

Syria's 2013 Ghouta Sarin Attack Committed by Al-Qaeda. German Media Die Welt

By [Moon of Alabama](#)

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The German paper Die Welt is staunchly pro-NATO and pro-U.S. It always follows the official, conservative propaganda lines up to the dot on the last i. But in today's Sunday edition one of its well-connected journalists and department head argues for a change of direction on Syria. Assad is not going to go away and "the west" needs to accept that to prevent a Salafist take-over of that country.

Buried in the German language [piece](#) is this version of events of the 2013 Sarin attack in Ghouta and the "lack of response" by the Obama administration (my translation):

When on August 21 2013 the nerve gas Sarin was used in Ghouta, a suburb of Damascus, [Obama] had to make a decision. He ordered to prepare an attack by sea-launched cruise missiles. But the British secret service was in possession of a sampling of the used Sarin. An analysis showed it not to be Sarin from the Syrian regime, but from the inventory of al-Nusra. Obama dropped his plan.

There are several problems with this line of events. The British parliament had rejected an attack on Syria. The U.S. congress refused to authorize one. If Obama would have attacked, the Republicans would have, without doubt, [started impeachment](#) procedures against him. The domestic policy implications, not the origin of the Sarin, stopped Obama's attack plans.

The explanation of *Die Welt* reporter, that al-Nusra Sarin's was different from Syrian government Sarin, is also dubious. According to a [recent extensive report](#) based on interviews with an al-Qaeda aligned "rebel" in Syria, al-Qaeda acquired the Sarin from a storage facility of the Syrian regime when it conquered the Syrian base of Regiment 111 in late 2012. This was before the split of al-Nusra and the Islamic State. There would thus be no difference between "regime Sarin" and "al-Qaeda Sarin".

But even completely independent of the origin of the Sarin, U.S. missile experts had long [concluded](#) that the missiles which carried the Sarin in the attack [could not](#) have been fired from government held areas. Their range was simply too short. Thus the event must have been a false flag attack.

Nonetheless, the German newspaper analysis is a sign that the tide has turned and that the official "regime change" storm is calming down. The dismantling of a major official propaganda item, like the Sarin attack, points to the introduction of a new narrative. How that will develop further is yet to be seen.

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