

German Newspaper Says CIA and FBI Active in Ukraine

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A woman holds a banner saying "The Kiev junta carries out the U.S. scenario" outside a town administration building in Kramatorsk, eastern Ukraine.

Dozens of U.S. intelligence agents are involved in the Ukrainian government's struggle against pro-Russian separatists in the country's embattled southeast, Germany's best-selling newspaper said.

In a report published Sunday, German tabloid <u>Bild</u> said Central Intelligence Agency and Federal Bureau of Investigation officials are advising the interim Kiev government on how to stifle the growing unrest in the country.

Citing German security officials, the Bild report said there are currently dozens of U.S. secret services agents who have been tasked with helping the interim government of acting acting President Oleksandr Turchynov counter separatist rebellions in the country's east, set up a security system and fight organized crime.

U.S. analysts have also reportedly been assigned with the specific task of tracking down

the fortune of ousted Ukrainian president Viktor Yanukovych, Bild said.

U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder said Tuesday that the U.S. was determined to help Ukraine find billions of dollars it says were stolen by Yanukovych and his aides.

All U.S. agents in Ukraine are working from Kiev, with none of them on the ground in the eastern Ukrainian cities that have seen recent outbreaks of violence, Bild said.

The report was prominently cited by Russia's main news outlets, as apparent confirmation of U.S. involvement in Ukraine, allegations that gained forced in mid April when CIA director John Brennan traveled to Kiev. The White House said at the time Brennan's trip had been a routine visit.

Russia and the U.S. have been embroiled in back and forth accusations of having a hand in the ongoing conflict in Ukraine between pro-Russian and government forces, with Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov openly blaming recent clashes in the Black Sea port city of Odessa on Kiev and the West.

"Kiev and its Western sponsors are practically provoking the bloodshed and bear direct responsibility for it," RIA Novosti quoted Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov as telling reporters.

The Bild article appeared hours after a team of OSCE observers, among them four Germans, returned home after being held hostage for more than a week by separatists in the eastern Ukrainian city of Slovyansk.

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