Internationalism: Lafayette's New Multi-Million Dollar Industry

Lafayette has a new multi-million dollar industry that can be described in one word: INTERNATIONALISM.

"Internationalism" is a sophisticated, consummated, job-producing, revenue-generating, non-polluting industry-oriented kind of payroll that does not ask the local taxpayer to vote a bond issue to expand it or sustain it.

Lafayette has long had many of the required assets for the industry of internationalism:

- The "Center City of Louisiana's" French culture
- The Center City of Acadiana's agribusiness commerce
- The Center City of the state's richest oil area with the resulting technology in petroleum and allied industries that has been applied worldwide
- The home of the University of Southwestern Louisiana

Now, each of these assets as they relate to the international scheme of things constitutes an industry unto itself. Taken collectively, they constitute the base for the new multi-million dollar industry of internationalism that Lafayette lays just claim to with the dawn of the 1970s.

These assets interlock with the renaissance of interest in preservation of the French language and heritage, and the determination to offer Acadians as a packaged attraction to the international tourist.

Four organizations warrant special mention for important contributions in recent times to Lafayette's internationalism industry. They are the Greater Lafayette Chamber of Commerce, the Council for the Development of French in Louisiana (CODOFIL), The International Relations Association of Acadians (TIRAA), and the Louisiana Intercultural Survey Association (LISA). In fact, CODOFIL, TIRAA, and LISA are domiciled in Lafayette and by the very nature of that fact have brought new jobs to the community because of the employment openings in the headquarters offices themselves.

The chamber, in cooperation with U.S.L., has played a role in the development of trade missions abroad that have brought new business to Lafayette, especially in the area of travel. The chamber also had a French heritage subcommittee that played an early role in student exchanges with Canada as well as a Quebec mission that helped persuade the provincial government of Quebec to establish a permanent office in Lafayette.

CODOFIL and TIRAA were also instrumental in inducing the Quebec government to locate a Louisiana bureau here, and the two agencies since mid-1971 were working to bring the New Brunswick government to Lafayette on a similar basis.

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Flags of many countries were displayed during the panel discussion held at the April 3-5, 1972, International Congress of the French-speaking Americas in Lafayette held under the auspices of the Council For The Development of French In Louisiana.

Congress participants came from Africa, Belgium, France, the French Antilles, Canada, Haiti, Quebec and New Brunswick and other Canadian provinces, New England and Louisiana. Panels also discussed bilingual trade and cultural enrichment.
TIRAA has done something right for Lafayette. It has given a new international dimension to its growth and development of downtown in view of some concrete actions. One has been in the establishment of the Trade Mart in the LaPorte building, the other in the encouragement it has given its members, a new building being built on Jefferson Street that will become a very important addition to the commerce of the city with its professional atmosphere of business and prosperity with worldwide ramifications.

L'EXPRESS, L'ARGUS CHAUD, LISA, CODOFIL and TIRAA have been headquarters in the French-speaking Trade Mart and this has meant a veritable boost of international activity attracting business interests to Lafayette from areas as far removed as France and Latin America.

Although LIISA is no longer in the Trade Mart it has spun off a new agency called the Louisiana Coalition of French Persons and two of the top officials are on the U.S.I.L. faculty, LISA, would have to remind you, in a multifaceted dollar project in its own right that seeks to connect the International Canal into a new shopping channel that would establish Lafayette as a one round trip connecting all of the shopping lanes of the world.

It is my privilege to have a unique opportunity to label you a meaningful public relations campaign in the "market" in which your work appears. You must be aware of the thrilling job you are doing to attract the investor, the cultivator, the plant executive or tourist. It is my firm belief that the entire history of Lafayette has been nothing less than an outstanding public interest has been given our state in general and the French-speaking French than that generated by CODOFIL both in the Louisiana Tourism and on the French movement is receiving or has received our entire attention and exposure, but many voices have had a more major media that includes it.

—H. L. E. PERSY, the TIME magazine with a circulation of around 900,000 readers.

—CHICOS DE FRANCE, a Paris-based bilingual "COMMERCE" JOURNAL-type with a circulation of over 100,000.

—READER'S DIGEST, the French version of the American Rotary and France.

—LE MONDE, one of France's largest and most distinguished newspapers, is the largest French language newspaper in Canada. The newspaper is owned by Antoine and M. Mathieu in early 1972.

—PERSPECTIVES, a newspaper sponsored by the FAMILY WEEKLY that goes into the major French-language newspapers of Canada.

—LE VACANZELLE, the French-language paper of New York City. It has a circulation of several hundred thousand copies from abroad. The paper is one of the many that are being interviewed in a number of office meetings. The most interesting and the one that has been most popular in the French-speaking press is the "International Canoe," which is the most important local event in July.

—Gazette de LAUSANNE, a French newspaper published in Switzerland.

—LE SOIR, a newspaper published in Belgium.

—LE MAGAZINE, a French newspaper published in Quebec.

—L'ACTION, another French language newspaper of Quebec, Quebec.

—THE JOURNAL DU SOUD-IEST, a French newspaper of Quebec.

—BROOKLYN GLOBE, a French newspaper of Quebec.

—LE CONQUETE, a French newspaper published in Cameroon.

—REMARQUABLE, a French newspaper published in the Ivory Coast.

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