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CAPT. LAWRENCE COYNE'S VIEWS ON UFOS AND HIS OWN EXPERIENCE BEFORE HE AND HIS CREW WON THE "NATIONAL ENQUIRER" BEST-CASE PRIZE OF \$5,000.

On Jan. 3, 1974, Capt. Coyne and I first talked by telephone about his UFO experience that had occurred less than three months before, on Oct. 18, 1973, near Mansfield, Ohio. This was several months before the case was selected as the Best Case of 1973 to receive a \$5,000 prize for the helicopter crew.

Following are a few highlights from that conversation that provide useful perspective on Coyne's views at that time:

COYNE: *"Like I said before, I'm a very rational person. I don't believe in UFOs and space monsters and all this kookie stuff, because I don't believe they exist. My biggest concern was that it was almost a mid-air collision as far as I was concerned."*

I then told Coyne about the incident that had occurred on June 5, 1969, in broad daylight, near St. Louis, when the very experienced flight crews of an American Airlines and United Air Lines jetliners, and an Air National Guard pilot, thought they too had had a near mid-air collision with a squadron of UFOs. The UFOs turned out to be a bright fireball and its fragments that actually had passed approximately 125 MILES north of the three aircraft. It was photographed by an alert newspaper photographer, Alan Harkrader, in Peoria. When I finished, Coyne commented:

COYNE: *"This is all possible. What I'd like to believe, really, is that in the area where we flew, is the Air National Guard, the F-100s have an approach and departure corridor [into nearby Mansfield airport]. What I think would be a logical explanation was that it could have been an F-100 fighter."*

KLASS: *"Except that you checked Mansfield [later]."*

COYNE: *"Right, and all [their F-100] aircraft were down."*

I went on to inform Coyne that at the time of his UFO experience, the Orionids meteor shower was under way. That it begins each night at approximately 11 p.m., precisely the time of his UFO incident, and that the meteors come out of the East--the direction from which the UFO came. I added that I had received a report from another man in central Ohio who had been driving East on Oct. 20, 1973, when he saw several glowing objects coming out of the East at the time of this Orionids meteor shower. Coyne responded:

COYNE: *"Well, that would sound like a logical explanation."*

KLASS: *"I'm not trying to convince you, or deprive you of your sighting."*

COYNE: *"No, it sounds good."*

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