
WHY THE US'S IRAQ INVASION, NOT SADDAM, BRED ISIS

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A Middle East historian this week challenged a claim that ISIS was created by former Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein.

In remarks cited by Foreign Affairs, Amatzia Baram responded to a previous article on the news site that suggested Saddam promoted Islamism in Iraq.

He believes the authors of the earlier piece, Samuel Helfont and Michael Brill, misunderstood the public face of the [Saddam] regimes beliefs, or what it presented as its beliefs [] evidence supporting Saddams Islamization efforts between 1993 and 2003.

According to Foreign Affairs, citing academics, the absence of the Baathist regimes repression and the collapse of the Iraqi state as a result of the 2003 invasion [] Saddams non-existent promotion of Islamism prior to 2003—is what bred ISIS.

The report added: Instead of finding a way to connect Saddam to Iraqi jihadists, academics and policymakers alike would be better served by contemplating the role of the US-led invasion and botched occupation of 2003 in unleashing the chaos that continues to claim lives today.

Indeed, it is unclear what the Baath leadership may have said privately or publicly against Islamism, but it is believed that what ultimately influenced the Iraqi Sunni population the most were Saddams actual policies and how they were conveyed to the public, Foreign Affairs stated.

There are archives that exist at the Hoover Institution that allegedly detail internal discussions and reasoning, but also on Saddams actual policies and how they were conveyed to the public.

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Baram, however, has disregarded the historical documents, saying we put too much weight on the archives and that we ignore open source records on the regime, according to the newspaper.

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Last year it was reported by German weekly Der Spiegel that an ex-intelligence officer under the Saddam was "the strategic head" behind ISIS and drew up the blueprints for the militants capture of northern Syria.

The magazine said Bakr was "bitter and unemployed" after the American decision to dissolve the Iraqi army in 2003.

Between 2006 and 2008 he was held in the US military's Camp Bucca and Abu Ghraib prison.

In the years that followed his influence grew in jihadist circles, Spiegel reported, and in 2010 Bakr and a group of other former Iraqi intelligence officers placed cleric Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi at the head of ISIS.

The move was reportedly designed to give the group a religious dimension.

Iraq: Protecting Civilians Key to Mosul Battle

Kaynak/Source: