

49/33

IRE LEAVES THE EMPIRE

Four hundred and eight years after Henry the Eighth was crowned King of Ireland, Eire cuts its last link with Britain. President Sean O'Kelly - the new state's first leader - joins a dense crowd in Dublin's O'Connell street as the flag of Eire is hoisted on the G.P.O. building. Here, as the veterans of the 1916 rebellion still recall, was the headquarters of the Sinn Fein rising. And here, 33 years later to the day, the new Eire officially becomes an independent republic.

There follows the biggest military review Dublin has seen for years. Units of the Republican Army parade past President O'Kelly.

So comes into being the world's youngest Republic. Although out of the Commonwealth, Eire's many common interests with Britain will keep the two nations close partners in the years to come.