All You Good Cajuns!
Your Name Is Maligned

By HILDA GALLASSERO

Gather round, all you good Cajuns and let me tell you how you're being misrepresented, even maligned; how you are the victims of harmful publications; how the name "Cajun" is being falsely explained; how you are being slandered far and wide.

I have often wondered: Where did they get the notion that "Cajuns" were a people of mixed Indian, white and Negro blood? I tried excusing their ignorance and attempted to set them straight. I explained and expounded — all to no avail. The old notion kept right on popping up.

Now I am asking for help. If the members of the French Heritage Committee will lend a hand, I'd appreciate it. Seems to me that their first duty would be to get the term "Cajun" straightened out. For instance, couldn't they tell the tourists, the foreigners, the L'Anglais and the Yankees what the name really means?

Come, Rascals

And come out, all you lawyer sons of Cajuns. Why do you think your pere sent you to school? Come out, you rascals, and file your affidavits.

I have a question for you and you alone: if you are slandered (in print) and if you are consistently misrepresented and defamed — does this or does this not constitute libel?

It does? Well, you are. And it is.

On the jacket of Mercury's album "Cajun Crawdaddy" it is plainly stated that: "Cajuns have mixed white, Indian and Negro blood, are descendants of French speakers and live in Southwest Alabama and Southeast Mississippi. . . ."

To start with, a Cajun doesn't call 'em crawdads. Next, a Cajun is no such thing. And lastly they live here in Louisiana, not in Alabama and Mississippi. Oh, well, a few are over in Port Arthur, Tex. I admit . . . but I have no idea where that bunch of halfbreeds came from that call themselves Cajuns and live in Mississippi and Alabama.

And then, to make matters worse, an Associated Press newsfeature writer by the name of Mary Campbell, parrots the above malarkey in one of her columns.

I was angry with Mercury records and I was not a bit happy with Mary Campbell, I can assure you. Exactly where do these notions come from, I wondered. Quite obviously neither Mercury nor Campbell had ever met a real honest-to-goodness dyed-in-the-bayou Cajun. Where did they get their definition then?

Ignoramus Looks

Well, if an ignoramus needs a definition for a Cajun, where would he look? Possibly in Webster?

And so I looked. And there it was! The same old malarkey, pure and simple. Webster's Third Edition Unabridged states ever so plainly Cajun is "one of a people of mixed white, Indian and Negro ancestry in Southwest Alabama and adjoining sections of Mississippi."

So there it is, good Cajuns. You are being slandered by none other than old Webster himself. Just think of how many copies have been sold! Why they use him in our public schools and we send our children there — to learn these lies?

I think it is time to lick the daylights out of this false Cajun image (invented by a bunch of Yankee foreigners); time to spread the true meaning of Cajun across the land and make sure that nobody but real Cajuns claim that title.

I think you should rally round, especially you preservers of the Heritage and HAVE WEBSTER RECALLED! I think you should step forward, you lawyer sons of Cajuns and PREPARE YOUR PETITIONS! I think you should get organized, you good Cajuns and PRESERVE YOUR GOOD NAME!