

The Collapse of the Soviet Union Reconsidered
By Roger Keeran and Thomas Kenny

Abstract

In Socialism Betrayed: Behind the Collapse of the Soviet Union, Keeran and Kenny argued that the collapse of the Soviet Union was caused not by any fundamental flaws of the Soviet system but by the policies of Mikhail Gorbachev and that these policies were in turn facilitated by the preceding development of a “second economy” in the Soviet Union. In the present article, the authors consider several criticisms of the book as well as the implications of the reforms currently underway in Cuba. The authors argue that attempts to explain the Soviet collapse by reference to the backwardness of productive forces in the Soviet Union or by Stalin’s authoritarianism are not persuasive. The authors also suggest that the current reforms in Cuba underscore the problematic aspects of the Gorbachev policies.