

THE HUGHES REPORT

by Thomas F. Hughes



Two and one-half billion (not million) dollars a year. That is the convention and vacation dollars spent in these United States by Blacks. It has been pointed out that the Black economy in the U.S.A. is larger than the sixteenth largest country in the world.

In a recent broadcast from Atlanta, called "Open Up" hosted by the brilliant Xermona Clayton on Cable Channel 24 at 9:00 p.m. Sundays, Clayton stated that we will never have segregation in the South again, because business people now realize what a huge sum of money comes from Blacks, if they will convene in your home town - not to mention the resident Blacks. Clayton continued by saying one of the newest hotels in Atlanta had three Black conventions as their first and was nearly in the Black financially after those conventions. There are 164 Black groups holding conventions. The average Black person spends \$124.00 daily in Atlanta, which is the same amount spent daily by a person in Las Vegas based on the latest available figures. This is quite a revelation, because Atlanta has no gambling and only a small percent of the number of shows available in Las Vegas. The percentage of visitors who are Black coming to Las Vegas are as follows:

- By Charter 11%
- By Airline..... 8-9%
- By Train 15%
- By Auto..... 7%
- By Junket..... 10%
- By Convention..... 4%
- From Southern California..... 10%
- From Foreign Countries..... 3%
- From High Income 15/40,000..... 5-11%

These figures showing Blacks constitute only 4% of the conventions, indicates very little total Black conventions here. Since only 3% of Black Foreign Visitors come here, it follows that Blacks, Foreign or Domestic, do not come to Las Vegas and the question is WHY?

In 1977 the Las Vegas Convention Authority had a meeting of Blacks and authorized a study project by JRH Marketing Services, Inc. of New York, a Black Study Group. The report was named "Attitudes Toward Las Vegas Among Black Men & Women." The Harris Survey showed that 32% of them liked shows as opposed to 31% casinos and gambling, 19% said it was too hot, 16% complained of losing, one third of 364 interviewed said they would like to stay in the Black community when it is developed and 81% said they would like to visit the Black community. A whopping 71% said they would like to go to Las Vegas for a convention. Some of the negative verbatim responses were:

- "Nothing said, but I got the impression I wasn't wanted."
- "Some restaurants didn't seem to want Blacks/were slow in serving."
- "Discos were prejudiced."
- "Some people lie and say there is no room when there is."
- "Some clubs say they are private to keep Blacks out - whites are admitted."

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