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"FACE THE NATION"

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GUEST: THE HONORABLE EVERETT M. DIRKSEN  
United States Senate  
(Republican of Illinois)

MODERATOR: Stuart Novins

REPORTERS: Philip Potter  
Baltimore Sun

Bill Downs  
CBS News

Warren Duffee  
United Press International

PRODUCER: Michael J. Marlow

ANNOUNCER: Senator Dirksen -- FACE THE NATION.

(Music)

ANNOUNCER: You are about to see the Senate Minority Leader, Everett M. Dirksen, Republican of Illinois, FACE THE NATION, in a spontaneous and unrehearsed interview with veteran correspondents from the nation's press:

Philip Potter, of the Washington Bureau of the Baltimore Sun;

Bill Downs, of CBS News; and

Warren Duffee, of the Senate Staff of United Press International.

And now here is the moderator of FACE THE NATION, CBS News Correspondent Stuart Novins.

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MR. NOVINS: Senator Everett Dirksen is the leader of the Republican Party in the Senate. As minority leader he is in constant liaison with the White House. During these past weeks, with Japan, with the Congressional legislative program, with the Rockefeller challenge to Mr. Nixon, there have been many things to talk about, and Senator Dirksen is here now to FACE THE NATION.

Senator, not only are there these things to discuss, but you are also being mentioned as a possible Vice President. So, if you will, let's start with this first question from Mr. Duffee.

MR. DUFFEE: Yes. I'd like to find out about that, too, Senator.

You have told us on many occasions that you are not a candidate for Vice President. However, your home State of Illinois has just given you a very substantial and meaningful endorsement, and I am wondering if perhaps in the light of that you might, shall we say, relent, and admit that you would like to be a candidate.

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, Mr. Duffee, I think I must still continue in the role of the reluctant dragon. I have said always that I am not a candidate, but I must say this is the first news I have had of this endorsement, believe me.

MR. DUFFEE: Well, you wouldn't turn it down, Senator?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: I would regard it as high recognition by the Republicans of the State of Illinois. And being a servant of the country and the party, I have always gone on the broad theory that I go wherever duty commands or wherever they invite me to go.

MR. DUFFEE: This means, then, you will not do anything to discourage any move in your behalf?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, I don't suppose I should, as a matter of fact. I should follow the dictates of the party leaders and make myself amenable to their suggestions and their commands with respect to party and national duty.

MR. DUFFEE: Has Vice President Nixon, who appears to be most likely your nominee, has he or have any of his people approached you about this?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Oh, definitely not.

MR. NOVINS: Mr. Downs.

MR. DOWNS: Well, in view of the summit failure and the fiasco in Japan, Senator Dirksen, do you think that the Republicans have lost the peace issue?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: I do not believe so.

MR. DOWNS: Why?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, for many reasons. I think they ought to disclose what the real problem was in Japan, in coming to a conclusion on that question.

MR. DOWNS: What was the real problem?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, the real problem was this: that after we had the signing of the Japanese Treaty, in Washington, in January, and it was ratified on May 20 by the Japanese Diet, that is when the violence really began. And I recall when one of the representatives of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Japanese Diet was here, he said it had been going on in sporadic fashion for a long time and we could anticipate it would be stepped up, and all this he confirmed to me in a letter not over two or three weeks ago. So, I fully anticipated that this sort of thing was going to happen.

MR. DOWNS: Well, don't you believe, then, that the President might have gotten some bad advice to put himself in a position of being embarrassed?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: No, definitely not, because since Kishi made two visits here, one in connection with the Treaty, obviously an invitation is a rather solemn thing, and I think the President was fully justified in accepting it. And, secondly, he must not appear as one who would shirk his duty from any sense of fear or apprehension about what may happen on a sojourn of this kind.

