

KLANSMAN SHOT LIUZZO , FBI INFORMER TESTIFIES

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ANN ARBOR -- **FBI informant** Gary Thomas Rowe, testifying in a videotaped statement played Thursday, said Ku Klux Klansman Collie Leroy Wilkins, not he, **killed** Detroit civil rights worker Viola **Liuzzo** 18 years ago as she drove along a misty Alabama highway.

Rowe testified Wilkins fired a .38-caliber pistol into **Liuzzo** 's face as she seemed to cry, "Oh, God!" Rowe also said Wilkins exulted over his marksmanship when they inspected the **Liuzzo** car, "G--damn, g--damn, Baby Bro (Rowe)! I **killed** those motherf-----!"

IN EARLIER TESTIMONY, Wilkins and fellow Klansman Eugene Thomas claimed that Rowe fired the shots into the **Liuzzo** car. **Liuzzo** , the 39-year-old mother of five, was **killed** ; a young black passenger, Leroy Moton, was not injured.

Rowe's testimony, taken last month, came in the \$2 million federal lawsuit filed **by** the **Liuzzo** family alleging the **FBI** was responsible for the murder of the white civil rights volunteer. U.S. District Judge Charles Joiner is hearing the case without a jury.

The suit claims that Rowe, a paid **FBI informant** , either **killed Liuzzo** or failed to prevent her murder after the March 25, 1965, Selma-to-Montgomery voting rights march.

Rowe was in the car with Klansmen Wilkins, Thomas and W. O. Eaton that chased **Liuzzo** 's car and from which the fatal shots were fired.

Wilkins was tried in Alabama for **Liuzzo** 's murder, but was acquitted after two trials. Wilkins, Thomas and Eaton were convicted in federal court of violating **Liuzzo** 's civil rights **by** murdering her.

Thomas and Wilkins each served five years of 10-year federal sentences. Eaton died in 1966 before entering prison.

Rowe, under questioning **by Liuzzo** family attorney Dean Robb, admitted he was armed, but claimed he never did anything not authorized **by** the **FBI** .

ROWE SAID he and the Klansmen cruised the misty highway when they spotted **Liuzzo** 's car at a traffic light with a "huge" black **man** in the passenger seat. **Liuzzo** and Moton looked at the Klansmen's car and sped off, Rowe said.

The chase, reaching speeds of 100 miles an hour, took the cars past a military base and groups of pedestrians.

Although he expected they would be stopped at any moment **by** highway patrols, Rowe said, their car pulled alongside the **Liuzzo** car.

He said Wilkins then urged him to draw his weapon. "G--damn, get your g--damn gun out . . . get your g--damn gun out the window," Rowe said Wilkins told him.

Rowe said Wilkins fired twice at the car as **Liuzzo** looked at them. She seemed to be crying, "Oh, God!" Rowe said. The **second** shot, Rowe said, hit **Liuzzo** in the face.

He said they looked briefly at the car, believing both **Liuzzo** and Moton were dead, and sped off.

Moton feigned death until police arrived.

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