Import of French Teachers Defended

By HOWARD JACOBS

“REGARDING the grievances of two displaced French teachers who were quoted as deploring the introduction of teachers from France into Louisiana,” wrote James F. Bezou, executive vice-president, New Orleans Area chapter of the Council for the Development of French in Louisiana (CODIFIL):

“The fact that they are having difficulty in finding positions as teachers of French is regrettable, but does not constitute an indictment of CODIFIL’s policy. Its mandate to promote the development of French in Louisiana could not be carried out without the help of trained teachers at the elementary level. Louisiana did not have enough of them because of so many years of neglect of our French heritage by educators who should have carefully safeguarded this priceless asset among the children who spoke the language natively and were discouraged and even punished for using it at school.

Hence CODIFIL, working in cooperation with the Department of State, the Louisiana Department of Education and the French cultural services, is now in process of ‘importing’ native French instructors from the school boards hire for only $325 per month.

“When sufficient demand has been created under this pilot program, it is certain many teaching jobs will open up for native Louisianians, and this is CODIFIL’s ultimate goal. Meanwhile, unfortunately, there bound to be some temporary hardship. In the long run, however, CODIFIL’s program will redound to the benefit of the dedicated men and women whose career will be asked in a bilingual Louisiana. In the words of Jimmie Domengeaux, CODIFIL chairman, Louisiana can be ‘The gateway of the United States for the French-speaking world.’”

Pithy Palaver

LIFTED NIFTIES: One bum approached another and asked: “What are you doing?” “Hitchhiking,” replied the second hobo. “Then why haven’t you got your thumb up?” demanded the first. “I’m on my coffee break.” (Relayed by “The Character”)

“When you married me,” she pouted, “I thought you were daring and courageous.” “I know,” he replied darkly. “Dozens of people have told me the same thing.” (Choupique)

AN UNFILLABLE REQUEST came to hotelier Lysle Aschaffenburg, this one for a 1928 edition of The Times-Picayune Creole Cookbook . . . Aside to Gulf Coast realtor Prieur Leary: That’s the most gargantuan brochure (of real estate listings) we’ve seen since “Gulliver’s Travels.”

Poetry Contest

THE POETS are coming out of the woodwork in the poetry contest sponsored by the Gentilly Branch of the New Orleans Public Library. Joe Ireland, moving spirit in the versifier competition, said Thursday that an astronomical 1,797 entries had been received as of Thursday, with the deadline for mailing today.

As every struggling poet knows, even the good ones are rarely compensated for invoking the muse. But some talented sonneteer is going to corral $25 first prize. Each of five “honorable mention” recipients will receive a book of poems. Ireland, “poet-in-residence” and head librarian at the branch, is receiving entries at 3000 Foy St., New Orleans 70122. Each poem should be on a separate page containing name, address and telephone number.