reports of anarchist groups being formed all over the country, even in places where there are no CNT unions. These groups, such as the newly-reorganized Iberian Federation of Libertarian Youth, are especially strong among younger people and students, who were not even born when the Civil War ended. Some of the groups have engaged in armed struggle, generally bank expropriations to support strikes. There is also a pacifist anarchist group, Solidarida Obrera.

Mujeres Libres (Free Women) has also been reorganized. This group was first established during the Civil War to give unorganized and non-wage-employed women an opportunity to take effective action in the struggle. It had close links to the CNT. (A monthly magazine, **Mujeres Libres** is available c/o Sara Guillen, Plaine des Astres, Montady 34310, Capestang, France.)

Until the end of the Civil War, the main strength of the Spanish anarchist movement was among the workers and peasants. But the old generation of CNT fighters — numbering about two million — is mostly dead, aged or in exile. The CNT ideal was nurtured during the long Fascist night by the guerrilla underground (names such as Sabate and Facerias), with its ceaseless activities from 1939 to the present.

Today, credit for resurgence of the CNT belongs to the spontaneous movement of students and young workers, most of whom were not even born when the Civil War ended. Ninety per cent of the current membership is young people, with an average age of 30.

As **Espoir**, the organ of the CNT-in-exile, noted in predicting a strong CNT revival: "Neither the politicians of the centre or the left, nor the Communists stimulate or orientate the class struggle in Spain, which arises spontaneously from the working class. Those who animate and stimulate the demands and the direct action of the workers, are to a great extent, our comrades of the CNT underground."

This view has been recently confirmed by non-anarchists. The late Andre Malraux, a Gaullist minister who was an air pilot on the Republican side during the Civil War, said, "What the French people do not know is that the only real, non-Communist working class movement and mass organization in Spain is the anarchist one." Pedro Schwartz, professor of economic doctrine at the University of Madrid: "The tradition of anarcho-syndicalism in Spain is very much alive because the organization and tactics of the spontaneous underground workers' organizations (decentralization, direct action and self-rule on the shop floor) correspond to anarcho-syndicalist tradition."

Juan Carlos is pushing through with elections, planned for this Spring, to legitimize his rule. The Left parties can be expected to make a fairly strong showing. Augustin Souchy, an anarchist for more than 66 years, toured North America last Fall to raise funds for the CNT. He said (reported in **Industrial Worker**) the election results would probably force the government to legalize several non-Fascist unions rather than just a Communist-dominated central (like the CP's Intersyndical in Portugal):

"As the great majority of workers are against being obliged to belong to one national labor confederation, I think that what will happen is that the CNT, the UGT, the Basques and the Catholics will end up with full liberty to organize as they want. There will probably be four, maybe five labor unions, since the Communists and their workers' commissions will want to have a national confederation also. This will probably be the picture of labor in Spain within the next year (1977)."

The CNT stands on a program of struggle for the immediate demands of the day, together with the goal of libertarian communism. It addresses people with their economic problems and at the same time offers them a view of themselves as free and whole human beings. It emphasizes that decisions do not originate at the top but at the local shop and at the local community. In a world wracked by dictators, nationalism raised to a feverish pitch, militarism and oppression, the anarchists of Spain are following the road to freedom, international brotherhood, justice and peace.

(Thanks for much of the material in this article to Abe Bluestein, the CNT's English-language broadcaster in Barcelona during the Civil War; and Sam Dolgoff, author of **The Anarchist Collectives: Workers Self-Management in Spain, 1936-39.**)

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workers. A plenario, on August 28, decided that a strike was the only solution. One worker recalls: "Our demands were the sacking of the management for incompetence, and the right to work. . . The government approached us and asked us nicely not to release our decisions to the press, to avoid 'shocks.' The boss has recently begun writing things on the walls, and also writing lying letters to the government. He has also written to the parents of the younger employees, saying what bad company they were keeping. . ."

Among the problems discussed in Committees were whether or not workers should take part in the management of companies which still remained in private hands: in a nutshell whether or not they should help employers increase their profits. This was generally and increasingly rejected. Attitudes were more varied in relation to firms which the workers had taken over and where the employers had fled. At stake were issues central to the whole discussion about self-management, about its recuperation under capitalism, and about its central role in the institutional framework of a socialist society.

