French Broadcasters Hold Meeting With

A dozen Louisiana French broadcasters met with CODOFIL in Lafayette this weekend and set the stage for the information of an advisory board to that state agency in matters of electronic mass media. The gathering asked Rod Rodrigue of KHOM Houma and Pierre Daigle of KAJN Crowley to arrange a general meeting with the purpose of creating the board.

"You are an essential and crucial element in the preservation and progress of the French language in Louisiana," James Domengeaux, Chairman of the Council for the Development of French in Louisiana (CODOFIL), told the French broadcasters. "Many of you, like Jerry Dugas of KHEF Jennings, who is present here tonight, were keeping interest alive in the language long before CODOFIL got into the picture as a state coordinating factor and catalyst."

More Interest

Dewey Balfa of KEUN Eunice said there is more interest at the present time in saving and expanding the French Balfa said: "Ten years ago, discouraged and disheartened at the lack of general interest, I hung up my fiddle and bow and so did my brothers. But in the last few years, solicited by leading personalities and institutions, we have started playing again. Interest in Cajun music and language is spreading not only in the United States but in Canada and Europe as well."

A CODOFIL survey shows that a total of 150 hours a week are broadcast in French by 25 stations in the State, as compared with some 15 hours by a half-dozen stations five years ago. Over 90 per cent of the non-religious French programs are commercially sponsored.

Better Results

A. J. Forestier of KLCL Lake Charles and Charlie Lejeune of KAJN said a well-made French program has no trouble finding sponsors. "In my area French spots sell for more than English spots because they bring better results," Rodrigue said. Camey Doucet of KAJN explained how he uses a six-year-old child in dialogue-type advertisements.

Pastor Woerner, broadcasting in French over 13 stations, and Father Murie, broadcasting over seven stations said religious programs in French have a definite voluminous listening audience in South Louisiana.

More Air Time

Gilles Baillargeon of KRVS, Lafayette, said he could have much more air time on that University of Southwestern Louisiana station than his present three hours a week if he could obtain more French language broadcasting material.

It was suggested that the board of broadcasters to be set up might be structured similarly to the existing CODOFIL Academic Advisory Board whose purpose is to advise the State Agency in all matters of education. Appointed by the governor, the members of that board are the heads of the foreign language departments of the State's universities and colleges.