



**Benjamin L. Hooks**

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After many rumors and reported false starts, a small group of cable franchise holders and woners got together in Washington D.C. in December to discuss formation of an association of minority cable television owners/franchise holders. They named themselves The American Association of Cable Television Owners (AACTO).

It's about time. Minority cable television owners (holders of franchise papers for the most part, for only one black cable system is currently in operation: Gary, Indiana Communications Group, headed by Dr. William Douglas for years have faced almost insurmountable obstacles in attempting to obtain necessary financing, management assistance and, once operational, adequate programming and other industry needs.

Under the auspices of the National Cable Television Association (NCTA) and the Inner City Communications of Atlanta, 16 minority cable system owners and franchise holders, met and grappled with the thorny problems they face from a hostile or indifferent financial community that applies different standards to minorities for short and long term financing.

Three reasons for withholding financing are usually given: (1) lack of sufficient equity; (2) lack of qualified management experience; and (3) the unspoken but accepted practice of leading institutions not to risk money in minority-owned new ventures.

At its December meeting AACTO decided it would establish an office in Washington, D.C. so that it can begin to do serious battle with those who deny them equal access and participation in the growing television industry.

Principal speaker at the organizing meeting was dynamic Jesse Hill, president of Atlanta Life Insurance Co., and an official of Inner City Communications of Atlanta, Ga. He praised the group for coming together "to lay the foundation for a plan to mutual support and cooperation . . .

There is great significance in the fact that the initiative for this meeting has come from the National Cable Television Association, an organization representing the entire industry.

Clearly in taking this initiative, NCTA has recognized that the broader interests of the Cable industry, as well as of the nation, will be best served by assisting those minority entrepreneurs and groups holding franchise licenses to become successful industry members and an integral part of the industry's structure."

Hill emphasized the great opportunities and challenges facing the little band of minority franchise holders, and added: "There can be no doubt that the CATV industry, which over the past 26 years has grown from a local antenna service to the hills and valleys of Pennsylvania and Oregon to a vast artery of communication which today serves almost 12 million American homes, offers tremendous opportunities.

This industry today generates more than \$777 million in revenues, employs over 25,000 people and has a total capital investment of almost one billion dollars."

A practical, hardheaded businessman, Hill is painfully aware of some of the hurdles confronting minorities seeking to enter the industry. He knows that many minorities have been oversold on the "Blue Skies" proposals of CATV, but that many of those components, two-way communications, data-transmitting services, etc., are today practical realities.

He is also aware that many blacks and other minorities are now beginning to realize that cable is a capital intensive business often requiring enormous outlays of money including capital costs of constructing cable systems, especially in urban areas, and that the long "payout period"—the time required for system revenues to permit paybacks of the original

capital investment, make it almost impossible for all but the hardest to survive. This period is variously estimated at between five and 10 years.

This long term investment is called "patient money." It is the hardest money to come by in capital markets generally and for the minority community in particular, Hill says. "Because of these high capital requirements, as well as the special conditions necessary to assure successful market penetration, the risks of cable investment also tend sometimes to be high.

Finally, the specialized nature of the industry puts an even higher-than-usual premium on that most indispensable of ingredients, capable management."

More on minority cable ownership, next week.

## The Hughes Report

By Thomas F. Hughes



### SAN BERNADINO—WHY NOT LAS VEGAS?

In my tax work I use specially prepared forms so around the end of the year I go to Los Angeles and I go to see our children, grand children, etc. On my return trip I stopped in San Bernadino to see my friend and editor of the Precint Reporter with whom I was associated while in California. Art Townsend, the publisher is an outstanding man and perhaps the top black in the San Bernadino Valley. He told me about the Operation Second Chance.

Operation Second chance is an organization giving blacks a second chance by training blacks how to type, work computers, teaches basic business, English and other semi-professional occupations designed to prepare blacks for those jobs that are and will become available. They work through Inland Manpower Association and have been granted one half million dollars for that purpose. In addition to this Second Chance has a division that develops small business administration proposal packages. It would do you good to see the new building that has been built for Operation Second Chance.

Some three years ago I met and had a conference with Valerie Pope. Valerie is head of Welfare Rights Organization and runs a senior citizens program. Valerie had at that time secured sole rights to rehabilitate the abandoned and repossessed properties of the Veteran's Administration and other lending institutions. I was pleased to find that her plan was very similar to the one I had developed for Pomona, Calif. which reduced the inventory from nearly 800 boarded-up houses to less than 100. Funds have been obtained for this rehabilitation. In addition to this Ms. Pope has an energy development program going for the San Bernadino area. Want more?

She also has a \$350,000 Security Patrol going which works in conjunction with the Police Department complete with patrol cars, C.B. radios, a headquarters etc. With only 2 policemen patrolling our West Side we could use the same program here. More?

In addition to this San Bernadino has a very strong Urban League which is securing 1st class jobs for blacks. Bob Garrett has a westside drop-in center which is city funded that provides services similar to our local E.O.B. Art Townsend also is President of the Inland Black Caucus which works in the Political Arena and looks into works on community problems and development. Rev. McDonald has a very strong N.A.A.C.P. Branch.

There are other civic things in San Bernadino too numerous to mention in this column, but the big question is this. If San Bernadino has only 15,000 blacks and Las Vegas has 45,000 blacks (3 times as many) why doesn't Las Vegas have more going?

## Education Is Power

By Thomas E. Wilson, Ph.D.



Several weeks ago we developed a column aimed at informing parents of how they could help develop the intelligence of their children. For the next several weeks we will be writing on this subject.

Parents do not have to have a college education to help develop or improve the intelligence of their children. Most things that every parent can do for both the children can be done right in the home. It can be inexpensive and fun for both the children and their parents. It appears that parents who play an important role in their child's education develop more interest in the school, and their children will get a better education.

Several important ideas come to mind when working with children. Some of them are very basic, and can be used to an advantage when working with children. We as parents must remember that most children have the basic ability to learn. Although we are not sure how much children can learn we do know that they are capable of learning much more than they usually learn.

It is generally felt by most educators and psychologists that children learn about sixty per-cent of what they are ever going to learn by the time they enter kindergarten, or by the time they are about five years old. This statement may be open for debate, but as teachers, we only have to expand on what children already know in order to make their educational program a worthwhile one. As parents, we have to be sure that the quantity and quality of what we teach our children before five years of age are of such that the child will be encouraged to learn more after entering school.

Children behave much as they are expected to behave. If we feel that a child can learn and be successful in school, he probably will be successful in school. We as parents and teachers must have high expectations for our children, and encourage the schools to maintain high expectations for all children.

One of the most important things that parents can do for their children is to have confidence in them. When our children feel that they are expected to be successful, they usually try harder and are willing to try new ideas.

Whenever possible, parents should use the standard English language when teaching their children. This, as opposed to the use of a dialect, assures that the child will receive the same early language training as he will in school. Make every effort to talk to the child on a level that he can understand, but in language where he sometimes has to use context clues to comprehend word meanings. This helps him to develop his vocabulary, powers of concentration, and his ability to think through on problems. Since language is the major form of communication, it is very important to the development of intelligence that the child has a good language foundation.

Parents may also desire to teach their children using another language, because it is sometimes desirable to be bilingual. Learning in English will help children adjust to schools. If parents do not speak English, they should teach their children in their native language. It is much easier for children to learn a concept in a second language if they already know it in their first language.

Above are some basic ideas to remember in any attempt to improve the intelligence of our children. This topic will be continued for about two more weeks in order that we as parents and teachers may work together to improve the intellectual functioning of our children.

**Write a letter to the editor today.**