



THE  
CARTER CENTER



*E-Newsletter on Access to Information and the  
Environment*

*November- December 2004 VOL 2*

Welcome to volume 2 of the access to information *e-newsletter*, with this month's focus on access to environmental information. The objective of this *e-newsletter* is to create a forum for the exchange of information and ideas about Jamaica's Access to Information Act and to provide an opportunity to focus on specific issues, themes, and news relating to the public's "Right to Know." We hope that through the distribution of this *e-newsletter* we can raise awareness of the Access to Information Act in Jamaica and encourage people to use this new right.

With support from The Carter Center, the Jamaica Environment Trust has prepared volume 2 of this *e-newsletter*. In this volume, they share the importance of environmental information for all people and the experiences of environmental nongovernmental organisations all over the world in their use of "right to know" laws.

We invite all civil society organisations and individuals to provide articles and comments for future *e-newsletter* editions, and thus produce a newsletter that focuses on your issues of interest, whether housing benefits, women and children's rights, education, human rights, crime, welfare benefits, infrastructure, health, etc. The Carter Center will provide editorial support and can assist you in developing story ideas. Please feel free to forward this *e-newsletter* to friends, colleagues and relatives.

In this edition you will find articles and case studies on:

- **The importance of access to environmental information**
- **Access to environmental information in Jamaica**
- **Environmental information on registers and their use in Jamaica**
- **Environmental journalism and access to information**
- **International recognition of the right to environmental information**
- **Recent and upcoming Events**
- **Quote of the month**

## **The Importance of Access to Environmental Information**

Have you ever wondered about the quality of the water you drink or the beach you go to swim at? Are you concerned about the safety of food prepared by vendors who you support, or whether the fire and health departments have inspected an establishment? Are you concerned about the air you breathe, the traffic on the road, or the lack of parks for recreation? Do you wonder whether the police have acted to prevent noise pollution in your neighborhood, or even if there is a law or policy related to noise? All of these are environmental questions. Now to receive answers to these, and a myriad of other questions, all one has to do is ask for the relevant documents through an Access to Information Act request.

The “environment” has been defined as the air and atmosphere, water, soil, land, landscape, and natural sites, including wetlands, coastal and marine areas, biological diversity and its components, and genetically modified organisms. Environmental information relates to any of the above and includes information on policies, legislation, programs, and decision-making on development control, environmental management tools, waste management, pollution control and regulation, safety, hazards, and risks to human health.

***The possibilities to obtain environmental information under the Jamaican Access to Information Act are endless, and the use of the Act is important for citizens to be able to participate in decision-making that will affect their health and quality of life.***

With the passage of the Act in July 2002, there is now a new regime to provide the public with a right of access to government held environmental information. The Access to Information Act increases the world of environmental information that is available and accessible to the public and the private sector. Accurate credible environmental information is critical to an understanding of the quality of the water we drink, the food that we eat, the air that we breathe, the quality of water at our bathing beaches and the state of our natural resources. Some of the ways in which environmental information may be important is for:

- Obtaining an understanding of the state of the Jamaican environment in specific geographical areas, its health or degradation
- Understanding how development decisions are made and to assure no bias
- Evaluating whether companies from which we buy products are environmentally friendly in their operations
- Illuminating, and subjecting to public scrutiny, documents which concern controversial policy or developmental issues
- Ensuring agency performance of statutory responsibilities or exposing governmental failures, and encouraging appropriate enforcement actions are taken for companies which breach the law
- Obtaining agency records for historical or academic research

There is a whole host of environmental information that, without making a request for information under the new law, would not easily be obtained.

Such information might include:

1. The policy rationale and background to decisions made related to permits and licenses, and their conditions. For example, why one company is required to monitor their environmental impact monthly and another similar company only asked to do so on a quarterly basis.
2. Information on projects or activities that cause or may cause danger to people's health or livelihood, or adversely affect the environment, in particular by emissions, pollutants, and the release of chemicals and waste. For instance, one could request government records on the air emissions from specific companies, the sewage discharges from hotels, or reports on manufacturers of popular products.
3. Information and decisions that inform policy-making, such as the public policy rationale for the creation of certain highways in Jamaica and the environmental effect of these structures.
4. Enforcement actions taken in Jamaica; for example, how many enforcement notices have been served in 2004 for illegal development, and the names of people applying for waivers to continue using buildings built without planning permission.
5. Information on how much money is spent on environmental conservation in Jamaica.

