

MRS. CHESTER F. CARLSON
133 CRESCENT HILL ROAD
PITTSFORD, NEW YORK 14834

October 21, 1974

Dear Yasuko:

As an honorary board member as well as the one who has made the Zendo, Monastery and house of 69th a reality through very great financial support, I would like to express my thoughts on the proposed or eventual sale of the 69th Street property.

When I gave funds for the purchase of the property at 356 East 69th Street it was primarily to provide a "homey" and absolutely private atmosphere for Eido Roshi and his wife to take refuge in for rest and privacy. I know from experience that a person who is consumed in fulfilling a spiritual destiny gives out so much of himself that such periods of privacy and renewal are absolute necessities.

All churches and synagoges in this country provide a home for the spiritual leader as well as a salary. In the case of the Zen Studies Society, I gave the home; I don't know about a salary, but assume that Eido Roshi should not be the only one in the organization expected to give himself so completely that he must give up his home. None of us would be willing to do this nor should Eido Roshi be expected to do so. He gives himself completely to the work in abundant dedication. The least we can do is insure a home with absolute privacy for him and his wife. I even wish that he and Yasuko could feel no obligation in letting anyone stay there, either visitors or students unless the idea and invitation originate entirely with them. At times Eido Roshi needs to be able to retreat from his administrative duties, the community and the spiritual work. He above all needs to replenish himself as he gives so much.

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The members of the Zendo are most fortunate in having Eido Roshi; they are most fortunate to have been given sums of money to help establish this work. No other Center in the United States or perhaps the world is as handsomely endowed primarily by the grant of one person. All the members should now put every effort into sustaining this work. It should not be the sole effort of Eido Roshi and a few others.

We should all be grateful for the wonderful, inspiring spiritual example of Eido Roshi and give him our support.

It is my wish that the property at 356 East 69th Street not be sold but that it be retained as the home of the Roshi and his wife alone. In an effort to give him support and sustenance, I don't think any of the members should have the use of the house as it should be as much Eido Roshi and Yasuko's house as is your home or my home our own. Our own home came to be known as a place where any and all could come, while I as part of the Spiritual Quest became the servant. I knew the value of having one place where one might run to when the body has been threatened with both physical and mental exhaustion. Eido Roshi is not one to complain. Rather, we should try to look at this matter in the way one of us would feel in similar circumstances. Believe me I speak from over twenty-five years of personal experience and speak through a very, very tired body.

It is only because of the spiritual stature of Eido Roshi that I gave any funds to the New York Zen Studies Society. If it were not for him, I should not have been interested.

Perhaps I shall be able to meet with the Board in the not too distant future. For the time being, however, it is not possible.

I should say that it was only by chance that I learned of the real reason for the proposed possible sale of 356 East 69th Street. Of course, Eido Roshi was not complaining. But I felt a need to discuss the matter with the Board and to voice my opinion that the property should not be sold.

With all personal good wishes to each of you,

Sincerely,

Joyce Carlson

Mrs. Chester F. Carlson