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M E E T T H E P R E S S
Produced by Lawrence E. Spivak

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Senator Everett M. Dirksen (Rep. Ill.)

Senate Minority Leader

and"

Congressman Charles A. Halleck (Rep. Ind.)

House Minority Leader

PANEL: Marquis Childs, St. Louis Post-Dispatch

John Steele, Time & Life Magazines

Warren Rogers, Hearst Newspapers

Richard Harkness, NBC News

MODERATOR: Ned Brooks

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MR. BROOKS: This is Ned Brooks, inviting you to MEET
THE PRESS.

(Announcement)

MR. BROOKS: Our guests today on MEET THE PRESS are
the two top Republican leaders of Congress, Senator Everett
Dirksen, Senate Minority Leader, and Congressman Charles
Halleck, House Minority Leader.

We will start the questions with Marquis Childs of the
St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

MR. CHILDS: Senator Dirksen, as I am sure you are very well aware it is only a little more than five months until the Republican National Convention in San Francisco and at this time President Johnson is showing in the polls anywhere from 70 to 75 percent against any Republican candidate and this is true pretty much around the country. I wonder if you could say how your party is going to persuade the voters to reject President Johnson and put a Republican in the White House?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: It seems to me, Mr. Childs, as I recall there was a Presidential candidate from New York who according to all the polls was in, and a Presidential candidate from your own state whose friends had probably given him up for lost by that time and yet when the votes were counted in November, the candidate from your state on the Democratic ticket won.

It is still a long time until November and the ballots won't be counted until that time and I apprehend there will be a good deal of history made before November which will have a direct bearing on the result.

MR. CHILDS: I would like to ask you about some of the issues, Senator. Now the Senate Rules Committee is investigating the Bobby Baker case. Do you think this will become a major scandal and an important issue in the campaign?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, it could become an issue depending

I think somewhat on developments and finally upon the report to be delivered by the Senate Rules Committee. We have authorized and I think this is a word has been overlooked, we have directed that Committee to look into conflicts of interest and improprieties and to make a report to the Senate at the earliest possible date. What will develop as a result is hard to foresee for the moment. There have been a lot of interesting developments. There could be a great many more.

MR. CHILDS: Do you foresee this, for example, shaping up the way the case of Sherman Adams did in President Eisenhower's second term?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Oh, I suppose it has its points of difference, of course, but in so far as I have been able to read the record, and by "record" I mean what you and others have written in their newspapers from time to time, it follows a sort of a general pattern as to the impropriety of doing business or exercising influence or receiving gifts in amounts that probably go beyond the limits of propriety.

MR. CHILDS: Now another issue: Senator Goldwater has said that American missiles are unreliable. Do you think this is likely to become an issue in the same way that the Democrats used the so-called missile gap, which was no missile gap at all?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: I don't know for sure, but it could

become an issue if you get substantial military documentation behind that charge, because if that were the case, obviously it would be extremely grave and serious from the standpoint of our national security.

MR. CHILDS: This in other words, could become an issue then?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Definitely so.

MR. CHILDS: You haven't had the chance to form a judgment yourself as yet?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Not yet.

MR. CHILDS: One more question about issues: Do you think foreign policy is going to be more important than domestic policy? For example, Viet Nam? Now apparently we are in a very bad way in Viet Nam. Some people are saying we should get out. Some people say -- de Gaulle was talking about neutralization.

SENATOR DIRKSEN: I would just like to attach a tag as to what will be the most important thing but as you look at the whole wide world, Eastern Africa, Panama, Viet Nam, the Congo and other fever spots in the world, certainly foreign affairs is going to be a major issue.

MR. BROOKS: We will be back with MEET THE PRESS and more questions for our guests, the two top Republican leaders of Congress. First, this message.

(Announcement)

MR. BROOKS: Now resuming our interview, our guests today are the two top Republican leaders of Congress, Senator Everett Dirksen and Congressman Charles Halleck. You have just met Marquis Childs of the St. Louis Post-Dispatch. Our other reporters today are John Steele of Time and Life Magazines, Warren Rogers of the Hearst Newspapers, and Richard Harkness of NBC news. Lawrence E. Spivak, Permanent Member of the MEET THE PRESS panel will be back with us next week. Now we will continue the questions with Mr. Steele.

