

News story: Welsh Consular representatives are key to unlocking trade opportunities

From:

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Welsh Secretary Alun Cairns says the Consular Association for Wales can help source new trading opportunities post-Brexit

Welsh Secretary Alun Cairns will today hail the Consular Association for Wales and its members as the people who can help Wales unlock some of the trading opportunities that will help us prosper after Brexit.

Speaking at an event he will host at Gwydyr House in Whitehall, the Welsh Secretary will tell guests that as the United Kingdom enters a time of national change, the UK Government is determined to deliver a stronger, fairer, more united and outward-looking UK than ever before.

He will say that to become a Global Britain, our strong relationships with Consular Associations and foreign dignitaries has never been more important.

Alun Cairns, Secretary of State for Wales, said:

Wales has a growing international reputation. It is essential that we work with our friends at the Consular Association of Wales to unlock trading opportunities and promote a Wales that is confident and strong to the world.

Building on old relationships and developing new ones is vital if we are to secure trade links and explore new and emerging markets. This will help to drive an economy that works for everyone.

Raj Aggarwal, President of the Consular Association for Wales and Honorary Consul for India in Wales, said:

Now more than ever the country needs the Consular Association of Wales to strengthen relationships and ties to their respective countries both in the EU and the rest of the world. The expertise, network and knowledge of the Honorary Consuls will forge stronger connections.

They represent countries with huge markets and a thriving consumer

demand for quality Welsh products. Our aspiration is to bring the world to Wales and take Wales to the world.

Speech: Backing the ad industry as we make a success of Brexit

“Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication.” Leonardo Da Vinci knew some stuff didn’t he? And he knew that slogans, or as we politicians put it, soundbites, matter.

Without the help of people who know how to express the core qualities of a service, product, or plan in straightforward yet captivating language, we are sunk.

No wonder Henry Ford opined “Stopping advertising to save money is like stopping your watch to save time.”

Thank you, Stephen [Woodford, Chief Executive of the Advertising Association]. It’s very heartening to see that advertising has such an enthusiastic champion and one who’s done his research – so thank you very much.

It is a great pleasure to be here, and a very welcome chance to speak to the advertising industry.

Today I’d like to share my thoughts on why you are so special, outline some of the ways I believe you will be key to the UK’s post-Brexit success, and reassert the Government’s support for advertising.

Advertising: a unique industry

UK advertising is the best in the world.

It does exactly what it says on the tin.

It has attracted some of the finest artistic talent around, such as the film director Ridley Scott and the comedy producer John Lloyd. The best adverts are not only a means to an end, but works of art in their own right.

I loved as a teenager the classy black-and-white Guinness adverts, and I’m also a huge fan of the hilarious SpecSavers ads.

Advertising is right there at the intersection of creativity and commerce, and as such, one of the most fascinating industries around.

And advertising’s special status does not end there. Culture, media, sport,

tourism, digital technology, heritage, the National Citizens Service, and everything else my department does is reliant upon and interacts very closely with advertising.

You are one of our major success stories. The UK has the biggest ad spend in Europe, and our advertising exports are worth billions annually. Deloitte has found that the £20 billion spent on UK advertising in 2015 generated around £120 billion in GDP, 6.4 per cent of the overall economy.

It's the real thing.

And it's Reassuringly expensive.

Advertising: key to the UK's success

There can be no question, then – advertising is central to a successful UK.

You are a key player in your own right. But of course you are also a champion for other industries – every other industry – and act as a catalyst for the creation of new ones.

New models for the consumption of television, film and music would – like the Internet itself – be unsustainable without advertising and would never have come into being without it.

You will also be a major player in post-Brexit Britain.

UK advertising has a well-deserved reputation for being outward-facing, innovative, and high quality. The UK balance of payments for advertising-related services is second only to the USA – and five times that of France. Germany and Italy import much more advertising than they export.

Go Compare!

The Government is seeking a new and equal partnership with Europe, and repositioning this country as a truly Global Britain.

You can help sell this country to the rest of the world. Of course you do so already – through the GREAT campaign, by drawing attention to our amazing film and music sectors, and indeed by promoting all our goods and services.

I want to be clear that the Government has never seen you as peripheral to our plans for success. You are right there at the centre. And I want to hear from you.

Why should you make the time?

Because you're worth it.

Our Plan for Britain will be driven by some basic principles: we will provide as much certainty and clarity as we can at every stage.

And we will take this opportunity to make Britain stronger and to make Britain fairer – getting the right deal abroad while ensuring a better deal

for ordinary working people here at home.

Our aim is to forge new relationships around the globe, while being open to international talent.

I'm conscious that UK advertising feels that certain aspects of EU-wide co-operation have been helpful and certain legislation harmful, so I want to hear your views on the opportunities Brexit presents as we approach negotiations.

