I think that CODOFIL is finally realizing that the Acadian connection has been neglected during the 15 years of existence."

—Philippe Gustin

CODOFIL's political influence in Louisiana created in 1963 and funded in 1970 as a state agency called CODOFIL to carry on Domengeaux's mission. It was housed administratively by the Louisiana State University System's Department of Continuing Education and Research. Louisiana Protestant—that CODOFIL was born. "We felt the voluntary organizations did not have sufficient strength and power to take on a project of this kind and it needed state support," Domengeaux says. CODOFIL Director Philippe Gustin confirms the state legislature has always supported CODOFIL programs, largely through the influence of Domengeaux: "He did not even need to go to Baton Rouge, a phone call was enough."

Domengeaux says that in 1968 French had been abandoned in Louisiana. "It was not spoken on the streets, not spoken in the stores, the churches had abandoned it also, the schools as well. French was a thing of the past. It was identified with ignorance and poverty, and people just didn't want anything to do with it. So if we have done anything, we have brought back pride to the culture, to the language. Today people are not ashamed to speak French," says Domengeaux.

The pride factor turned out to be a crucial one—for tangible reasons of educational reform as well as for the intangibles of cultural identity and self-determination. "At the beginning, the resistance was great," says Domengeaux. "The schools opposed it. Particularly in South Louisiana, where the superintendents of schools and the principals of schools, who were the victims of psychological trauma that they suffered themselves, could not see (the value of) French and seriously opposed every move we made in the legislature for the French language. Notwithstanding that, we were always suc-