

CIA behind Panama Papers leaks, says 'most significant financial whistleblower of all time'

13/04/2016



Trends [Panama Papers](#)

In an exclusive interview from Munich, Birkenfeld told CNBC on Tuesday that the leak of over 11 million documents from Panama-based law firm Mossack Fonseca is most likely not a whistleblower job, but rather an *"intelligence agency operation."*

"The CIA I'm sure is behind this, in my opinion," Birkenfeld said, citing as evidence selective management of the information exposed to the public domain that *"doesn't hurt the US in any shape or form."*

"The very fact that we see all these names surface that are the direct quote-unquote enemies of the United States: Russia, China, Pakistan, Argentina... and we don't see one US name. Why is that? Quite frankly, my feeling is that this is certainly an intelligence agency operation," CNBC cited Birkenfeld as saying.

"That's wrong. And there's something seriously sinister behind this," Birkenfeld said.

The former banker acknowledged that years ago, when he worked in a Swiss bank, he was aware that Mossack Fonseca was an integral part of a worldwide offshore financial network used to avoid domestic taxes.

[@RT.com #panamapapers](#): Spy agencies, CIA intermediaries used Mossack Fonseca to hide activities
<http://on.rt.com/79ta>



Birkenfeld also pointed out that the Panama firm was a relatively minor player in the tax evasion scheme.

"We knew that very well in Switzerland. I certainly knew of it," Birkenfeld said.

Quite a number of firms in Panama are still offering similar services, Birkenfeld revealed.

"The cost of doing business there was quite low, relatively speaking," he said. *"So what you would have is Panama operating as a conduit to the Swiss banks and the trust companies to set up these facilities for clients around the world."*

Read more [Whistleblower gets \\$104mln for helping detect tax evasion at UBS AG](#)



Birkenfeld, an American citizen once employed by UBS AG, a Swiss bank, is famous for helping to expose the bank's tax evasion schemes in 2009.

Birkenfeld was convicted in 2008 for helping a former client at UBS AG to hide his wealth from the Internal Revenue Service and spent over two years behind bars. Nevertheless, Birkenfeld did well. As part of the same case, the IRS awarded the former banker \$104 million for aiding the investigation that resulted in UBS being fined \$780 million. The bank was also forced to disclose the names of 4,700 American clients, who held secret overseas

accounts in Switzerland.

American pressure finally put an end to the 'golden era' of Swiss banks' dodgy financial dealings. Many of the country's banking institutions were fined billions of US dollars for providing tax evasion assistance to US citizens.

Birkenfeld is now living privately in Bavaria, Germany, and is unwilling to speak to journalists. However, in the case of the Panama Papers, he made an exception.