The Access to Information Act allows citizens to request documents in a number of different forms, including inspection reports, water and air quality monitoring data, background policy papers, internal memos, legal opinions, comments and review of decisions by internal committees and experts, minutes of meetings, and research documents.

### **CASE STUDY ON REQUEST FOR FISHERIES ENFORCEMENT INFORMATION**

Enforcement of environmental laws and policies is critical to assure that they are followed and environmentally unfriendly companies are punished for their violations. Information on enforcement actions can help citizens monitor the effectiveness of the laws and the impact of violations. Therefore, a student from a law firm in Canada made a request to the Canadian Fisheries Agency for a CD-ROM copy of an electronic database known as the Habitat Enforcement Database. This database contained court judgments arising from *Fisheries Act* prosecutions, case summaries of the judgments, and information about the impact of the court decisions on future prosecutions. His request was refused on the basis that the information was subject to solicitor-client privilege and, hence, exempt from the right of access. The requester made a complaint arguing that the database comprised information that was largely known and critical to the public interest i.e., court decisions and summaries. The commissioner found that this information is public, and he noted that the decisions were not "selected or presented as foundation for particular legal advice" and that the information should be provided on CD and released to the requestor.

See [http://www.infocom.gc.ca/reports/section\\_display-e.asp?intSectionId=400](http://www.infocom.gc.ca/reports/section_display-e.asp?intSectionId=400)

## **Access to Environmental Information in Jamaica**

***Akila Anderson, JET***

Select information relating to the Jamaican environment already is available to the public. A quick reconnaissance of any “environmental organisation” in or out of government will likely reveal an overwhelming array of reports, studies, compendiums, policy papers, and other documents. There also are a growing list of local Web sites, some courtesy of foreign-funded projects such as the Ridge to Reef (USAID), and a proliferation of leaflets, booklets, CDs, and other material geared toward public education.

Governmental Web sites are great resources for current environmental information. See

- National Environment and Planning Agency (<http://www.nepa.gov.jm/>)
- Forestry Department (<http://www.forestry.gov.jm/>)
- Ministry of Agriculture (<http://www.moa.gov.jm/>)
- Ministry of Health (<http://www.moh.gov.jm/>)

The Government of Jamaica and the NGO environmental community have generally initiated the publication of large amounts of environmental information. In 1995, the (then) Natural Resources Conservation Authority (now National Environment and Planning Agency or NEPA) started a series of State of the Environment reports that give a wide range of information on aspects of the Jamaican environment. See

<http://www.nrca.org/publications/SoE/SOE/soe.htm>. In 2001, the quality of these reports received a significant boost when the Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN), which compiles an impressive collection of quantitative data on anything from incidences of landslides to water quality in wells, became involved. Much previously scattered and fragmented data was consolidated into a reader-friendly document made available free of charge.

In the face of all this, a reasonable question might be whether a right to information is redundant. Is it really necessary and if so, why? To answer this, a closer look should be taken at what information is freely given, and what is less so. Public bodies that perform “environmental” and related functions, such as monitoring water quality, regulating development, or law enforcement, hold much of the available environmental information. These public entities include parish councils, statutory bodies, government agencies and ministries, and any agency in which the government holds more than a 50 percent share. Prior to the passage of the Access to Information Act in 2002 (effective 2004), the public did not have a statutory right to information held by any of these important bodies. It was entirely discretionary whether we were told why well water quality was below standard and what was being done about it. We are made aware of the incidences of landslides, but what of the policy for future development of these areas? Are developments still being permitted in these areas, and who is receiving the permits?

By outlining what documents are exempt and what must be made available, the Access to Information Act removes much of this discretionary power. It also specifies the time within which a response to a request must be made, and it gives us a right to appeal if denied the requested information.

A recent experience gives some indication of why it is essential to promote a culture of accountability and responsiveness to requests for information as a duty. In August 2004, a fish kill was reported in the Rio Cobre River, St. Catherine. Simultaneously, a spill of "Caustic" (concentrated sodium hydroxide) also was reported by one of several companies that operate and/or empty waste along or into the same river. The Rio Cobre is a source of public and irrigation water and also is used directly by communities along its banks. Caustic is an extremely corrosive substance that is harmful to biological systems.

