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STO TECHNICAL REPORT

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ANNEX E

Devil's Advocacy and Quality Assurance

Huib van de Meeberg



Ministry of Defence

Devil's Advocate (DA) and Quality Assurance (QA) in NLD MOD Intelligence

DIS2016022591

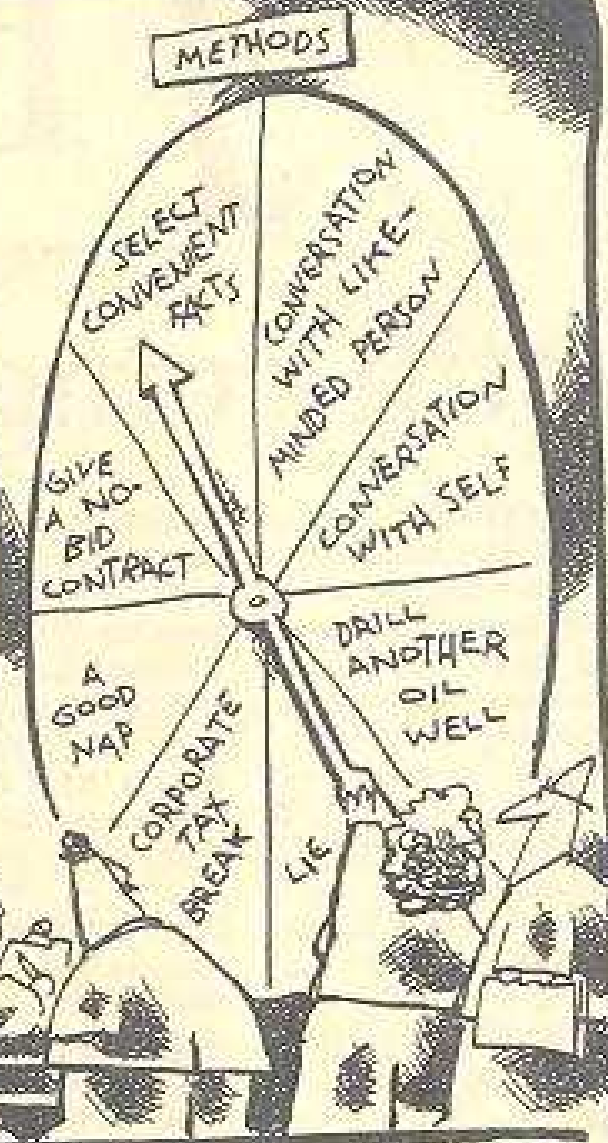
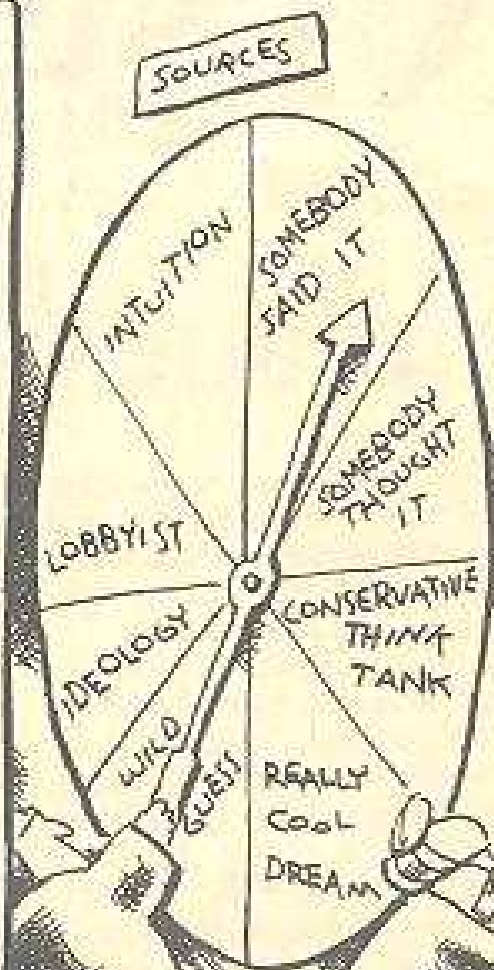
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Devil's Advocate (DA) and Quality Assurance (QA)

- Devil's Advocate: a very short history
- DA/QA and NLD MoD Intelligence
- Activities
- Results
- Lessons learned
- Way ahead (focus)

WE CAN'T
RELEASE THAT
INFORMATION
BECAUSE IT WOULD
REVEAL OUR
'SOURCES AND METHODS'



TALS

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SPIN,
AGAIN.

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Devil's Advocate (DA); a very short history

Advocatus Diaboli (Promotor Fidei)

Official who formulates in his official capacity objections to a proposed sainthood of a candidate

“...to uncover any character flaws or misrepresentation of the evidence favouring canonization...”

Sixtus V 1587





DA/QA and NLD MoD Intelligence

- Iraq WMD 2003 intel failure
- NLD MoD response: better quality assurance in NLD DISS

DA: primarily a (small!) organisational element, outside the formal production process, independent, with unlimited access to all available info, and accountable to Director NLD DISS only!

Start 2008



DA/QA and NLD DISS: 2 phases

2008-2011: assess performance: “how”

- Assess and improve quality of intel products and processes through independent and critical DA-surveys, inquiries, and product reviews (tunnel vision, group think?)
- Advice how to improve products and processes

Since 2011: assess performance (“what, why”)

- Do we do the right things and do we do them effectively?:
Weighing and Prioritising



DA/QA-activities (phase 1)

Intel cycle

- Quality of collection, SRM, product formats

Reviews intel products

- Ex-post (in order not to interfere with work-in-progress)
- Focus on specific quality criteria
- Transparent, future-oriented (advice how to do better)

Improve the analyst

- Training analytical techniques
- Seminars with outsiders/non-intel experts
- Academic Program NLD Defence Academy



DA/QA-activities (phase 2)

- Intel product reviews (including terminology used)
- Assessments of relevance of collection assets in final products
- Special investigations
- Customer feedback research: written questionnaires, interviews
- Do we do the right things and do we do them effectively:
Weighing and Prioritising?



DA/QA-activities: results

- Improvements were achieved but progress remains uneven and fragile, requiring sustained follow-up action on all levels
- Greater sensitivity to customers' interests
- Great support for DA activities



DA/QA: lessons learned

- Effectiveness of top-down approach has its limits
- Support for DA/QA by line management is essential
- Transparency is essential for confidence building
- Lasting product quality improvements require continued “investment” on all levels



DA/QA: way ahead (focus)

- Continued reviews of intel products
- Focus on quality of forecasting (calibrated feedback)
- Integration of quality standards in training programs and SOPs
- High prio for customer feedback research!



Questions?