MR. STEELE: Mr. Halleck, do you expect to be Permanent Chairman at the Republican National Convention in San Francisco this summer?

REPRESENTATIVE HALLECK: Well, Mr. Steele, I was Chairman of the last convention in 1960. I enjoyed the experience very much. Now that is a matter to be determined by the Arrangements Committee of the National Committee. As far as I am concerned I have made no effort in respect to the matter and I don't propose to do so. I am perfectly willing to leave it to their discession and judgment about who they want to be Permanent Chairman.

MR. STEELE: Mr. Halleck, there seems to be a little -- to put it politely -- difference arising -- I suppose you could also describe it as a potential fight. I understand some of the Republican Governors are trying to advance the name of Governor Hasfield of Oregon as Permanent Chairman.

What do you hear about this?

REPRESENTATIVE HALLECK: Well, I have understood that effort has been made. I do not know how many of the Governors participated in it. As a matter of fact, I haven't paid much attention to it. I was led to believe after being Permanent Chairman of the last Convention that the Convention ran very well. As a matter of fact, I thought it was very much in contrast with the affair that went on a few weeks before that, or a little while before that, of the opposite party.

But as I say, I have made no great effort about it and I don't propose to make any. If the people who are running the National Convention want me to be Permanent Chairman, that's fine with me. Now you speak of the Governors and we have I don't know how many, 16 I guess out of fifty, and they are all fine people and as far as Mr. Hatfield is concerned I have admired him for a long, long time. I admire all of the Republican Governors. But I happen to think also that we 178 Republicans in the House of Representatives, outnumbered as you know three to two, have been giving a pretty good account of ourselves. But I am perfectly willing to let it ride with whatever the Arrangements Committee decides.

MR. STEELE: Well, Mr. Halleck, from what you have said I would gather you would fight any attempt to oust you or to override you?

REPRESENTATIVE HALLECK: I didn't think I said that, and

I don't believe you can quite fairly draw that idea from what I said. Now I don't want to contend with you about it but I just said to you that I wasn't going to make any campaign for it. I don't see how it could be flatter than that.

MR. STEELE: Mr. Halleck, often in these arguments over Convention positions, Presidential politics is involved. Do you get any indication that one side or the other among the possible Republican candidates favors or opposes your appointment as Permanent Chairman?

REPRESENTATIVE HALLECK: If there is any such feeling I hadn't heard it. As a matter of fact, on MEET THE PRESS just about a year ago there was some little suggestion around in some of the papers that my leadership in the House of Representatives was threatened and I was asked at that time if I was going to be thrown out as Leader.

Well, of course those are kind of tough questions to answer and I think maybe I was a little irritated at the time when I answered it, but in any event I am still the

Leader and we are still doing very well up there, as I say, although we are outnumbered 3 to 2.

MR. ROGERS: Senator Dirksen, I would like to follow up a little bit on South Viet Nam. We have had two coups there in three months. We have 15,000 American troops, soldiers, there, we are spending about \$500 million a year in support of the effort to beat back the guerillas.

President Eisenhower once said that this country was like a domino. If you let it fall the other countries in that area would fall.

The other day Secretary McNamara said that we had to do everything necessary to win the war out there. Now do you agree with these two men and if so do you think that "doing everything necessary" includes the commitment of U. S. fighting forces in Viet Nam?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, first I agree that obviously we cannot retreat from our position in Viet Nam. I have been out there three times, once as something of an emissary for then President Eisenhower. I took a good look at it. It is a difficult situation, to say the least. But we are in to the tune of some \$350 million. I think the last figure I have seen indicates that we have over 15,500 military out there, ostensibly as advisors and that sort of thing. We are not supposed to have combatant troops, even though we were not signatories to the treaty that was signed at Geneva when finally they got that whole business out of the fire. But we are going to have to muddle through for awhile and see what we do. Even though it costs us \$1.5 million a day.

