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## **Democrat Moderate Liberals & Contra Aid Opponents Assume Key Foreign Policy Positions; Helms Removed From Leadership**

*by Deborah Tyroler*

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Republican Sen. Jesse Helms, who during the past six years contributed greatly to a rightwing US foreign policy, suffered a serious setback Jan. 6 on being rejected as minority leader for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Republicans on the committee voted 7 to 0 to elect Richard Lugar instead. Lugar was outgoing committee majority leader. Although a loyal Reaganite, Lugar's moderate style contrasts with that of Helms, who on many occasions managed to embarrass Washington by putting forth a personal foreign policy at odds with official prescriptions. Helms said the voting which denied him the chair was illegal since it occurred before Congress was formally opened. The new chair of the committee is Democrat Claiborne Pell, whose position on the Central America issue can be synthesized by his reference to the Nicaraguan contras as "our terrorists." In recent years Helms' actions were felt in many regions of the world, but especially in Latin America, given that he chaired the Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Hemispheric Affairs. Helms is succeeded by Democrat Christopher Dodd whose conversations with Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega last month resulted in the release of Eugene Hasenfus. Hasenfus had been sentenced to 30 years in prison for his participation in providing supplies to the contras in Nicaraguan territory. The chair of the House Foreign Relations Committee will remain in the hands of Democrat Dante Fascell, a moderate liberal. In contrast, a change has occurred in the House Subcommittee on Hemispheric Affairs. The subcommittee chair has been filled by Democrat George W. Crockett. The position was vacated by former Rep. Michael Barnes (D-MD) who lost his bid to move from the House to the Senate in November. Crockett, the first black congressperson to chair the subcommittee, is considered to be more leftist than Barnes.

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