MR. POTTER: Senator, I'd like to go back to this possibility of your being a Vice Presidential candidate. If you are not, in your judgment who will make the best running mate for the Vice -- for Mr. Nixon, who unquestionably is going to be the nominee?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, Mr. Potter, as you know, that question is as open as a 40-acre field, in the sense -- that there have been a great many people mentioned: former Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, the Minority Leader of the House, Mr. Halleck, Thruston Morton, the Chairman of the National Committee, and a great many others. So, if on the basis of my experience in other Conventions, that carries over in 1960, the ultimate decision will obviously be in the hands of the Presidential nominee.

MR. POTTER: Well, Senator, you mentioned a couple

of possibilities. It's noteworthy you did not mention Governor Rockefeller, of New York. Is --

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, that's only because I didn't give you a run-down, Mr. Potter, on the whole list.

MR. POTTER: Do you think his recent criticism of the Vice President and of the Administration on defense and foreign policy has ruled him out as a running mate for --

SENATOR DIRKSEN: No, I do not believe it ruled him out. I think, however, from the very definite statement that Mr. Rockefeller made on several occasions, that he tried to take himself out of the race for the second spot; and so, I didn't give that too much attention.

MR. DOWNS: Do you have any idea why he made this announcement at this particular time? Here, Nixon had just won a big victory in California, and the primaries were all over. What was the strategy, what was your interpretation of his strategy on it?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Frankly, I have no interpretation of that statement at all. And I say that on this background: first, I have known Nelson Rockefeller intimately for at least fifteen years and perhaps twenty years; secondly, I have worked with him some when he was in the Federal Government, and I esteem him as a friend. I have no explanation for it at all.

MR. NOVINS: Do you put him in a different category from yourself, Senator? You indicated before, about your own plans, that you were reluctant but not inflexible. Do you think he would fall into that category?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, Mr. Novins, I have always disclaimed any real interest in being a Vice Presidential candidate, but I am ready to serve my party and my country.

MR. DUFFEE: Senator, there is considerable indication that Senator Kennedy is certainly a strong and perhaps leading contender for the Democratic nomination. Now, in event he wins the nomination, do you feel that perhaps the Republicans should nominate a Catholic for Vice President, perhaps Labor Secretary Mitchell, or perhaps a Governor?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: I have never speculated on this subject because I have never permitted myself to let that thought intrude into my thinking at all.

MR. DUFFEE: You don't think a Catholic as Vice President wouldn't strengthen the ticket against a Democratic Catholic nominee?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, it might or might not be. But I always think of a candidate as a citizen of the United States, and one who, because of the judgment of his party, is eminently qualified to be a candidate of his party; and beyond that, I have not let my speculations go very far.

MR. POTTER: Senator, you have said that you are a

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Reluctant Dragon, and you've noted that Governor Rockefeller is, too. One who is not a Reluctant Dragon is Senator Barry Goldwater of Arizona, who seems to have considerable support in the South -- South Carolina has endorsed him, Texas has indicated they would like him on the ticket. Would you like to see him go on the ticket? Do you think he would be a -- really represent the kind of Republicanism you'd like to see on the ticket?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: I've a great affection for Senator Goldwater. We work well together, particularly on the Labor Committee of the Senate, and I esteem him very highly as a very courageous public servant, and if the party saw fit to nominate him, why, that would certainly have my approval.

MR. DOWNS: Senator, I'd like to get back to this foreign policy question because it's pretty obvious that this is going to be one, if not the major, issue in the upcoming campaigns. Now you have indicated after the U-2 incident and the Summit Conference that any criticism of the Administration and of the President personally somehow would weaken our position vis-a-vis the Communists and somehow might be slightly unpatriotic. Is that true or not?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: I believe that the essence of my observations, both on and off the Senate Floor, was that I thought it was a most appropriate thing not to downgrade our own country. I don't mind criticism. It would be an amazing



thing in a free country if you didn't have it, even when it's directed against the President of the United States. But I doubt very much the wisdom of downgrading or setting forth in iridescent letters any so-called or alleged deterioration in our own country. But, that's quite different from criticism, I must say.