Almost immediately, requests for information were made to several relevant government agencies and ministries. In some cases, the Access to Information Act was not yet legally in effect for the agency. For these agencies, such as the National Water Commission, NEPA, and the local public health board, the request was made based on the "spirit of the access to information law." Other requests were made to the Ministry of Health (MOH), which fell under the Act. A query was also made to the company suspected to be the source of the spill.

As The Carter Center often has expounded, access to information legislation helps establish a culture of greater openness as well as encouraging better record-keeping and management. When a country has an access to information law, it is generally more open in all respects. Therefore, one would presume a positive response rate to the requests from both the Ministry of Health, which is legally bound by the Act, and the various agencies.

At the date of writing, the MOH commendably responded in approximately 30 days (the time given under the Act) and NEPA, the agency responsible for overall environmental monitoring, responded to the questions raised in just under three months. The company implicated in the spill responded fastest (nine days) and rightly referred queries about advisories against using contaminated water to the relevant agencies. Unfortunately, the NWC has still not responded to requests for information regarding closure of the water treatment plant downstream of the spill or plans to safeguard the integrity of the domestic water supply. A fourth agency, the Water Resources Authority, was contacted in November after receipt of the NEPA report and supplied its documents in two days.

This example helps demonstrate the importance of access to information and the need for all agencies to be covered by the law. While some of this is positive, such as the receipt of information from the MOH, there remains room for improvement. Access must be given to useful, relevant information concerning our environment and its effects on us. It is only through the process of making a request that we can find out information on the impact on the environment of pollution incidents. It should be a duty for agencies to keep the public well-informed of the investigations into pollution incidents and the progress of action taken to prevent such damaging activities from re-occurring. The new Access to

Information Act is an important tool that can be asserted by environmentalists and persons with related interests in advocating for a cleaner, healthier, and more prosperous Jamaica.

#### **CASE STUDY ON BHOPAL INDIA AND THE RIGHT TO KNOW**

“Shortly after midnight on December 3rd, 1984, one of the world’s worst industrial disasters unfolded in Bhopal, India. Under the cloak of night, over 40 tons of lethal gases—including methyl isocyanate, which contains cyanide—leaked from a pesticide plant in the northern part of the city. The streets of Bhopal filled with the bodies of thousands of victims, many suffering violent deaths in the grip of the potent poisonous gas. Today, hundreds of thousands of people still suffer debilitating health effects. By some estimates, the death toll rose to over 16,000 people. One of the single biggest factors in the Bhopal disaster was the failure of Union Carbide to adequately inform the Indian government, its workers, and the surrounding community of the dangers of the chemicals contained in the factory. In order to avoid stringent safety regulations, Union Carbide hid information about the toxicity of the chemicals used at the plant. The price of this failure to disclose critical information was ultimately paid in thousands of lives. This proves the importance of ensuring that information about a company’s operations is accessible in order to protect the environment and the lives and human rights of local communities and workers.

“International Right to Know” - Empowering communities through corporate transparency

#### **Investigative Journalism: the Environment and the Public’s Right to Know**

**Diana McCaulay, JET**

*“Environmental issues are best handled with the participation of all concerned citizens, at the relevant level. At the national level, each individual shall have appropriate access to information concerning the environment that is held by public authorities, including information on hazardous materials and activities in their communities, and the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes. States shall facilitate and encourage public awareness and participation by making information widely available. Effective access to judicial and administrative proceedings, including redress and remedy, shall be provided.”*

Principle 10, Rio Declaration  
United Nations Conference on Environment and Development  
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil June 1992

When the nations of the world came together in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), they agreed on 27 principles thought to be critical in reversing worldwide environmental degradation. Called the Rio Declaration, this set of principles covers a wide range of legal, ethical, economic, and governance issues

acknowledging the importance of sustainable development for the world's peoples and our reliance on the ecological integrity of our planet.

Principle 10, quoted above, speaks to the importance of public participation in decision-making and the right of a citizen to access environmental information held by public authorities. In order to bring this principle into force, a range of legal and other instruments have been adopted all over the world, including access to information laws, pollution registers, toxic releases inventories, mandatory public participation, and mandatory environmental impact assessments for certain types of large projects.

