

## A Memorial Service Held for Robert N. Butler, President & CEO of ILC-USA

A memorial service for Robert N. Butler, President & CEO of ILC-USA was performed mournfully in All Souls Unitarian Church in Manhattan, NY from 4:00 PM on September 29 (Wed.).

Right in the entrance of the venue, many photos of Dr. Butler were displayed. All of them were filled with gentle smile.

About 400 friends and colleagues got together from all over the world and shared regret over Dr. Butler's death. From ILC Global Alliance attended Mr. Morioka, Hon. President of ILC-Japan, Baroness Greengross, Executive Chair of ILC-UK, Dr. Forette, President of ILC-France, Dr. Pereyra, Director of ILC-Dominican Republic, Dr. Daichman, President of ILC-Argentina and Dr. Osako, Exective Director of ILC Global Alliance Secretariat.

Memorial addresses were delivered by 11 persons including US professors and ILC



members who are making earnest efforts in the fields of gerontology and journalism education, Dr. Butler's life work.

On behalf of ILC Global Alliance, one of Co-Presidents Baroness Greengross, Chief Executive of ILC-UK made a speech of farewell.

In the middle of the ceremony Dr. Butler's youngest daughter sang "Last Night When We Were Young" for her father with all her heart, which moved the attendants to tears.

Dr. Butler's four daughters, taking over their fathers achievements, established "the Robert N. Butler, MD Charitable Fund" to support public policy, education, research and awareness activities concerning population aging.



### Memorial Tribute to Dr. Robert Butler

Baroness Sally Greengross  
Chief Executive, ILC- UK

For me, one of Bob's key messages was that anything was possible, if it helped to further the cause he fought for all his life – a better life for older people and an end to the negative attitudes and discrimination they often face. He believed that we should always celebrate the unprecedented triumph of living in an ageing society. This message was always incredibly strong and permeated all his work.

He could also make others believe they could do anything, as he did me in persuading me to describe best practice across Europe to special Congressional and Senate Committees, each in seven minutes with no preparation. When I expressed some doubts about being able to do that, he said 'of course you can do it Sally, just tell

them what you know'. Somehow I managed, because Bob inspired me, as he did all of us. He was the best mentor ever.

Hearing him inspire audiences across the world was a privilege and he achieved momentous changes in policy and practice. Not only did he coin the word 'ageism' but also 'shortevity' and his work was renowned.

But outside work, Bob was one of my dearest friends. He and Myrna first stayed with us in London when Alexandra was two and a half. Last year she and her fiancé returned to London, where a happy reunion reminded me of Bob's delight in his family, such as, when in London with two charming grandsons, we all climbed to the top of Big Ben.

He was a determined walker covering huge distances, sometimes with me desperately trying to keep up. My husband Alan mapped out many

historic walks across London for him. His insistence in maintaining physical and intellectual energy ensured, I believe, that he was able to remain fiercely active, even publishing a book a few days before his death.

My tribute to Bob, and that of my colleagues from the ILCs across the globe, will be to develop, expand and progress the work of the ILC Global Alliance. I am proud to have been involved since the early days with Bob, Shigeo Morioka from Japan, and Françoise Forette from France, because if Bob's message to recognise the economic and social force of older people is heeded, the world

will surely be more balanced and more humane. The strength of Bob's call to action demonstrates how future society can benefit from being, in all senses of the word, more mature and through the work of the ILCs we can ensure that Bob's spirit and leadership will continue to inspire the world.

We owe him that at the very least and that, I promise, we shall do everything in our power to achieve.




Baroness Greengross expressing her condolences

## Dr. Robert Neil Butler

Personal History (summary)

### 1927 Jan. 21

- He was born in New York City. At the age of 11 months his parents divorced, and he was taken in by his maternal grandparents in their 70s who ran a chicken farm in the city of Vineland, New Jersey.

### 1934 (7 years old)

- After his grandfather's sudden death, he spent hard life with his grandmother.

### 1949 (22 years old)

- He graduated from Columbia University in New York and became an MD in 1953. His specialty was psychiatric medicine.

### 1955 (28 years old)

- He became a senior researcher at the National Institute of Mental Health in Bethesda, Maryland.

### 1963 (36 years old)

- He advocated the reminiscence, life review which would become a psychotherapy method for the elderly.

### 1968 (41 years old)

- He coined the term "Ageism" to signify discrimination against the elderly.

### 1969 (42 years old)

- He worked energetically towards legal amendments to bring corrective changes in nursing homes.

### 1975 (48 years old)

- He contributed to the establishment of the National Institute on Aging within the National Institute of Health and became its founding director (~1982).
- He summarized in the book "Why Survive? - Being Old in America."

### 1976 (49 years old)

- His book "Why Survive? Being Old in America" won the Pulitzer Prize.

- His book "Love and Sex after 60," co-authored with Dr. Myrna Lewis, was published.

### 1978 (51 years old)

- Dr. Butler made his first visit to Japan with his second wife Dr. Myrna Lewis. He participated in the 11th International Congress of Gerontology in Tokyo. He then gave a lecture at Kyoto International Symposium on Aging sponsored by WHO.

### 1982 (55 years old)

- He was appointed as the founding chairman, Gerald and May Ellen Ritter Department of Geriatrics and Adult Development, The Mount Sinai Medical Center. This Department of Geriatrics was the first of its kind in the US.

- He played a central role in the first World Assembly on Ageing in Vienna.

### 1983 (56 years old)

- Salzburg Global Seminar (Austria), founded and managed by Harvard University, covers various themes, among which was population aging in 1983. He was the central figure at the seminar, introducing the keyword "Productive Aging" to experts from all over the world.

### 1984 (57 years old)

- Invited by American Center of the US embassy in Japan, he gave lectures in Tokyo and Fukuoka.

### 1987 (60 years old)

- He visited Japan to attend the international symposium hosted by Asahi Shimbun. He gave a keynote lecture. This event turned out to be an opportunity for him to meet Mr. Shigeo Morioka, President of Yamanouchi Pharmaceuticals and it was the beginning of the actual work on establishing ILC.

### 1990 (63 years old)

- He established the ILC-USA at Mount Sinai Medical Center.

- The ILC-Japan, headed by Dr. Hideo Ibe, was established as affiliated to The Japan College of Social Work, and Dr. Butler visited Japan to attend its first board of meeting.

### 1991 (64 years old)

- He came to Japan to attend the symposium that celebrated the establishment of the ILCs in Japan and the USA.