

Thai Criticism

U.S. Pullout Denounced

BANGKOK (Thailand) — (UPI) Deputy Prime Minister Prapass Charusathiara today criticized the U.S. troop withdrawal from neighboring Cambodia and said American air power alone could not drive Vietnamese Communists from Cambodia's soil.

"The United States should not let this war-torn nation face its own fate," Prapass, an army general, said in a speech. "After all, the number of Communists is increasing daily.

"If the United States is aware of its prestige and responsibilities, it should therefore be responsible for correcting the situation."

All U.S. ground troops withdrew from Cambodia yesterday but it was understood American warplanes would provide tactical air support for Cambodian and South Vietnamese troops battling Communist forces and that B-52 jets would bomb Communist supply lines.

Prapass said this would not be enough.

"Although the United States is going to launch air strike after the pullout, they could not clear the enemy's ground forces in deep jungle," Prapass said. "The war cannot be won through air strikes in such a deeply-forested terrain in Cambodia.