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THURSDAY, JULY 07, 2005

Terror Alert From Yellow To Orange. Whew! I Feel Safer.

by Michael in New York on [7/07/2005 12:10:00 PM](#)

Just watched the press conference with Homeland Security head Michael Chertoff who spoke smoothly and reassuringly. He took questions for about three minutes, which seems rather abrupt given the situation and that he can't be too pressed for time, since the attack took place in another country.

The most foolish moment: Chertoff said the terror alert for transportation only was raised from yellow to orange. Then he claimed that since we've been on heightened alert yellow for years, that this had provided us an added level of comfort and security. No, being on heightened alert yellow for years is a joke that makes us look foolish. You can't be on heightened alert for years at a time; if that's the level of security we will need forever than that isn't a heightened alert level, it's the standard level of security and keeping the threat level raised for years is ridiculous. It's like saying putting on your seat belt while driving is heightened security when driving. No, that's standard operating procedure.

The debasement of security alerts: no one has addressed the fact that the color coded levels of threat have become a joke or that Tom Ridge admitted the White House often raised the security threat for political purposes over his objections. When the codes have been abused for years, don't they lose their effectiveness.

The missing question: we're worried about our transportation and security. Homeland Security oversees the Coast Guard. And not one question about the front page story in USA Today about the crumbling equipment they use and Bush's plan to delay upgrading that equipment fully from 2025 to 2030. How can Chertoff justify taking 25 years to upgrade the Coast Guard when we are at war? How can that possibly make us safer?



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