

## Ireland of the Welcomes:

### The Inter Parliamentary Union and French Envoy Extraordinary, 1930

#### Introduction

By 1930 the Irish Government's international hospitality infrastructure was a well-oiled set of comprehensive programmes geared to specific interests (tourism, agriculture, defence, etc.) mixed with tourism highlights. The Department of External Affairs (DEA) focused on international gatherings held in London where visiting delegates were invited to and shown around the country as well as fact-finding missions and other large groups visiting Europe.

The DEA were responsible for external coordination and the partner ministry for internal organisation, the cooperation between the two is detailed in a memo by John J Fahy, May 1929<sup>1</sup>. The higher the status of the visitors the better the treatment and could include meals hosted by a Minister. "Generally, policy is to keep State hospitality as exclusive as possible".

This exclusive lavish hospitality is best seen with these two synopses of the visit of the Inter Parliamentary Union and arrival of the first French Envoy Extraordinary in July 1930 as reported by the *Irish Independent*, *Irish Press* and *Irish Times*.<sup>2</sup> This was probably the high point of generous Government hospitality prior to the impact of the Great Depression.

#### Inter Parliamentary Union

The Inter Parliamentary Union was founded in 1889 at the instigation of William Randal Cramer, UK, and Frederic Passy, France, after a meeting in Paris the previous year as an international forum of parliamentarians for multilateral negotiations for mediation and arbitration of interstate conflicts.<sup>3</sup>

"Between the two World Wars, the IPU intensified its work in the field of peaceful settlement of international disputes, the reduction of armaments and international security, and the development of the rules of warfare, but also dealt with support for the League of Nations, the further codification and development of international law, the promotion and improvement of the representative system, the protection of national minorities, colonial problems, economic questions, social and humanitarian

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.difp.ie/docs/1929/State-hospitality/920.htm>

<sup>2</sup> The sole sources for this article; all speeches were overwhelmingly full of praise and complements

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.ipu.org/strct-e/1889.htm> "It was repeatedly stated that an arbitration treaty between the US and France would be easier to set up than one between the US and GB, since there were disagreements between the two countries to do with Ireland, Canada and fisheries". The 39<sup>th</sup> Conference was held in Ireland in 1950.

policy, and intellectual relations.”<sup>4</sup> However due to its complicated relationship with the League of Nations its influence gradually declined over the 1930s due to overlapping missions and agendas.

At the end of the 26<sup>th</sup> conference in London in 1930<sup>5</sup> around 180 delegates<sup>6</sup> accepted an invitation by the Irish Government to visit the country. They were welcomed off the mail boat at Dun Laoghaire on the 23<sup>rd</sup> July by Senator Barrington; Senator Douglas; Mr F Aiken TD, Mr M O’Connell, Leinster House; C Murphy, Clerk of the Dail; Donal O’Sullivan, Clerk to the Senate; Major P Ruzicka, Consul for Czechoslovakia; Mr Justice, Vice Consul for Belgium and Mr Weenink Consul for the Netherlands. Prof Tierney TD, Senator O Farrell and Mr Coffey, assistant clerk to the Senate, travelled with the delegates from London.

A special train took them to Dublin and then to Leinster House for a reception organised by the Free State Inter-Parliamentary Group. They were welcomed by Speaker Michael Hayes; music was provided by the Army No 1 Band under Lieut. James Doyle and light refreshments were served in the restaurant. The Dail was decorated with flowers and palm leaves, which to one reporter, was a welcome contrast to the normally “severely businesslike appearance of the interior”.

On the 24<sup>th</sup> they had lunch at the Mansion House hosted by Taoiseach Cosgrave though, because he was unable to attend, they were addressed by Ernest Blythe, Executive Council Vice-President and Minister of Finance, who discussed Ireland’s new role as an independent country while harking back to its past. The No 1 Army band played O’Donnell Abu as they entered. Votes of thanks came from M La Fontaine, Belgium, A J Montague, chairman US delegation, Ferdinand Merlin, France, who complimented Ireland for “so many eminent men and charming women”, Rennie Smith UK, F J Borgbjerg, Danish Minister of Education, and M Delski, Poland.

In the afternoon they went to the Vice Regal Lodge<sup>7</sup> for a garden party in their honour. This was a huge affair with over 2,000 guests and possibly the largest reception hosted by any Free State Government. They “were received on the centre walk of the gardens, which were gay with flowers, and in this setting the No 1 Army Band under the direction of Colonel Fritz Broase rendered a delightful selection of music through the afternoon.” Newspapers have several columns of guests’ name and short descriptions of what the VIP ladies were wearing. Photos show long queues awaiting entrance.

