



Wesley Hershey, ca 1970s

WESLEY L. HERSHEY
(1913 – 1989)

INTERVIEWED BY
HARRIETT LYLE

May 2 and 3, 1979

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Subject area

Caltech Y.

Abstract

An interview in two sessions in May 1979 with Wesley L. Hershey, former executive secretary of the Caltech Y. He earned a degree from Yale Divinity School in 1946, became executive secretary of the Caltech YMCA (as it was then called) that year, and served in that position until his retirement in 1976.

He comments on his longstanding interest in the student YMCA movement, beginning with his undergraduate years at Berkeley. Recalls his arrival at Caltech and the importance of the YMCA there; Robert A. Millikan's support; Millikan's religious bent and involvement with Pasadena's Neighborhood Church. C. Schwieso, the Y's early executive secretary; history of Freshman Camp. The Y's role in making students feel at home; the stress that incoming students experience; Dr. Kenneth Eels as Caltech's first institute psychologist. Establishment of the Y's Leaders of America program. Decline in student activism and volunteerism.

He discusses his interest in working with people in “encounter sessions.” Recalls the founding of Athenaeum luncheon forums and Friends of the Y. Concludes with comments on the value of volunteerism and group interaction, and on the Caltech Y’s evolution as a liberal, even secular, organization.

Administrative information

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CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY ARCHIVES

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW WITH WESLEY L. HERSHEY

BY HARRIETT LYLE

PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

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Wes Hershey with a group of students, 1974

CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY ARCHIVES
ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Interview with Wesley L. Hershey
Pasadena, California

by Harriet Lyle

Session 1 **May 2, 1979**

Session 2 **May 3, 1979**

Begin Tape 1, Side 1

LYLE: Mr. Hershey, what did you do before you came to Caltech in 1946?

HERSHEY: I did my undergraduate work at the University of California, Berkeley, and as an undergraduate there, I became very active in the student YMCA. When I finished with my degree [1938], I was asked if I would be interested in being a junior secretary there. I was and stayed for three years as junior secretary, knowing all the time that if I was going to stay in student college work, I would need to have some kind of advanced degree. At that time, the place most highly recommended was Union Theological Seminary, in New York City. So, without even applying, I decided to go to New York. But neither my wife nor I was able to get a job at first that would make it possible for me to go to the seminary, so I decided I'd just work that year in a Brooklyn YMCA. After a year, I was asked to be the assistant director of the Cornell [University] United Religious Work, which was, historically, their student YM and YW. After several years, I decided to go to Yale Divinity School—instead of Union—to get my degree, which I finished in 1946.

We wanted very much to come back to California. There were only two jobs that were open: One was at UCLA, and their board decided they wanted somebody with more experience, so I didn't get that job. The only other opening for me in California was at Caltech.

LYLE: So, all along, you had specifically planned to work in the YMCA.

HERSHEY: In the student YMCA movement. Yes.

LYLE: So, your training in divinity school was really directed—

HERSHEY: Directed towards working as a college YMCA secretary.

LYLE: Why did you want to do that? It sounds like that had been a dream from way back.

HERSHEY: Not really, but I got involved in the Y, as I said, at Berkeley. I found that the people who were active in the student Y, and who were concerned with it, had religious concerns, but not necessarily Christian and certainly not church-oriented—though I was active in church, too. Student Y was an opportunity for students to continue to be challenged by great ideas and great ideals, and I enjoyed working at Berkeley so much that I decided that that was really the direction I wanted to take professionally.

LYLE: So, then you took the job at Caltech?

HERSHEY: Yes, I was offered the job at Caltech, and I think it's a fact of some interest that there was a popular young professor, Hardin Craig, an assistant professor of history, who was chairman of the Y board, and he and I corresponded while I was still at Yale. One of the contingencies on my coming to Caltech was that they would find a house for me to rent at a reasonable figure, because my salary that first year was \$3,000. Well, as it turned out, they were unable to find a place for my family to live. I had a wife and two daughters. Hardin wrote and said they were going to have to let me out of my informal contract, because they couldn't find a place. But the same day, I got a wire from him saying that the Y board had met again and that [YMCA board member] Margaret [Eaton Brown] Fleming had said, "We want that young family to come to Caltech, so I'll buy a house, so that they can have a place to rent." Which she did, and basically loaned the

money to the Y for that purpose. But if it hadn't been for her intervention, I would not have come.

LYLE: Did you like the house?

HERSHEY: Oh, yes. But as it turned out, that same summer Hardin Craig moved to Rice Institute, and so we bought his house.

LYLE: What was the early history of the Y? Did it have any problems?

HERSHEY: The Y had a very fine history at Caltech, though it had had severe financial problems. Nevertheless, it would be fair to say that almost all of the innovative student-centered activities and projects at Caltech were inaugurated by the Y. I wasn't too worried about the finances, because I had gotten some good experience up at Berkeley during the Depression, raising money for the Y there, and I knew Pasadena had lots of well-to-do people. And we were able eventually to build up good support.

LYLE: So, when you came into the job, you had in mind that one of your jobs was to build support.

HERSHEY: Oh, I knew that would be a major job. The Pasadena YMCA and the Pasadena Council of Churches both pledged \$1,000 a year for three years to our budget, and it was the knowledge of this that really made it possible for me to see that there was at least a good chance I'd be able to get my salary paid for a few years.

LYLE: At that time, did Caltech support the Y?

HERSHEY: No. No financial support at all. That didn't start, and then very modestly, until after I was here about four or five years. [Robert Andrews] Millikan [head of Caltech's Executive Council, 1921-1945] supported the Y financially but apparently had never felt that it was appropriate for the institute to give money to the Y. It's interesting that the person who really made it possible for the Y to start getting money was Wallace

Sterling, who was then professor of history and later president of Stanford. His office was just down the hall from the Y's office, in the basement of Dabney Hall. So I talked with him one day about it, and he said, "Well, there shouldn't be any problem. I'll just bring it up at the next administrative meeting." Apparently, he did, because we then started getting some money from the institute. It was quite [a] small [amount], but at that time, it was of critical importance. Now, of course, it's substantial.

LYLE: Were the Pasadena YMCA and the Council of Churches involved in any other way besides giving money?

HERSHEY: Not directly. The executive director of the Pasadena YMCA had a strong commitment to the student YMCA movement, and he wanted very much to see it supported and revived after the war. So, he got his board to go along with the idea of supporting us. I maintained close contact with the Pasadena Y and was an invited guest to their board of directors' meetings during the first several years I was here. I also went out to their camp at Catalina one year and helped the staff during the summer; that was strictly on a voluntary basis. But other than that, we haven't had very close ties.

LYLE: Could you describe the beginnings and the development of [Caltech's] Freshman Camp?

