

Shiro Yamasaki

Secretary to the prime minister

On the desk in my office sits a small box for accessories that Dr. Butler liked. I received it courtesy of Dr. Osako at the ILC Global Alliance as a remembrance token of Dr. Butler.

I first met Dr. Butler in 1987 while serving as Ministry of Health and Welfare representative for the JETRO New York. My impression of him is still unchanged from that when we first met. He always had a smile on his face and listened attentively to what the other person was saying. He always took things with a positive attitude, and then summarized the various opinions. I remember being deeply impressed that leaders in the US or rather in the world at large are also this same type of person. I have countless memories of the professor but will give just a few here.

In New York my work was mainly devoted to establishing the US-Japan International Leadership Center on Longevity and Society (ILC). When about to return home to Japan, the Professor invited us over for dinner at his home in Central Park West. After some happy conversation, we all enjoyed *Karaoke* which was starting to become popular in New York at that time. Dr. Butler remarked, "*Karaoke* is great for a long life!" and very happily sang a great many tunes.

After returning to Japan, we were able to work along with him on The Public Long-Term Care Insurance System and ILC affairs and during that time it was an honor to be invited as a lecturer to the Salzburg Seminar in 1998. At this seminar, famous researchers from all over

the world gathered for a one week stay on discussions about longevity issues and all members and the entire program were worked out by Dr. Butler. I was surprised at the distinguished faces I saw and again thought respectfully of how expansive the Dr. Butler's people network was. At the seminar I carefully introduced everyone to The Public Long-Term Care Insurance System concept currently being considered in Japan. All of the participants from each country showed a great deal of interest and approval. Dr. Butler's wife then remarked, "I think The Public Long-Term Care Insurance System in Japan is wonderful. I still fondly remember the time when Shiro was just a young boy in New York." which I hope were words of praise and I also felt that I had now in this way returned some of the Dr. Butler's

kindness. He truly loved his wife. I also cannot forget that on returning to Japan and finding that his wife had just obtained her doctorate from Columbia University, he said, "Two doctors in one family is kind of unusual!" and seemed really happy.

I met him for the last time during the summer in New York three years ago. On visiting the ILC-USA office he seemed as healthy as always, I believed he would stay active for a long time. Now I am deeply saddened.

Though it may be bold to say it, I think my wife Yuko and I were really loved by Dr. Butler and his wife Myrna Lewis and they were too nice to us. To me, Dr. Butler was someone I think of as my "American father" and I really feel that each time I look at his accessory case on my desk.



(Left to right) : Mrs. Yamasaki, Dr. Butler and Mr. Yamasaki