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Brown's Radicals: Discord and Disarray

by LOUIS PECK

When the buses pull out of Kennedy Plaza tonight on their way to Saturday's much publicized anti-war march in Washington, it is a certainty that members of Brown's Young Socialist Alliance will be making the journey in significant numbers.

Conspicuously, absent will be various other radical individuals from Brown, and the reasons for their absence provide some answers about the decline of radical groups not only here but on college campuses throughout the country within the last year.

At present, the twenty-member YSA remains as the one radical group with significant organizational and educational activities operating at Brown. Ideologically, they are old-line Trotskyite Communists, a fact that they are somewhat reluctant to advertise for fear of conjuring up Joe McCarthy-like images of Communism in the American worker.

It is this fact that perhaps separates them the most from the other radical ele-

ments on campus, most of whom are presently in a uniform state of disarray and disorganization. "They [YSA] are trying to apply an analysis of a man who has been dead for 30 years — Marx would turn over in his grave if someone told him Marxism is a set doctrine," charges one person who has been active in radical politics at Brown.

The same non-YSA radicals feel that the Young Socialists' talk of cooperation with the working class to build revolutionary consciousness is meaningless at this time.

"There is no working class in the United States," claimed a campus radical who asked to remain unidentified. "Marx believed that the workers did not constitute a working class until they achieved the achieved the consciousness of being a working class — the workers in the U.S. don't have this consciousness." He said that this consciousness had to built up before any intergroup organizing is done.

Jerry Freiwirth '72, a spokesman for YSA, took exception to this view by citing labor support for Saturday's anti-war march. "The unions are mobilizing their

membership — they see the connection between the war and the economy," Mr. Freiwirth asserted.

The march as well as the larger question of ending the war has also produced bitter divisions in the radical movement. YSA is part of the National Peace Action Coalition, the organizer of tomorrow's rally in Washington.

So far, the group has stayed clear of the National Coalition for Peace and Justice, which is organizing massive civil disobedience for the first week in May in an attempt to end the war through immobilization of the nation's Capitol.

"Having a rally of 100,000 kids in Washington isn't going to do a thing," complained another anti-YSA radical, expressing the hope that the May demonstrations will raise "national consciousness" about the war.

YSA, whose program calls for an end to the war through "independent action," has taken the course of not attempting to integrate an anti-war movement into a soci-
Radicals