EXPO FEATURES ‘LOUISIANA DAY’

Martin Advocates Closer Ties with Canada

By EDGAR POE

MONTREAL, Quebec — Closer cultural and friendship ties between Canadians and Louisianians, first linked in kinship with the arrival of the Acadians 215 years ago, was strongly advocated here Friday.

Officials of Montreal and the Province of Quebec joined hands with a delegation of Louisianians in a pledge of friendship and goodwill at “Louisiana Day” at the “Man and His World” exposition in this big modern city.

There is already a cordial working agreement between the Province of Quebec and Louisiana through the joint Quebec-Louisiana committee. This was brought out at the Louisiana exhibit in an address by Secretary of State Wade O. Martin Jr., speaking for Louisianians; Montreal Mayor Jean Drapeau, and Madame Claire Kirkland-Casgrain, minister of tourism, game and fisheries, and a strong voice in the Quebec Parliament, of which she is a member.

The Montreal exposition, still attracting tourists from various parts of the world, first opened in 1967 and, unlike other expositions of its kind, has never shut down. It is operating 12 weeks this year, and is apparently assured of seven million people for the season.

50 MILLION VISITORS

Officials said during the four years approximately 50 million persons have been attracted to the fair.

Of last year’s 6.5 million visitors, 34 per cent came from the United States. Montreal is only 70 miles north of the New York State border and is close to the New England states.

Secretary of State Martin, speaking in French and English, at the Louisiana iron face grillwork exhibit, told the audience that Louisiana takes great pride in its citizens of Acadian and Canadian descent and in their traditions.

Over the years, he said, Canadian-Louisianians have come to occupy topmost positions in education, medicine, the judiciary, the military, in government and in the church.

The Acadians and their descendants, working with other Louisianians, have made great strides in agriculture and industry, he said.

As Martin and others spoke, six Louisiana French-speaking school teachers stood in the background. They wore pretty “Evangeline Dresses.” The teachers have been on duty at the Louisiana exhibit since early June.

They are the Misses Shirley Ardin, Ville Platte; Louise Ledet, Montegut; Judy Duplachin, Sunset; Judy Comeaux, Canton; Eleanor Bourgeois, Lafayette, and Rosalie Authement, Houma.

FRENCH HERITAGE

Secretary of State Martin, ranking member of the delegation, told Canadians that Louisiana’s Acadians were so numerous in the early history of the state that acts of the state legislature were published in both French and English for many years. French publication was discontinued in 1886, 56 years after statehood was obtained.

Asserting that Acadian cuisine and language have greatly influenced the Louisiana way of life, the official added:

“In many areas of our state great work is being done to perpetuate Acadian folklore, folk music and folk dancing . . .” this is why we consider so extremely important this Louisiana-Quebec committee to expand even further our cultural relations. And we particularly desire perpetuation, and even wider use of the French language in our state.”

Martin commended Bona Arcenaut, member of Parliament from the Province of Quebec, for the role he has played in the Louisiana-Quebec committee. Arcenaut has made 21 trips to Louisiana and is known to many people in the state.

After Mayor Drapeau’s warm welcoming remarks and those of Minister of Tourism Kirkland-Casgrain, Morris Ford, director of the Louisiana Tourist Commission, presented the minister a dozen red roses. Moments later Martin presented Mrs. Drapeau a dozen yellow roses. Later, in turn presented the secretary of state one of the roses.

FILM VIEWED

Before stopping at the Louisiana exhibit, the Louisianians and hundreds of other visitors watched a stirring film of “America the Beautiful” at the U.S. pavilion.

The Olympia Brass Band from New Orleans gave a series of performances of the fairgrounds during the day and was warmly applauded by visitors. Later in the day, the band took a train to Toronto for appearances.

Among those presented at the Louisiana luncheon by Secretary of State Martin were Elmo Koelchel, president of the Louisiana Travel Promotion Council and public relations representative of South Central Bell Telephone Co.; Dr. Leonard L. Burns, New Orleans, owner of Four Corners Travel Agency; John D. Cleatut Jr., business development manager of the First National Bank of Jefferson Parish; Phil Brady, of the Greater New Orleans Tourist and Convention Commission; Christopher Blake, New Orleans public relations representative, who brought along 5,000 bottles of hot sauce for distribution and an equal number of cookbooks.

Also, Chester Mouton, city councilman of Baker; A. J. Simonneau, William Siegelmeier and Willard M. Casso, all of Donaldsonville, and numerous others from scattered parts of the state.

Ridley J. Boudeaux, assistant director of the Louisiana Tourism Commission, spoke briefly at the luncheon.

The Louisiana delegation plans to leave Sunday and will fly directly to New Orleans with one stop in New York.