

HONORING THE LIFE OF ERNIE
MILLS

HON. TOM UDALL

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2003

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, New Mexico lost a legend recently. Ernie Mills, the dean of New Mexico's political reporters, died from pneumonia on Wednesday, February 26 in Santa Fe. Ernie's career and New Mexico politics were synonymous. There was probably no one else in Santa Fe who knew more about how New Mexico politics worked. Governors, senators, and representatives and a host of elected officials from across the state knew that Ernie and his "little birdies" had the scoop on what was really happening in the state's political arena.

Ernie first came to New Mexico in 1957 when he became editor of the Gallup Independent. He had started his journalism career in New York where he worked for New York Herald Tribune. In 1958, he became the Capitol Bureau Chief for the Albuquerque Journal. He later opened his own public relations consulting firm in Santa Fe and Albuquerque, and was president of the New Mexico Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America.

In 1968–69, Ernie covered the activities of New Mexico servicemen in Vietnam during two tours of duty. During his tours of Vietnam, he also handed television coverage of the fighting there, first for KOB-TV and later for KOAT-TV.

Ernie was probably best known for his participation in one of New Mexico's largest news stories: the 1980 prison riot in Santa Fe. Rioting inmates requested that Ernie—and no one else—be allowed into the prison to negotiate a settlement with them. Fifteen hostages were released after his participation, all unharmed. Thirty-three inmates died in the bloody confrontation.

Ernie's career was devoted to his syndicated newspaper columns and radio and television shows. He produced a daily radio commentary Dateline New Mexico that was carried by more than 20 radio stations statewide. He also had a weekly television show entitled Report from Santa Fe that had been produced by KENW-TV in Portales, and that had aired for more than 27 years.

He received numerous awards during his career, including Broadcaster of the Year in 1995 from the New Mexico Broadcasters Association. The same organization also honored him for Special Reporting, Best News Coverage, Best Editorial Writing and Radio Newsmen of the Year.

Ernie Mills is gone, but his impact on New Mexico will be with us forever. He will be remembered for his sense of fair play, his balanced reporting, his unwillingness to report in something without first making sure of his facts, even if it meant that he was not the first to break the news. He always said it right.

Yes, he will be remembered for his "little birdies," his "gatos flacos," his "wall-leaners," and his interviews that kept his guests struggling to keep up with him. And we won't forget the "train wrecks," even if we don't remember what they were about. We will remember the man who gave his heart to all New Mexico. There was never a time that Ernie did not put people first. It was their hearts that he was

about. When asked about running for office, Ernie was fond of saying, "I'd like to run for office, but I wouldn't want to serve." It was Ernie's way of saying how much he loved being close to the people.

A memorial service for Ernie will be held on St. Patrick's Day in the State Capitol. He would have loved this. He was proud of his Irish heritage and it is fitting that he be remembered in the center of New Mexico's political world in Santa Fe.

Mr. Speaker, no one can ever replace Ernie Mills. His brand of journalism was unique and exclusively his own. More importantly, Ernie took people under his wing, to love, guide and protect. His heart was bigger than all New Mexico. On behalf of all who knew him, I can confidently say that we will sincerely miss him. I feel as though I have lost a real friend, and I extend my deepest sympathies to his wife Lorene and his children, Joy, Ken, Eddie, and Margaret.

BEECH GROVE GIRLS
CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. JULIA CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2003

Ms. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Beech Grove High School, located in the seventh Congressional District, on winning the Indiana State Girls Basketball Final. The Beech Grove Hornets beat St. Joseph's from South Bend, IN, 63–45.

Congratulations to Coach Dawn McNew who led the Beech Grove Hornets to a 27–1 record. I also want to congratulate her players whose teamwork implemented her system so well: Katie Gearlds, Emily Ringham, Joy Cromley, Stephanie Durbin, Clara Harris, Katie Ringham, Mandy Seward, Nicole Helfrich, Patty Collins, Maria Combs, Katie Lamping, and Jenni Moore.

The Hornets' stellar performance is an example of the benefits of superb teamwork and sportsmanship.

Beech Grove defeated North Harrison, Ramsey, IN, to advance to the Girls State Finals. The State Finals were played at Consecro Fieldhouse on Saturday, March 8th.

Beech Grove won its first state title, led by Hornets player Katie Gearlds, who scored a 3A title-record of 33 points. Katie, who has a scholarship to Purdue University, finished the season with 2,521 points, placing her fourth in state career scoring in Indiana.

This exceptional win by the Hornets is a perfect example why Title IX should remain as it is. Title IX has allowed the number of females participating in interscholastic sports to increase from 300,000 in 1971 to approximately 2.4 million in present day.

Congratulations to the Beech Grove Hornets! You have made us proud!

COMMEMORATING 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF HISTORIC RESCUE OF 50,000 BULGARIAN JEWS FROM THE HOLOCAUST

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2003

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, during the Holocaust, the Jews of Europe were subjected to persecution and, ultimately, targeted for total genocide—not only by foreign occupiers, but also at the hands of erstwhile friends and even their own governments. In the face of this atrocity, Bulgaria stands out for protecting its indigenous Jewish population from the evil machinery of the Holocaust. Despite official allied status with Nazi Germany, Bulgarian leaders, religious figures, intellectuals and average citizens resisted pressure from the Nazis to deport Bulgarian Jews to certain death in the concentration camps of Eastern Europe. Thanks to the compassion and courage of broad sectors of Bulgarian society, approximately 50,000 Jews survived the Holocaust.

Once an ally of Nazi Germany in March 1941, the Bulgarian Government and Parliament came under pressure from the Nazi regime and enacted legislation severely curtailing the rights of the Jewish population. In February 1943, a secret meeting between, Hitler's envoy to Bulgaria, and Bulgaria's Commissar on Jewish Affairs, established a timetable for exporting to Germany the Jews in Aegean Thrace and Macedonia, territories then under Bulgarian administration, and deportation of Jews from Bulgarian cities. The deportations were to begin on March 9, 1943.

Trains and boats to be used in the deportations were in place, and assembly points in Poland had already been selected when word of the plans was leaked. Almost immediately, 43 members of the Bulgarian Parliament led by Deputy Speaker Dimiter Peshev signed a petition to condemn this action. This, coupled with widespread public outcry from active citizens, political and professional organizations, intellectuals, and prominent leaders of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church, led the Minister of the Interior to stay the deportation orders. Later that month, Peshev again took a bold step in drafting a letter, signed by members of the ruling coalition, which condemned the possible deportation of Jews, calling this an "inadmissible act" with "grave moral consequences."

In May 1943, the plan for deportation of the Bulgarian Jews was finally aborted. King Boris III resisted Nazi pressure to advance the plan, arguing that the Jews were an essential component of the workforce. While some 20,000 Jews from Sofia were then sent to work camps in the countryside for the remainder of the war and subjected to squalid conditions, they nevertheless survived.

Tragically, there was no such reversal of fate for the estimated 11,000 Jews from Aegean Thrace and Macedonia, who did not have the protection afforded by Bulgarian citizenship. Already driven from their homes in March 1943, these individuals were transported through Bulgarian territory to the Nazi death camps. Madam Speaker, this month marks the 60th anniversary of Bulgarian resistance to the Holocaust. The people of Bulgaria