FRENCH TEACHER SEARCH BEGINS
200 Are Sought for South Louisiana Schools

By BILL SHEARMAN

"We were the only organization in the state to get additional funds from the state legislature, so we presume they are enthusiastic about our program," chimed James Domengeaux of Lafayette, chairman of the Council for the Development of French in Louisiana (CODOFIL) Sunday.

Domengeaux made the comments at New Orleans International Airport as he and a contingent of 150 Louisiana teachers and students prepared to board a plane for a trip to France where they will start recruiting some 200 teachers to teach French in south Louisiana elementary schools.

In regard to his comment about funding, Domengeaux was more than anxious to praise Edwin W. Edwards shortly before a CODOFIL contingent's departure from New Orleans International Airport to France. Domengeaux and a group of educators and students will seek to find 200 instructors to teach children the French language in several southern parishes in the state.

"The legislature appropriated $500,000 for CODOFIL, and we expect the French government to match that figure," Domengeaux said.

"Governor Edwin Edwards has never failed to offer his cooperation or time to our project."

Domengeaux said the CODOFIL program since its inception in May 1968 has already placed 47 French citizen-teachers in south Louisiana schools where they are teaching the youngsters French and various aspects of French culture.

"Under State Directive 259, passed in 1968, the State Department of Education was directed to start a course of French language education in all state colleges and universities. Those classes are just starting to graduate, so we expect home-grown teachers to begin in the program," Domengeaux said.

Domengeaux said the CODOFIL program has met with great success among teachers and educators in southern parishes of the state and the only trouble his organization has run into has been from local education superintendents and school boards.

"There is a stigma attached to the French language—a feeling of inadequacy and insecurity attached to those who speak it that is just ridiculous. Fully one-third of the state's population speaks French, so there is no basis for the criticism of our program," Domengeaux said.

He added, "In fact, the northern parishes have given our program at least vocal support."

Domengeaux was carrying with him letters of introduction to French President Georges Pompidou from Edwards and State Superintendent of Education Louis Michot.