HERSHEY: Yes, Freshman Camp had a predecessor, or several predecessors, in that it was probably during World War I that the Y first organized evening receptions for new students. I'm not quite sure where those receptions were held, but a little later I know they were held on campus and at the Pasadena YMCA. But these were just evening events. And then, a little later, probably in the early twenties, the Y and what was then called the ASB, Associated Student Body, and—I suspect—the dean of freshmen's office organized a Freshman Day, basically for orientation and programs very similar to the programs of the Freshman Camp a few years later.

In 1924, a man by the name of Charles Schwieso came to Caltech to be the Y's executive secretary, as we were called in those days. He helped students inaugurate many new projects and expanded the Freshman Day into a Freshman Camp. Student Ys

did this all over the country. I was involved in helping one at Cornell, which had been started there forty years earlier.

LYLE: Was it a camp or a day, at Cornell?

HERSHEY: It was away from campus for a weekend, at least a weekend. Well, Chuck [Charles Schwieso] helped to move the Freshman Day to Freshman Camp. The first one was held at the Idyllwild Inn. And as I looked through some of the minutes of Y cabinet meetings from those years, I came across quite a number of names of alumni whom I've gotten to know through the years.

LYLE: The people who belonged to the Y then and came back to help?

HERSHEY: Yes, and who were the student leaders of Freshman Camp in those days. Incidentally, freshmen all paid their own way, completely voluntary, and I have a feeling that probably upperclassmen paid their way, too. And the few faculty who could be cajoled into going.

LYLE: Do you think that's better than the way it is now?

HERSHEY: No, not necessarily. I doubt very much—though it's pretty hard to say—whether new students could or would come up with the money or how easy it would be to get them to do it. But that generally was true of all things that were done back in those days: There were no scholarships for that kind of activity or any aid from any other source. The Y's budget was so thin. Charles Schwieso's salary in 1924-25 was \$1,600 a year. I do know that when he finally had to leave—in 1934, because they couldn't raise enough money to pay his salary—that he hadn't gotten any salary at all for the last two or three years he was at Caltech.

LYLE: Did you ever meet him?

HERSHEY: Oh, yes. He's a good friend. He is quite ill these days and getting along in years.

LYLE: What did he do after he lost that job?

HERSHEY: He went to work in private industry somewhere for a while and eventually worked with the American Friends Service Committee for many years. But he lives in Menlo Park, California, now.

LYLE: So, the camp was then at Idyllwild for a while.

HERSHEY: It was at Idyllwild for a while and then it was in the mountains somewhere for a year or two, here in the San Gabriels. When I came here in 1946, [associate professor of physics] Foster Strong, who had been appointed as dean of freshmen by Millikan shortly before Millikan retired, met with upper class leaders, who felt that one of the things that ought to be continued was Freshman Camp. But there was some concern expressed by some persons that returning GIs wouldn't go to a camp on a voluntary basis. So, it was decided to *require* attendance of all new students and that the institute would pay for the cost of the camp. At first, it was going to be by not returning to the students their \$10 register fee—something like that. Well, it was a successful transition, but it was also based on the fear—well, at least I guess it was Foster Strong's fear—that the only way we could get people to come out was to make it compulsory. Whereas before, the minutes show that almost all of the freshmen attended Freshman Camp on this voluntary pay-your-own-way basis. In one meeting minutes, there was a note that said something like, "Freshman Camp was great, and So-and-so is to be congratulated. We feel sorry for the few freshmen who didn't get there." So, it has continued to be a very important part of Caltech life.

I might comment that because of the increasing costs and pressures for money to go to other places, there was quite a bit of agitation on the part of some people to do away with Freshman Camp a few years ago, and for one year—1964, I believe—it was held on campus. This was not a complete fiasco, but it just didn't do the job, with people coming and going, with all their other responsibilities and activities. And then I suggested—

since almost all alumni certainly had felt that camp was a very important part of beginning life at Caltech—that we go to the Alumni Association and see if they would be willing to support Freshman Camp. As a matter of fact, the previous year, when we had it on campus, we did get them to provide the money to hire buses to take freshmen on tours to Palomar and to the beach, too, so the Alumni Association had gotten increasingly involved. And then, a little bit later, the alumni board members, many of them, were invited to go to Freshman Camp and participate in the leadership, too. We moved from Camp Radford, an L.A. City campground in the mountains, after it had had a devastating fire and wasn't able to accommodate us the next year, to Glendale YMCA's camp on Catalina, where it is still held. Of critical importance in the retention of Freshman Camp is the opportunity for upperclassmen and faculty to communicate how important the honor system is. That is always a very important part of any camp program and has been as far back as I can see any reference.

One big thing that was great about having the institute take it over was that it also meant that they could urge professors to take time off to go to camp and pay all of their expenses.

LYLE: So, you had more professors participating?

HERSHEY: Oh, yes. There were very few faculty back in the volunteer days—maybe three or four. Now it's more like thirty to forty.

LYLE: What kind of support or interest did Dr. Millikan give to the Y?

HERSHEY: When I came, Greta Millikan [Mrs. R. A. Millikan] would send a \$35 check to the Y each year, and so financially that was the extent of it. But then well into his retirement, he and I used to have long talks together, and he helped me raise some money in his later years by writing letters to some of his friends, saying that I would be getting in touch with them. And at one point, he even wrote saying that he was going to give us \$1,000, and he hoped that each of these other people would. Well, most of them didn't give that amount of money, but almost all of them gave some, so he was helpful in many points. Then, of course, the big thing that came out of our continued friendship was that

after his death [1953], it was announced that he'd left [much] of his estate to the Caltech Y—[an amount that] at that moment was thought to be about \$100,000. As it turned out, by the time the estate was settled and we got our money, it was closer to \$150,000. The Millikans and I agreed that it might be best for him to give that money to the institute itself and for the income to go to the Caltech Y. This money became the primary undergirding financial support for the Y.

LYLE: So, you're not responsible for the investing of the money and so forth.

HERSHEY: That's true. The institute has been very kind through the years in that regard and also in terms of taking care of any endowment monies we have. But I think it is an interesting story related to this \$100,000. Of course, we knew about this, oh, a number of years before he died, because this is something that he and I had worked out. I think the first story that is of interest is that I had been talking with him about the possibility of giving us, oh, \$25,000 or something like that, so that we could bring some special speakers to campus, because we've always been a sort of speaker-oriented organization. And so, I had written this letter suggesting that certainly \$25,000 to \$100,000 would be really great and outlining how I thought the Y could utilize that money.

