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Will Jordan Be Saddam's Next Target?

By George Mullen

Without being able to remove the U.N. sanctions or retake Kuwait, Saddam Hussein will be looking for a new escape valve (easy prey) to relieve the pressure on his regime. Will he attack Iran, Syria or Turkey? Not likely, for all are powerful adversaries. But Saddam could overrun Jordan with little effort, for Jordan is a military pushover full of Iraqi agents and supporters. Would the United States come running to the aid of a nearly landlocked desert kingdom with no oil that previously supported Iraq in the Gulf War?

Moreover, Israel would view an Iraqi attack on Jordan as a significant threat and would likely prompt an Israeli military response, thus forcing the populace of the Middle East to choose between a fellow Arab country or what Saddam calls the "illegal Zionist entity." Saddam could successfully inject a major new wedge between the West / Israel and the Arab World while portraying himself as a new pan-Arab leader.

Hafez Al-Assad of Syria would quietly stand by smiling as Jordan, who broke ranks with the Arabs in the peace process, is crushed while his two major adversaries, Iraq and Israel, pummel each other. The peace process would be the unfortunate casualty.

Watch where the elite Iraqi Republican Guard moves next.

Mullen is author of the new book, *Peace in the Middle East* (Ican Press, 1994).