The real problems within the class were considerable. They reflected differences of "status", of age, of sex, and between employed and unemployed workers.

Calls to narrow the range of wage scales produced considerable opposition from the better paid workers. Generally, as in TAP, this was got round by raising the lower scales and freezing the top ones. But in the case of specialized categories (like pilots, who threatened to sell their labour power to another company) these questions were not easily dealt with. There was moreover a definite tendency for the better-paid workers, who were often more articulate, to dominate and sometimes even to manipulate the plenarios to such an extent that other workers walked out.

What the workers were seeking to do (and in many cases achieved) was to tackle certain aspects of the relations of production: the relations they experienced in their daily lives. This had the effect of lessening the separation of the workers from their means of livelihood, allowing them to situate themselves more consciously within the total process of production. As long as capitalism remained, all this was little more than the self-management of their own exploitation: it did not abolish the exchange of labour power for wages. But the insights achieved could be of lasting value to the building of socialism.

The older workers (and in the last analysis the revolution would have to mobilize their support) tended to be more conservative. They had the most to lose. They often warned against "adventures." "Who would pay the wages if the firm was taken over?" they asked again and again. There were often no funds to start with. There was no security. To lose one's job was to jeopardize one's survival. They knew about wage labour. Organization was paramount, they rightly stressed.

At Nefil (a furniture factory in Guimaraes, near Porto) the old management had been completely routed. The workers sold the goods produced at the gates and to street hawkers. But how was the money to be shared? As one worker put it: "The question is very difficult. It has really been a headache, this workers' control. People want to adopt a more united, more socialist attitude, those earning more giving some to those who earn less. But this raises a lot of problems. One proposal was to pay out according to the type of work. Another was to pay according to need. Yet another was to pay everyone the same. People realized that everyone couldn't be paid equally. If this happened it would cause disunity among the workers. We still haven't reached agreement over this. The proposal to cut some wages and increase others (where there is real need) is the most popular."

The questions of common ownership and of judicial and effective power over the means of production were rarely raised explicitly (though they were always in the background). Many groups called for nationalisation as a means of achieving such control. Only a few could see beyond this reinforcement of State power, could envisage a genuinely communist society. Problems of immediate survival inevitably surged to the forefront. The workers in occupation needed raw materials, machinery, money. In the absence of any other source of help they were forced to call on the government or on the MFA.

In many firms under self-management the workers continued to produce the same type of goods. In most instances there were major problems of distribution. Many of the bigger firms had so scattered their production units that many of their plants only turned out components of the ultimate product. There was no question of being able to sell or distribute such components within the country without a structured distribution network and without an awareness of overall demand. The fundamental question was restructuring the whole economy in terms of communist production, of production for use. This task could only be tinkered with on

"The doors of revolution seem open again, after forty-eight years of repression."

a local basis.

One of the main shortcomings of the Workers' Committees was the lack of any organization controlled from below. The unions and parties fought for domination of the plenarios. In many cases, the Committees didn't represent the majority of the workers, despite the fact that they had been democratically elected by them. The workers in many cases put the onus of struggle on the Committees and remained passive themselves, expecting the Committees to get on with it, alone. Power was a hot potato.

If the Workers' Committees were to provide a real alternative to capital they would sooner or later have to face up to some political and institutional problems.

The most important was how to organise themselves into a larger federation. This was talked about on many occasions, but it was usually the political parties who were behind such moves, not the workers themselves.

In January 1975 it was decided, on the initiative of worker committees of Efacec-Inel (electrical firm), to set up a Federation of Workers' Committees under the name of Inter-Empresas. This linked 24 firms, among them the largest in Portugal, "to aid and support workers' struggles." Inter-Empresas formed a bloc on a par with Intersindical (PCP-dominated union federation) and in many ways soon became more popular.

A large demonstration on Feb. 7 organized by Inter-Empresas in the face of increasing unemployment and a possible NATO threat was the culmination of meetings between various Workers' Committees. Inter-Empresas soon weakened, and for good reasons. It was the obvious place to be (or to get into) for any vanguard party worthy of the name. Every Leninist group in sight (and some invisible ones) made for Inter-Empresas.

