

INSTITUTE OF CURRENT WORLD AFFAIRS

ATW-22

Now You See It, Now You Don't - II: Miracles on the Upper West Side

Eugene, Oregon

October 18, 1973

Mr. Richard H. Nolte  
Institute of Current World Affairs  
535 Fifth Avenue  
New York, New York 10017

Dear Mr. Nolte:

I did not see Uri Geller again until the first week in June. By that time Uri was becoming very well-known in the U.S. He had made convincing appearances on the Merv Griffin Show and the Jack Paar Show. On the latter he had caused a heavy metal spike to bend to the astonishment of his host. Articles about him were coming out in many magazines, most of them favorable. Only TIME accused him of being a fraud.

I was living in New York in June, and one night Andrija Puharich invited me to a small gathering on the Upper West Side where Uri would be meeting with some people interested in making a feature film about him. When I arrived at the apartment, about ten people were present, among them Puharich and Geller. Uri had just flown in from California and was looking in good shape, although he said he was very tired. The company included a lighting director from a major television network with his wife; a young lawyer and his wife; a young woman psychic, also a protégée of Puharich; and Jascha Katz, one of two Israeli "promoters" who manage Uri's professional appearances.

Many of the people present had seen Uri do things and some of them had witnessed phenomena they considered miraculous. The lawyer showed me a ring Uri had bent for him and said the experience had changed his life.

After some informal talk, we drifted into a small living room and sat down, hoping that Uri would feel up to trying out

his powers. There were now about a dozen of us. Uri asked us to be patient and rather than urge him to do things just to talk with him. "If something is going to happen, it will," he said. He began to tell us stories of his recent feats. He had "blown the mind" of an astrophysicist by causing his fork to bend while they were eating dinner together. The day before, on the plane in from California, he had "unconsciously" jammed the motion picture projector, causing film to spill out on the floor. "Things like that are always happening around me," he said. "Sometimes Andrija and I are eating in a restaurant and - pop! - a fork on the table is breaking just like that."

Someone asked Uri what he thought this power was. "I don't think it is my mind," he answered. "The parapsychologists are always talking about the mind, but I think this power comes from somewhere outside of me, and I am just a channel for it." What did he mean by "outside?" "I believe there are other dimensions and other universes and that this energy which comes through me is coming from another universe -- that it is intelligently directed and sent through me for a purpose." Puharich made assenting noises and said that what he and Uri were learning about the nature of this intelligence was astonishing. He did not want to say more because the subject was very "far out" and would be discussed in a book he was now writing.

But Uri added that he thought it was very significant that all this was happening now and that people in the United States were so receptive to it. "Here is where people really believe in me and where things are going to happen." Modesty is not a Geller virtue. He described himself as "bigger than Watergate" and predicted that within a short time everyone in America would have heard of him. Already, he said, a number of high-placed American officials believed in him. The Defense Department has been especially interested in his ability to erase magnetic tapes at a distance. He described how he had made an airport TV monitor go blank in the presence of a U.S. Senator. And so forth.

There were some pieces of silverware and a few keys on a table. Uri picked up a key and played with it. Everyone moved for-

ward expectantly. "I don't know if anything will go tonight," he said; "I'm really very tired and not feeling up to it." He rubbed the key with finger and thumb. "No." He dropped it. "Look, let's try some telepathy," he suggested. He pointed to me. "Why don't you draw any figure on a piece of paper. I won't look." He turned his head away. I drew an infinity sign. "Now right below that draw another figure." I added a triangular pyramid. "O.K., now try to send it to me; just visualize it in your mind." Uri took up a pencil and pad. He assumed a look of concentration, first staring at me, then closing his eyes. He quickly sketched on the pad.

"The first thing I got was a circle that changed to an '8.'" He had drawn an upright "8." Underneath it he had drawn a triangle. I showed him the horizontal "8" and the pyramid. "Dammit," he said, "I saw a pyramid for an instant but then it became a triangle." But I was quite impressed. "Can you send something to me?" I asked. "Oh, yes -- go ahead, close your eyes." He and I both concentrated, and I came up with an ice cream cone, possibly because I think about ice cream often. Uri had been trying to send me a sketch of a boat.

He tried a few more drawings with other people in the room and generally scored well. Then he began to miss. "There's something not right about the energy in this room," he complained. "It's just not working well; maybe it's because I'm tired."

"Can you try the key?" someone asked.

"I'll try," he replied, "but I don't think I can do it." He picked up a thick key and began stroking the shaft. Nothing happened. He placed it in his palm and tapped it with a finger. Nothing happened. "Maybe if it were lying on something metal," he suggested. A frying pan was brought. He turned it upside down and placed the key on it. He jiggled the key and tapped it, but still there was no change. "No, it's not working; let's wait." Uri seemed a little edgy now. Every once in a while he conversed in Hebrew with Jascha Katz. Some of the guests drifted back into the other room for drinks.

"Do you only have power over metal objects?" I asked.

"Only with metals," he answered.

"Does it make any difference what kind of metal?"

"No, all metals are the same."

"Do you do any kind of meditation or have any periods of being in trance?"

"No, I'm very ordinary."

"Do you use any drugs?"

"No, not even alcohol."

"How do people react when they see you do something that's not supposed to happen?"

