

'School for Guerrilla War' At S.F. State Investigated

By DEXTER WAUGH

The students straggled into the large, bright yellow classroom at San Francisco State College one night, noiselessly took their seats and turned their attention to the tape recorded voice of Stokely Carmichael.

"This is an important speech," the barrel-chested, welterweight instructor of the Experimental College course in guerrilla warfare explained. "This is where Carmichael sets a new direction for the Black Power movement — calling on blacks to organize themselves, become nationalistic, almost racist."

After the speech, recorded at Huey Newton's birthday party rally in Oakland, a panel of "combat veterans" took the stage and reviewed, historically, the tactics and practice of urban warfare, discussing sabotage, espionage, counter-intelligence and weaponry, with emphasis on the Battle of Algiers.

This unusual college class, a subject of controversy off campus, is being investigated by the state attorney general's office.

"If it is a classroom discussion on guerrilla warfare," says Charles O'Brien, chief deputy attorney general here, "that is one thing; if it is an exercise in guerrilla warfare, if they are training guerrillas, that is quite another thing."

Roberto Kaffke, the class organizer and instructor, denies that the purpose of his course is to produce young guerrillas and revolutionaries.

"Most people in there (the class) don't have the potential to be revolutionaries," he says, and he adds: "No real saboteur would come near this class."

The course, "aimed at minority groups" but attended by many whites, began as a historical survey of revolu-

tions and conditions in Latin America.

"But the students came to me and said they were more interested in what's going on here, in this country, right now, and why," says Kaffke.

It does not appear to be "how to" course. Bombs are not taken apart and reassembled in class. There are no cram sessions in brick throwing or field stripping of the M-16 rifle. The panel of "combat veterans" that night discussed only the types of weapons popular in the Battle of Algiers.

On the surface, the class is not very different, and is less militaristic than the usual college ROTC course, which often provides instruction in target firing.

POLICE GUARD

But the class is controversial off campus. One week recently, the administration was bombed with phone calls from the public, protesting the course. The college responded by cautiously providing two campus police, who stood outside the class one night while student monitors stopped and questioned students entering the classroom. No one showed up to protest.

The course spreads its attention over the violence and trauma of contemporary urban life. One session turned into a dialogue on race between the audience and a black student who had the stage, and among members of the audience itself. One white fellow, irritated at the black student's statements, stomped out of the room. At the end of the session he and other black students were seen in the hallway, their heads together, talking out their differences.

U.S. ARMY TEXT

Recommended reading for the course ranges through the Sierra Club's "Sierra Wilderness Handbook," to Dostoevsky's "Brothers Karamazov," Mao Tse-tung's "The Protracted War," Hemingway's "For Whom the Bell Tolls" and "Counter-



INSTRUCTOR ROBERTO KAFFKE

Revolutionaries "don't have to carry guns"

Insurgency Operations," a U.S. Army book by Valeire and Bohannon.

The college does not ignore the class but, as with all courses in the student-run Experimental College, maintains a "very much hands-off policy," according to Harvey York, San Francisco State's coordinator of information services.

Dean of Students Ferd Reddell says Experimental College student coordinators as well as Kaffke have stated the course is an educational exercise, and "I have no reason to think otherwise."

NOT WORRIED

"The administration is not too worried about course offerings as long as they stay on the discussion level," says York. Dean Reddell adds that the college takes no responsibility for students once they go off campus on field trips.

Kaffke, the instructor, likes field trips. A forest ranger for 12 summers, he does not like to pass time in debate, and prefers backpacking in the outdoors to the heated rhetoric of arm-chair activists.

He had planned for the week of April 6 an "Easter Vacation Survival Field Trip (not a college or class function)." His printed announcement read: "One week of rugged comaradie (sic), 10-20 mile daily hikes. No cameras! No grass! No automatic weapons!"

"For one thing," Kaffke commented on the restriction on marijuana, "you can get in trouble. For another, rebels and grass don't mix."

PEN'S POWER

He adds that "you don't have to carry guns to be a revolutionary. The power of the pen is much more powerful than a bullet — look at

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Regis Debray" (the French journalist imprisoned in Bolivia).

At one class session, however, Kaffke, with tongue somewhat in cheek, reminded the 100 or so students of their "constitutional right to bear arms. I suggest sawed-off, hair trigger, loaded, double barrel, 12-gauge shotgun." He amended that to point out that sawed-off shotguns are illegal.

Kaffke is a fighter. He boxed junior welterweight as a professional stablemate of Bobo Olson. He lettered in football, boxing and track at City College, and also studied art at the California School of Fine Arts.

'I WILL FIGHT'

He says he is not a pacifist — "I will fight for peace." Kaffke, who at 15 ran away from home to join the 153rd Combat Engineers during World War II, and served in the Korean War in the Submarine Service, sees the fight for peace no longer at the side of the Establishment, but against it.

Born in San Francisco, he openly, almost eagerly, tags himself a revolutionary. "The Declaration of Independence gives me the right to be a revolutionary," he says. "Revolution, to me, means dramatic change."

He says he became a revolutionary in 1963, when he and 58 other U. S. students flew to Cuba in defiance of a State Department ban on travel to that country. "A subjective viewpoint," and came back convinced that Castro's revolution had changed Cuba for the better.

Kaffke's main passion is focused on Latin America:

His mother was Nicaraguan (his father German), he speaks fluent Spanish, he is completing a book, entitled "The Rape of Nicaragua."

Although he has not actually traveled or fought in the South American mountains with guerrillas, as one would suspect from the way he talks, he has "moved with some of the urban groups" — students' movements — in Latin America.

His one-page biography proudly lists a succession of arrests: 1962, at the Berkeley nuclear test protest; three in 1964, at the Palace Hotel civil rights sit-in, the Cadillac Auto Row sit-in, and the Times Square Vietnam sit-in.

SUBTLE TORTURE

Last December, as he was preparing to leave Nicaragua, he was taken prisoner by the Seguridad Nacional (secret police) and, he says, tortured.

"A subtle torture," he recalls. His captors took everything from him, including his insulin — Kaffke is a diabetic. He was not beaten, but he and his insulin were kept apart. They accused him of espionage, threatened him with 15 years in jail. After three days of interrogation,

Kaffke, "bleary eyed and hazy," was returned his insulin and kicked out of the country.

Kaffke thinks this country is moving toward a racial explosion, although he says the black movement at present cannot be called "revolutionary," because it is not a "mass movement."

"Thousands of blacks are going to die," Kaffke pred-

icts. "They are willing to die. And I know there are people who are willing to kill them."

"If I were black — and I wish I were, because then I could join them — there comes a time when you have to make a stand, based on your demand for dignity and human respect. You can't take anymore, and your back is against the wall. And you fight."