

# Russians Probing UFO Mysteries After Rash of Bizarre Sightings

By HENRY GRIS

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Spurred by a spectacular yearlong series of UFO sightings, the Russians have set up a special commission headed by a veteran cosmonaut to solve the UFO mystery.

Astounding objects in the sky — one resembling a giant airborne jellyfish — have terrified eyewitnesses and triggered near-panic in some areas.

"People are scared — they have been clamoring for a valid, official explanation of what is up in our skies for far too long," declared Dr. Vladimir Azhazha, a leading Russian authority on UFOs.

"Their patience has worn thin. That's why the government has set up this commission — and good luck to it."

The new commission is headed by a



'PEOPLE ARE SCARED,' Russian UFO expert Azhazha (left) told Enquirer reporter Henry Gris.

senior Soviet cosmonaut, retired Maj. Gen. Pavel Popovich, who made a solo space flight in 1962 and commanded a two-man 15-day mission in space in 1974.

The commission was formed, and an intensive scientific investigation launched, after a rash of incredible sightings. Among them:

March 27, 1983 — A wingless, cigar-shaped UFO as big as a 747 jumbo jet zig-zagged over the city of Gorky and was tracked for 40 minutes on Gorky Airport radar. Observers said it made sharp turns that would be impossible for a conventional airplane. *before vanishing.*

June 21, 1983 — Another cigar-shaped spaceship circled for 18 minutes over strategic nuclear research installations in the city of Dubno.

Sept. 20, 1983 — A monstrous "jellyfish" surrounded by a glowing fiery mist hovered over the city of Petrozavodsk for 14 minutes, sending down a shower of what was described as "luminous rain." Panic erupted in the streets as many terrified residents tried to flee. Army troops were ordered to seal off the local railway station and restore order.

Dec. 2, 1983 — A squadron of seven luminous, globe-shaped UFOs in V-formation circled the city of Minsk and was seen by hundreds of people.

Jan. 12, 1984 — A similar squadron of UFOs flew over the city of Vladimir.

Feb. 6, 1984 — Dozens of frightened eyewitnesses described an eerie formation of triangular and round lights flying across the night sky over Gorky.

Feb. 26, 1984 — A huge fireball exploded in the atmosphere, about 60 miles above Siberia, in

the same area where a massive explosion devastated 1,500 square miles of the Tunguska forest in 1908.

March 14, 1984 — Six UFOs described as a brilliant orange "string of sausages" zipped through the skies over Sverdlovsk — then suddenly changed color simultaneously to fluorescent blue, red, and then back to orange.

Two of Russia's top scientists — Prof. Anatoly Logunov, vice president of the Soviet Academy of Sciences and head of Moscow



MONSTROUS 'JELLYFISH' hovered over Russian city for 14 minutes and caused panic in the streets.

University, and astronomer Nikolai Yerpylev of Moscow Observatory — were appointed to assist cosmonaut Popovich on the UFO commission.

"We will have as many as 2,000 men in the field before fall," Yerpylev said. "They will be reporting to a headquarters in Moscow, staffed by 150 scientists."

Amateur astronomers are also being recruited to aid in the massive sky search aimed at solving the UFO riddle.

"We have a gigantic task cut out for us," said Popovich.