So I wrote this letter, and I suppose it was about five o'clock one evening I got in my car and drove over to the Millikan residence in San Marino and knocked and knocked and knocked and rang the doorbell, but no answer. Finally, Mrs. Millikan opened an upstairs window and leaned out, and after pleasantries—I had, incidentally, assumed that nobody was there, so I slipped the letter in the envelope underneath the door—she said, “Mr. Hershey, I'd like to know what you think of John T. Flynn.” I think that was his name; I'm sure it was Flynn. He was a very conservative—I'd say reactionary—radio commentator. And I said, “Well, I've got an opinion. Why do you ask?” She said, “Robert has received two telegrams now from Board of Trustees' members who want him to give \$1,000 a year to keep John T. Flynn on the air. I've talked to Dr. Rod [Rodman W.] Paul [Harkness Professor of History, d. 1987]. I asked Rod what he thought. He didn't like Flynn. But he wouldn't talk to Robert, because he said it wasn't his place to try to tell the great Robert Millikan anything. What do *you* think?”

I said, “Well, frankly, I think he’s a louse,” or words to that effect. I thought that he was a kind of McCarthy-type character, always trying to call everybody communists. At any rate, I said, “That’s what I feel about him.” She said, “Well, what I want you to do—Robert’s at his office now”—he was often at his office until late at night. “I want you to go over to his office and tell him what you have been telling me.”

And so, I got over there, and after pleasantries I said, “Well, I’m here because your wife sent me over. Settle back. I’ve got something I need to tell you.” So, I told him then what I felt about this guy Flynn. I thought, “My God, I’ve really set my foot into it now and probably won’t get a cent.” But as Clark Millikan, his son, told me years later, no doubt his father greatly respected me for speaking my mind, particularly since I knew that he was more in that direction than I was. That was on Friday, as I recall, and I didn’t hear a thing until I came home on, probably, the next Friday—or it could have been one other day of the week. I walked into the house, and my daughter Margaret, who would have been all of about eight or nine at that time—she’s now Margaret Hershey Lester on campus—she said, “Daddy, Mr. Millikan called and said he’s going to give you \$100,000, and could you come to lunch on Sunday or dinner on Sunday.” The dinner on Sunday was dinner, but also, he had arranged to have his attorney there during the afternoon so we could agree on the final wording of his will.

LYLE: That’s really interesting.

HERSHEY: I thought it would be.

LYLE: Did you ever discuss with him whether he sent the \$1,000 to Mr. Flynn?

HERSHEY: No.

LYLE: That wasn’t brought up again.

HERSHEY: No, I wasn’t going to stir up any troubled waters.

LYLE: Did Greta Millikan have much influence, do you think, on what Robert Millikan did? It sounds like maybe she did.

HERSHEY: Oh, yes, they were really very close, and their attitudes, at least, were very similar. And I'm sure some of the students of the Millikan era who are alumni now remember very well how she used to try and get students not to hang their laundry out on the balconies of student houses and all kinds of things that she felt was trying to help them. In addition, of course, the Millikans had regular teas for students in their home. She of course was heavily involved in that.

LYLE: Did she come to the Y? Was she involved in the Y at all?

HERSHEY: No. Well, she preceded Robert in death, but she had been very ill for quite a number of years, so he used to come to the Y's Athenaeum luncheon forums regularly. But no, she was never able to come.

LYLE: But he did come?

HERSHEY: Yes. And when he got to the point where he couldn't walk up the stairs—he did that for many years—why, Lee DuBridg[e] [Caltech president 1946-1969] arranged that an institute car would pick him up at his office and drive him to the basement of the Athenaeum so that he could take the elevator up to the main floor.

LYLE: Did you find that it was difficult to work with him when he was older? I've heard that a lot of people had trouble communicating with him.

HERSHEY: No, I didn't have—well, I didn't have that many contacts with him during the last, well, I guess during the last year. He was in a rest home for a period of time, and I didn't see him during that time, so I couldn't say that.

LYLE: But when he was on campus, you didn't think that that was a problem?

HERSHEY: No. Millikan was a strong individual, and I'm sure the faculty would say that he was certainly a dictator as far as Caltech was concerned. He didn't take the title of president, but nevertheless there is no doubt at all as to who made almost all decisions. I think he did share a few major decisions with [Arthur Amos] Noyes and [George Ellery] Hale, and they in turn made some of their own. But nevertheless, there were some faculty people who had the title of assistant professor for years and years without getting any promotion and probably no more money either. But he made these decisions himself. So, he was irascible in many ways.

LYLE: When he gave all this money, what did he want done with it?

HERSHEY: Well, this question requires a complicated and rather lengthy answer. Both Robert and Greta were born in parsonages—that is, their fathers in both cases were ministers, Congregational ministers. And also, they grew up in a very similar kind of environment—religiously oriented homes. I don't know, but I suspect they met at Oberlin. I know that Robert went to Oberlin, and I suspect that Greta did, too. And probably Robert was very likely an officer in the student Y there. I am sure he was active in it, though I don't have any records to support that. But I suspect that Oberlin records might well show that he was, because that was then—as it is now at Caltech, I think—the center of nonacademic life outside of athletics. And the student Y has always been involved in causes, too, through the student Y movement. The student YM and YW, incidentally, recruited more people for the foreign mission field than all churches combined, because they had this great idealism to do what they felt as Christians they should be doing. That was one of the high priorities at the time that Millikan was going to college, and earlier. So, his involvement with the student Y, and of course his interests generally in religion, go back a long way. I think one of the nice little delightful experiences that I had in that regard was when I was on the Board of Ushers at Neighborhood Church here in Pasadena, and Millikan was on the Board of Ushers, too. And every week, for weeks, we'd come down the aisle and stand in front of the pulpit with our plates out. We'd reach through and have the preacher put them under the pulpit. And that was fun. But Millikan did like to talk to me because of my theological

education. He always liked to talk to some people about religion. And occasionally I'd get a telephone call from him saying, "Wesley, could you come over for a little while this afternoon?" He'd really get talking about the things that, more often than not, he really wanted to tell you, to see if you didn't agree with him.

These are nice memories, but his gift to the Y grew out of a lifelong interest in religion, and I helped convince him that there was a better chance of religious influence being continued on the campus through a gift to the Y than just to Caltech and the general fund.

LYLE: And he thought it was important to do that?

HERSHEY: Oh, yes. Yes, he did. And I'm sure that was a critical factor. I worry sometimes that we're not carrying that out as well these days as we should, but while Millikan had his own Christian theology and I had a slightly different one when I came out here, nevertheless he was not a dogmatist who believed that his beliefs were absolutely right. He always felt that a person should do that which he felt was right, regardless of the religious tradition. So that I think that the Y through the years has been a good testament to Millikan's concern. Of course, he often supported, or gave some support to, people he disagreed with, though in terms of the Y I certainly didn't feel he disagreed with us in those years at all.

LYLE: Is this history of support by Millikan generally known to the Y members?

HERSHEY: I couldn't say today, because I'm largely out of touch with the Y. But for many, many years we publicized the fact that our Leaders of America program was made possible through an endowment provided by Robert Millikan.

Begin Tape 1, Side 2

LYLE: OK, the next thing I would like to discuss is how you started the Y's Leaders of America program. Was Professor Millikan involved in the starting of this?

