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American Embassy,
Bangkok, Thailand,
September 24, 1959.

Dear Mr. Spivak:

I am writing in reply to your letter of August 28, 1959, in which you asked that I support your invitation to the King of Thailand to appear on your "Meet the Press" program.

Although I appreciate your interest in seeking the King's cooperation, and the decision would, of course, have to be his, there are several factors that make me question the desirability from either of your standpoints of his appearance on an unrehearsed program such as yours. The King, in Thailand, is a constitutional monarch, and plays no part in the controversies of political affairs. I am sure he would consider it improper to impinge on the field reserved to the Prime Minister and the Government, e.g., questions of domestic and foreign policy. I am also sure that the newsmen on your panel would be primarily interested in examining just these questions. The fact that the King would find it inappropriate or be reluctant to discuss these subjects would very likely be misunderstood by much of your audience, and would severely limit the range of permissible questions.

In these circumstances, I doubt that it would be wise to urge the King to accept your invitation. However, I would be glad to receive any further views you may have.

Sincerely yours,

U. Alexis Johnson

CC: Dept-SEA

Mr. Lawrence E. Spivak,
Meet the Press,
528 Lexington Avenue,
New York 17, N.Y.

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