Iberia May Become Great Trade Center

NEW IBERIA — Acadiana Regional Airport will turn the Iberia area into one of the great international trading centers of America, members of the Tech-Assocation of Life Underwriters were told over the weekend in New Iberia. The prediction was made by Bob Angers Jr., president of The International Relations Association of Acadiana (TIRAA), during an address before the underwritten the functions of TIRAA.

Angers said the airport has already been designated by the Council For The Development of French In Louisiana as the point of departure for Louisiana teachers and students taking part in CODOFIL’s exchange program with France, Canada, the French Antilles and other French-speaking areas of the world.

Many Involved

Preliminary indications are that more than 500 persons will be involved in the 1971 program, and the TIRAA president predicted that 10,000 Louisianians will be traveling abroad in the CODOFIL project between the 1975-80 period.

Acadiana Regional Airport is not only the center for the French transportation emphasis but it has now been designated by the United States Department of Agriculture as an export facility for shipment of livestock, particularly to Latin America. TIRAA was formed on an Acadiana-wide basis as a private sector international trade and tourist development organization, Angers said. It is seen now that its stationery hasn’t come in from the printers, but it seeks to weld together two assets that precede Louisiana’s admission into the American union as a state. One is the French language, and the other is the community of interest we have in the economic sphere with Latin America, particularly agriculture.

Airport Promotion

TIRAA seeks a marriage of the French renaissance and the Spanish country economic interest, Teche Association members were advised, and one of the major objectives of TIRAA is promotion of the Acadiana Regional Airport. Angers noted that the organization had been successful in bringing the United States Ambassador to the Organization of American States to inspect the airport and facilities of the Gulf South Research Institute laboratories nearby.

Other projects of TIRAA include support of a seminar on trading with Spanish-speaking countries that will probably be held at the airport in early 1971.

Another program of the Acadiana trade association is hosting more than a thousand people from 60 foreign countries scheduled to visit sugar cane fields and factories of the Teche country in October, 1971. Larry Lampo Jr. of Jeanerette, a TIRAA board member, will chair the event.

Cajun Cuisine

Angers told the insurance men and women from Iberia and St. Mary that this particular project includes the initiation of a program to introduce foreigners to the retail shopping attractions and the medical facilities of Acadiana, in addition to the Cajun cuisine and hospitality.

He revealed that the visitors will spend the night in Lafayette and take part in an international program at the Municipal Auditorium. On the schedule is a conducted shopping tour and merchants will be asked to test the sales value of the experiment. At least one bank in Lafayette has introduced a foreign department that will be prepared to handle currency exchanges and other services. If the program is successful it will become a regular part of the TIRAA portfolio.

Many Aims

The new trade association has other aims, Angers said, including support of the Freshwater City industrial project in Vermilion the port programs of all communities in the area as well as LISA, the French-Spanish Trade Mart at Lafayette, the rice experimental station at Crowley and other programs with international aims.

TIRAA, said the president, will combine French Canadian and Louisiana groups for grade missions to Latin America, and send Latin and Louisiana missions to Canada and France. Negotiations are presently underway to encourage QUEBECAIR of Canada to become a charter carrier with Acadiana Regional Airport as a terminal. In addition to moving exchange students and teachers to French countries, the airline would be taking part in the combined trade missions to Latin America.

Angers told the underwriters...