MR. ROGERS: Well, the war seems to be going pretty badly. Should we continue to muddle through on this present plan that we are following or do we have to consider another possibly stronger course?

1 SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, there is some hope that the new military leaders who are allegedly at least very much in our corner and definitely pro-American, will give a better account of themselves than we got from the coup where other leaders took over before, or that we got from Ngo Dinh Diem, the executive head of Viet Nam.

 MR. ROGERS: Well, suppose they don't?

 SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, if they don't then of course we will have to take another tack in the matter but we can not certainly let it go down the drain in view of what is happening in Red China, the French recognition of Red China, the fact that our economic and other relations with Cambodia have been severed, and that's next door, and the fact that Laos is very much in a tizzy at the present time.

 So if Viet Nam went down the drain, it could conceivably cost us all of Southeast Asia.

 MR. HARKNESS: Mr. Halleck, the House is now debating the civil rights bill. I wonder where you stand on two of the most controversial and perhaps the most important provisions, number one, public accommodations and number two, the Fair Employment Practices.

 REPRESENTATIVE HALLECK: Well, of course you understand, Mr. Harkness, there are other provisions in this bill that many people think are of equal importance to the ones that

2 you have mentioned. I would say that -- let me say first of all at the outset that I stand right today where I have stood right along and that is that I am for a meaningful but reasonable Civil Rights Bill, one that will be effective.

Now I would say that there will be a public accommodations section in the bill. Originally you will understand, if you are talking about FEPC -- Fair Employment Practices Commission -- that was not recommended by President Kennedy. It was not recommended by the Administration. I don't want to be too harsh about it, but actually a bill was reported out of the Education and Labor Committee, which is the Committee that ought to deal in that area, setting up a FEPC.

Now about the time we were getting ready to report the big Civil Rights Bill, the Chairman of the Education and Labor Committee said "I'm going to use Calendar Wednesday to get my bill out." I think Judiciary held no hearings on it. Now once upon a time we had an FEPC Bill that was more of a voluntary rather than involuntary, compulsory provision. We had that before the House of Representatives some years ago and I voted for that.

But in any event I think there will be a public accommodations section in the bill. I'd like to say one thing further. That we are reading the bill -- we start tomorrow -- under what we call the five minute rule for amendment and I haven't heard of anyone who contends that

in the six or eight days that we are going to debate it and consider it that if any amendment is offered that deals with some particular part of the bill that it shouldn't be considered and disposed of on its merits, and I think that's what everybody wants to do.

MR. HARKNESS: I am sorry, you sort of lost me at the first turn there. You said you think there is going to be an Accommodations Section in the bill, but I just wondered how you, Charles Halleck, are going to vote?

REPRESENTATIVE HALLECK: Well, I am going to vote for some public accommodations bill, that is right.

MR. HARKNESS: You believe that you --

REPRESENTATIVE HALLECK: But I don't know whether this one -- look, the first Public Accommodations Section we had as recommended by the Subcommittee and that finally went out of the bill I think, was opposed by just a great many people, including most of the people in the Administration. Now then there has been a retreat from that original proposal. Whether or not there will be any further retreat I do not know. I would say in substance that in all probability the Public Accommodations Section will stay in the bill and as far as I am concerned, while it involves a complex, complicated matter -- personally you asked me and you got a right to ask me, that is what I am here for -- I expect to support a Public Accommodations

Section.

MR. HARKNESS: Do you think you bespeak the position of the Republicans in the House generally?

REPRESENTATIVE HALLECK: Let me just say this: The Republican position on civil rights has been good for a hundred years and it is good today in spite of what people have undertaken to say of us as Republicans.

MR. STEELE: I'd like to ask Senator Dirksen a question: President Johnson at his news conference yesterday seemed to be calling for some kind of a political amnesty, or truce. The President -- I think I quote him correctly -- said that he intends to stay "as free from politics as I can and as long as possibly I can."

