**WARNS AGAINST 'UNDERMINING'**

**Lipsit Praises 'Democratization'**

By BILL SCHNITZ

Thresher Reporter

"The United States must be on guard for changes which will undermine American democracy," stated Professor Seymour Lipsit in a speech Wednesday night at Fondren Library.

Professor Lipsit, who was brought to the campus by the Forum Committee and the Political Science and Sociology Departments, is currently Professor of Social Relations and Government at Harvard.

The main criteria of "democratization," according to Professor Lipsit, is the extent to which the citizenry has "access to the decision-making structure in society." In this respect, the American political system has shown unusual "flexibility" in dealing with change.

**Vicious Cycle**

The current War on Poverty, for example, manifests the Government's "systematic efforts to break through the self-perpetuating, vicious cycle of cultural deprivation." American democracy has similarly been strengthened by the "expansion of education," which has made the Horatio Alger Myth "much truer in the 1960's than in the nineteenth century.”

Professor Lipsit noted an "incredible decline" in racial prejudice since World War II. The "triumph of the civil rights movement," he said, "reflects...very basic changes...in society."

**Toleration**

The "toleration for political dissent" in contemporary America is unmatched by any period in American history, according to Professor Lipsit. The "tremendous crackdown" on universities during the Korean War stands in sharp contrast to the "pattern of tolerance" exhibited toward today's anti-war demonstrations, he said.

But Professor Lipsit observed that "every dynamic social system...breeds conditions for extremism." It is the "declining groups in the historic process" which are responsible for "backlash reactions," he said.

**Declining Groups**

Professor Lipsit asserted that three such groups had gained control of the democratic process during the 1920's: the "small-town, rural, evangelical, white Anglo-Saxon Protestant;" the "self-employed labor force which resents governmental interference;" and the "whites who are upset by the rising position of the Negro."

These three groups were "subsumed by the Goldwater movement," he said, and represented a "coalition of lost causes."

**Threat From Left**

Extremism from the Left represents a similar threat to American society. He said that Civil disobedience, a tactic which Negroes were justified in using, had "corrupted" democracy outside of the South where the democratic process did in fact exist.

Professor Lipsit stated that a "prolonged" war in Viet Nam might "escalate" the antagonisms between the extreme Right and Left, a situation which he feared would ultimately "undermine American democracy."