

9/28/60

Memorandum on Dr. Norman Vincent Peale

Norman Vincent Peale's association with the group which spearheaded the most insidious of the attacks against Jack Kennedy on the basis of his religious affiliation, was no accident, nor was it precisely an unprecedented type of activity for Peale.

Twenty years ago Dr. Peale was in the vortex of the isolationist pro-Nazi anti-semitic movement directed against the Roosevelt Administration and the Jews.

Here are two milestones in the Peale record:

1. He was the acting chairman and acting secretary, for a period, of the Committee for Constitutional Government, the chief lobbying arm of the America First Committee. By the time Peale came into it, it was not only isolationist, but the rallying point for all the pro-Nazi, anti-semitic lunatic fringe groups in the nation. When Peale became the acting chairman, he was serving as the front for Edward Rumley, agent of the Kaiser before and during World War I, the man who purchased the New York Evening Mail with German money in order to propagandize Germany's cause in America. In 1920, Rumley was tried and convicted as a German agent, and served a prison term for his illegal activities. In 1938, he was brought before a Senate Committee Investigating Lobbying Activities, and questioned concerning the Committee for Constitutional Government, of which he was the chief officer. Upon the public exposure of Rumley's past, he withdrew from the titular leadership of the Committee for Constitutional Government. The titular leadership was then given to Dr. Peale, as a "front", with the title of acting chairman and acting secretary; Dr. Rumley, however, continued to direct the activities of this lobbying organization from behind the scenes.

2. During this period Dr. Peale on a number of occasions appeared on the same platform with Coughlinites, pro-Nazis, and anti-semites. On October 30, 1938 Dr. Peale delivered the invocation at a meeting in the Hotel Commodore called to whip up public feeling against Britain and France, and against any deviation from isolationism. Speakers on that occasion included Coughlinite spokesmen and Mrs. Elizabeth Dilling, isolationist and anti-semite.

During all of this period Peale's church was frequently made available for use as a forum by notorious spokesmen for the hate groups and the lunatic fringe.

Detailed and specific reference to Dr. Peale's record can be found in the files of the Anti-Defamation League in Washington, and of the American Jewish Congress in New York.

*Shouldn't we  
you?*

*File under  
Norman Vincent Peale*