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CIA Killing Claimed by 2d Group

Washington Post Foreign Service

ATHENS, Dec. 28—An unknown group in a two-page diatribe against the United States today claimed credit for the killing of Richard Welch, station chief for the Central Intelligence Agency in Greece, and threatened further retaliations against "American imperialism."

The group identified itself as the "Organization of November 17," the date in 1973 when militant students at Athens Polytechnic rebelled against the military government of George Papadopoulos. The revolt set off a wave of unrest that brought down Papadopoulos, whose government was replaced by another military junta.

The letter, secretly delivered to several Western journalists, was the second claim of responsibility for Welch's assassination. Less than 24 hours after the killing, another unknown group which identified itself as the "Army Officers Representing the Free Greek Spirit" claimed credit for the assassination.

Senior police officials in charge of the investigation of the Welch case have dismissed both claims as the work of cranks. "The case is without a substantial clue," a senior inspector said tonight.

Officials here speculated that both the extreme left and the extreme right are trying to embarrass each other by sending fraudulent letters to the news media.

Welch, 46, who arrived here last July, was gunned down by three men in front of his house. His body will be flown back to Washington Monday for burial at Arlington's National Cemetery.