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MEET THE PRESS
Produced by Laurence E. Spivak

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:This is a rush transcript : SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1964
:provided for the information :
:and convenience of the press :
:accuracy is not guaranteed. :
:in case of doubt, please GUESTS: Senator Everett H. Dirksen (Rep. Ill.)
:check with MEET THE PRESS. : 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.

1 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. BARKNESS: 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. Barkness, there are other provisions in this bill that many people think are of equal importance to the ones that