

BAGHDAD PACT MEETING:

U.S. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles flies to Ankara and is greeted by Turkish premier Adnan Menderes. Mr. Dulles is here for the Baghdad Pact talks; in theory, just an observer - for America's not a member. Mr. Selwyn Lloyd arrives to represent Britain, which is a member - the only one outside Asia; the other states involved, being Iraq, Iran, Pakistan and Turkey. Iran's premier Dr. Eghbal is a delegate to this vital conference, where the American "observer" is, by a strange paradox, the most important figure. The Turkish Prime Minister takes the chair.

To most Europeans, the word "Baghdad" conjours up pictures of Arabian Nights and flying carpets - but to the nations of the Middle East, the Baghdad Pact means resistance to Communist expansion in the area where the pressure is strongest. The object of this conference - to build up a military machine to meet the threat of actual war, and to find ways of countering the more immediate threat of infiltration and subversion - even (as the Conference declares) when these tactics are disguised as "friendly co-operation".

One theme runs through the whole debate - a plea from Middle East delegates that America should follow the example of Britain and become a full member of the Pact. America still declines - but Mr. Dulles gives a pledge that his country will co-operate fully - "if need be, by military action".