

**Professor Gordon Tullock - my benefactor who fostered
the Public Choice Society in Japan and other Asian
countries**

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§ In the course of careers of many Asian scholars, they received their college education in their home countries and, at a point of time, spent some time in research institutions in the U.S. or Europe. Many of them may have traveled alone but would be very happy if they could find a mentor who could teach them the rich history, culture and traditions of the countries and institutions they visit.

§ I was most fortunate to have met such a man -- Professor Gordon Tullock -- when I visited Public Choice Center at VPI in the mid 1970s. He knew well that the average Japanese scholars were poor English speakers. I was indeed one of them. On the day of my arrival, he advised me to watch the television two hours every evening. By doing so, I improved my English day by day. At the same time I came to understand and appreciate the American way of life. Every morning when I arrived at Public Choice Center, Betty Tellman kindly informed me which TV program was good and that evening I would watch them.

§ Since I was the first Japanese visitor to VPI, I received special attention from Professors Tullock and Buchanan. One evening Professor Tullock invited me and Professor Buchanan to dinner at his residence. Professor Tullock showed us his collection of a series of *Ukiyoes* prints that described an old walkway from Tokyo to Kyoto. They were the work of Hiroshige, a famous Japanese artist. I regarded that as an expression of friendship to me.

In those days, VPI conferred the title of distinguished professor to excellent professors in all departments of study. Professors Tullock and Buchanan were distinguished professors from the department of Economics. Distinguished professors sometimes lunched together in a very nice room in the campus. On one occasion, Professors Tullock and Buchanan invited me to a lunch meeting of that distinguished group of

scholars. I was able to enjoy meeting many distinguished professors and we talked about Japan.

While I was in Blacksburg, Virginia, I went for drives on country roads every weekend. The State of Virginia had many historical places. Professor Tullock would give me suggestions of places that were worthwhile visiting.

§ After I returned to Japan from my first stay in Blacksburg, I set up the Japanese Public Choice Society together with my friends including Hiroshi Kato, Kazuyoshi Kurokawa. It was a small group of like-minded scholars. However, Professor Tullock wrote in an editorial in *Public Choice* as follows: "...The European Society is now large enough to live on its own. The Japanese group is still smaller than the European by quite a big margin, but granted the general tendency of things Japanese to grow rapidly, this may not remain true very long." *Public Choice* 46:227-246 (1985). I still remember this warm-hearted encouragement for us.

Over the years, Professor Tullock visited Japanese Public Choice conferences several times. Even if all of us happened to be busy and no one was able to take care of him for a day, he would always say "Don't worry, I can walk around Tokyo city". Kurokawa and I responded to his heart-warming kindness by translating his book *Social Dilemma* into Japanese.

§ Immediately after Professor Tullock was elected President of the prestigious Western Economics Association, he advised me to participate in the Pan Pacific Special Conferences of Western Economic Association that were held in the U.S.

Professor Tullock was to be seen in Hong Kong, Vancouver, and Bangkok in the Pan-Pacific Conferences. Also, I was appointed a member of the editorial board of the Journal of W.E.A. on the recommendation of Professor Tullock.

Whenever I had a chance to talk with Professor Tullock, our conversation would extend over the history and culture of China and Japan. Through the process of my study of the subject of public choice, Professor Tullock has given me strong support and encouragement as a great teacher who understands Asia.

For Professor Tullock's eightieth birthday, I wish him continued good health and

success in new academic activities.

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