MR. NOVINS: Well, Senator, did you feel that way when the Republicans talked about Truman's war in Korea?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Oh, I think so.

MR. NOVINS: Well, how do you criticize a policy without downgrading it?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, you start from a broad premise there. The question is: Was it a war or a police action.

MR. NOVINS: Let's talk about the current situation, Senator. How would you criticize the current policy, if you honestly felt it ought to be criticized, without downgrading the United States?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, it can be criticized at any time. When they criticize the foreign policy of the country as such, it's perfectly all right in my book because I think there is an answer for it. But unless people know, unless they have full knowledge with respect to the strength of this country, they ought to be pretty careful about telling how weak we are in this field, in this department, in this area, because you can make, in my estimate, no good judgment of that matter unless

you have the whole ball of truth before you.

MR. DUFFEE: Well, Senator, does this mean that you are going, you or some other Republican is going to take to the floor or the airwaves or the stump to answer every attack made on foreign policy by any Democrat, or just those made by Presidential candidates like Kennedy, for example?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, obviously, you can't answer all of them. But I think the issue will be joined in some major respect and there you'll fling it back.

MR. DUFFEE: Well, what kind of a major respect could you join it, short of the Presidential campaign?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, I don't -- Are you inferring that I'm opposed to any criticism in a Presidential campaign?

MR. DUFFEE: Oh, no; not any criticism in a Presidential campaign, but you seem to be criticizing criticism of the Administration's foreign policy.

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Oh, definitely not. They can criticize it to their heart's content, but I still make the point that when you talk about how weak or how strong we are in the rocket field, the missile field, the nuclear weapons field, in balance strength, I doubt very much whether any person in responsible position should advertise that to the whole wide world unless he is pretty sure that he's got all the facts at his command.

MR. NOVINS: Well, Senator, do you think the Democrats

are correct, then, if they criticize the methods by which foreign policy is arrived at in the Administration?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Oh, I have no objection to that; certainly not.

MR. POTTER: Senator, Senator Kennedy has asked for what is, in effect, a crash program to build up what he claims has been a severe deterioration in our strength. He has urged an immediate stop-gap air alert, he's urged stepped-up production of the ATLAS missiles and stepped-up research and development on the second generation missiles, such as POLARIS and MINUTEMAN. Do you oppose such a program or do you -- do you feel that we are adequately going along, as it is?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: No, Mr. Potter. Let me put it in capsule form. There were twelve specific suggestions in the statement that Senator Kennedy made on the Floor of the Senate, and I symbolized the whole matter in the rejoinder I made the other day when I said: One, he wants more of everything for everybody everywhere, without being specific; and, two, he has undertaken to advertise our deterioration to the whole wide world. Now, it was in respect to the first item that I think I was a little caustic and I believe rightly so, because Mr. Kennedy ought to be pretty careful that he has all the facts before he does it.

MR. POTTER: You think we should not go into a stop-gap emergency air --

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Oh, well, I don't comment on that; I just take issue with him on this ground. I think a Defense budget that has been put together by people schooled and who are competent in the art, who have worked at it for months and months and months -- plus, of course, the advice of the National Security Council, plus the expert advice of the President of the United States, plus the look-see of men on the Appropriations Committees in the House and in the Senate, stands up on one side of the picture as something pretty substantial, so that if you start from that premise and say there must be more and more and more of everything for everybody everywhere, over and beyond this, and then couple it with a criticism that there has been deterioration in our national defense, then I do take some umbrage.

MR. DOWNS: Well, on the other side of the picture, Senator Dirksen, you have Stuart Symington who was an ex-Air Force Secretary, you have the Caither Report which was organized by his own -- by the Republican Administration, and you have men who have been members of the Atomic Energy Commission who disagree. Now, there is disagreement within the Atomic Energy Commission, there is disagreement within the Pentagon.