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.internationaldemocracywatch.org/index.php/inter-parliamentary-union>

<sup>5</sup> Resolutions, Twenty-Sixth Conference Inter Parliamentary Union, London, July 16-22, 1930, *Advocate of Peace through Justice*, vol. 92, no. 4, 1930, pp. 269–272

<sup>6</sup> Many travelled with unnamed wives and friends, totalling >200. The delegation did not include those that returned home due to impending elections in Germany, Poland and Spain. For a list of representatives attending see appendix

<sup>7</sup> The Lodge was a focal point of the diplomatic community in Ireland up to 1932; from when they first showed their credentials to subsequent Government receptions; invitations were highly prized among Dublin’s elite

On the 25<sup>th</sup> they went to Glendalough in seven buses where they heard a lecture by Pr McAllister and were accompanied by Richard Mulcahy, Minister for Local Government; Pr Tierney TD; Dr Hayes, Speaker; Senator Barrington; Senator Cummins; Senator Hooper; Senator Mrs Wyse Power; Senator Farren; J T O'Connell, TD Leader of the Labour Party; Frank Aitken TD. They had tea at the Woodenbridge Hotel, Avoca no doubt to the airs of Thomas Moore. During the afternoon they were joined by de Valera.<sup>8</sup>

In the evening there was a reception at Leinster House hosted by the Speaker Hayes. The National Museum was specially opened with a lecture on the collection by Dr Mahr, Keeper of Irish Antiquities.<sup>9</sup> On the morning of the 26<sup>th</sup> they toured the Guinness Brewery<sup>10</sup> and, in the afternoon, the Agricultural College, Glasnevin. Both institutions were used to hosting government-sponsored tours.

On the 27<sup>th</sup> they visited the Boyne valley and heard a lecture on Newgrange by Dr Mahr followed by tea<sup>11</sup> at in a marquee tent at Stackallen Castle hosted by D O'M Leahy, bloodstock trainer. The vote of thanks was given by Hartveig Frisch (Denmark) and Senator Kamel Sedky Bey (Egypt). They departed on the evening by mail boat from Dun Laoghaire and were seen off by Dail representatives and senior civil servants led by Diarmuid Coffey, secretary of Irish branch of the IPU.

#### French Envoy Extraordinary

Charles A Alphan, first Envoy Extraordinary of the newly promoted French Legation in Ireland arrived two days later on the 29<sup>th</sup> July 1930. Born in 1872<sup>12</sup>, he was son of Jean-Charles, an engineer and Director of Works in Paris who, from 1850 in collaboration with Baron Haussman and Leon Say, was responsible for the redesign of Paris and some of its most famous landmarks; his maternal grandfather was astronomer Herve Faye.

Educated in Law, he specialised in private international law and arbitration; he joined the Diplomatic Service in 1902 to become chef de cabinet to the Minister of Foreign Affairs for twenty years. He was one of the Ministry's main representatives at international conferences, viz. private law, bills of exchange, white slave traffic and assistance to foreigners, before 1914, and to the Armistice, Cannes, Genoa and Franco-Soviet conferences after 1918.

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<sup>8</sup> He had a practice of discreetly joining such events for a few hours as a political courtesy; apparently with government acceptance

<sup>9</sup> For a list of attendees and the dresses worn see appendix

<sup>10</sup> T B Case MD, C J Newbold and H S Guinness directors made the welcome, G W Narranore was caterer

<sup>11</sup> Mills Ltd caterers

<sup>12</sup> Biographies of him and his wife appear in all national newspapers

He was appointed Envoy Extraordinaire<sup>13</sup> to Ireland, indicating how important France considered the relationship and received a fulsome government welcome, almost equivalent to a state visit. He was accompanied by his wife, son and three daughters in their late teens. Another son, Herve, was by this time Inspector of Finance and later became economic advisor to De Gaulle during WW2 followed by an illustrious Ambassadorial career to NATO, UN and USA.

Madame Jeanne Alphanand was the daughter of the Comte Margerin de Cremont whose family traced their ancestry to a Leinster McGrian family who settled in France in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Her late father had been an ardent Hibernophile, a co-founder, and later president, of L'Association de St. Patrice (Association of St. Patrick) in Paris, 1893. He was "a sensitive poet" who had "written verses on Ireland inspired by the very noblest sentiments".

At Dun Laoghaire the Alphanand family received a lavish welcome with guard of honour, and were met by D O'Hegarty and J P Walshe who went on board and welcomed them on behalf of Irish Government. The French were represented by M Vacher Corbiere, Consul General and Andre Leprevost Commercial Attaché with their wives.

