First names in freer enterprise.

Fewer than 3 per cent of American businesses are owned by the black, Spanish-speaking and Indian-Americans who make up 17 per cent of our population.

These companies have done something about it.

Each is among the first sponsors of a Minority Enterprise Small Business Investment Company. (Or MESBIC, for short.)

The seed capital they provided is being channeled directly to promising businesses in the form of long-term loans (5 to 20 years), equity investments or a combination of both.

The leveraging potential is impressive. Through Small Business Administration loans and guarantees, as much as $15 of investment monies can be generated for each $1 of private capital.

Headline stuff? Hardly. MESBIC sponsorship simply means financially backing minority people who want to go into business, then helping them make a go of it.

Not all will make it, even with help. The first MESBIC sponsors knew that.

But most will. And that makes MESBIC a concrete way to make the American free enterprise system a little freer.

Maybe a little stronger, too.

If you agree that's good business, ask for complete information on MESBIC sponsorship.

You'll be in good company.