HERSHEY: No, he was not, although the idea for the Leaders of America program was in the process of developing several years before his death. When it became apparent to us that we were eventually going to be getting a big chunk of money, I invited about twenty faculty and several students. I say *I* invited them; the Y Board and I invited them to a weekender—or, as it turned out, an overnight, a day, and an overnight—down at the Mission Inn at Riverside to talk about what we might do most creatively with this money. And in one of those sessions I recall Dr. Art [Arthur W.] Galston, who was [an associate] professor of biology at Caltech at that time and now is at Yale, telling about a program at Haverford [College] where they invited distinguished people to come to the campus for a week and later invited them back to give a commencement address. He thought it a neat idea, and he said, “You know, I think it could be a neat thing for Caltech to do. And the Caltech Y to do.” And so, we decided that we would pursue this idea, and we did, and quite successfully for a number of years. But like all programs—I guess, many programs—it ran out of steam after a number of years as far as student interest is concerned.

LYLE: You found this happens a lot? That you have a program and you can expect it to last four or five years and it’s time to change?

HERSHEY: Yes. We had committees of students and faculty who decided on who should be invited for the next year. And so, you name the leaders of the last thirty years, except the last seven or eight, and we invited them. I have letters in some of my old files from President Jack Kennedy, a senator then, and his brother Bobby. But we were very fortunate in getting to have week-long guests—such people as Justice [William O.] Douglas, Margaret Mead, Martin Luther King, Roy Wilkins of the NAACP—who not only gave one or two talks but spent most of the time sitting around either in the student houses or the Y lounge, talking to students about their concerns. But, as I said, it ran out of steam. It ran out of steam largely because the people we were able to get weren’t as attractive to students, and/or that we couldn’t seem to interest students in some of the big issues that some of these people were interested in.

LYLE: I was curious about something you said just a minute ago. You had this meeting at the Mission Inn at Riverside. Have you found in your experience that it is important to go away to another place for discussions?

HERSHEY: I'm a strong believer in conferences being held away from where people have other responsibilities. Get them somewhere where they can spend all their time thinking about this particular problem that you want to think about. And I've believed in this ever since I first got involved in helping to arrange conferences at Cornell and at Berkeley.

LYLE: And in your experience this has certainly held up over time.

HERSHEY: Oh, yes. Now this Y Student Executive Committee is not having their orientation conferences down at [the Frank] Capra Ranch [in Fallbrook, California] anymore, for a variety of reasons, but my guess is that the attempted method of just doing these on campus probably won't prove to be very successful. It will be interesting to see. If they do, then it tears down one of my prejudices.

LYLE: So, you noticed that the students were no longer interested in such big issues. When did this happen? Ten years ago?

HERSHEY: Well, I think it was not at any one time, but we became more and more aware of it, probably about ten years ago. Let's see, ten years ago—1969. Well, that's not a good statement, either, because in the sixties there was a lot of renewed interest in activism, although Caltech students never became radicals. But I'd say probably after 1969 or '70 interest in the Leaders program dropped off. Along in those years, or maybe later, we started changing the name, calling it Leaders *in* America rather than Leaders *of* America. The latter was really a pretty pretentious title, and under which we had difficulty inviting Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, the vice president of India, to come. He was on the campus—probably in the late fifties—with a couple of U.S. and U.N. ambassadors.

LYLE: It seems to me, though, that a week is too long a time for these men who are very busy.

HERSHEY: Oh, that was a big problem for many. The only person who didn't complain about the heavy schedule and the numerous meetings and the length of time was Margaret Mead, and she was here on crutches, too; she had broken her leg not long before. But we were really very fortunate to get these people, and in more recent times I think time has been the critical problem in terms of getting special guests.

LYLE: Are the students who have been active in the Y, and been the leaders in the Y, necessarily people who are involved in religion? That is, is it independent of religion or is it tied closely with religion?

HERSHEY: I'd say it is completely independent of religion. A few of the guys have been active, maybe, in some church. But by and large, student groups in churches are very small, and student attendance at Protestant churches has dropped off considerably in the last twenty to thirty years. But our leaders have been—well, I think that both leaders in America and our student leaders say that probably almost all of them have had some kind of religious interest, in terms of something they believed in and something they wanted to do something about. But that didn't mean they had any direct church interest. Of course, some of our strongest leaders have been self-proclaimed atheists or boys who came from Jewish homes, even though they didn't continue to go to services or anything. They found an outlet in the Y for some of their concerns. I used to love to sort of take credit for ways that some of these young men developed, and increasingly as time went on I came to see that. Show me a fine concerned young man and I'd like to meet his parents. Because without exception, it has always proven true that the best leaders that the Y has had, to the extent that I've gotten to know them, have been concerned, dedicated people. I think it has always been that way. Certainly, in my lifetime, and in Millikan's lifetime I'm sure this was true. The influence of the family is of prime importance.

LYLE: Did the Y play any role in helping students who were having trouble adjusting to either scholastic pressures or social pressures?

HERSHEY: Oh sure, in many different ways.

LYLE: Can you give me one example?

HERSHEY: Yes. I have a friend who goes with me to various alumni reunions that I'm invited to—and I usually get invited to several every year, because I'm an honorary member of the Alumni Association, and I'm probably known by as many alumni as anyone—that is, they've always had contact with me. And this friend is always amazed when I go to these places and—it happens over and over again—someone will come up and say to me, “Wes, you probably don't remember me, but when I was a sophomore I was having some real problems and someone suggested I come and talk to you. And you saw me for an hour a week over a period of time, and if I hadn't seen you then, why, I would never have graduated from Caltech.” So, I played a very important role as a counselor long before Caltech had any health center or psychologists. And that was important.

In addition, through the years, we have done many programs that were helpful in this regard. Generations of students remember the sex lectures that Paul Popenoe of the [American] Institute of Family Relations gave every year on our campus. I was looking through some old publicity yesterday at the Y, and one of the letters announcing Popenoe's next series said, “How many times have you heard Dr. Popenoe?” In the area of sex and in the area of interpersonal relations, we brought many conferences and leaders to campus. Erich Fromm, Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers, to name a few. And then of course, we were heavily involved in getting the administration of the institute to finally hire an institute psychologist. Well, I guess that somewhat covers it. It gives you a couple of illustrations.

LYLE: It must have been a very interesting life for you to meet all these people.

HERSHEY: Oh absolutely. And particularly in view of the fact that I always had an inferiority complex at Caltech, because being surrounded by all these people who everybody said were so brilliant—and many of them are, no doubt. But I had only one college science course, so I had an inferiority feeling as far as being able to communicate

with them. But as I found out, that wasn't what they needed from me. What they got from me—and wanted from me, really—was a concern for people and a concern for society, and to help students to gain some sensitivity in those areas.

LYLE: How long did it take you to figure that out?