The press plays a vital role in ensuring government accountability, transparency, and responsiveness to citizen concerns, whatever the issue. However, a journalist interested in doing investigative work may face various hurdles, both internal and external. Many media houses are reluctant to invest resources in investigative journalism, and some claim Jamaica's libel laws are an obstacle. In addition, until the recently passed Access to Information Act in 2002, journalists were simply not able to get sufficient information from government agencies to conduct and publish investigative stories. My own experience in writing opinion columns, which sometimes sought to probe and expose various environmental problems, was that the information was not available in the time frame required for deadline writing.

Hurdles notwithstanding, good investigative journalism can be achieved by asking the right questions and can now be facilitated through the use of access to information requests. I offer as an example the coverage by all three Jamaican newspapers on the recently announced "rehabilitation" project for Kingston Harbour.

Since November 2003, many media houses, both print and electronic, have covered a story about Inter-American Development Bank funding to rehabilitate Kingston Harbour. The stories variously mention the components of the project as follows: development of a physical plan for the harbour; improving the environmental performance of industries discharging into the harbour; development of the documentation and tender documents for a ship-generated waste reception facility; public outreach, education, and training; and institutional strengthening. The news stories are crammed with sentences like this one: "The broad objectives of the project are to create the institutional setting needed to ensure coordination of the diverse stakeholders and their activities that impact on the environmental condition of the harbour and support pre-investment efforts to address major pollution sources." Or: "The funds will assist in developing structural options for implementing strategies for the government to consider..." These provide neither analysis nor clear delineation of the terms of reference for the funding and anticipated outcomes .

At the time of writing, a critical assessment of this "rehabilitation" project has not been published. Yet, a journalist could develop an excellent investigative piece by asking the following questions: How many rehabilitation plans for Kingston Harbour have been announced over the years? How much money has

been spent on various plans and projects without any reduction in the pollution in Kingston Harbour? What is the main environmental problem facing Kingston Harbour and will this project address it?

Over the years, it has been reported exhaustively that approximately 20 million gallons of inadequately treated or untreated sewage flows into Kingston Harbour each day. A journalist might ask: Why doesn't this new project have provisions for the treatment of sewage? Or, What kind of education message will this project deliver? If the main problem affecting the Harbour is sewage, what will the public awareness component of the project ask the public to do?

Journalists could ask what institutions will be strengthened and what will happen to those institutions when the funding comes to an end. They could explore the likelihood of actually building a ship waste facility, once the tender and bid documents for a ship waste facility were completed. Will the necessary funding be put in place? What has been our experience in this regard with other projects? Journalists could also look at the many studies, which have been conducted over the years, including those that assessed the economic value of a restored Kingston Harbour. The Access to Information Act could be a useful tool to obtain answers to many of these pertinent questions and create a real understanding of the future of the Kingston Harbour and what this project can accomplish, if anything.

A free press is a critical agent for the public's right to know. But it not enough merely to have a free press; all too often in Jamaica, the media are filled with little more than press releases or uncritical he said/she said stories. In order to ensure the rights embraced by Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration, the press needs to do a much better job of investigating and reporting on environmental issues.

*Did you know that there is a Society of Environmental Journalists? For their Web site go to <http://www.sej.org/foia/>. For more resource material on investigative reporting and the environment see <http://www.icfj.org/publications.html>*

### **CASE STUDY ON HEALTH INFORMATION FROM ILLINOIS USA**

In the town of Taylorville, 25 miles southeast of the state capital of Springfield, children were dying at an unprecedented rate from a rare childhood cancer. In 1997, the *Southern Illinoisan* newspaper began an investigation into the prevalence of this cancer, neuroblastoma, to determine whether there was an unusual "clustering" of cases, as was seen in Taylorville. For each case, the newspaper requested the type of cancer, the zip code of the patient and the date of diagnosis. The state department of health refused to release the requested information.

Following a denial of the information and an appeal, the Illinois Court of Appeals found that the newspaper was entitled to statistical data from the state's cancer registry and ordered the department to produce the statistical data. The Court held that the data did not meet an exemption in the state open records law that keeps confidential records that would "constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy." In this case, the court said the privacy interest was minimal and that the release of the statistics for the newspaper investigation presented a great public benefit. Finally, the appeals court said, the department had to release the records because the newspaper could not obtain them from an alternate source.

