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RNR45
ZCZC NYB370
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0649 :URGENT*****LEAD ALERT:

WASHINGTON, OCT. 25, REUTER--AMERICAN MILITARY BASES IN THIS COUNTRY AND EUROPE--INCLUDING THE NUCLEAR STRIKE FORCE--WERE PLACED ON ALERT EARLY TODAY, DEFENSE DEPARTMENT SOURCES CONFIRMED, WITH THE ACTION APPARENTLY LINKED TO THE MIDDLE EAST WAR.

OFFICIAL SPOKESMEN AT THE PENTAGON TOOK A STRICT "NO COMMENT" LINE.

BUT THE SOURCES, WHO DESCRIBED THE ALERT AS "LOW LEVEL," SAID THE ALERT INVOLVED NOT ONLY ELEMENTS OF THE STRATEGIC AIR COMMAND (SAC), WHICH INCLUDES AMERICA'S NUCLEAR STRIKE FORCES, BUT THE 82ND AIRBORNE DIVISION AT FORT BRAGG, NORTH CAROLINA. THE DIVISION IS THE ELITE PARATROOP FORCE AVAILABLE FOR DISPATCH TO ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD ON SHORT NOTICE.

THE WHITE HOUSE REFUSED TO TAKE ANY CALLS FROM NEWSMEN SEEKING CLARIFICATION OF THE ALERT ORDER.

AT OFFUTT AIR FORCE. . . SECOND GRAF RNR37 (NYB361)

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