HERSHEY: Oh, I'm sure it took me the first twenty years of my thirty years at Caltech. And it was probably a little over ten years ago that I started getting a feeling that that was really what it was all about.

WESLEY L. HERSHEY**SESSION 2****May 3, 1979****Begin Tape 2, Side 1**

LYLE: You mentioned in our first interview that there were students who came to you at the Y because they had some personal problems, psychological problems, and that actually the Y encouraged setting up of the counseling program at Caltech. I was wondering what your observations were in terms of the kinds of problems the students were having, and if there are any things you think that Caltech might do that would help them with some of those problems.

HERSHEY: Well, there are two questions. First of all, problems that Caltech students have, particularly freshmen, are similar in many ways to problems that all young people have if they go away from home and go to college. All of those feelings of anxiety and of change from high school to college occur here and are very much anxiety-producing factors. Of course, at Caltech you have that additional factor of students who have been outstanding students in high school, and they have to have been that in order to get in here. And they get here and then, after they have been here for a little while, find out that instead of being at the head of their class, they are down toward the bottom. And then they are quite sure they are not going to make it. One of the stories I like best occurred on the bus going to Freshman Camp years ago. As is often true with freshmen—or just anybody—the freshmen, as they ride on the bus to Freshman Camp, try to impress all their newfound buddies with how bright they are and how much they know already. And after his trip up to Freshman Camp, this particular student told us, when he was a senior, that he was quite sure he was going to flunk out that first semester. Now he's certainly one of Caltech's most distinguished professors.

LYLE: It's just that everybody else sounded so intelligent.

HERSHEY: So bright, yes, and knew so much more than he did. But this is not irrelevant to the fact that half of them have got to be below the average in a class. And even those who find themselves just average become aware of the fact that no, they aren't the genius that many people had thought they were, and so this means they are very worried about their ability to stay at Caltech. And many of the early problems that develop center around that. Then, as time goes on and they find they can make it, other kinds of normal anxieties—sometimes family relationships, quite often girls, lack of or worry about a developing relationship—were things that students would come in to talk to me about. Also, religious beliefs. Many of our students come from homes where they had been brought up in a fairly strong religious tradition, and then they find after they get here that the theology behind that faith doesn't stand up in the light of some modern knowledge. Of course, many of those students—not lots of them, but many of them—found a way to handle that and became members of the Caltech Christian Fellowship, which was a fundamentalist organization and is quite similar to the evangelical churches out of which many of our kids came. They would find a home there.

LYLE: Is that on campus?

HERSHEY: Yes. They're a group that had regular hymn sings around Millikan Pond, and then they sort of don't worry about the conflicting understanding. But the whole quest for self-understanding and wanting to be liked by other people— Because these kids had been successful in quantitative understanding in their schoolwork and gotten lots of brownie points—I guess for men that's the wrong term—but got lots of strokes for being good in science and math in high school. Often this has been to the detriment of learning to get along with people or getting a real understanding of who they are as persons.

LYLE: Did the Y really try to work on that problem—of getting them to understand themselves?

HERSHEY: Oh, yes, increasingly. I think our Scripps-Caltech conferences were partly aimed at helping kids to get to know each other, and particularly men to get to know girls better, and be able to talk with them about some problems they thought existed in our

society and in our schools. Because so many of these kinds of problems you can't discuss in the abstract; you have to get in relationships with some other people—faculty or students—on a more personal level. After the Scripps-Caltech conferences ran out of steam—and I might say that they ran out of steam primarily at the Scripps end; the boys wanted to continue to have them, but the girls seemed to have a dwindling interest in them—I started a major program that was known at that time as sensitivity training, eventually to become more known as personal encounter conferences and programs.

LYLE: How did those work?

HERSHEY: They were really very successful, particularly in view of the fact that they weren't cheap, and all students had to pay their own board and room—we didn't have anything like tuition. Until the institute acquired the Frank Capra Ranch, we tried to cover some of the overhead for running the conference by holding it at somebody else's conference site. Usually we'd go to various conference sites around Southern California, the ones that weren't sheltered on campus, and often we'd have the team groups, which would meet every week or every other week, right here on campus. But here again, they gave students opportunity to react to each other and try to get some honest feedback as to how they were affecting other people. This wasn't done in a vacuum, this was done in terms of, "What you said really upsets me." It was a laboratory in relationships right then, where they were talking about a variety of things and were able to counter each other with what they heard that person saying.

I'd say I got interested in this whole thing some years earlier, for a couple of reasons. One is my own personal quest for understanding of myself, and I had an opportunity to get to go to several different week-long encounter sessions, and I found it to be very helpful. I felt I learned more about myself at those seminars than in any other fashion. But in addition, some of these seminars were oriented around methodology in working with people in groups. And so, I was able to sharpen my own understanding of group processes and how I could more effectively work with groups that were either task-oriented or non-task-oriented. And I'd say the second thing in relation to this is my own developing religious beliefs. I changed from a person who had—as a boy, at any rate—

quite strong Christian convictions. Those became less and less clear, and more and more I came to see that in my own theology it was the individual person who mattered. For me, and the students too, it was more important for them to be helped in developing, in their own fashion, their beliefs and understandings, than anything that I could tell them about any religious ideas or faith. And the Y became more and more known as a person-centered organization. At any rate, that was what I wrote in my first papers—around 1955 or so—as to the nature of the Caltech Y and what it was all about: person-centered.

LYLE: Did you ever see students who were very, very seriously ill? That is, they had so much anxiety or were so depressed that they couldn't work?

HERSHEY: Oh, yes.

LYLE: What happens to students like that at Caltech?

HERSHEY: Well, in the early years when I was the only person doing counseling on campus, I didn't have any of those. But later, when I would run into somebody with this sort of a problem, I was able to refer them to our clinical psychologist at the time, Dr. Kenneth Eels. He was able to work with them. We've had suicides and we've had many others who have just dropped out of school, primarily because of personal problems, and no doubt, one or two psychotics.

LYLE: Do you feel that the counseling program at Caltech has been successful?

HERSHEY: I'd say it was very successful until a few years ago. I don't really know much about it now, but I think that after Dr. Eels had to retire because of his bad heart, we had great difficulty getting adequate counseling staff. Though we had some that were fairly good, in my estimation Dr. Eels was so good and so nonthreatening a counselor that he was able to be far more helpful than anybody we've had since.

LYLE: Has group help, in which a group of people who are in a similar situation try to pool their knowledge, been attempted at Caltech? Were there regular group discussions on things at the Y?

HERSHEY: There weren't at the Y. But there was an attempt to do some of this seven or eight years ago, through the Health Center, in terms of sex education. Seems to me that wasn't very successful, but I wasn't involved in it directly.

LYLE: OK. Which programs have you considered to be most valuable to the students, in the time you were there?