Now, unless we as a democracy know what is going on, how can anyone make a sound judgment, then?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, my answer is this: You have men in uniform who have dedicated their lives to the country. They

have come up the long, hard way. We expect them to be competent and skilled in that field because if it were not so they would not be wearing one, two, three, four stars on their shoulders, but that is an evidence of long experience in the field. You don't completely negate the judgment of a man who was the grand captain of the greatest offensive in any time or generation in the history of mankind, nor those who are on the Security Council. They've got to work with a balanced program that comes within the capacity of the country, and at the same time in their considered judgment is wholly adequate to our survival and defense needs. And before you try to knock it down, you'd better be pretty sure that the people who are trying to knock it down have an equal competence in that field.

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MR. DUFFEE: Then, you are saying, in effect, that speakers like Senator Kennedy did not have an equal competence.

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, I'll be very candid with you, Mr. Duffee. I doubt it.

MR. DUFFEE: Senator, if -- we all agree, I'm sure, that the peace issue and preparedness are definitely going to be campaign issues and very widely and thoroughly discussed; but what, in your mind, if you just tick them off for us, what, in your mind, might be three or four or five of the other most important issues in this campaign?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Oh, you will have the budget question, you'll have the tax question, and, incidentally, that's very much to the fore now, since the Senate Finance Committee reported the bill to whack something over three-quarters of a billion out of the revenues --

MR. DUFFEE: That figure is open to dispute, Senator, but I'm not--I'm not taking you as saying --

SENATOR DIRKSEN: That's right, but it is still a chunk out of the revenues.

Another bill was reported only this week for a retirement system for self-employed which, by the least calculation, will probably take another \$250 million out of the revenues.

You have a billion in the housing bill.

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You've got a write-up over the budget estimates in the Health, Education, and Welfare, of a half billion.

And then, of course, you've got the mutual security issue.

And on top of these, you'll probably have the health insurance issue, assuming, of course, that this Congress does something with it before adjournment.

So there are many issues.

MR. DUFFEE: In other words, you're going to run -- you're only going to run on a balanced budget, then, -- and foreign policy; is that right?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Foreign policy, balanced budget, what do you do in the aged field, what do you do in the appropriations field. All these, of course, are components, or all will be issues, and some sharper issues than others, depending upon the area where they are raised.

MR. POTTER: Senator, you note that the tax bill that has been reported out is going to cut revenues -- some of your colleagues, including Senator Douglas, Democrat of Illinois, have had some suggestions as to how the revenues can be restored and picked up. For instance, Douglas is advocating a change in the depreciation allowance for oil and gas from  $27\frac{1}{2}$  per cent to 15 per cent, which would require the oil companies and the gas companies to pay more tax into the Federal Government,

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Are you in favor of that move?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Mr. Potter, if that amendment is refined so that in the case of those who explore and wildcat, particularly in the areas where you do not have heavy investments in new wells, and where they can afford to drop in thirty or forty thousand dollars in a 2,000-foot well, and then kiss it good-bye, provided there is an adequate depreciation allowance, that's quite a different thing. But if you cut it straight across the board, then of course it's still another matter. I am thinking particularly of the oil fields in Southern Illinois. There it's quite common to take thirty or forty thousand dollars and sink it in the earth, and I think the ratio is about one good hole out of nine. Now, you've got to give them some hedge, otherwise all your wildcatting, all your exploring, will come to an end. So if that matter is refined, I think I can go along with something in that field, and I think others can do likewise.

MR. DOWNS: Senator, you said the other day that after the Senate passed the Federal pay raise bill granting about a million and a half for postal workers and civil service workers, a 7½ per cent raise, I think, that the President probably would veto it. You've got a medical care bill that the Democrats have been pushing along, that you also indicated that if it's not changed, might be vetoed.

