

Soviets say alert was intimidation

United Press

MOSCOW — The Soviet Union said yesterday the U.S. explanation for its worldwide military alert Wednesday was "absurd." It also said the alert was an attempt to intimidate the Soviet Union and did not serve to promote better international relations.

But a Soviet statement did not specifically deny that Soviet troops were placed on alert as Washington said.

The Tass News agency said it had been authorized to give the statement, which was one of the most critical expressions Moscow has directed at the United States recently.

The statement said: "Tass is authorized to state that such explanations are absurd since the actions of the Soviet Union are aimed solely at promoting the implementation of the decisions of the Security Council on cease-fire and restoration of peace in the Middle East."

The statement, however, did not say what the U.S. explanation for the military al-

ert was. Washington said it acted because of indications the Soviet Union might send troops to the Middle East.

The statement follows charges in a Friday speech by Communist Party General Secretary Leonid Brezhnev that "certain elements" had been artificially "drumming up sentiment with all kinds of fantastic rumors" about Soviet intentions in the Middle East.

Brezhnev said the Soviets had sent representatives to the Middle East to observe the cease-fire. Reports from Cairo said about 80 arrived there yesterday.

The Tass statement said American officials tried to justify the alert by referring to "certain actions of the Soviet Union that allegedly gave grounds for concern."

The statement read, in part:

"This step of the United States that does not promote international detente by far was taken, obviously, in an attempt to intimidate the Soviet Union. But those who are behind this step should be told that they have chosen the wrong address."