"Oh, man, it blows their minds. Most people are really excited and really are turned on. Some people just don't believe it even when they see it with their own eyes. Some guy on the West Coast wrote that I had a laser beam concealed in my belt. Can you imagine that?" He laughed and shook his head. "A few people believe it and think it's evil."

"What do you mean?" I asked.

"Well, like that business with the projector on the plane yesterday. The stewardess was really flustered because she said that never happens. I told her it often happens when I'm on planes. I didn't mean to cause it; it just happened. So then some of the passengers recognized me from television, and I bent a few forks for them. And then this big guy from Hawaii came over and identified himself as the security officer. It was very far out. He didn't know what to make of it. So finally he relaxed, but then he asked me how did I know that what I was doing wasn't from the Devil. He said the old Hawaiians believed powers like that were from the Devil."

"How does that make you feel?"

"Well, it makes me feel strange. I have these powers, and they just come through me. I want to show them to people. I want people to know that it's real, that there are no lasers in my belt and no chemicals that I am putting on anything. I just say to the key, "Bend!" and I just feel that it's going to bend, and it does."

"I imagine that could be heavy for some people."

"Sure, it's heavy for them. But, look, I am not a Moses or a Jesus or a Messiah or anything. I believe in God, and I think

that everything comes from God, but I don't think this has anything to do with God."

"Do you have any effects on living things?"

"Yes. One time in a press interview in San Francisco, they gave me a rose bud, and I put it in my hand, and the bud opened."

"How about on humans: did you ever try to heal anyone?"

"Just one time. When I was at Stanford there was this girl who had polio, and I put my hand on her leg, and it started to move for the first time in years."

"Really?"

"Yes. But that scared me. I wouldn't like to do that again."

At this point, the lawyer asked Uri if he would please try to bend a valuable old pin that belonged to his wife and was of great emotional importance for both of them. Uri said he would try later. "But what if it really twists or breaks?" he asked.

"Believe me, Uri, it would mean more to us that way," the lawyer told him.

"Well, maybe I'll try this key again," Uri said to himself. He picked up the key -- it was a good solid house-key -- and held the head of it between the thumb and forefinger of his left hand. With his right index finger he stroked the shaft of the key. I was about six inches from him, and there was good illumination. For a long time nothing seemed to happen. Then Uri suddenly shouted: "Oh, look! There it goes!" Several of us pressed closer. At first I could see nothing different about the key. But Uri insisted: "It's bending! Yes, it's bending!" And then I could see that the tip of the key was definitely curved slightly. It had been perfectly straight before.

Uri continued to rub the key. Now the bend was easily visible, and the key could be rocked back and forth when placed on a level surface. Uri put it down on the frying pan. "It will continue to bend slowly by itself," he told us. And, in fact, although no motion of the key was perceptible, after several minutes the bend did seem more pronounced. "Usually, they keep bending by themselves for 24 hours, so by tomorrow morning it will be even more bent. It's as if they have a kind of life for a short time."

Uri now felt "hot." He correctly received two drawings sealed inside opaque envelopes -- one of a cross, the other of a Star of David.

The lawyer now wanted Uri to deform his wedding band, but the idea did not carry, and we drifted back into the dining room. The lighting director offered Uri a very heavy gold ring, set with stones. Uri examined it carefully and said he would try. He asked the owner to support the ring on edge with his forefinger. Uri then held his hand over the man's hand and finger, without touching the ring. After trying out several positions on his hand, he settled into one that he seemed to like. Again, I was only a few inches from the demonstration. Suddenly, the ring sagged into an oval shape. Uri exclaimed, "There! Look at that!" "Did you feel anything?" he asked. The owner of the ring was equally excited. "I felt a strong tingling over the whole back of my hand, definitely some kind of energy." Uri held up the ring for all to see. It was certainly not circular any longer; in fact, it would not fit back on its owner's finger. And it was not warm to the touch or in any other way odd.

Flushed with success, Uri took on another housekey, and within less than a minute had it bent to about 25 degrees, with the assurance that by the next morning, the angle would be considerably greater.

There was another interlude of conversation and munching. Uri and I and the lighting director were sitting in the living room. Someone came up and asked Uri to try to bend a fork. He said he did not like to work with silverware because it was too easily bendable by hand and therefore did not make as convincing a demonstration. As he spoke, he picked up the fork by the middle in a casual manner, just to play with it. Suddenly, the fork seemed to become like melting wax and drooped over Uri's hand. "My God! Look at that!" Uri said. "I wasn't even trying to do it." The fork was bent at a grotesque angle. I picked it up. It was not warm and gave no clue as to how it had reached its new shape.

It was now late, and the company was about to break up. I

wanted badly to see Uri work on something of mine that I knew was not gimmicked. The only thing I had on me of metal was a heavy brass belt buckle. I offered it to him. "I never work with belt buckles," Uri said flatly.

There was little doubt in my mind that I had seen genuine psychokinesis -- something I had always believed in but never actually witnessed. I left the apartment with a sense of elation. I still wanted to see a key of my own bent. But I knew that I would probably have a chance do that, too.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew T. Weil". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a prominent initial 'A'.

Andrew T. Weil

Received in New York on October 24, 1973.