Do you think there is a danger that the President might



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      SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, Mr. Downs, first, this gives me a good opportunity to correct any mis-impression that may result from the ease with which I sometimes use the threat of a veto. Frankly, I ought to be a little more cautious about it, because I cannot speak for the President. Insofar as I know, and in all the days that I have attended leadership meetings, I have never heard, nor have I ever seen the President indicate in advance when a measure was likely to be vetoed or not vetoed. And so I ought to exercise a little more caution -- nor should I use that as a pistol, when I'm carrying on a rather intense and passionate argument on the Floor of the Senate, but I'm pretty confident, recurring now to the third item in your question, that he will not veto Mr. Nixon.

      MR. DUFFEE: Senator, the Congress is trying, fits and starts, to finish up here in two or three weeks.

      Do you think it's actually possible? They have a very heavy legislative load to do, which I think you, yourself, have outlined on occasion.

      Do you honestly believe you can finish before the Democratic Convention? That's less than -- three weeks from today.

      SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, Mr. Duffee, you will recall the last press conference I had.

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MR. DUFFEE: Very vividly, sir.

SENATOR DIRKSEN: After the last policy meeting.

MR. DUFFEE: Very vividly.

SENATOR DIRKSEN: And we run down 14, 15, 16, major items on which it was hoped there would be action before this Congress came to an end. Now, it depends entirely on how much time is devoted to a given item. Suppose, for instance, that some health insurance package is added to the tax bill that is presently on the Floor, and, mind you, those excise taxes are going to have to be renewed eleven days from now, otherwise there will be substantial losses to the Treasury, but you may have enough Senators to carry on, and you may have to have round-the-clock sessions; I do not know. But it's a very substantial package to conclude before the first National Convention in Los Angeles.

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MR. DUFFEE: But do you think it's possible to finish?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, frankly, not knowing quite how intense my colleagues in the Senate on both sides of the aisle are with respect to these issues, I do not know how much time is going to be devoted to it, and consequently the calendar could run out on you and you wouldn't conclude them. Then the question arises: Do you adjourn or do you recess and come back? Obviously, every Member hopes there will be no recess, that when the curtain rings down it will be sine die, the Latin term for -- without an appointed day -- that they can stay home, that they can pursue the campaign, and I have an equal hope, but whether it will eventuate remains to be seen.

MR. POTTER: Senator, I noticed in running down the issues for Mr. Duffee a moment ago there was one significant omission. Do you not think that Ezra Taft Benson, Secretary of Agriculture, is going to be an issue?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Oh, he is an issue in some sections.

MR. POTTER: In what way is that going to affect Nixon's chances?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, I do not believe it will have any significant impact on his chances.

MR. DOWNS: Well, Senator, this brings up this problem: The Vice President is committed to running on the record of the Eisenhower Administration but, at the same time, he said he is going to make new suggestions in the field of foreign

policy, farm policy, and the rest of it. Have you discussed with him, about the possibility of new approaches to the farm bill, the farm --

SENATOR DIRKSEN: No; but, Mr. Downs, I apprehend just exactly this: When they meet in convention at Chicago they will write a platform. Certainly, the Vice President and his views will have some impact on the platform. Once it is done, that becomes the working document of the party, and it does represent their promises, their pledges, their assurances to the country. Now, you know how much weight and how much importance President Eisenhower attached to the party platform, and constantly went back to it because he said when you made it, make a pledge, that's a covenant, it's a solemn thing and, insofar as you can do it, making allowance, of course, for changes in conditions from one year to the other, you shouldn't make that pledge lightly. Obviously, there will be a farm plank in the platform, but I do expect the Vice President at that time, when the platform is completed, to say, "This is the document on which we stand."

MR. POTTER: Do you -- you agree, then, that he should not speak out on this, these issues now, although Governor Rockefeller has said that he ought to speak out on all of these issues before the Convention?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Oh, the Vice President is free to speak out on anything that he likes, and he has been speaking

out.