On land, the National anthem was played by the No 1 Army Band under Lieutenant Doyle and the Guard of Honour, 2<sup>nd</sup> battalion Portobello, under Captain Keogh and Lieutenants McKenna and Lennon were then inspected by Alphanand. Assisting in the arrangements were Captain Fosberry Holmes, RN Harbour Master; J M Irwin, traffic manager LMS Company; Captain Cassidy, Assistant Harbour Master; Superintendent Clarke and Inspectors O'Riordan and Gilbride, F Division Civic Guards.

The following day: "Shortly before 11 o'clock a mounted escort, with trumpeters, under Captain Harty, took up their position outside the French Consulate-General, and as the Minister left the trumpeters sounded the general salute and the mounted troops presented arms. A considerable crowd had collected and cheers of 'Good Luck', 'Failte', 'Vive la France' were raised as the Minister took his seat in the motor-car that was to take him to the Vice Regal Lodge."

They went at walking pace along the crowd-lined route; Alphanand was impressed by their enthusiasm and "acknowledged with smiles and lifting his hat." From St Stephen's Green they went via Kildare St, Nassau St, College Green, Westmoreland St, Sackville St, Frederick St, Blessington St, North Circular Road to the Phoenix Park via the Gough Monument.

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<sup>13</sup> A consulate had been established in Dublin in the 1890s; consular agents back to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century were primarily French and found in most Irish ports (*Thom's Directories*)

The driveway to the Lodge was lined with infantry who presented arms as the Minister passed. On arrival there was a cannon salute. He presented his credentials to Governor McNeill<sup>14</sup> and laudatory speeches were made, concluding with a 15 gun salute.

They returned by the Northern Quays via Grattan Bridge, Dame St and Grafton St.<sup>15</sup> At 4pm Alphant, attended by Roger Gucheron, Secretary of the new Legation, visited Government Buildings where a guard of honour presented arms and a bugle sounded the general salute. He was received by Mr Gilligan, Minister of External Affairs who hosted dinner in his honour.<sup>16</sup>

## Appendices

There are numerous lists of names of Irish that attended all IPU events as it was a high point in the international political social calendar, particularly the Vice Regal Garden Party whose published list of c.1,000 names in alphabetical order probably came from the Governor General's office.

### Appendix I

#### Inter Parliamentary Union Delegates<sup>17</sup>

Australia: Senator & Mrs Elliott Greham

Belgium: Emmanuel De Winde Mlle Elizabeth De Winde, Albert Francois & daughter, August De Schryter, Ernest Maes & Mlle Simonne Maes, Mr & Mrs Lafontaine, Mr Branquart, Mrs Spaak, Mr & Mrs Huysmanns, Deputy Senator Carton, Mr Dercka & son

Czechoslovakia: Dr Lev Winter, Senator Dr Wilhelm & Mrs Sita Medinger, Otakar Nebuska, Mrs Ruzena Nubuskavo

Denmark: Mr Holgar Dristiansen, Mr I P Iensen-Sterns, Mr Marinus Loerensen, Mr M K Woerensen, Mr J J Bjerring, Mr Harivig Frisch, Mr & Mrs Slebsager, Sekretar Otto & Mrs Himmelstrup, Mr Jasper & Mrs Simouson (Juge de la Cour Superieur), Mr & Mrs Rviter, Mr & Mrs Reventlow, Mr A C & Mrs Mortinson, Mr J E P & Mrs Hansen, Mr P & Mrs Andersen, Mr G f & Mrs Sorensen, Mr Alfred Brindsler, Mr Ole Bjorn Kraft, Mr F Z & Mrs Olga Borgbzer/Borgbgerg Mr Olaf & Mrs Andersen

Egypt: Kamel Sedky Bey

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<sup>14</sup> The Alphands and McNeills became good friends. When his daughter married Michael Fitzgerald, a Dublin solicitor, in Paris, 1932, the bride wore a 9-yard scarf of Carrickmacross lace, a gift of the McNeills who attended. Later that year the French Legation was scene of the incident that led to the controversy between McNeill and de Valera

<sup>15</sup> Inspector Hurley DMG was in charge of traffic arrangements

<sup>16</sup> He was only to stay three years, leaving Ireland in late 1932 to become Director of Office and Personnel, Ministry of Foreign Affairs. A commercial treaty and rugby match were successfully negotiated; the former was completed when a doubling of wine tax in 1929 was cancelled in the 1930 Budget

<sup>17</sup> There are minor typographical differences across the newspapers

France: Ed. & Mrs Largier, Mr Salles, Mr & Mrs Pieyre, Dr Ferdinand & Mrs Nerlin, Paul Basiell, Marcl Sturmelm

