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## **U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee Rejects Motion To Overrule Bush's Certification Of Mexican Anti-drug Efforts**

*by John Neagle*

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On April 12, the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee rejected a motion to rescind President George Bush's certification of Mexico's anti-drug and corruption efforts by a vote of 14 to 3. The motion was sponsored by Sen. Jesse Helms (R-NC). The matter goes to the full Senate for floor debate on May 1. Under US law, all countries receiving US foreign aid must cooperate in Washington's anti-drug efforts. At stake for Mexico is \$15 million designated for Mexico to maintain a fleet of 100 planes used to detect and fumigate marijuana plants, as well as other funds for anti-drug efforts. In a prepared statement, Secretary of State James Baker called on the committee to reject the motion, asserting that Mexico is "acting strongly against narcotics trafficking and corruption." He said Mexico has deployed 25% of its troops to eradicate drugs, increased penalties for drug traffickers, ordered the re-arrest of suspected marijuana trafficker Gilberto Ontiveros, and the investigation of judges who had released him. Baker stated that most recently, the Mexican government arrested Miguel Angel Felix Gallardo, a notorious drug trafficker, as well as an unspecified number of municipal and state policemen. Helms said the world has long been aware of Gallardo's activities, and that his arrest was an attempt by Mexican authorities to offer a "sacrificial lamb" to placate US legislators. (Basic data from AFP, 04/13/89)

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