

# No Clue

Nobody asked but ...

I heard a Federal Government bureaucrat/spokesperson on the radio on my way to work this morning. An amount of hot air was gushed that would make a political hack blush. The bureau in question was the Department for Homeland Security (you know, the wholly fictitious entity which was created by the equally fictitious War on Terror).

I'm not sure what the report was about, no clue. But ostensibly it was to warn us of something we couldn't recognize if it bit us on the collective ass. The DHS believes we are a collective of asses, by the way. The warning concerned spoofing, but the spokesperson had no intent of actually describing spoofing and how it might threaten any *status quo*. Actually, I think the spokesperson was unaware of the nuances of which she spoke. That goes to show you that government bureaucrats believe they can stir us up at will, no thinking required.

This warning consisted of buzzwords from computerese that had a vague ring of authenticity — intruder, Russia, hack, router, spoof, sitting on your network, devices, dither dither dither ... . It sounded scary as all hell's demons. But I am a computer geek, a certified propeller beanie wearer, and it sounded like gobbledegook to me. The keyword was "spoof" as in "there's spoofing going on ..." Resorting to FOLDOC on spoof, we find a definition that has nothing to do with the fears spread by DHS this morning. But some specters were thrown in to raise the panic quotient — one was a mention of taking down all or part of the power grid by cyber-attack, and whether such would be considered an act of war.

It all parsed with as much concrete information as an expressway e-sign blaring that there was an orange alert. I keep hoping that the BS will get more sophisticated, so our cluelessness will not seem so profound. But if the BS did get more sophisticated, we would have a clue.

— Kilgore Forelle