MR. POTTER: Do you agree with Rockefeller, that he ought to make his position clear on the farm issue, and -- before the Convention?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: I think there is plenty of time to do that.

MR. DUFFEE: Senator, if the farm -- if Ezra Taft Benson and his farm policies are not going to be much of a factor on the Vice President, why has the Vice President, has he already announced that tomorrow in North Dakota, in the heart of the wheat country, he's going to make a major farm speech outlining his own views?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, I think you may discover that the Vice President won't depart very far from what we endeavored to do in the Senate, and we got the job certainly partially done when we had the Wheat Bill before the Senate last week.

MR. NOVINS: Senator, I'd like to take up a couple of the issues that still remain before the Congress. What, in your opinion, is going to happen to the Health Insurance Bill?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, I'm confident, of course, that either on this tax bill or on some other tax bill, or in connection with a bill that will come from the house of Representatives, that a number of very substantial amendments will be offered. I rather anticipate the Forand Bill will be offered in the Senate, very likely the McNamara Bill, which has been

reported --

MR. NOVINS: Will there be any final action, do you think, this term?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, I think they're going to make every endeavor to get some kind of action, but what the ultimate outcome will be and what the form of the program will be when we finish is quite another matter, and on that I could only give you the widest guess.

MR. NOVINS: Well, it's a pretty well educated guess, and I'd like to use it, if I may.

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, I'm not sure that it is, in view of the fact that you've got a sharp division of opinion on both sides of the aisle with respect to what ought to be done.

MR. NOVINS: What about school construction, Senator?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: There you have a difference of opinion between the House and the Senate, to begin with, and it's locked up in the House Rules Committee. As you remember, the Senate included teachers' pay, the House said we want no part of it. The Administration wanted this done on the basis of picking up the interest tab on the principal of loans in areas where there was a need. The House wrote in a grant provision, and that is a very wide departure, of course, from the original Administration position.

MR. POTTER: Senator, but assuming that the Senate and the House get together on a bill which takes out the Powell

Amendment, and also takes out the Senate teachers' pay provision, in other words, sends a simple school construction bill to the White House, do you think the President will sign that one?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, Mr. Potter, it will have to have a little more, I think. The allocation formula will have to be put in shape. The needs formula, so that this authority and these funds will not be used in cases where the need has not been demonstrated. That's going to have to be pretty clearly set forth in the Act. And then there is this question of state matching. Now, you see, you can have state or local matching in the first year, as the thing stands. I think the President was pretty insistent that there be state matching even in the first year, but it's possible then to put a bill together that would receive the approval of the President.

MR. DUFFEE: Senator, one more quick question on issues: Do you think there is a possibility the Senate will restore all or most of the money cut by the House from foreign aid money?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, now, originally they cut out 790 million and then restored 200 million, so it's 590 million short of the request. That, of course, denies the President, particularly at a feverish time like this, some very essential funds that he thought were so urgently necessary -- first, to keep faith with these other countries with whom we are associated in this security effort, and to carry on a program

that he thinks is vital to the defense of this country.

MR. NOVINS: Senator, you are running out of money in the Senate and we are running out of time here. Thank you very much, indeed, for coming here to FACE THE NATION.

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Thank you.

MR. NOVINS: Thanks also to today's news correspondents:

Philip Potter, of the Baltimore Sun;

Bill Downs, of CBS News; and

Warren Duffee, of the United Press International.

This is Stuart Novins. We invite you to join us next week at this time for another edition of FACE THE NATION.

Our program today originated in Washington.

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ANNOUNCER: FACE THE NATION was produced by Michael J. Marlow. Associated in production, Ellen Wadley. Directed by Bill Linden.

Today you saw the Senate Minority Leader, Everett M. Dirksen, Republican of Illinois, FACE THE NATION.

Ted Miller speaking.

This has been a Public Affairs presentation of CBS News.

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