

96 *HAK, Scowcroft*

U.S. TROOPS--MIDEAST

WASHINGTON (AP)--THE UNITED STATES DOES NOT INTEND TO SEND AMERICAN MILITARY FORCES INTO THE MIDDLE EAST BUT WILL FIRMLY SUPPORT ISRAEL'S WEAPONS NEEDS, OFFICIALS SAID TODAY.

THE STATEMENT FOLLOWED A REPORTED COMMENT BY SECRETARY HENRY A. KISSINGER AT A WHITE HOUSE DINNER THAT IF THE SOVIETS INTRODUCED TROOPS THE U.S. WOULD FOLLOW SUIT.

SIMILARLY, MELVIN R. LAIRD, DOMESTIC ADVISER TO PRESIDENT NIXON, WAS REPORTED TO HAVE TOLD A GROUP OF NEWSMEN AT A BREAKFAST THAT THE SITUATION IS BECOMING ONE OF CONFRONTATION WITH THE SOVIET UNION.

JG138PED OCT 16