By EAREARA CROSSETTE

Special to The New York Times

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^Jept. of State, RPS/IPS, Margaret P. Grafeld, Dir. () Deny () Declassify

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A Growing Embassy Reflects Role in Area

By CARDARA CROSSETTE

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By the embassy's own count, the United States now has close to 300 military advisers, technicians and engineers in Honduras, not counting the eight officers and nine enlisted men attached to the military attache's office and the Military Assistance Group.

The embassy staff numbers over 140, at least 35 of them with diplomatic rank. Most other foreign missions here, according to American diplomats, have fewer than six foreign service officers. Washington also has a strong and ex-perienced Ambassador, John D. Negroponte, who is often rumored to be under consideration for higher policy-making posts in the Reagan Administration.

Eighteen months ago the embassy was upgraded from a Class 4 to a Class 2 mission, putting it on a par with United States embassies in such cities as Lima and Buenos Aires. Only those in Mexico City and Brasilia, Class I embassies, outrank it in Latin America. The embassy in El Salvador has 102 permanent American staff employees and 100 temporary duty personnel, including the military advisers training Salvadoran Army troop against the guerrillas there. troops fighting

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Salvadorans in Training

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About 80 members of the United States Army Corps of Engineers are extending a runway at Comayagua, northwest of Tegucigalpa. Sixty Americans are working on a radar site about 12 miles southeast of the city.

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In an interview last week in San José, Costa Rica, Brooklyn Rivera, a leader of Nicaraguan Miskito Indian exiles who are also in revolt against the Government in Managua, said that during his time in Honduras working with the anti-Sandinistas he had not encountered any American servicemen advising or fighting with the rebels. Mr. Rivera broke last year with the Honduran-based rebels because of the preponderance in their leadership of former officers of the national guard of Anastasio Somoza Debayle. He has since allied his Indian organization, Misurasata, with the forces of Eden Pastora Gomez, who is fighting the Nicaraguans from the Costa Ricanside.

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By EARBARA CROSSETTE Special to The New York Time

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