At first certain delegates from Intersindical (who had also been elected to their respective Workers' Committees) tried to form a block within Inter-Empresas. Through them the PCP sought to push its "battle for production" within the portals of Inter-Empresas itself. The result was that many Committees stopped sending delegates to general meetings. This facilitated the manipulation of the Inter-Empresas skeleton by Party delegates or sympathisers (PCP, PRP-BR, MES, MRPP, FECml), and contributed to its further dessication.

Within a year, Inter-Empresas had fragmented into various "inters" controlled by different political parties. These fought even over the salvage of the fragments.

Another attempted regroupment which appeared at this time was the "Federation of Covilha." Covilha was a town in the centre, in which were concentrated many textile factories, and which had a rich history of workers' struggles. Here some 93 different Committees met over the weekend of September 26-27, 1975. Fifty-two of them were mandated by their plenarios.

Topics discussed at the Congress included: Workers' Control (forms of control exercised by Workers' Committees over production and consumption, self-management, etc.), working hours, arming the working class, purges, unemployment, workers-peasant alliances, nationalizations, etc.

This Covilha Congress was, however, supported by the MRPP (Maoists) and thousands of their highly characteristic red and yellow "non-party" posters had appeared all over the country, publicizing it in factories and public places. The MRPP had infiltrated the original Inter-Empresas and through such Workers' Committees as Efacec-Inel were now attempting to infiltrate all the other Workers' Committees related to this Inter.

The weakness of the State apparatus and the discredit in which the political parties found themselves left the task and burden of self-organization firmly in the hand (and on the shoulders) of the workers. Both the State and the political parties were aware of this reality and attempted to manipulate it by creating supra-party structures. The PCP were most notorious in this respect, the MRPP coming a close second. The PS (Socialist Party) too, realising its falling support within the working class, were present in Covilha.

The Workers' Councils (of the PRP-BR) offered a different field for party manoeuvres, more cleverly disguised but just as manipulative. In a leaflet distributed on August 2 we read: "The Councils are the proposed organisation of the workers at their place of work, in their neighbourhoods, in the barracks. The Councils seek to form structures to take power, both political and economic, in order to establish socialism. The CRTSM (Revolutionary Council Workers, Soldiers and Sailors) can't become the tool of any particular party because of the way they are elected. But this is not to say that they can't play an important role in the socialist revolution. Theirs is the task of ideologically organizing the militants and of presenting proposals to the class. It will be up to the class, and the class alone, to decide what they want."

The Councils appeared at the very moment when, after the fracas at Inter-Empresas, the workers began to feel the need to create new forms of organization. But they were not born directly of working class struggles. As **Combate** put it (July 17, 1975): "It is in the moment of impasse in the autonomous workers' struggle when people are saturated with party politics — but also at a time when the workers haven't yet created autonomous organisations relating various struggles to one another — that this wide open space for opportunist adventure appears."

Councils managed to implant themselves in a few companies: Lisnave, Setenave, Efacec, Cambournac, etc. There is no denying that their demonstrations had an effect on Otelo, and on the "left" of the MFA in general. Because of this the CRTs could support COPCON and the "progressive" wing of the MFA without any serious thought being given to the whole question of State capitalism.

As a reality the Councils hardly existed, except in the minds of PRP planners and intellectuals who had made a fetish of the "council" form, i.e., who had a traditional perspective. While workers participated in demonstrations organised by the PRP Councils, these bodies had little real life in the factories except as yet another party political faction. Of the 1300 workers in Lisnave only two or three dozen actively supported the Councils. Other workers supported the Councils temporarily, as on demonstrations organized by the PRP searching for new means of self-expression). But workers soon reverted back to their original instruments of struggle: the Workers Committees. Throughout, the Councils remained more an idea than a real movement.

These experiences provide rich lessons in the techniques of manipulation, and in methods of resisting them. But these lessons were not assimilated fast enough. The majority of the workers who wanted to fight capitalism never took the lead themselves. It was during this period that they could most

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