HERSHEY: Well, of course, the one that was most meaningful to me, no doubt, was the Leaders of America Program. It did provide a fantastic opportunity for students to meet some distinguished people and to visit with them, not just to hear them talk. But there were many other very important programs, such as the first student-faculty conference, where we took forty students and forty faculty away for a weekend just to talk about education at Caltech. It was the first time that many—I suspect almost all—of these students and faculty had had an opportunity really to get to know each other a little more personally.

LYLE: Did you plan activities? How did you set up for something like that so that they would communicate?

HERSHEY: We'd have a student-faculty committee that would plan the thing and determine what ratio of student and faculty we hoped to have and how we should operate it. It was all in small groups, after we got to our conference site. And equally important was the overall topic: whether we would have any speakers or not, or just discussion groups. In that first case, we had no speakers, we just had discussion groups with general things. What do we like most about Caltech? What do we dislike most about our experience here? And what do we think should be done about it? And then the Scripps-Caltech conferences were very important, and I'd say equally important were the sensitivity and encounter weekend programs. One thing, of course, that led to the

Scripps-Caltech conference was the fact that for the previous seventy-five years before that, back into the last century, there were regular intercollegiate conferences sponsored by the student YMCA and YWCA. These annual events took place at Asilomar, which is up near Pacific Grove and is now a state park. But it was a great place to hold a week-long conference every year between Christmas and New Year's. And we had anywhere from 200 to 600 students and faculty there for a full week from colleges all over California, Arizona, Nevada, Hawaii. Those were extremely important. Every now and then, I run into an alumnus who went to one of those conferences who says, "It's really a shame they don't have them anymore, because it was the highlight of my time at Caltech." But here again, there seems to be a time and a place for everything. They ran out of steam also.

LYLE: One big difference I see in the students as time has gone by at Caltech is that originally most of the students came from Los Angeles, Pasadena, San Marino, this area, so they had family nearby. Then as time has passed, they have come from farther and farther away. I think that has a big effect on their relationship to friends, family. I think it would be a lot harder to meet other people.

HERSHEY: Yes. Well, there has been quite a change in many ways through the years. But back in the thirties, I understand, and in the forties, we got lots of students from prep schools in the East, and some from Western prep schools. But it meant because of that, and with so many others coming increasingly from working-class family homes, we had a much broader, a much more cosmopolitan student body than we have had in the last number of years. Almost all—not all, surely, but almost all—of our freshmen come from public or parochial schools. I haven't checked that out, but I believe that's true.

LYLE: I wanted to go back to what we were talking about yesterday. You mentioned that you would like to talk a little bit more about your conversations with Dr. Millikan.

HERSHEY: Oh, I'm not sure if it is so much a matter of some conversations. Although I do recall some pleasant conversations when I would take him to some meeting somewhere. Like there was a national conference of the Congregational Church that was

held in Claremont one spring, and so every day during that conference I would drive him to Claremont, and we would talk about all manner of things. Not all manner of things—usually about religion or about the church of which we were both members. Often, we talked about, oh, such things as war and peace, too. His only criticism of Einstein had been that Einstein, he felt, was very naïve in pushing pacifism.

LYLE: What problems was he concerned with do you think?

HERSHEY: What problems?

LYLE: Yes. What was on his mind?

HERSHEY: Oh, I think Caltech was always the number one thing on his mind as he recruited, successfully, faculty from all over the country and beyond, as well as raising money for Caltech. He was the number-one—and as far as I know the only—money raiser for Caltech during that whole period of time that he was the head of Caltech. So, he was always concerned about Caltech.

LYLE: You said he was very interested in religion at this time, and I guess what I was asking you was, was there any particular thing he was interested in?

HERSHEY: I think he was concerned about young people growing up with a sense of values that were going to be helpful in their own lives as well as in the life of the society.

LYLE: And he was concerned about how to teach those values?

HERSHEY: Well, he was concerned about the fact that he didn't think that young people were getting very much of it.

LYLE: He was concerned that they weren't getting them at Caltech, for example? Or just in society in general?

HERSHEY: Oh, I think probably he was more concerned about the former—that he probably verbalized about. As I said yesterday, certainly one of his big concerns about, or interests in, the Y was that he saw us as an organization that might help to make sure those values, those religious values, were, if not instilled in the students, at least students were challenged by them, and he wanted to make sure that continued. Occasionally we talked about theological ideas. But I recall one time his saying, “Of course, all this theology nonsense is like a lot of science. You really don’t know very much, and so what we know now probably will be proven wrong sometime in the future.”

LYLE: You mentioned that in a sense your faith had changed a lot. Had his faith changed a lot? Had he begun to question religion at all or not?

HERSHEY: He did not verbalize that to me. But knowing him I am quite sure his religious beliefs had changed substantially. He grew up during a period of time when evangelism and a fundamentalist belief in the literal interpretation of Scripture was dominant in our society, and I suspect that was a part of his own life. Although his parents, like my parents, may have moved beyond that fairly narrow religious belief, because he certainly was a leader and very active in the Neighborhood Church, which was a very liberal Congregational church—actually Congregational Unitarian. The Unitarians joined together at the Neighborhood Church with the Congregationalists probably about the time the Millikans came to California. So, the preachers we had during his lifetime were all quite liberal in their theology.

LYLE: And he stayed with that church.

HERSHEY: He stayed with that church, right. Millikan actually brought the Neighborhood Church one of its early ministers after he became a distinguished preacher from Chicago—Millikan had known him there—and that was Dr. Theodore Soares. Being a minister at the Neighborhood Church was a half-time job for Dr. Soares, because the other half-time job was as professor of philosophy at Caltech, which Millikan gave to him.

LYLE: Were there a lot of people at Caltech in the Neighborhood Church?

HERSHEY: No, relatively few.

LYLE: You came with this certain idea about your job, what your responsibilities were and what you wanted to accomplish. Did that change very much through the years, or did it pretty much stay the same?

HERSHEY: Oh, no, it changed radically over the years. I'd say that in the area of religion I felt when I came that I had a responsibility to be a religious educator. One of my very early discussion groups was a discussion group on religious values. Not religious values, really; we were talking in terms of Christian values and understanding. Though there was pressure to continue Bible studies, which some alumni talked about years earlier; I was able to successfully resist that. That really wasn't my bailiwick. But trying to sort out the responsibilities of a lay organization like the Y with lay leadership, and sort that out in terms of responsibilities we had versus those churches have, was a continuing problem for me. Eventually I was able to see that even though the churches gave birth to the Y, nevertheless we weren't the church, and these were two different kinds of responsibilities. But of course, like so many things, there was continuous change in our culture, primarily in the United States, but of course also around the world.

LYLE: So, after a few years you began to think more in terms of the personal life and feelings.

