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Australia Said to Plan Training for Cambodians

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WASHINGTON, Nov. 2—Australia has agreed to provide instructors and facilities in South Vietnam for the training of several battalions of Cambodian troops, informed sources said today.

William McMahon, the Australian Prime Minister, who is visiting Washington was reported to have discussed the arrangement today with President Nixon. The two leaders met for nearly two hours at the White House.

About 125 Australian instructors will reportedly train the Cambodian troops at Muidat, a jungle warfare training center near Saigon, as part of an allied effort to enlarge and equip the Cambodian Army.

The Australian instructors will remain behind after the departure of the 8,000 Australian troops currently serving in

South Vietnam. Mr. McMahon announced in August that all Australian combat units would be home by Christmas.

The Cambodian armed forces now number approximately 180,000, according to American sources, compared with the 38,000-man force that was in existence in March, 1970, at the time of the overthrow of Prince Norodom Sihanouk as Chief of State. The goal for 1972 is 220,000 men.

A total of 60 battalions of Cambodians have been trained so far by the South Vietnamese in South Vietnam and have been equipped by the United States. Five other battalions have undergone training in Thailand and three others were given instruction by Central Intelligence Agency units in southern Laos last spring.

Charles W. Bray 3d, the State Department spokesman, con-

firmed today that the United States was discussing the possibility of Cambodian assistance with both Australia and New Zealand, including the training of Cambodian troops. He said that no final decisions had been reached.

Mr. Bray said the discussions had preceded and were in no way related to the rejection of the foreign aid authorization bill by the Senate last week. Australia is expected to cover the expenses of the training program herself.