

Creating Capitalism

The State and Small Business since 1945

Linda Weiss

Basil Blackwell

Contents

Preface	ix
Abbreviations	xi
1 Forms of capitalism and the state	1
The revisionist critique: from demise to dualism	4
A radical view: from survival to subordination	6
Bringing in the state	8

PART I

THE ITALIAN CASE, 1945-1975

2 The problem: its contours and explanations	13
Small enterprise: definitions, importance and trends	14
Italy in international perspective	15
The rediscovery of small business	19
Existing approaches	20
3 The petite bourgeoisie on trial	31
Who were the Fascists?	32
Right-wing extremism after 1945	38
An alternative profile of the small business stratum	43
Conclusion	54
4 Patterns of state support I: bountiful but bounded	55
The legal regime of the small firm	57
Financing artisan enterprise	58
Results of the loan scheme 1953-1976	60
The financial structure for small industry	65

Results of the loan schemes 1952-1976	69
An overall panorama	77
General conclusions	79
5 Patterns of state support II: beyond employment	81
Arguments for small business: necessity and preference in political action	83
Framing legislation: the primacy of labour?	90
Implementing policy: arresting decline or promoting proliferation?	94
Clientelism and firm size	100
Conclusion	103
6 The social project	104
Introduction	104
The middle class core of demochristian ideology	106
The DC project: a property-owning democracy	107
The case for ideology	113
Conclusion	125
7 The internal challenge	127
The nature of the political problem	128
Challenge and response: some interim conclusions	134
Christian democracy and big business	138
Against the trend: state and enterprise in the concentration era	150
Conclusion	158
PART II	
THE CREATIVE STATE	
IN RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT	
8 Giantism and geopolitics	161
Introduction	161
Interstate competition and capitalist concentration	164
National variations on the geopolitical theme:	
France, Germany, Britain	172
American exceptionalism	188
Conclusion	194
9 Re-creating micro capitalism	196
The relative importance of state and social structure	197

Politics as recognition and regulation	203
Lessons for America and Britain	204
Conclusion	210
Appendix I	212
Appendix II	223
Notes	226
Bibliography	250
Index	269