What do you think about the prospects during an election year for a period of moratorium on politics?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Oh, John, there has never been a moratorium on politics. There is never a truce in politics. A phenomenal or extraordinary situation can develop that can be respected. The death of the late President Kennedy imposed such a self-imposed moratorium, and I think it was respected by all people.

Now the Marquis of Queensberry Rules now obtain and it is everybody for himself. So that regardless of what the situation is, we are thinking in terms of the well-being of this country both now and in the future, and

you can not discuss it without discussing politics and taking a forthright stand on the issues that are brewed up from time to time. So believe me, there is not going to be a political truce. That would be a phenomenon that would have been unheard of in the history of this country.

MR. STEELE: Well, Senator, as I understand it you are rather friendly with President Johnson, a Democrat. You enjoy a pot of Sanka with him occasionally, and I think Mr. Halleck enjoys some thick bacon, but how do you get into the necessary political dialogue of a campaign? It apparently sounds as though the President wants a political amnesty. Do you create issues to force a breaking of that armistice?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: First let me say I never got any of the thick bacon but over the Sanka the President then the Majority Leader of the Senate and I used to contest, and we did it with a great deal of spirit. But a message comes to the Congress with respect to a given thing. I may be for it. I may be against. If at the very outset I feel that I am going to oppose it then I speak my piece and start getting my ducks in a row and then we work from there. And of course you don't use sponges to throw at somebody when you go into that kind of a contest.

MR. CHILDS: Congressman Halleck, you have two conspicuously avowed candidates of your party for the nomination, Senator Goldwater and Governor Rockefeller. Mrs.

Margaret Chase Smith is a third candidate to come in recently. But many Republicans are saying that they believe you are going to have to turn to a third candidate, Scranton or Lodge or Romney or another candidate, in order to get harmony in your party.

Do you think that is going to happen?

REPRESENTATIVE HALLECK: Well, we have, of course, a great many potential candidates, some avowed and some others disavowing it but going through all the motions that would indicate that they are candidates. Now that is perfectly all right. As far as I personally am concerned, I haven't chosen up sides in this Presidential matter. I think my first responsibility as the leader of the Republicans in the House of Representatives is to do the best I can through this session of Congress to write the sort of a record that would attract the attention of the people of the country and I am going to do that to the best of my ability.

A little -- we have just been talking about this so-called truce. Well, Mr. Childs, you were remarking a little bit ago that President Johnson, according to the polls, 80 or 90 percent of the people are for him, or 70 or 80. If I was running that far in front, I would want a truce, too. But you see we are not going to have a truce.

Let me say this -- and there are some things that he

is going to ask us to do and I will respond, just like I have responded to Democratic Presidents before. And no one has any higher respect for President Johnson than I have, but as a matter of fact when he sent up that warmed over package of the things that have been advocated time and again, and there is no support for them in the country or in the Congress, I'm just not going to buy them, so if that means an end of the truce, that is where it is.

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Mr. Childs, there is one other answer. You remember the Conventions you have covered -- notably one at Philadelphia -- Frank Gannett, the publisher, was a candidate. Taft was a candidate. Stassen was a candidate. There were other candidates. You never know quite what a Convention will do when the chips are down and you can't tell until you get around to it, the leaders and the delegates begin to talk it out and then determine what ought to be done in the interests of the country and the interests of the party.

MR. HARKNESS: Senator, would you say that the Democrats on the House Rules Committee are pursuing the Bobby Baker case with the same investigating zeal they showed in going after Sherman Adams?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Oh, goodness, Mr. Harkness, how did it get over in the House Rules Committee. You just

said it was in the House Rules Committee.

MR. HARKNESS: No, I asked if the Senate Rules Committee, if the Democrats there are using the same zeal as the House Committee -- as when the House Committee went after --

SENATOR DIRKSEN: There is no reason why they shouldn't. They were authorized, and then we used the word in that resolution, they were directed to investigate improprieties, conflicts. There are six Democrats on the Committee, there are three Republicans, and from all reports I have no reason to believe that they have not with diligence and fidelity pursued the directive of the Senate.

