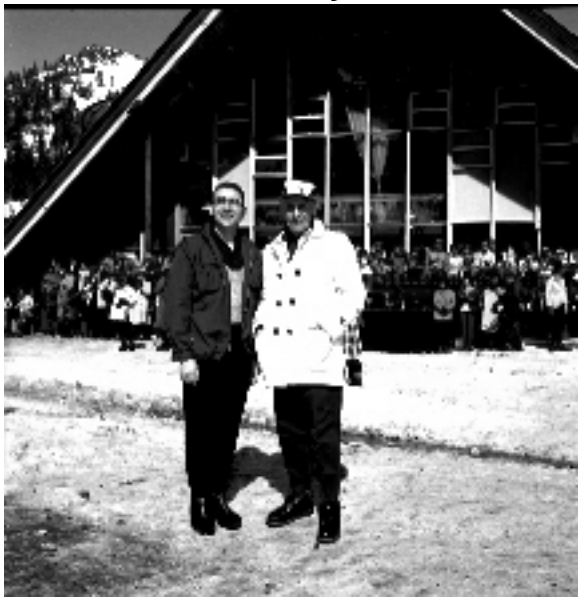
Nevada Commission on Equal Rights of Citizens/ Equal Rights Commission

Administrative History



Nevada's history of race relations in the 1950s and 1960s was compared by journalists and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) to that of some southern American states, notably Mississippi. Although not as formalized in law Nevada still provided many examples of racism against minorities in housing, employment, and public accommodation. Early beginnings of the civil rights movement in Nevada can be traced at least as far back as 1959 when planning for the February 1960 Winter Olympic Games at Squaw Valley was underway. The U.S. Justice Department was concerned because of the impact racial discrimination in public accommodations might have on international visitors and was anxious that nothing should occur to mar or blot that event. Likewise, the California Attorney General was concerned because Olympic visitors would be visiting and staying in northern Nevada where people of color would be treated with bias.

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Photograph of the Equal Rights Movement in Nevada's Equal Rights Movement