As we engage in negotiations with the union, the advertising industry can help us make the case by providing us with data and knowledge.

I want to make use of your myriad skills as well.

You know how to sell anything – and so I am certain that you can sell as a product as fantastic as the United Kingdom!

After all, When you've got it, flaunt it.

Government support for advertising

If you are to take one thing away from what I say today, please let it be that the Government is foursquare behind the advertising industry.

Credos, the advertising industry think tank, has found that there is a £5 billion gap between what people are willing to pay and the true cost of advertising-funded media they receive. I will be very conscious of that as we look at things like Internet advertising filters.

Inevitably, an industry that is so woven into the fabric of the whole economy is particularly vulnerable during times of economic difficulty, and uncertainty will make businesses reluctant to invest. A fall in ad spend was one of the first indicators of the last recession.

So it is quite right that the creative industries are highlighted in the Government's green paper Building our Industrial Strategy, which was published earlier this week.

The Industrial Strategy's overarching aim is to enable us to identify all of the opportunities throughout our economy – so that businesses can grow, create more jobs, and spread economic success right across the country.

The purpose of the green paper is not to lay down the law, but rather to start a conversation. Before the consultation closes on 17 April, I am very eager for you to help us make the case for the creative industries in general and advertising in particular.

The Government has been clear that business is best placed to identify what companies need, and has issued an "open door" challenge to industry to come forward with proposals to transform their sectors.

Because it's good to talk.

This industry already has a tremendous advocate in the Advertising Association.

This is not an old-fashioned “picking winners” industrial strategy. Instead, sector deals will be open for both established and emerging industries, and the Government will work with any sector that can organise behind strong leadership.

This leaves your industry – which has a long history of doing just that – in a very strong position.

Impossible is nothing.

Sector deals with government can be struck when an industry can demonstrate a strategy to transform their prospects. This could include such matters as helping to align policies on training and skills; addressing regulatory issues; helping to identify market barriers; and promoting the creation and spread of new technologies.

Moreover, there is a specific focus on creative industries in the green paper. Sir Peter Bazalgette is conducting an independent sector review, which will focus on three key themes: utilising new technologies, capitalising on intellectual property rights, and growing talent pipelines.

I look forward to working with you and Sir Peter – or Baz as he prefers!

The review will complement, rather than replace, the sector’s efforts, such as the Creative Industries Council’s work programme. Aably led by Nicola Mendelsohn, the Council has already produced extremely useful material on intellectual property and talent pipelines.

You are likewise well placed to prosper thanks to your determination to explore cutting-edge technologies such as Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality. And, once again, where the advertising industry leads, others will follow.

I wanted to say a word about the Gambling Review. I know that the fact we are looking at the advertising of gambling concerns some of you, but this is something about which people feel very strongly. I receive a lot of correspondence on this matter and it is something that is regularly raised with me as a constituency MP.

It would be irresponsible not to explore those concerns and that is why we are carefully considering the responses to our genuinely open call for evidence. We aim to publish our findings in the Spring.

In conclusion, then, UK advertising is something about which we can all be very proud. More than that, it is one of the industries that most makes me optimistic about this country’s prospects.

And this Government will be backing the advertising industry as we make a success of Brexit.

Tell Sid. In fact, tell everybody. Just do it. Thank you.

[News story: Energy innovation celebrated at cleantech awards](#)

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Innovate UK-supported ITM Power was the big winner at the Rushlight Awards, while another 5 organisations received accolades.

Specialist manufacturer of integrated hydrogen energy systems [ITM Power](#) walked away with the top honour at the [Rushlight Awards](#), which took place at the Royal College of Surgeons in London on 25 January.

The Rushlight Award is presented to an organisation whose contribution to addressing environmental issues has either had a significant impact in reducing the global footprint, or has the potential to do so. It recognises ITM Power's efforts to enhance and encourage the use of renewable energy and minimise unnecessary waste.

In addition to being announced as the overall winner ITM Power picked up the Clean Energy Award and the Hydrogen & Fuel Cells Award.

Other winners who have benefited from Innovate UK support include:

- the [European Marine Energy Centre](#), which won the Marine & Hydro Energy Award for harnessing energy from a marine or inland waterway environment
- Smart Separations Ltd, awarded the Rushlight Clean Environment Award for technological developments or innovations that prevent, reduce or treat pollution, noise or other contamination

Three businesses that have received help from Innovate UK were also commended:

- [Sustainable Pipeline Systems](#) in the category of Responsible Product or Service Award
 - [ULEMCo](#) for both Hydrogen & Fuel Cells and Clean Energy
 - WaterGEN for Power Generation and Transmission
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Speech: Nick Gibb: the evidence in favour of teacher-led instruction

It is a pleasure to follow the speech of my friend and fellow E. D. Hirsch enthusiast, His Excellency Dr Jareonsettasin.