MR. HARKNESS: Senator, it is talk -- and let me say just that -- it is talk in the news galleries of the Senate that no Senator except John Williams of Delaware really wants to open up this Bobby Baker can of political worms. Would you comment on that?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Why certainly. Because I remember the first meeting that John Williams and myself and the Majority Leader, Mike Mansfield, had. There were others in attendance. We had a second meeting. We fashioned the resolution. Why should I have had part in fashioning a resolution to get a job done without wanting to go through with it, and suggesting that it be given to a good, stable committee of the Senate, the Rules Committee?

MR. HARKNESS: Senator, a change of subject here. You among other Republican and Democratic leaders were at the White House the other evening. The White House refused to even confirm there was a meeting. What can you tell us about that? We felt it was on Panama.

SENATOR DIRKSEN: I like those off the record meetings because I keep my mouth religiously shut and then the next morning I read everything that transpired in one of the papers, whether New York, Washington or elsewhere. And of course there they name names. It was indicated in general what I said, what Senator Russell said, what Clarence Brown said, what Bourke Hickenlooper said, but the fact of the matter is we did talk about Panama. And the fact of the matter is that I did speak my piece, and I spoke it in unequivocal terms because I had some thoughts on the subject.

MR. HARKNESS: Can you give us a 30-second sum.-up?

MR. BROOKS: I don't think we have 30 seconds. I think we better go on to Mr. Rogers.

MR. ROGERS: Congressman Halleck, you said you want a Civil Rights Bill with a good and reasonable Public Accommodations Section. In the Senate the Civil Rights Legislation is pretty fragmented. I am not too sure how Senator Dirksen stands on it, but let me ask this, are you and Senator Dirksen in complete agreement on the kind

of Civil Rights Bill you want and if not, how do you propose to reconcile your differences?

REPRESENTATIVE HALLECK: Well, let me just say that Senator Dirksen and I went down to the White House at the late President's request and talked about civil rights. Now at that time I made very few commitments. I couldn't make any because I didn't know what the ultimate Republican position would be. Actually it is largely a matter of individual conscience on both sides of the aisle.

Now what I am hoping is that whatever bill we pass in the House of Representatives will be fairly acceptable in the Senate. I have made it quite clear that I don't want to happen what has happened before and that is for us to go up against the buzzsaw, and some of these things are a buzzsaw, with a lot of provisions in the bill, only to have it get over to the Senate and then the provisions that we have gone up against go right out of the window.

Now let's just understand one other thing. The House of Representatives is three to two Democrat and the Senate is two to one Democrat. Now it is kind of passing strange, isn't it, that we have to be called on to kind of determine what ought to be done, but that happens and when it does we will step up, we Republicans, and meet our responsibilities.

MR. ROGERS: Are you hoping also that it comes to a vote on the Floor of the Senate?

REPRESENTATIVE HALLECK: Well, I think it is going to be voted on in the Senate. It may take a little time, but I would say that it will be voted upon.

MR CHILDS: Senator Dirksen, you and other Republicans have attacked the President's proposals for economy in the budget as phony. I wonder if you could say roughly whether you have an estimate of how much greater those cuts could be?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: I have made a little list of where we are going to attack and I suppose I could recite the catacysm, today, about pushing things back into Fiscal Year 1964. It is a fine gimmick if you can do it --

MR. BROOKS: Senator, on that note, I am afraid I am going to have to interrupt because I see that our time finally has expired. Thank you very much, Senator Dirksen and Congressman Halleck for being with us.

I will tell you about next week's guest on MEET THE PRESS after this message.

ANNOUNCEMENT

THE ANNOUNCER: For a printed copy of today's interview, send ten cents in coin and a stamped self-addressed envelope to "Merkle Press, 809 Channing Street, N.E., Washington 18, D.C.

MR. BROOKS: Next week our guest on MEET THE PRESS will be Governor George Romney of Michigan who is among the most frequently mentioned for the Republican Presidential nomination. Now this is Ned Brooks saying good-bye for Senator Everett Dirksen, Congressman Charles Halleck and MEET THE PRESS.
