

# Report on Nixon and Chile

New York

A former Central Intelligence Agency official says former President Richard Nixon ordered agency officials to take any action necessary, including a military coup, to prevent the election of Salvador Allende, a Marxist, as president of Chile in 1970.

The attempt failed, but not for lack of trying, says David Atlee Phillips, a former CIA chief for the Western Hemisphere.

Phillips, who has resigned from the CIA and runs a group dedicated to improving the public image of past and present agents, claims, however, that the CIA had nothing to do with the coup that overthrew Allende in 1973.

Of the 1970 scheme, Phillips says in a new book, "The Night Watch," that it was so top-secret that Nixon concealed it from Secretary of State William Rogers and Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird.

Richard Helms, then director of covert intelligence, was put in charge of a small group of agents,

including Phillips, to run the project, code-named "Track II."

Phillips said his book had official clearance.

Phillips, who had worked for the CIA in Chile, said he was the agency's chief of station in Rio de Janeiro in 1970 when was called back to Washington to take part in "Track II."

He said Helms had been called to the White House September 15 for a secret meeting with Nixon and was instructed to do everything necessary to keep Allende out of office.

The author quotes a memo Helms brought back to CIA headquarters in Langley, Va. The notes read:

"One in ten chances, perhaps, but save Chile.

"worth spending.

"not concerned risks involved.

"no involvement of embassy.

"full time job — best men we have.

"game plan.

"make the Chilean economy steam."

Phillips said he worked 20 hours a day on the plot for six weeks.

"There is only one way," he said he told a colleague identified only as Abe. "A military coup."

Then General Rene Schneider, Allende's military chief, was killed during a kidnap attempt by another group on October 22 and the unexpected death "made the odds of a successful military coup against Allende plunge to zero," he wrote.

Helms informed the White House and "Track II was dismantled."

Phillips noted that several official committees have investigated the CIA's role in Chile and failed to come up with evidence of wrongdoing.

*Associated Press*