

WXPost
DEC 2 1975
Ex-Informant Criticizes FBI

Associated Press

An ex-FBI informant has told Senate investigators he repeatedly provided advance warnings of Ku Klux Klan attacks against blacks and civil rights workers but the bureau took almost no action to prevent the incidents.

In one instance, Gary Thomas Rowe Jr. said, the FBI had three weeks' notice that Klansmen would attack a group of Freedom Riders as they debarked from their buses in Birmingham, Ala.

Despite the warning, FBI agents stood by and took photographs of the 1961 incident in which "people just got all beat to hell," Rowe said in an interview yesterday.

Rowe, now living under an assumed name in Southern

California, also said he has secondhand information about the FBI campaign to defame civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr.

Rowe is scheduled to testify under oath today before the Senate intelligence committee. A spokeswoman for the committee said Rowe would wear a mask to preserve his new identity.

During a one-hour interview in a Washington hotel room, Rowe and attorney described his five years as an FBI informant which ended when he became the government's star witness in a trial at which three Klansmen were convicted of civil rights violations in the 1965 murder of white civil rights worker Viola Liuzzo near Selma, Ala.

Rowe said he has already provided the same account to intelligence committee staff in a sworn deposition.