Jennings to Walter B. Saul, President of the Board of Education, August 6, 1948, Box 2, Folder 16, Teachers' Union of Philadelphia (Pa.) Records, URB 36, Special Collections Research Center, Temple University Libraries, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (TUP 2/16 hereafter).

<sup>43</sup> "City Ordinances," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, March 18, 1948.

<sup>44</sup> Letter from Francis P. Jennings to Walter B. Saul, President of the Board of Education, August 6, 1948, TUP 2/16.

<sup>45</sup> Letter from Jennings to Add Anderson, March 13, 1951, TUP 4/57. The letter to Anderson was also reprinted in *Teacher Union News* 5, no. 7 (April 1951), TUP 1/26.

<sup>46</sup> Executive board meeting minutes, January 5, 1949, TUP 1/5.

<sup>47</sup> Letter from W. E. B. Du Bois and Victoria Garvin to Francis Jennings, February 9, 1950, TUP 14/16.

<sup>48</sup> Letter from Francis P. Jennings to W. E. B. Du Bois, February 24, 1950, TUP 14/16.

<sup>49</sup> William Patterson, ed., *We Charge Genocide: The Crime of the Government against the Negro People* (NY: International Publishers, 2017 [1951]), 106. For more about the Jenkins case, see "Youth Charges Threats in Murder Confession," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, November 23, 1949; "New Trial Asked in Meller Killing," *Philadelphia Inquirer*,

May 6, 1949; Francis Jennings FBI file, 100-HQ-72937 vol. 3, 4; Noyma Appelbaum, "A campus Communist headed toward a career with the 'Pennsylvania Worker,'" *People's World*, November 22, 2019, <https://www.peoplesworld.org/article/a-campus-communist-headed-toward-a-career-with-the-pennsylvania-worker>; Walter Lowenfels, "Gulembo Confession Still Ignored," *The Worker*, March 13, 1949.

<sup>50</sup> For more about the Dorothy Albert case, see Jenkins, *The Cold War at Home*, 121; "Red-Branded Teacher's Fate Up to Board," *Pittsburgh Press*, March 15, 1950; "Dorothy Albert Fired by School Board on Charge of Communism," *Pittsburgh Press*, March 18, 1950; 372 Pa. 13 Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, Appeal of Albert, Nov. 25, 1952.

<sup>51</sup> "Lee Lorch, Desegregation Activist Who Led Stuyvesant Town Effort, Dies at 98," *New York Times*, March 1, 2014.

<sup>52</sup> Executive board meeting minutes, April 12, 1950, TUP 1/6.

<sup>53</sup> Executive board meeting minutes, May 10, 1950, and Membership meeting minutes, April 14, 1950 and May 12, 1950, TUP 1/6. See also "Civil Rights Rally Tonight, As State Parley Begins," *The Gazette and Daily*, May 13, 1950.

<sup>54</sup> President's Letter, *Teachers Union News* 4, no. 4 (June 1950), TUP 1/26. For more on the Ingram case, see Erik S. Duffie, *Sojourning for Freedom: Black Women, American Communism, and the Making of Black Left Feminism* (Duke University Press, 2011), 164-178; Charles H. Martin, "Race, gender, and southern justice: The Rosa Lee Ingram case," *American Journal of Legal History* 29 (1985): 251-268.

<sup>55</sup> Legislative Journal of Pennsylvania, Senate 1951 (20 December 1951), 6588, Pennsylvania State Senate, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, <https://www.legis.state.pa.us/WU01/LI/SJ/1951/0/Sj19511220.pdf>.

<sup>56</sup> *Uniongram*, May 21, 1951, TUP 1/23.

<sup>57</sup> "Dilworth Hits Loyalty Oath and 'Hysteria,'" *Philadelphia Inquirer*, March 12, 1952.

<sup>58</sup> "Twenty Six Teachers Are Suspended Here for Refusing to Answer Red Quiz," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, November 21, 1953; Records of the U.S. House of Representatives, Un-American Activities Committee, Organization Name Files, Series 1, Box 16, Philadelphia folder, RG 233, National Archives.

<sup>59</sup> "Advance statement of Francis P. Jennings, in regard to his hearing before the Philadelphia Board of Education on charges of 'incompetency' and 'wilful and persistent violation of the school laws,'" February 10, 1954, TUP 10/65.

<sup>60</sup> Transcript of Board of Education hearing, February 11, 1954, FPJ 20, 84-87.

<sup>61</sup> Hearing Before the Committee on Un-American Activities, House of Representatives, Eighty-Third Congress, Second Session, February 16, 1954 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1954), 3917-3928.

<sup>62</sup> William Allen, "Francis P. Jennings, president of the Teachers Union of Philadelphia, testifies today before House Un-American Activities Committee, 1954." George D. McDowell Philadelphia Evening Bulletin Collection, Special Collections Research Center, Temple University Libraries, Philadelphia, PA.

<sup>63</sup> Letter from FPJ to Robert Bendiner, November 7, 1954, FPJ 1.

