

First impulse after reading the back page of the Enchantment was just to ignore the blatant lies and misinformation but then, an email came in remarking on the fact that it was a perfect example of Orwellian “DOUBLETHINK” and “DOUBLESPEAK” as expressed in the novel, 1984. In that novel, the party slogans were “Freedom is slavery,” War is peace, and mostly notably, “Ignorance is strength.” Add “Truth is lies” and you have an excellent description of the “Enchantment” back page.

A great example of both doublethink and doublespeak follows the statement, “A rural electric co-op ...is democratically controlled directly by its members.” This is indeed the ideal. So why does Pres. Aguilar want to doublespeak this direct control by inserting a committee of trustee handpicked members, trustee(s) and the board attorney who has shown himself to be the lawyer for the corporation and trustees not the members. This action which did not take place in an open meeting of the board goes against the purpose of co-ops, federal law, state law, and SEC by-laws. This is a way for trustees to control the amendment of the bylaws while seeming to do the opposite. Members have consistently and repeatedly voted down amendments presented by trustees. Members are not stupid and this idea will also be soundly defeated.

Why does the board with the exception of Trustee Wagner also continue to pound on the District 5 amendments? The only procedural flaw is the board’s ignoring of the bylaw that requires district passed resolutions to be published and presented to the full membership at the following Annual Member’s Meeting. The 2013 Annual Meeting was set on a week day afternoon to discourage attendance (the upcoming District 1 & 4 meeting are also using this same ploy.) The members registering were handed a published copy of the amendments which were overwhelmingly passed at the second session of this meeting. There are a couple of resolutions that are aspirational but so was “vote by Mail” and the solution was to change state law to conform to co-op members’ wishes. A brief outline of the resolutions shows that they have the effort of reducing trustee power and sifting that control to the members. Here they are: 1. Trustees to submit receipts to account for money received. 2. Auditing of district population to ensure fair elections of trustees. 3. Trustee regular meetings to rotate among the 5 SEC districts. 4. Trustees appoint attorney for 1 year term subject to a vote of the members at Annual Members’ Meeting for annual renewal (the lawyers hate this one). 5. Donations limited to scholarships with funds coming from Foundation. 6. Candidates for trustee to receive list of district voting members for the proper purpose of campaigning. This leads us to another DOUBLESPEAK in the last section. “The SEC Board of trustees has the utmost respect for the law, regulations, and its own by-laws...it’s unfair to attempt to approve bylaw amendments with disregard for both the rules and the will of the majority. Those rules are in place to protect members from actions by a vocal but small and representative minority.” What nerve does it take to switch an untrusted and unrespected board to the majority and the members to the minority!

DOUBLETHINK, DOUBLESPEAK.