HERSHEY: Yes. Now quite often I'm concerned about some of the values that I hold to be important, and I worry about whether our culture today— I feel that our culture, as well as our programming at Caltech, doesn't really ask enough of students to be more giving of themselves, their time, and their money for things they believe in. I guess that those of us who grew up in the Depression in many ways were fortunate, in that hard times made us face some kinds of problems. But also, we were continually stimulated to be giving of ourselves, in terms of the things that were important, and I feel it would be a shame if that is lost in our society. In fact, I think it would be critical. In our culture, in

terms of anything big, the one thing I know that gives young people opportunity to really give themselves today, and has been for many years now, is the Peace Corps. I know that there are a few opportunities presented by groups like the American Friends Service Committee for a person to be a volunteer somewhere for periods of time to a year or two. But by and large, we aren't suggesting to students and young people the way Kennedy suggested: Don't ask what your country can do for you, ask your country what you can do for it. I think that that's another illustration of the kind of thing I mean when I think we need to ask people to give of themselves to accomplish their ideals and values. One kind of program that is an illustration of that, which we did for a number of years, was to have a volunteer tutoring program primarily for black high school students. We wanted to do it in Pasadena, but we couldn't get any cooperation from the Pasadena school board at that time, because the administrators generally felt that to accept any tutoring from Caltech students would be an admission that education wasn't as good as it should be in the school system. So, finally we were able to get together with Jordan High School and run a tutoring program. That's down in south central Los Angeles.

LYLE: You couldn't do it in Pasadena?

HERSHEY: Not until some years later. We'd have several carloads, almost a carload every night, of Caltech students who would drive down there and meet with students and work with them all evening.

LYLE: And you think it is very important for the students to do that—that is, to have the chance to volunteer?

HERSHEY: Yes, to be challenged with giving some assistance to people who are less fortunate than they are. See, our kids come from a very rich cultural and economic class. And I feel their lives will be enriched if they can give something to others. And eventually that tutoring program was continued here in Pasadena, and we did get to work through some of the schools. But at first in Pasadena it had to be done through agencies other than the schools. I think that was an important learning experience for the people who participated in it. And another very interesting program that was a follow-up to that

tutoring program was that we recruited, oh, about a dozen young black men to come to the campus and live here for a week on the campus in the student houses—a tutoring program in reverse: What it is like for a black man living in a basically white society? What kind of problems do you have? Well, we did that just one year. But that was a good two-way street.

LYLE: And that worked?

HERSHEY: Yes. Very well. I know my own understanding of the black person's problems in our society was greatly helped by that program.

LYLE: You said you were concerned that these values you believe in may not be continuing in our society, and one is this value that it is important to give something.

HERSHEY: Right, give as well as to receive. Right.

LYLE: Do you think that our society doesn't have ways that one can give anymore, or that people don't want to give?

HERSHEY: Well, I think it's probably a little of both.

LYLE: That is, if anybody wants to give, they can find a way?

HERSHEY: Yes. Right.

LYLE: Was it a problem to get students to volunteer their time and work?

HERSHEY: Oh, yes. Yes. I think it has always been a problem. It kind of goes in cycles, up and down. Walt [Walter Meader, Caltech Y executive secretary 1976-1982—ed.] was telling me yesterday that at a recent student executive committee meeting of the Y, most of the members kept volunteering to head up some project or other, so that finally the

president had to select people from those who had their hands up. That's unheard of in my experience. That's rare—if not unique.

LYLE: Did he have any explanation?

HERSHEY: No, we didn't talk about that. We talked about how different that had been from the student executive committees over the last several years, when it was like pulling teeth to get somebody to take on a project.

LYLE: OK. So, you started out with the feeling that you should teach Christian values.

HERSHEY: That's one of the ways, one of the important ways, right.

LYLE: And that changed?

HERSHEY: Yes.

LYLE: What did you end up thinking? What were your job role and your responsibilities the last five years?

HERSHEY: Well, I think I got more and more to the point of feeling that I had the responsibility to try to help students find out what were the important areas of life—whether it was nuclear problems or concern over our nuclear future. That they should think about these problems as well as do something about them, to the extent they could responsibly, from some of their insights. As well as the other thing I said a few minutes ago: more and more, trying to help the student discover who he was and what he wanted to do rather than what kind of job he wanted to get. To respect that person as a person and not try to force my values on him.

LYLE: Did you ever have any classes on values as such, like values clarification, that kind of thing?

HERSHEY: No, not directly. I had become acquainted with some programs of value clarification in recent years, but as such we did not do anything formal.

LYLE: You did set up the Friends of the Y. Could you describe that a bit—why you started it, and does that still go on?

HERSHEY: Yes, it does still go on, and we brought the Friends of the Y into being because we knew we needed to increase our income. I believe the Friends were started back in about 1950—no, not that long ago, more like 1960.

LYLE: So, it was partly a financial need that started it?

HERSHEY: Oh, basically a financial need, yes.

LYLE: Has it been a problem not having more adults from the outside community?

HERSHEY: No, I don't think it was ever really a problem. Some members of the Athenaeum, some faculty, would say, "Sure, it was a problem." The Y took over the Hall of Associates in the Athenaeum every Wednesday, so that many faculty couldn't even get in to eat. So, they would say it was a problem. But there is a great thirst in the Pasadena area among non-Caltech people to get in on things at Caltech.

I guess the other very successful and really important program that I developed shortly after I came was the Athenaeum luncheon forums. To these forums we invited distinguished people. Or, if we knew that some person one might like to hear was going to be coming to Pasadena or Caltech from elsewhere, whether this country or abroad, we made arrangements for him to speak to this Athenaeum luncheon forum. Of the people who attended through the years, probably, oh, 40 to 50 percent were from off campus.

LYLE: So, they could come there for lunch and participate with this group? That sounds nice.

HERSHEY: School board candidates, candidates for governor, candidates for Senate, Senator [William] Knowland. Sometimes we'd have to spill over, have the event outdoors rather than a luncheon, like for instance when Nixon was running against Pat Brown for governor, we got both of them to come to Caltech and speak on the Athenaeum lawn. As far as I know, the first East European to speak in Southern California was the Polish ambassador to the United Nations, whom we were able to present to the Athenaeum luncheon forum one Wednesday. Linus Pauling spoke here many times—both while he was on the campus as well as after he went to Palo Alto.

LYLE: Did you make all these arrangements for these people to come, or did someone on the executive board do it?

HERSHEY: Well, I was the administrator; and, with few exceptions, I was the person who got in touch with these people. Occasionally I'd have a chairman, faculty or student, who was interested and had the time to do that administrative work. They usually introduced these guests, but not always.

LYLE: Were there some faculty who objected to the Y using the Athenaeum for this luncheon?

HERSHEY: Oh, yes. There were some, and there were a few faculty wives as well. What all the reasons were, I don't know. I do know that some faculty resented what they thought to be an all-outside-Caltech group taking over one of the biggest rooms in the Athenaeum every week.

LYLE: Do they still do that?