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<sup>64</sup> Letter from FPJ to Gary Nash, August 27, 1997, FPJ 1.

<sup>65</sup> Letter from FPJ to Erik Hemmingsen, October 18, 1999, FPJ 1. Underlines in the original.

<sup>66</sup> Francis Jennings FBI file, 100-HQ-72937 vol. 2, 30.

<sup>67</sup> *Beilan v. Board of Education*, School District of Philadelphia 357 U.S. 399 (1958).

<sup>68</sup> Assorted correspondence, TUP 1/18-22.

<sup>69</sup> Letter from Jennings to Condon, March 30, 1958, TUP 1/22.

<sup>70</sup> Teachers' Union of Philadelphia FBI file, 1920-1965, 100-HQ-400260, vol. 2, FOIA request to FBI, National Archives, College Park, Maryland, 222-226.

<sup>71</sup> Letter from Pauline Tompkins, President of Cedar Crest College, to Francis Jennings, May 14, 1969, FPJ 1.

<sup>72</sup> Hoxie, "In Memoriam," 4.

<sup>73</sup> Jennings, *Empire of Fortune*, 480.

<sup>74</sup> Jennings called Rogin's book "a morass of Freudian-Jungian exploration of Indian psyches" but also allowed that "[a]side from the psycho-dogmas, the book offers some valuable research." Rogin, meanwhile, saw that Jennings' critique of the colonial encounter had its limits. "Culture," he noted, "plays a large role in Jennings's description of the Indigenous tribes, but a self-consciously minor role in his understanding of Puritan society and its encounter with those tribes." Jennings, *Ambiguous Empire*, 45. Rogin, review of *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present* by Robert F. Berkhofer, *The Journal of Ethnic Studies* 7, no. 1 (1979): 114.

<sup>75</sup> Francis Jennings, "The Discovery of Americans," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 41, no. 3 (1984): 436.

<sup>76</sup> Jennings, "The Discovery of Americans," 437.

<sup>77</sup> Jennings, "The Discovery of Americans," 437.

<sup>78</sup> Francis Jennings, "Which Way, History? The History of a War, and a War Against History," *Pennsylvania History* (1995): 160.

<sup>79</sup> Jennings, "Which Way, History? The History of a War, and a War Against History," 165.

<sup>80</sup> Jennings, "Which Way, History? The History of a War, and a War Against History," 163.

<sup>81</sup> Jennings, "Which Way, History? The History of a War, and a War Against History," 163-164.

<sup>82</sup> Jennings, "Which Way, History? The History of a War, and a War Against History," 169.

<sup>83</sup> Hearing Before the Committee on Un-American Activities, 3923.

<sup>84</sup> Letter from Karl Davis to Francis Jennings, February 27, 1998, FPJ 1.

<sup>85</sup> Letter from Francis Jennings to Karl Davis, March 4, 1998, FPJ 1.

<sup>86</sup> Jennings, *Creation*, xii.

<sup>87</sup> Jenkins, *The Cold War at Home*, 140-141.

<sup>88</sup> Victor Navasky, *Naming Names* (NY: Macmillan, 2003).

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- <sup>89</sup> Jennings, *Creation*, 181.
- <sup>90</sup> Jennings, *Creation*, 189.
- <sup>91</sup> Jennings, *Creation*, 311-312. For an early example of Jennings' sympathy with the Quakers, see Francis Jennings, "Thomas Penn's Loyalty Oath," *The American Journal of Legal History* 8, no. 4 (1964): 303-313.
- <sup>92</sup> Paul Jenkins, "Franklin's Legacy Falsified; Politicians Exploit His Name," *The Sunday Worker*, January 18, 1948, 5.
- <sup>93</sup> Francis Jennings, *Benjamin Franklin, Politician: The Man and the Mask* (NY: W. W. Norton and Company, 1996), 20.
- <sup>94</sup> Jennings, *Benjamin Franklin, Politician*, 25.
- <sup>95</sup> Jennings, *Benjamin Franklin, Politician*, 21.
- <sup>96</sup> Letter from Francis Jennings to Karl Davis, March 4, 1998, FPJ 1.
- <sup>97</sup> Letter from Francis Jennings to Isadore Reivich, April 24, 1995, FPJ 1.
- <sup>98</sup> Letter from Francis Jennings to Ted Conover, January 28, 1985, FPJ 1.
- <sup>99</sup> Letter from Francis Jennings to Isadore Reivich, September 11, 1991, FPJ 1.
- <sup>100</sup> Letter from Harry Levitan to Francis Jennings, August 6, 1992, FPJ 1.
- <sup>101</sup> Letter from Jennings to Levitan, August 10, 1992, FPJ 1.
- <sup>102</sup> Letter from Jennings to Reivich, April 24, 1995, FPJ 1.
- <sup>103</sup> Jennings, *Creation*, 192.
- <sup>104</sup> Jennings, *Creation*, 316.
- <sup>105</sup> Robin, "Eric Hobsbawm."
- <sup>106</sup> Jennings, *Creation*, 316, 318. Italics in the original.