CSE Endorses Policy Statement on Geopolitical Intrusion on Editorial Decisions

The Council of Science Editors has endorsed the World Association of Medical Editors (WAME) Policy Statement on Geopolitical Intrusion on Editorial Decisions. The statement, issued earlier this year, is posted on the WAME Web site (wame.org/wamestmt.htm) and reprinted below. CSE supports extending the statement beyond “biomedical journals” to include “all scientific journals”.

Geopolitical Intrusion on Editorial Decisions

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Decisions to edit and publish manuscripts submitted to biomedical journals should be based on characteristics of the manuscripts themselves and how they relate to the journal’s purposes and readers. Among these characteristics are importance of the topic, originality, scientific strength, clarity and completeness of written expression, and potential interest to readers. Editors should also take into account whether studies are ethical and whether their publication might cause harm to readers or to the public interest.

Editorial decisions should not be affected by the origins of the manuscript, including the nationality, ethnicity, political beliefs, race, or religion of the authors. Decisions to edit and publish should not be determined by the policies of governments or other agencies outside of the journal itself.

Editors should defend this principle, as they do other principles of sound editorial practice, and enlist their colleagues’ support in this effort if necessary.

Highlights of the CSE Board Meeting

The CSE Board of Directors met on 31 January 2004 in Washington, DC. Highlights of the meeting follow:

1. The fall 2003 CSE retreat, on the journal’s role in scientific misconduct, was a success, attracting 70 attendees and financially breaking even. Scholarship funds totaling $7,100 were raised for the retreat. The proceedings of the retreat will appear on the CSE Web site (www.CouncilScienceEditors.org) and in a future issue of Science Editor. [Editor’s note: The proceedings have now been posted on the Web site, and they appeared in the May-June 2004 issue of Science Editor.]

2. The fall 2004 CSE retreat, on conflicts of interest, will take place in Chicago (Oak Brook), Illinois, on the last weekend of October.

3. For the first time in CSE history, members in 2004 will be able to cast their ballots online for CSE officers.

4. The preliminary program for the 2004 CSE annual meeting, in Vancouver, BC, Canada, will be in the mail shortly.

5. Cheryl Iverson has joined the editorial staff of Science Editor as an associate editor.

6. The CSE membership directory is now available in PDF form on the CSE Web site.

7. The CSE Web site contains the Amazon.com logo; when a member accesses Amazon.com through the CSE Web site, CSE receives a portion of the profit.

8. Richard Horton has agreed to serve as the CSE liaison to the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors.