

# Don't Sell Us Short!

by Ralph Keyes



Sen. Howard Baker (right) and Water-gate Committee counsel Fred Thompson: Little Lib proponents have urged they investigate a heighist conspiracy.



Bobby Riggs stood tall before the match and was clobbered by Billie Jean King.

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This has been a good year for the Little People's Liberation Movement, a year of many small strides.

In sports, the Bobby Riggs tennis matches were our brightest moments. Short people around the country were thrilled by Billie Jean King's victory over Riggs, just as we had been delighted by his earlier victory over Margaret Court. In each case, the shorter person won.

Politically, it has been a mixed year, with the election of 5-foot-2-inch Abe Beame as Mayor of New York the high point. Beame is sure to stand small as New York's mayor. In fact, when asked what the differences would be between his administration and predecessor John Lindsay's, Beame replied: "About a foot." Right on, Brother Beame—raise your fist on low!

Little Lib people have understandably been bothered ever since 6-foot Gerald Ford was proposed as Vice President. Should President Nixon leave office, we would, of course, much prefer House Speaker Carl Albert, who at 5 foot 4 would be America's shortest President in nearly two centuries—equalled only by James Madison, also 5 foot 4.

We should take some comfort in the fact that the last Presidential election was only the second one this century won by the shorter candidate—Richard Nixon, who at 5 foot 11 $\frac{1}{2}$  stands an inch and a half below George McGovern. But our happiness is tempered by the fact that we missed having the 4-foot-11 Eleanor McGovern as First Lady, rather than the 5-foot-6 Pat Nixon.

The televised Watergate hearings have pointed up the conflict between big and small.

## A Watergate outrage

Millions of us were shocked when attorney John Wilson referred to Sen. Daniel Inouye as "that little Jap." We thought it outrageous that in this day and age one man could blithely call another "little."

Most of the contestants in the Watergate struggle have been physically large, as is President Nixon's main committee defender, 6-foot-2 Sen. Edward Gurney of Florida. But fortunately, the smaller interests were well protected by the likes of 5-foot, 6-inch Judge John Sirica, and Senators Inouye (5-6), Joseph Montoya (5-8) and Howard Baker (5-7).

Baker did let us down at one point in the hearings. When he was accused of trying to muffle fellow Sen. Lowell Weicker, Baker flashed one of his "Cousin Howard" grins and cutely said he thought it would be presumptuous for a man his size to tell someone 6 foot 6 what to do. We in the movement thought this was the remark of an Uncle

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Which of these men would you like to see as President, Carl Albert (left) or Gerald Ford? The author favors House Speaker Albert by a wide margin—about 8 inches.

## SHORT STORY CONTINUED

Tom Thumb, and I personally wrote Senator Baker to tell him it wasn't *presumptuous* for a man 5 foot 7 to tell someone a foot taller what to do—it was his *duty*! Baker replied he was going to ask Minority Counsel Fred Thompson (6 foot 5) to investigate any heightist conspiracy, adding, "I shall ask him to slouch while doing so."

Some of our smaller members have asked that we might form a logical coalition with tall women, since both suffer similar social humiliations such as dating difficulties and the problem of maintaining good eye contact at parties without getting a stiff neck. But for now we are going to limit our membership to small people of both sexes, since our heightist nation is desperately in need of a lowered consciousness.

The movement includes, for example, Elodia Serna, who at 4 foot 9½ recently became the world's smallest WAVE, and the Little Green Sprout, who recently joined the Jolly Green Giant in selling peas and corn.

We number among our ranks Bryce Harlow, a 5-foot, 6-inch counselor to the President, who once described a heated argument with 6-foot-7 Interior Secretary Rogers Morton as an "eyeball to kneecap confrontation."

### A national prejudice

Harlow is just one of many small men who were ascendant this year as we struggled against the prejudice of a nation dedicated to the proposition that tall men are created equal. We also count 5-foot-9 Henry Kissinger as one of ours, since he replaced 6-foot-1 Bill Rogers as Secretary of State.

The year has been one of bantam breakthroughs in many fields. Five-foot,

5-inch Howard Stevens made the New Orleans Saints football team as a running back, and 5-foot-7 Calvin Jones played cornerback for the Denver Broncos. In show business, 5-foot-2 Joel Grey won an Oscar.

But even as we celebrate our victories, we must not overlook the fact that America's smaller citizens continue to be subjected to humiliations—such as that suffered by ex-POW Ronald Ridgeway, who after his release by Hanoi was judged "too short" to become a Houston cop at 5 foot 5¾.

The most sober heads of our movement are adamant that passage of an Equal Heights Amendment must remain our first priority, because studies continue to show that tall people are hired before, paid more and promoted over the heads—literally—of short people.

### Short, but with hair

But in this encouraging year past, we finally got a study on our side. A research team at London's Roney Clinic announced that after studying 2000 patients with hair problems, they found men of above average height were more likely to lose their hair than shorter men.

The team thought this extra hair loss might have something to do with increased circulation problems from all that extra height to ascend. We like to think that it has something to do with the deleterious effects generally of bumping one's head on doorways, and exposing the scalp to a richer smog content higher in the air.

But thanks so much, you Roney researchers, for dragging us out from underfoot.

All power to the little people!  
We shall overcome!