HERSHEY: No, we had to give it up, because the Athenaeum house committee felt that they couldn't set aside that room for us anymore. We tried to do the program in other places, other rooms, even sack lunches, but it died. But it was an important thing in the life of the community in that it gave candidates for school board and other persons like that who were very powerful a chance to come to talk. At least one candidate for

reelection killed himself politically in one of these talks by insulting the whole teaching profession. So, this was a forum that was, as far as I know, the only important forum in Pasadena to which the general public could come.

LYLE: Well, that's too bad.

HERSHEY: It really is a shame. You've asked a question as to whether there were any outside people coming in, and so the Friends of the Y was developed for two reasons: one, to provide a greater financial base for the Y and more support, but also to give people in Pasadena an opportunity to meet many of the distinguished people we bring to the campus. And of course, it was because of that that ever so many of them joined the Friends. To be able to go to a dinner event at the Athenaeum and hear Justice [William O.] Douglas, Archibald MacLeish, Martin Luther King, to name just a few, was a real privilege and they felt privileged to be able to get to do that. We started the organization of the Friends almost immediately after we had attempted to raise several hundred thousand dollars in new endowments. Though we did raise several thousand dollars, we came so far short that we saw that we were going to have to take a new tack, and that's why we organized the Friends.

LYLE: And were you able to raise enough money then?

HERSHEY: Oh, yes. It was our dominant means of support, up till a dozen, fifteen years ago. It was our biggest single source of support.

LYLE: Have the faculty at Caltech been supportive of the Y?

HERSHEY: Yes, I'd say they have.

LYLE: About how many faculty are involved?

HERSHEY: Well, in fact, they had been involved with the Y since the Y was formed. Its advisory board was made up, first of all, of faculty and eventually included some

townspeople. But after I came, we organized our bylaws, and one of the things we included was that at least a third of the non-student board of directors—because students are on the board, too—had to be members of the faculty, and another third alumni. So, at that level we've had participation, and I suspect that out of the 200 Friends today, it's probably in that neighborhood, that at least half of those are from either Caltech on the campus or JPL [Jet Propulsion Laboratory]. So there has been a continuing interest in financially supporting the Y too—not by everyone, but I'm sure by half.

LYLE: It seems to me that the Y has a big impact on the campus and on the ideas there. Do you get any official recognition for that impact from the school?

HERSHEY: Oh, now and then. I've forgotten the year, but I guess I came as close to getting an honorary degree at Caltech as anyone ever has. Caltech does not give honorary degrees, but at commencement back in the mid-sixties, I was asked to come to commencement, and [President] DuBridge read a little certificate of appreciation to Wes Hershey and the Caltech Y. So, we've had this sort of thing every so often.

LYLE: You really liked Lee DuBridge.

HERSHEY: Yes. He's a fine, warm human being.

LYLE: Did he have a chance to get involved in the Y?

HERSHEY: Oh, he was helpful at various points, but other than speaking to all of our various groups and helping us to build up a faculty-at-home program on Sunday evenings, he was not very closely [involved]. Let's say he was very supportive.

LYLE: Was it the Y that set up that program?

HERSHEY: Yes, it was. They had twenty to thirty guys on a Sunday evening go and spend a couple of hours with a faculty person and his wife. It was a fine program. And there again, it was a shame it ran out of steam.

LYLE: Has there been any program that hasn't run out of steam?

HERSHEY: Not programs as such. Of course, two of the major services that the Y inaugurated back in the thirties still continue—and continue to meet real needs of students. The Student Emergency Fund, a loan fund where students can just come in and borrow up to \$25 with a written promise that they will repay it in thirty days—that has continued through the years to be a very important service. And the Student Book Exchange—which is called the book exchange because the Y only handles the money. Students bring their books in and put a slip in it indicating how much they want to sell it for and their name and address and so forth—and then the Y collects the money and they come in later and get the money. This has been going on successfully since the early thirties. Now, there have been projects and services that the institute has taken over. The early placement service for student jobs was begun by the Y in Depression days and was taken over by the institute after World War II.

LYLE: Can you think of any others? The counseling program, for example?

HERSHEY: The counseling program, right.

LYLE: Are there any other programs you think Caltech should take over?

HERSHEY: No, I don't think of any now. By and large, most of the things the Y does, the Y can do better than the bureaucracy of Caltech can do. One of the things I didn't say yesterday is related to the institute's help in funding the Y and the fact that they hadn't been helpful. After I came out here, I was really afraid of domination of the Y by the university. This was not an idle fear, because in many college Ys that had of course happened, where the administration got worried about the political attitude of people in the Y and then cut their funds off completely. So, I was always concerned that we not get too dependent upon the [Caltech] government. So, I really wasn't looking for support from the institute in the early days, but I sure was glad to get it when we eventually did get it.

LYLE: Has the institute interfered politically at all?

HERSHEY: No. Though it has come awfully close a few times. The chairman of the Board of Trustees a few years ago was very upset, apparently, over some of the programs. I was never really able to find out specifically what that was. But it came up, apparently, in a fall meeting of the Board of Trustees.

LYLE: Caltech Board of Trustees?

HERSHEY: Caltech Board of Trustees. And so Lee DuBridge wrote me a note asking me to compile a report of the things the Y had done that past year and send it to him, and he would send it on to the chairman as well as all members of the Board of Trustees. Which I did. But it is true that the Y has until very recently been seen as a very liberal if not a left-wing organization.

LYLE: Did you see it as that?

HERSHEY: I saw it as an organization that had a responsibility to help build as good a society as possible. And when you're in the process of trying to change things in a society, that stimulates people to think about trying to change them, and then you're seen as being a radical. So then, yes, I would say that in fact I was very liberal to radical in that regard, though at the same I was liberal in the wider sense, in that I worked very hard to make sure that various sides of controversial subjects were presented and not just to present one side. But this was often an uneven confrontation, because [there was] much greater difficulty getting the conservatives to speak than to get liberals. This is understandable, because people who are trying to change things are interested in getting an audience, and those who want to conserve aren't often as interested.

LYLE: You just mentioned that the Y had dropped out of the National Council. Why did they do that?

HERSHEY: Well, it may be because they changed their corporate name from Caltech Young Men's Christian Association to the Caltech Y. I'm not sure, but it's my impression that in order to maintain membership in the National Council, you have to continue to call yourself "Young Men's Christian Association." See, I'm not even positive of that, but I think that's true. I'm not clear why they decided to do it in a corporate fashion. I was not consulted. I was informed about what they'd done some time later. And I responded that I thought it was a mistake—not for ideological reasons or for National Council reasons, but frankly I thought that on the corporate statement the Young Men's Christian Association might have a feeling of more stability—particularly if you were going to try and get gifts to endowment—than a flitful name like Caltech Y, which is a fine name for our organization to be known by, but I don't think it has the stability of the other name for endowment purposes.