(*Southern Illinoisan v. Department of Public Health*; Media Counsel: Donald M. Craven, Craven & Thornton, Springfield, Ill.) -- <http://www.rcfp.org/news/2001/0425southe.html>

## **International Recognition of the Right to Environmental Information**

Internationally, there have been a number of developments in the area of environmental rights, including the right to environmental information and provisions for requiring public participation in environmental decision-making. Of primary importance is the development of the Aarhus Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making, and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention). For the full text of the Aarhus Convention see <http://www.unece.org/env/pp/documents/cep43e.pdf>.

This Convention was signed in 1998 and came into force on Oct. 30, 2001. Secretary-general of the United Nations Kofi Annan in describing this convention stated "Although regional in scope, the significance of the Aarhus Convention is global. It is by far the most impressive elaboration of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration, which stresses the need for citizens' participation in environmental issues and for access to information on the environment held by public authorities. As such it is the most ambitious venture in the area of environmental democracy so far undertaken under the auspices of the United Nations." (<http://www.unece.org/env/pp/>)

This convention falls under the U.N. Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and establishes a right for the public to have access to environmental information, to be informed and participate in decision-making about the environment, and to have access to the courts to enforce these rights. This Convention allows a right to information on the state of the environment, on policies or measures taken, and on the state of human health and safety where this can be affected by the state of the environment.

Another new development, the discussion of Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs), is being led by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and the North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC). <http://www.chem.unep.ch/prtr/default.htm>. These PRTRs are being promoted to enhance public access to information through the establishment of registers containing information on pollutants and their release in the environment, as well as specific information on the companies that generate and release significant quantities of pollutants. Registers can serve different purposes. Apart from simply making information available for public scrutiny, they have been found to act as behavioral restraints to companies that do not want to be known to their investors or customers as polluters. A protocol also has been developed under the Aarhus Convention to further support the PRTRs development throughout Europe <http://www.unece.org/env/pp/prtr.htm>.

In the United States, the establishment of such a toxic release registry via the Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act has reportedly resulted in a 50 percent decrease in emissions by the affected industries (<http://www.iht.com>). It is important that the NGO community continue to demand that work is done to ensure that a similar register is created in Jamaica. Until then, it will be important for citizens to use the Access to

Information Act to obtain this relevant information to carry out their work and address issues of specific concern about pollution in Jamaica.

The Jamaica government is commendably participating in work to make provision for the establishment of a PRTR, but the public must be proactive in asking questions about when it will be completed and available for use. Specific legislation is to be developed establishing this register, which may provide access to information on toxic releases of pollutants and emissions by Jamaican companies.

#### CASE STUDY ON REQUEST FOR ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION IN A CABINET DECISION

Ethyl Canada, a company based in Canada, submitted a request to the Canadian Environmental Agency for records relating to the government's decision, in 1995, to introduce legislation banning the trade and import of a gasoline additive known as MMT. The environmental agency denied the request on the grounds that the information was contained in an exempt Cabinet document.

The Access to Information Act provides that once cabinet decisions are made public, paragraph 69(3)(b) of the Act provides that "discussion papers, the purpose of which is to present background explanations, analysis of problems or policy options to (Cabinet) . . ." are no longer excluded from the right of access. The government refused to disclose the information and argued that "discussion papers" were no longer used to present background information and claimed cabinet confidences.

The information commissioner found that there was no lawful authority to refuse disclosure of background, analysis and options information with respect to the decision to ban MMT and this was supported by the courts who ruled that "discussion papers" could be found elsewhere in the cabinet papers system either incorporated into, or appended to, other records such as memoranda to Cabinet or briefs to ministers and thus the information was to be released

[http://www.infocom.gc.ca/reports/section\\_display-e.asp?intSectionId=331](http://www.infocom.gc.ca/reports/section_display-e.asp?intSectionId=331)

### **Recent and Upcoming Events**

#### **Private Sector Organization of Jamaica**

The Carter Center hosted a meeting with the Private Sector Organisation of Jamaica on "International Experiences in the Use of Access to Information and the Private Sector" on Friday November 19, 2004. This session was held at the Hilton Kingston and included participants from professional associations and government companies.

#### **Volunteer Attorneys Panel**

The Carter Center, in association with the Independent Jamaica Council for Human Rights and the Jamaica Bar Association, held the inaugural meeting of the Volunteer Attorneys Panel on November 17, 2004 for Attorneys donating their time to work for free for people and civil society organizations

that are refused information and that do not have the means to hire a lawyer. At the close of the meeting, a number of lawyers joined the Volunteers Attorneys Panel, and there are now 25 lawyers and one law firm signed up to work on the panel.

