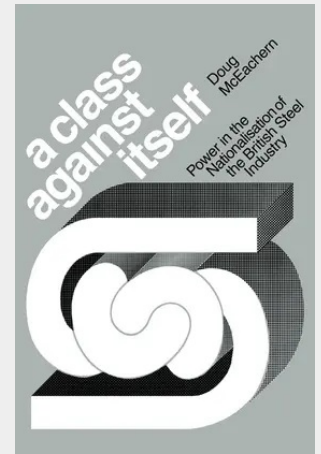


McEachern

A Class Against Itself

Power and the Nationalisation of the British Steel Industry

This study of the complicated disputes between 1945 and 1970 over the nationalisation of the British steel industry offers original insights into the distribution and exercise of power in a capitalist state. It examines in detail the ways in which the views of different classes and pressure groups in society were reflected in the history of steel nationalisation, and shows that the issue of nationalisation brought out inherent conflicts within the capitalist class. This class opposed the Labour governments' attempts to nationalise steel, but Doug McEachern shows that those attempts were in fact securing, perhaps unwittingly, the interests of capital. In this sense the opposition of capital to nationalisation made it a class arguing against itself, against its own long-term interests. Unlike many other studies of either power or the state, this analysis is based on the sustained assessment of the complex issues involved in a long-drawn out dispute about a policy of real social significance.



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