abian oil fields are of course paramount and even in the British protectorate of Kuwait, the Gulf Oil Co. of the U.S. own a 50% interest. In fact, American Companies own 58% of current production and 60% of known reserves in Middle East oil. Oil is America's greatest single foreign investment.

On the other hand, the exploitation of oil fields in the United States, vast as the industry might be, leaves much to be desired. An article in the English journal, *New Statesman* for July 26, 1958, brings forth some interesting information. It seems that whereas in the U. S., "an investment of $40,000 is required to increase crude oil output by one barrel; in Venezuela the figure is $15,000; in the Middle East as a whole, $3,000 and in Kuwait, less than $2,000." Furthermore, whereas in America, only one in every 100 wells drilled yields oil in commercial quantities, the overall Middle East proportion is one in five and in Kuwait, actually one in one.

Power of Oil Interests

There is no question then that the Middle East is an area most vital to the interests of American oil companies and furthermore it is apparent how much influence American oil companies must exercise in the determination of U. S. foreign policy.

In this regard, Drew Pearson, in a column dated April 14, 1958, reported a discussion between Senate Foreign Relations Committeeman, Senator Humphrey and Assistant Sec'y of State William Rountree about the Middle East:

"How are you planning to rescue American prestige in the Middle East?" Humphrey asked. "What are your plans for combatting Nasser's growing power?"

Reluctantly Rountree admitted that the State Department had no plans.

"What about that pipeline you were going to build across Turkey from Iran to the Mediterranean,"

"We aren't building it."

"Why not?."

"The oil companies say it's too expensive."

"What!" shot back Senator Humphrey. "You're letting the oil companies run the policy of the United States? I want you to know that the Senate of the United States does not want our policies dictated by a few oil companies on the basis of money..."

"Our pussyfooting, procrastinating policies have let the whole Near East fall away from us and now you tell me that the oil companies say we can't build a pipeline from Iran across Turkey to safeguard us in case of war."

State Department policy in the Near East has almost always been dominated by the oil companies, not dictated to the oil companies.

It was the oil companies which advised bringing King Saud to Washington. This worked all right until Saud was virtually ousted by his brother, who hates the United States.

This was back in April at a time when the American oil companies could not possibly wish for any action which would aid the cause of Arab nationalism. The recent revolution in Iraq, however, changed the situation completely. Now it became a case of sending Marines to keep American oil fields from falling to the Nasser United Arab Republic.

Despite all the advance in nuclear physics, we are still in the age of oil and the governments of the world will risk even the threat of nuclear war to protect their interest in oil.

In the meantime, situations such as the present crisis in the Middle East can offer a shot in the arm to capitalism generally. It seems that business usually prospers in a period of an arms build-up and the current events in the Moslem world certainly provide the basis of such a course. Turkey, Iran and Pakistan, for example, are situated just to the south of the Soviet Union and are all militarily weak. In Turkey, recently, Premier Menderes warned the Germans who were extending credit to Turkey that an anti-Western coup in Iran might be impending.

It seems apparent then, that plenty of economic and military aid from the United States to this area may be imminent. Perhaps this is the reason behind the recent recovery in industrial stocks. But that such an arms build-up could provide enough of a stimulus to end the current slump is another question.

American Apologists

To many of the apologists of American capitalism, present U. S. policy in the Middle East is highly embarassing. Even the noted columnist Walter Lippman is calling for the withdrawal of American troops from Lebanon before the U. N. debaters really go to work on this great "champion of peace and democracy." Such are the perils which confront a writer in the field of capitalist apologetics, whether it be the Soviet or the "Democratic" variety of capitalism. Events in the course of time are bound to leave him away out on a limb, and should war actually result from this latest crisis the same columnists who cry out against present U. S. policy will be found supporting the American war effort to the hilt.

Horrible as the coming war will be however, there are some ludicrous aspects about its propaganda which are worth going into at this time. We will be told, undoubtedly, once the real shooting begins, that this is another war for the preservation of democracy — this time against "Communism," only the Western anti-"communists" will find themselves shooting mainly at Moslem followers of Mohammed and Nasser. Furthermore, one of "our" allies will undoubtedly be Saudi Arabia, the headquarters for the chattel-slave trade of the world, which will be on the one hand at war with its Moslem brethern of the U. A. R. and on the other, possibly allied with their "mortal enemies" the Israelis. That Tito's "Communist" government will be lined up with the West is quite probable and that "Communist" Russia and "Communist" China will be on opposite sides is at least conceivable. That the Pope, and all the other heads of Christianity will give their blessing to the motley crowd that will form the alliance of "Democracy" is a foregone conclusion.

Behind the whole bloody mess will be, of course, the powers behind the Summit, the capitalist rulers of the world. Whatever else might be said about or against messrs Eisenhower, Khrushchev, Macmillan, de Gaulle and Nasser etc., they and their regimes are doing their outmost to preserve the system that prevails in their respective domains — capitalism in a developed or in a developing form — and nothing will prevent these political leaders from representing the needs of their respective capitalist countries. When the time comes that an Eisenhower or a Khrushchev or a Nasser falters in the task at hand, they must be replaced in short order by someone with a steadier hand. Capitalism must go on.

Must It Go On?

Or must it? There is no question that it will go on as long as the majority of the population, the workers of the world, are willing to have it continue or are apathetic about it, which amounts to the same thing. There is a great deal which must be learned and understood by the working class before something can be done to replace capitalism with a sane system of society. They must learn that "Communism" as it is generally regarded is not communism but state capitalism. That the reason America is on the verge of war with Soviet Russia is not because of any difference in idealogy but because of a similarity in economic systems and a consequent rivalry for strategic bases, and sources of raw materials, such as oil in the Middle East.

Furthermore, they must realize that in order to bring about a world in which such things as oil wells and other capitalist interests will not be permitted to become the motivating cause of war, the entire structure of capitalist society, the wages, prices, profit system must be abolished and in its place a system of production for use, of free right of access to all that can be produced, established. This is socialism.

HARMO