### **Media**

The Carter Center, Media Association of Jamaica, Press Association of Jamaica, and MSI – CIV JAM hosted a two-day workshop November 19-21 titled “Creating a Culture for Investigative Journalism in Jamaica and the Use of Access to Information.” Over 50 media representatives attended, including owners, journalists, and news editors. The workshop discussed both the state of investigative journalism in Jamaica and the constraints to investigative journalism and how the Access to Information Act could be used as a tool for investigative journalism. Training manuals on how to conduct investigative journalism were handed out to all the media houses that attended.

### **CARIMAC**

The Carter Center conducted a training session for final-year communications students from CARIMAC on November 19, 2004, on investigative journalism and the Access to Information Act. The training session was well attended, and an award has been offered to final year students for the best story produced in print, TV and radio using the ATI Act.

### **Civil Society**

Jamaicans for Justice sponsored a civil society networking workshop on the use of the Access to Information Act, held on Thursday November 18, 2004. A large number of NGOs were invited to attend to discuss how they could use the Access to Information Act to advocate for their causes and issues. Interested civil society organisations are asked to contact Jamaicans for Justice about the network of organisations working on this issue.

Also on November 18, 2004, a workshop was held on environmental advocacy. This workshop, with more than 50 in attendance, including civil society and government representatives, addressed the use of access to information requests as a critical tool in all environmental advocacy efforts.

### **Public Forum**

A public forum was held on November 18, 2004, at the Stella Maris Church Hall on the use of access to information in the fight against corruption. It was quite well attended both by the public and news media, and there was a general discussion about the role of the public and media in fighting corruption and how the ATI Act could assist in this fight.

## **Upcoming Events**

### **Volunteer Attorneys Panel**

The Carter Center is currently planning its first awareness-raising event for lawyers on the VAP and also lawyers interested in learning more about the new Jamaican Access to Information Act. We hope to have attorneys from Jamaica and also experienced international litigators discuss international cases and its applicability in Jamaica. This is planned for late February or early March.

### **Media Training**

The Carter Center is planning smaller training sessions specifically on the ATI Act for interested media houses. The training will include practical advice on the Act and its use as well as exemptions and enforcement under the Act. Scheduled for January- April 2005. Please contact Mrs. Carole Excell, Carter Center Field Representative, to schedule an in-house training session for your media house or staff.

### **International Conference**

The Third International Conference of Access to Information Commissioners is to be held from February 20-23, 2005, in Cancun Mexico. It has been designed as a meeting place for the authorities of the world that have a mission to protect and promote the right of access to information. This event will be organized by Mexico through the Federal Institute of Access to Public Information (IFAI, its Spanish acronym). Eleven countries of the world, which have analogous institutions, are invited. This will be a space of deliberation and debate, between the commissioners of access to the information and personal data protection in the world, and them, along other personalities that come from multilateral and international organisms will show their interest in the subject matter. The main purpose of the conference is to recognize and disseminate the power of the right of access to information and its impact on people's life, public deliberation, and the exercise of power.

For further information on these events or to obtain reports contact:  
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925-2821, E-mail: [cartercenterja@mail.infochan.com](mailto:cartercenterja@mail.infochan.com).

## **Quote of the Month on the Right to Know**

*Rachel Carson*

"The choice, after all, is ours to make. If, after having endured much, we have at last asserted our 'right to know,' and if, knowing, we have concluded that we are being asked to take senseless and frightening risks, then we should no longer accept the counsel of those who tell us that we must fill our world with

poisonous chemicals; we should look about and see what other course is open to us."

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**ABOUT THE E-NEWSLETTER**

Volume 3 of the Access to Information *e-newsletter* will focus on the government and access to information. We are looking for people or groups interested in working on Volume 5. Please let us know if you want the newsletter to focus on a specific theme or if you wish to submit information or articles. We always welcome your input and any information you care to share with us about your special interests.

If you do not want to receive this *e-newsletter* directly, please e-mail Carole Excell at [cartercenterja@mail.infochan.com](mailto:cartercenterja@mail.infochan.com) or call her at 755-3641, and we will ensure that you are placed on the mailing list. Again, we apologize for any cross-postings and are currently working on a database of e-mails to avoid future duplications.

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