

2/15/96

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FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
VIDEOTAPED REMARKS for FINCA's 10TH ANNIVERSARY GALA AND AUCTION
February 15, 1996

I am so happy to congratulate FINCA International on a decade of helping our world's less advantaged men and women help themselves. I only wish I could speak to you in person.

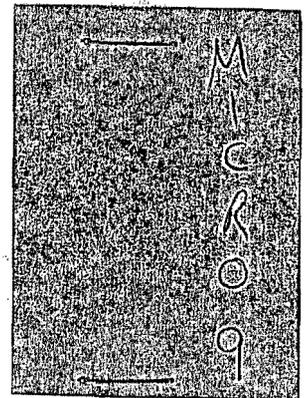
The basis for any long-term solution to poverty rests in a community's ability to help those living in poverty raise their own incomes. Most of us realize that the poor are capable and hardworking. What they lack is not initiative, but opportunity. FINCA has taken this idea to heart. Through 2,500 local banks here and around the world, FINCA has provided the disadvantaged with opportunity -- the opportunity to borrow small amounts of money, to start small businesses, to prove that they are creditworthy, and most important, to improve their own lives and the lives of their families and communities.

The modest loans you give have yielded amazing results. I saw those results firsthand on my visit to the FINCA Village Bank, "Mothers United" in Managua, Nicaragua. The women I met there told me how modest loans of \$50 to \$300 had changed their lives. One woman talked about a bakery business she had started; another made mosquito netting; still another told me how her loan enabled her to make a living as a seamstress.

The hard-working women were proud that their earnings had made them even more productive members of their community. They had become a network of support for one another, too, giving their chosen name, "Mothers United," special meaning.

I know how hard many of you have worked over the past ten years to bring village banking to more than 60,000 families in Africa, Asia and the Americas. I am particularly pleased to know that FINCA is taking its methodology to the former Soviet Union and to our own country. I wish you only the best as you continue to bring hope, opportunity and economic vitality to the forgotten neighborhoods of the world.

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Foundation for International Community Assistance (FINCA) Gala

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Briefing

FINCA International will be celebrating its tenth anniversary with a Gala and Fundraising Auction on March 21, 1996, at the National Museum of Women in the Arts. The 6:30-9:30 pm event will begin with a silent auction, followed by a short program beginning with your video. Jo Noble, a member of their Advisory Board and the event's Master of Ceremonies, will introduce your video at approximately 8:30 pm, FINCA founder John Hatch will also be speaking.

The event will include a "FINCA Marketplace," in which some of the local "self-employment associations" will display their products and offer information about their services. Some of the Greater-DC "self-employment associations" include the North Capitol Entrepreneurs, Providers United for Families Business Associates (PUFF), and Future Empowering Women Peer Lending Association (FEW PLA). Crafts such as weavings and paintings from Guatemala, and baskets from Honduras will be on display. An audience of approximately 300 Board of Directors, Advisory Board Members, and people involved in the microenterprise field are expected.

FINCA is a non-profit organization funded by the Agency for International Development, foundations, corporations, service clubs (churches and rotary), and private individuals. In the past ten years, FINCA's 2,500 village banks have brought village banking to more than 60,000 families in Africa, Asia, and the Americas. The village bankers at *Madres Unidas* Bank (Mothers United), one of FINCA's branches in Nicaragua, were moved by your visit there because they felt forgotten by their own government. After your visit, the village bank voted to change its name to *Madres Unidas con Hillary* (Mothers United with Hillary).

Several members of Congress are serving on The Gala Honorary Committee, including Patricia Schroeder, Constance Morella, Eleanor Holmes Norton, Paul Sarbanes, and John Conyers.

Secretary Ron Brown's Speech to Ghanaian Women Entrepreneurs

On Tuesday, February 20, 1996, Secretary Ron Brown will be in Accra, Ghana, one of five countries he will visit during his Commercial Development Mission in Africa. The afternoon of the 20th, Secretary Brown will be speaking to a group of Ghanaian women entrepreneurs. The Secretary requested that you address the group with a video message to speak to the important role that women play in developing countries. The focus of his speech will touch upon three important themes: 1) the celebration of African History Month in the United States and the opportunity this allows to highlight the cultural and historical contributions of Americans of African descent; 2) the important linkage between Ghanians and African Americans in the United States with an emphasis on the shared values of family, children and a strong cultural identity; and 3) the crucial role of Ghanaian women in the economic and social development of Ghana.