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## **Freedom Is the Answer for Us, Too** **by Scott McPherson**

“[Market] systems are the ones that are producing the most for their people and dictatorships and despotism don’t,” said Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, commenting on the economic plight of North Korea under communist rule. Echoing this sentiment two days later, Michael O’Hanlon, senior fellow at the left-wing Brookings Institution, wrote, “North Korea needs a market economy ... to improve the lot of its own people.”

So it’s the free market, not command-and-control central planning and bureaucratic management, that provides the best assortment and largest quantity of goods and services, to the greatest number of people? What an amazing revelation!

In light of Rumsfeld’s and O’Hanlon’s discovery, can we now count on this to become official Bush administration policy on economic matters? If so, then surely we will see a concerted effort on the part of the president to eliminate any and all obstacles to the free working of the market in this country. After all, what is good for the communists is certainly good for us, too, right?

Will the alphabet soup of federal agencies that interfere with the free and voluntary exchange of goods and services in America, such as OSHA, ICC, FDA, COE, FAA, FTC, SEC, NLRB, ATF, TVA, and the FCC, just to name a few, be immediately disbanded, and their legions of bureaucrats be relieved of the power to regulate and control the marketplace?

Can we count on the president to call for a free, unregulated market in our health-care, banking, transportation, pharmaceutical, housing, steel, agriculture, manufacturing, telecommunications, broadcasting, business, computer, and other industries?

Will President Bush ask Congress to repeal the capital-gains tax, the corporate and personal income taxes, the Social Security tax, and the Medicare tax to assist Americans in returning to the days when individuals were free to make and spend money in the marketplace without any government interference?

Will we hear any speeches on the evils of wage and price controls? What about anti-monopoly laws, which interfere with successful businesses’ gaining as large a share of their

respective markets as their customers freely grant them? And what about a free-market solution to education?

How confusing it must be for countries such as Cuba and North Korea to hear our public officials denounce communist economic systems as pragmatically flawed and morally bankrupt — while telling the American people that *their* version of central planning is actually called the free market.

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