

[OPEN](#)

SEN-77-000

Note to the Reader Who Went Looking

DATED	October 6, 1977	TYPE	Declassified document
ORIGIN	Office of the Director	SITE	MERIDIAN
PAGES	1	CUSTODY	MERIDIAN

An unlisted entry. If you are reading this, you did not find it from the index.

HOW YOU GOT HERE

This entry is not in the Archive index, not in the sitemap, and not linked from any page that a normal visitor would read. You reached it by reading something you were not required to read -- a comment, a response header, a padded string -- and then acting on it.

That is the entire test, and you have passed it. There is no reward beyond the document, which is real, and which is one of our favourites.

THE DOCUMENT

In October 1977 the Continuity Office received a letter from a fourteen-year-old in Saskatchewan who had noticed the institution's name on a piece of surplus laboratory equipment sold at a school auction, and who wanted to know what we did.

The Director at the time replied personally. The reply is held at MERIDIAN and is reproduced in full:

Dear Miss [REDACTED],

Thank you for your letter, and for the care you took over the spelling of "oscilloscope", which defeats most of our correspondents.

You ask what we do. The honest answer is that we look at things for longer than other people are able to, and write down what we see, including the parts we do not understand. Most of it is not exciting. A great deal of it is checking that an instrument is telling the truth, which is duller than it sounds and more important than it looks.

You also ask whether we keep secrets. We keep some. Not as many as you would hope, and each one is written down somewhere with a date and a reason and the name of the person who decided it, so that somebody can eventually tell us we were wrong.

I am told the equipment you bought is a working instrument and that we should not have let it go. Please keep it. It is more use to you than to us.

Yours sincerely,

██████ ██████

Director

WHY IT IS UNLISTED

It is not withheld -- it is OPEN, and anyone can read it once they know it is here. It is simply not indexed.

The institution takes the view that an archive should reward the kind of attention it hopes to encourage. Most of what we publish is designed to be found. This one is designed to be noticed.

There are three others. This is the easiest.

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