Greece: Alexander Mylones

Hungary: Stephen & Mrs Gorgey (MP) Joseph & Mrs Illes (MP) Nicholas Illes, W Paul Tomesanyi, (MP) Geza-Bishop Antal. Tirhamer, Erodi & Mrs Harrach (MP) Colman Kinkoly-Thege, Eugene Szaboky, Beln Usetty, George Platthy, Bela & Mrs Erody-Harrach

Italy : Il & Fillipo Comte Visconti Modrone,

Japan: J Hirose, J Miyakawa, M Jozuka, J Miura, J Nakamura, S Satake, S Tanchikura, J Yamaji, R Yamanori

Netherlands : Dr M Slingenberg, Th F M & Mrs Schaeoman, E Th Lockefer, Th M & Mrs Ketelaar, Dr A M & Mrs Joeckes, J & Mrs Koster, Mis J M J A Melier, Dr W N & Mrs van Lanschot, Dr P A & Mrs Diepenhorst, Dr D & Mlle van Embden, Ch G & Mrs Cramer, J B Westerdijk, Dr L A & Mrs Kesper, Miss Vellener, Miss J Westerman

Poland: Colonel Carl & Mrs Sophie Grache, Rev Otto Krayczyrski, Senator Gliwic, Deputy & Mrs Delski, Deputy & Mrs Grelinski

Rumania: Mr Toan Manolin, Mr & Mrs Gongopol, Mlle Ventura Senches, General M & Mrs Racovitza, Mr Petre V & Mrs Hanes, Mr & Mrs Bratu

South Africa: Senator R A Kerr

Sweden: Senator Erle & Mrs Charlotte Hallin, Senator Dr David Bergstrom, Senator & Miss Holmgren, Dr Frederick Johannesson, Rev Bertil Mogard, Senator Ivar Vennerstrom, Dr K G Westmann

Switzerland: Dr Herman & Mrs Helene Haberlin, Dr Victor Emil & Mrs Linn Scherer, Dr Freidrich & Mrs Olga Studer

United Kingdom: Sir Nicholas Grattan Doyle MP H A Grattan Doyle, Ben Riley, Rennie Smith

USA: Senator & Mrs Fountain, ex-Governor A J & Mrs Montague, Mrs Baker, Mr & Mrs Pasvolsky, Dr. Carl Chindblom, Mr Burton L French (Congress) Mr. Thomas C Cochrane, Mr, Mrs & Miss Cochrane, Mrs Ruth Bryan Owen, Mr Roy G Fitzgerald, Senator Connally, Mr F & Mrs La Guardia, Dr Call, Senator & Mrs Ashurst, Mr & Mrs Ellinwood, Mr Lewis Deshler, Miss Fannie Hurst, Miss B Livingstone

Other: Joseph Weydmann

## Appendix II

### Dresses: Leinster House Reception, 26<sup>th</sup> July

Mrs Hayes gown of black georgette and lace, Ellen Countess of Desart black satin gown the skirt trimmed with deep black silk fringe, Mrs Mulcahy black georgette and lace toilette, Mrs Barrington cyclamen coloured frock with silk fringe trimmings, Mrs Hallin brown net frock, Mrs Murnaghan royal blue crepe-de-chine Mrs Douglas frock of green and gold sequins. Fannie Hurst red velvet gown with silver tinsel, Mrs Wyse Power in black Miss Power soft shade of grey taffeta Madam Murkin black net frock, Mrs Ferris in grey lace with a coatee to match, Madame Boissier frock of lavender coloured lace, Miss Beulah Livingstone flowered black georgette with coatee of same material, Hon

Mrs Gordon Campbell blue and yellow flowered ninon, Madame Dobrzynski<sup>18</sup> a white satin frock with an effective black & white shawl, Mrs Gerald FitzGibbon gown of deep royal blue georgette, Mrs O'Byrne primrose-coloured georgette frock, Mrs Abbot blue and grey patterned ring velvet gown, with long coatee edged with grey fur, Mrs O'Hegarty flowered black ninon frock, Mrs Davitt black and yellow ninon ensemble Mrs Counihan gold satin gown, Mrs Montague gown of deep purple georgette, Mrs Erikson black and white satin frock with diamante trimmings, Miss Ruth Brien black crepe-de-chine frock, Mrs Brennan in orange georgette, Mrs J J McElligot lowered velvet gown, Mrs Michael Tierney black georgette frock with coatee trimmed with white fox fur, Mrs Hanna black ensemble, Mrs Bryan Owen black taffeta gown

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<sup>18</sup> Declaration of interest: She is the author's grandmother. For unexplained reasons, her Polish Consul General husband did not attend any of the events