SIR — Aprro Siip's 'Kingdom of Thailand' (15 February) is a masterly précis of information about the Thai legal system. I am appalled that the crisis has not yet been fully understood. For over 30 years the Thai government has resorted to the royal monopoly of martial law. The latter is a form of political deception. The root of the problem is that Thailand's King is considered the country's highest political and spiritual authority. The Royal Thai Army has always been in charge of the government and the prime minister. The latter has been charged with the duty of upholding the constitutional monarchy. The appointment of a new prime minister is made by the king in consultation with the military. The king has always been considered the head of state. The Thai Constitution requires that any changes to the monarchy must be approved by a majority of the Thai people. The current crisis centers on the king's proposed referendum on the monarchy. The referendum is seen as a way to undermine the power of the monarchy and to limit the king's abilities to interfere in political affairs. The referendum has been postponed several times due to pressure from the military and the royalist establishment. The Thai military has used its power to suppress political dissent and to maintain its control over the country. The Thai government has been forced to intervene in the political situation to prevent any further violence or unrest. The Thai government has been under pressure to take action to maintain stability and to prevent any further violence. The Thai military has been called upon to take control of the situation and to ensure that the referendum is held in a peaceful and democratic manner. The Thai government has been accused of using violence and intimidation to suppress political dissent. The Thai military has been accused of using excessive force to suppress political protests. 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