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6 July 1964
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(ADVANCE FOR AMS OF TUESDAY, JULY 6)

FBI INFORMER (660)

BY DON MCKEE

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(ADVANCE) ATLANTA, GA., JULY 5 (AP)-FEDERAL AULHORITIES HAVE THROWN A BLANKET OF SECRECY AROUND FBI INFORMER GARY THOMAS ROWE JR. AFTER DISCLOSING HIS ROLE IN THE MURDER TRIAL OF AN ALABAMA KU KLUX KLANSMAN.

ROWE HAS DROPPED FROM SIGHT SINCE HE TESTIFIED LAST MAY THAT HE WAS WITH THREE BIRMINGHAM AREA KLANSMEN THE NIGHT ONE OF THEM SHOT AND KILLED MRS. VIOLA LIUZZO OF DETROIT, WHITE PARTICIPANT IN A CIVIL RIGHTS MARCH.

NEITHER THE FBI NOR THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE WILL DIVULGE ROWE'S WHEREABOUTS. HIS LAWYER DOES NOT KNOW WHERE ROWE IS.

"THE ONLY WAY I CAN GET IN TOUCH WITH HIM IS TO CALL JOHN DOAR OF THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT," SID ATTORNEY PAUL JOHNSTON OF BIRMINGHAM. JOHNSTON IS DEFENDING ROWE IN A COLLECTION SUIT BROUGHT BY MATT H. MURPHY, A KLAN LAWYER.

MURPHY, WHO CLAIMS ROWE OWES \$6,000 IN LEGAL FEES, IS COUNSEL FOR THE THREE KLANSMEN ROWE IDENTIFIED AS HAVING A PART IN THE SLAYING MARCH 25 OF MRS. LIUZZO ON U.S. 80 BETWEEN SELMA AND MONTGOMERY.

ROWE TESTIFIED IN THE MURDER TRIAL OF COLLIE LEROY WILKINS JR., FIRST OF THE DEFENDANTS CALLED TO TRIAL. THE INFORMER SAID WILKINS WAS THE TRIGGER MAN IN THE LIUZZO KILLING. WHEN THE TRIAL ENDED WITH A HUNG JURY, RETRIAL WAS SET FOR SEPTEMBER.

UNTIL THEN ROWE IS BEING KEPT UNDER WRAPS, SAID EVERETT INGRAM OF THE FBI IN BIRMINGHAM. PRESUMABLY, INGRAM KNOWS WHERE ROWE IS OR HOW TO FIND HIM. WHEN ASKED WHERE ROWE COULD BE REACHED, THE AGENTS SAID:

"THAT'S OUT OF THE QUESTION RIGHT NOW."

ASKED IF THERE HAD BEEN ANY PLOTS OR ATTEMPTS ON ROWE'S LIFE, INGRAM SAID HE COULD NOT COMMENT.

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NEITHER WOULD THE AGENT DISCUSS ROWE'S DIVORCED WIFE AND THE FOUR CHILDREN, PRESUMABLY UNDER FBI PROTECTION ALSO. ROWE AND THE FAMILY LIVED IN BIRMINGHAM PRIOR TO THE LIUZZO MURDER TRIAL.

IN WASHINGTON, JUSTICE DEPARTMENT AND FBI SOURCES REFUSED TO DISCUSS THE ROWE MATTER. THEY EVEN DECLINED TO DISCUSS THE GENERAL SUBJECT
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DISCUSS THE ROWE MATTER. THEY EVEN DECLINED TO DISCUSS THE GENERAL SUBJECT OF PROTECTING INFORMANTS BECAUSE OF THE SENSITIVITY OF THE ROWE CASE.

BUT HERBERT J. MILLER JR., FORMER ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR CRIMINAL MATTERS, SHED SOME LIGHT ON SUCH MATTERS LAST SPRING, SHORTLY BEFORE HE LEFT THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT.

DISCUSSING INFORMANTS WHO BECOME KNOWN TO THE UNDERWORLD, MILLER TOLD A NEWS CONFERENCE:

"WE'RE NOT GOING TO LET THESE PEOPLE DOWN ONCE THEY'VE HELPED US. THE LITTLE BIT OF MONEY IT TAKES IS CERTAINLY WORTH IT AS FAR AS WE'RE CONCERNED. IN ORDER TO PROTECT THEM WE'LL MOVE THEM TO ANOTHER PART OF THE COUNTRY, IF NECESSARY. WE'LL HELP THEM AND THEIR FAMILIES ESTABLISH NEW IDENTITIES, GIVE THEM NEW NAMES AND SEE THAT THEY EARN A LIVING."

ROWE PROBABLY WILL BE BROUGHT FORWARD AGAIN IN SEPTEMBER FOR WILKINS'S RETRIAL. UNTIL THEN, PRESUMABLY, HE WILL NOT BEGIN HIS "NEW LIFE." WHEN EDWARD PARTIN TURNED GOVERNMENT WITNESS AGAINST TEAMSTERS PRESIDENT JAMES F. HOFFA IN 1963, THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT WHISKED HIM TO A SECLUDED MOUNTAIN HIDEAWAY IN TENNESSEE. U.S. MARSHALS AND FBI AGENTS WERE HIS COMPANY UNTIL THE HOFFA TRIAL--WHICH RESULTED IN A JURY TAMPERING CONVICTION.

ASKED IF ROWE WAS GETTING THE SAME TREATMENT THIS SUMMER, A WASHINGTON FBI SPOKESMAN MERELY SHRUGGED.

"ALL I CAN SAY IS WE'VE GOT HIM STASHED AWAY SOMEWHERE," HE SAID.

ROWE, 34, ACCEPTED THE ROLE OF A PAID INFORMER IN THE KLAN WHEN HE WAS APPROACHED BY THE FBI IN 1960. AT THE TRIAL, FBI AGENTS SAID THE 5-FOOT-8, HEAVYSET AND RED-HAIRED ROWE RECEIVED NOMINAL PAY FOR INFORMING ON THE KLAN.

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DURING THE FIVE YEARS, HE DREW LESS THAN \$10,000.

ROWE, A FORMER BARMAN AND DAIRY EMPLOYEE, INFILTRATED THE EAST-VIEW 13 KLAVERN OF THE UNITED KLANS OF AMERICA, KNIGHTS OF THE KU KLUX KLAN, IN BIRMINGHAM. HIS FBI CONTACT, AGENT NEAL SHANAGHAN

OF BIRMINGHAM, TESTIFIED THAT ROWE PROVIDED "UP-TO-THE-MINUTE INFORMATION ON ACTIVITIES OF THE KU KLUX KLAN."

THE AGENT CONFIRMED THAT CONSIDERABLE INFORMATION ABOUT THE KLAN HAD BEEN OBTAINED.

FBI DIRECTOR J. EDGAR HOOVER HAS SAID THE KLAN IS INFILTRATED, BUT THE EXTENT OF THIS INFILTRATION IS KNOWN ONLY TO THE FBI.

IN GARY THOMAS ROWE, THE FBI FOR THE FIRST TIME REVEALED HOW DEEPLY IT COULD INFILTRATE THE SECRET HOODED ORDER.

END ADVANCE FOR AMS OF TUESDAY, JULY 6--SENT JULY 3.

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