

FROM AMERICA'S FRONT LINE OF FREEDOM . . . MISSISSIPPI!

# "THE STREETS OF GREENWOOD"

The new motion picture about the voter registration campaign in Mississippi that led to the formation of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party.



"THE STREETS OF GREENWOOD demonstrates again that one picture is worth 1,000 words . . . Very revealing, as well as packed with strong feelings and the explosive situation."

Archer Winsten, NEW YORK POST



Featuring folk singer PETE SEEGER and BOB MOSES (a founder of the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party and a leader in the voter registration drive).



## NOTES ON GREENWOOD: The Grim—The Good

### GRIM

- Birthplace of the White Citizens Council.
- Byron de la Beckwith, indicted for the murder of Medgar Evers is from Greenwood.
- Silas McGhee, a Greenwood Negro, was shot and wounded in Greenwood in August 1964.
- Emmett Till was murdered in Greenwood.

### GOOD

- Scene of Freedom School activity achieved with help of northern teachers, students, ministers and others—conceived and organized by Bob Moses (who is featured in this film).
- Scene of active support for the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party—the strong beginning of a political force for social and economic justice.
- Greenwood is where the Negro people march on towards freedom despite the grim opposition.



**THE STREETS OF GREENWOOD** is an action picture of the effort of Negroes and whites to achieve the right to vote in Mississippi, despite prejudice, illegal pressure, and actual violence.

This is documented history in the making in the summer of 1964—in the voter registration project set up through the Council of Federated Organizations, which embraces SNCC, CORE, the NAACP, and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

### SYNOPSIS

The film opens on a Negro Freedom Festival in a cotton field, and the singing of "No More Segregation." Mrs. McGee, the Negro lady owning the field, tells of the harassment she has been subjected to by the whites because of the festival. A young Negro leader (as the song continues) tells of the victory in Albany, Georgia, over Police Chief Pritchett, and promises that Negroes soon will be able to walk the streets of Greenwood.

Over the white streets of the city, the voice of Mayor Charles Sampson tells of his pride in the city, and of his certainty that the Negro problem will be resolved as soon as the "outside agitators" leave Greenwood.

In a church, we hear the song "No More Shooting." We see the headquarters of SNCC (the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee) and learn about its efforts at voter registration.

Bob Moses, leader of SNCC, explains how automation of farm machinery is pushing the Negro population north, thus increasing the importance of the Negro vote.

Over scenes of Negroes and whites working, a white man speaks of the love he feels for the Negro. A farmer says the same thing—that the whites could not get along without the Negro—and points out a Negro laborer for whom he has a special regard. At a white political rally, a candidate warns that one must treat a Negro like a "nigger"—and tells a Nigger Joke.

The folk singer Pete Seeger tells why he came to Greenwood and stresses the importance of the vote so that the southern Senators can be replaced. He sings "If I Had a Hammer."

Over the song, Negroes are seen walking up the Greenwood Courthouse steps to vote, surrounded by policemen and dogs. Two women in a church describe their unsuccessful attempts to register, and their determination to keep trying, even if they are killed in the process. We see the Negroes being shoved into police cars and pushed back, over the song "Keep Your Eyes on the Prize." White men's voices are heard stating that the Negro does not deserve the vote—that he will never win it. In the church, the Negroes sing "We Shall Overcome." The film closes with the song "The Streets of Greenwood."



## Six Songs of the Civil Rights Movement Sung in THE STREETS OF GREENWOOD:

- "If I Had a Hammer"  
(sung by Pete Seeger);
- "We Shall Overcome"
- "Oh, Freedom,"
- "Freedom Coming,"
- "I'm Gonna Walk the  
Streets of Greenwood,"
- "Keep Your Eyes on the Prize."

### PRESS COMMENT

"Vivid documentary evidence of hostility between whites and Negroes in the last year in that Mississippi town."

*Bosley Crowther, NEW YORK TIMES*

"The cameras cleverly set a Negro Freedom festival against a white political rally in an adjoining field. There are some interesting shots displaying the hostility of the Mississippi whites toward the Negro, but the final message points towards a brighter day."

*Robert Salmaggi, NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE*

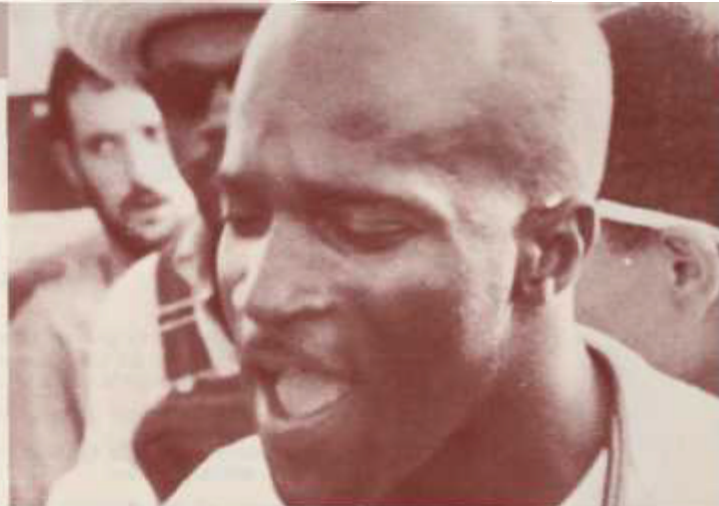
"A short, 20 minutes of documentary, 'The Streets of Greenwood,' demonstrates again that one picture is worth 1,000 words. It also underlines the photographic talent of Ed Emshwiller, which has already been on view in avant-garde films, in the Mekas picture, 'Hallelujah the Hills,' and which has won a Ford Foundation grant this year.

"Emshwiller simply focuses on Negro faces in Greenwood, Mississippi, either singing or speaking. It is not a demonstration of photographic wizardry. He subordinates his art to the business at hand, and in so doing proves that this is always the best way to do it. Others who should also take bows for permitting Emshwiller's work to speak for itself are Jack Willis, writer-director for the Canadian broadcasting Co., Fred Wardenburg and John Reavis, Jr. "The picture is not wholly silent. The other side, the white South, speaks its piece. You can judge for yourself. There's no doubt that 'The Streets of Greenwood' is very revealing, as well as packed with strong feelings and explosive situation."

*Archer Winsten, NEW YORK POST*

Streets of Greenwood is a powerful short, film among the Student Volunteers, and Civil Rights Workers in Mississippi. Folk singer Pete Seeger is among the real people on the actual scene.

*Faye Hammel, CUE MAGAZINE*





## SUGGESTED USES

For all Americans, in community groups (libraries, churches, unions, forums, centers, political parties) interested in seeing the faces of the men and women behind the "race" headlines, and in learning at first hand about the Civil Rights drive in the most explosive city of the South;

For all Americans concerned with getting out the vote;

For all young Americans, students (jh,sh,c) of current events and problems of democracy, as primary resource material in social studies;

For general audiences, as an example of significant film-making in the documentary genre.

## CREDITS

Directed and Produced by  
JACK WILLIS, writer-director for Canadian Broadcasting Co.  
FRED WARDENBURG, associate producer for Talent Associates  
JOHN REAVIS, JR., winner of two Ohio State Awards for documentary production.

Cinematographer  
ED EMSHWILLER, creator of TOTEM, DANCE CHROMATIC,  
cameraman for HALLELUJAH, THE HILLS.

## FILM DATA

20 minutes  
Black and white sound film  
United States, 1964  
Rental: \$7.50      Sale: \$125.00

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