IN LAFAYETTE
French-Speaking Writers Meeting

How does one convince a visitor from abroad that French is still spoken in Louisiana?

One solution: Converse with the visitor on the streets and in the stores and in the homes.

Another solution: Set up programs, in French, about the oil business and the hot pepper business and the tourist attractions and the good fishing found in the state.

That's the bill of fare that the Council for the Development of French in Louisiana (CODOFIL) plans for over 150 representatives of the International Association of French

potpourri will be presentations on the origin of the Acadians, the Cajun legend, the history of the Louisiana Acadians and a grand and glorious Cajun Music Festival Tuesday night at 7 in the Blackham Coliseum that is free to the public. The festival will feature Cajun musicians and other artists who have gained worldwide acclaim and the event is being billed as "A Tribute to Cajun Music."

Louisianians will also put on a grand tour of tourist attractions that include visits to Jungle Gardens, Rip Van Winkle Gardens, the Loreauville Heritage Museum, Longfellow-Evangeline State Park, St. Martin de Tours Catholic Church and even country horse racing. Fishing expeditions are planned in the Gulf of Mexico in quest of salt water species and in the Atchafalaya Basin where fresh water fish abound.

James Domengeaux, CODOFIL chairman, sees the event as an unparalleled opportunity for Louisiana to receive publicity around the world that will bring in a tide of new tourists as well as trade for the state.

Convince Visitors

He encourages a Louisiana-wide effort to convince the visitors that there is indeed a reservoir of French spoken by over a million residents of the state. One of the convention themes is "The French Language Renaissance in Louisiana."

CODOFIL's experience through the years has been that the most convincing argument for a bilingual state is for the man on the street to speak French to the visitor at every opportunity. "The visitor will then find that there isn't much wrong with Louisiana French that a little grammar and vocabulary won't cure," Domengeaux says.

The wife of the mayor of Lafayette and the president of USL will greet the journalists during their opening session at 11 a.m. Friday at Griffin Hall, and former United States Ambassador to France will extend felicitations. Mamou newspaper publisher Mike Deshotel will shop talk with the visitors in French. Breaux Bridge Mayor Fred Mills, Ville Platte Chamber of Commerce President J. B. LaHaye, Terrebonne State Representative Leonard Chabert will be among a score of other Louisianians saying "Bienvenue!"