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Ex-C.I.A. Agent Gains Retraction by Authors

WASHINGTON, Feb. 15 (Reuters)— A legal action group that defends former United States intelligence officers has announced its first victory — the full retraction of an assertion that a former C.I.A. agent was linked to the killings of President Kennedy and former Foreign Minister Orlando Letelier of Chile.

The group, Challenge Inc., an intelligence officers' legal action fund, said Friday that the authors of "Death in Washington," a book on Mr. Letelier's slaying in 1978, had retracted the allegations against David Phillips, the former agent, in an out-of-court settlement.

The president of Challenge, J. Er Dolan, a retired Marine Corps intelligence captain, said the group was financing a lawsuit against the author of the book "Missing" and the makers of a popular film based on it.

"Missing" asserted that United States officials took part in a coup that toppled President Salvador Allende Gossens of Chile in 1973.

"Death in Washington," by Donald Freed and Fred Landis, asserted that Mr. Phillips, using the alias "Maurice Bishop," served as a C.I.A. case officer for Lee Harvey Oswald, who was arrested in the killing President Kennedy in 1963.