



## Transcript

### Cecil Williams - Civil Rights Part 2

**Williams:** This photograph is one of my favorite ones. At the time that I took this photograph....It's also a collage of really three different photographs—the Briggs Petition; the American flag out of focus in the background; and Annie Gibson, who, at that time, was one of the oldest living signers of the Briggs Petition. She's now deceased.

This last photograph is of a very little-known incident in South Carolina that, in my opinion, is a greater catalyst of America's civil rights movement than the Montgomery bus boycott, which most generalists attribute to being the beginning, where Rosa Parks sits down on a bus and the, the whole civil rights revolution, by most historians' standpoint, begins. But this incident took place four months before that. It was carried in *Jet*, *Ebony*, across the pages of the black press across America. And the people in Montgomery, Alabama, modeled the Montgomery bus boycott with what happened right here in Orangeburg four months older...four months earlier. So, in my opinion, this is an earlier beginning of the real beginning of the civil rights movement.

This is Fred Moore, who was then the student government president at South Carolina State University who was being ousted for leading the students in demonstrations and boycotts against the people in Orangeburg who had fired people from jobs simply because they wanted to send their children to the public schools, which was...had been ordered by the Supreme Court of the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision.

Mercer University published my book *Freedom and Justice* about eleven years ago. Incidentally, it's something that still yet today has a great number of the incidents that happened in South Carolina. And it...the title of it is *Freedom and Justice: Four Decades of the Civil Rights Struggle as Seen by a Black Photographer of the Deep South*.

It was my great experience at really fourteen years old to, on the background of this incident, start working for *Jet*. As *Jet* magazine came into Orangeburg to do this story, the story kept unfolding, and they were not able to remain here. But I was appointed by *Jet* as a stringer correspondent for them, and my relationship with them started as a result of this incident.

*End.*