The theme of this session contains 2 statements and 1 question. Firstly, that international rankings are useful for policy makers. Second, that today's students will be rewarded not for what they know, but what they do with what they know. And third, how can evidence or should evidence be turned into policy, action and change?

I shall begin by focusing on the second of these. And then what that means for the answer to the third – in particular for approaches to teaching. In the 12 years since I became a Shadow Minister for Education, I have never met anyone who advocates teaching children knowledge with the explicit intent that it not be used or applied. The absurdity of this thought highlights that the oft-heard statement we are discussing today is effectively a tautology. It is plain to anyone who considers the matter: one must possess knowledge in order to use and apply it. As E. D. Hirsch has said, knowledge builds on knowledge.

Consider the example of simplifying fractions: a child cannot simplify the fraction $21/35$ down to $3/5$ without first possessing knowledge of the 7 times tables.

The ability to use and apply knowledge necessarily rests on possessing knowledge. So long as we consider using and applying knowledge to be of benefit – and we all do – logic suggests that the statement under consideration is both true and so bland as to elucidate next to nothing.

But that is not to say that this statement is without consequence.

This statement and similar statements are used throughout the world to argue for so-called 'child-centred' pedagogies. These 'child-centred' approaches to teaching focus on eliciting and developing ethereal and often poorly-defined skills in pupils. Teacher focus is turned away from ensuring all pupils are taught the core of academic knowledge that they need, and instead teachers attempt to inculcate creativity and problem-solving as if these skills transcend domains of knowledge. We know from decades of research – and most recently from the boom in understanding the workings and limits of human cognition – that this view is deeply misguided.

Children need to be taught the body of knowledge that we all take for granted. In too many countries – including Britain – educationalists have argued against knowledge and in favour of skills. I believe this has been deeply damaging to millions of children, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The question before us today is 'how can evidence or should evidence be turned into policy, action and change?' The answer is, I believe, important but straightforward. We should eschew easy-sounding tautologies and truisms that advocate by stealth or accident teaching methods that are not effective and we should honestly assess what the evidence says about the efficacy of knowledge-rich curricula and teacher-led teaching methods.

The work of E. D. Hirsch – the educationist who has most influenced my thinking – has made clear the importance of ensuring all pupils are taught the body of academic knowledge they need to be culturally literate. His work on developing the core knowledge curriculum has inspired the work of many of the most successful and innovative academies and free schools in England.

Whilst the curriculum is possibly the most important component in great schools, the approach to teaching is also integral to the success of pupils in being able to use and apply their knowledge. Many in the world of education assume that for pupils to become proficient in using their knowledge of science and history, they must be allowed to behave like scientists and historians in lessons. Teachers are encouraged to prepare lessons that are centred on the interests of pupils and discouraged from teacher-led approaches.

Teachers are implored to allow pupils to debate and discuss ideas, design and carry out their own scientific experiments and analyse historical sources. In the immediate aftermath of the [PISA report publication](#) last year, many educationists seized on the results to call for a more 'child-centred' approach to teaching.

One example was Eric Mazur, Harvard physicist and creator of 'Peer Instruction', a 'child-centred' group-work approach to teaching. In the immediate aftermath of the PISA results, he implored Australians to recognise that there is something amiss about education in the Western world – which he sees as too focused on traditional methods.

He said:

If you teach interactively, where students are being taught through questioning and helping each other, you can actually accomplish a lot. If you teach the old-fashioned way with the instructor being the source of knowledge, then the highest level you set for the students is the teacher. If you teach by inquiry, then it is possible for students to exceed the teacher.

This seductive sounding remedy to Western education was made after Mazur reviewed the PISA 2015 results. And yet, in all but three countries, pupils reporting higher levels of teacher-directed instruction achieve significantly better results. In the majority of countries pupils reporting higher levels of enquiry-based instruction achieve significantly worse results.

This is what the PISA report has to say:

Perhaps surprisingly, in no education system do students who reported that they are frequently exposed to enquiry based instruction (when they are encouraged to experiment and engage in hands-on activities) score higher in science. After accounting for students' and schools' socio-economic profile, in 56 countries and economies, greater exposure to enquiry-based instruction is associated with lower scores in science.

In fact, the PISA report found that teacher-led approaches such as explaining how a science idea can be applied to a number of different phenomena had a net positive impact on pupil scores. Whereas allowing pupils to design their own experiments; allowing pupils to investigate and test their ideas; holding class debates about investigations; and requiring pupils to argue about science questions and a number of other 'child-centred' teaching approaches resulted in a net negative impact on science outcomes.

And the pupils who took the PISA exams were not being tested on their ability to recall scientific facts. That is not what PISA sought to test. PISA was testing how well pupils could use and apply their scientific knowledge. And the results were clear: teacher-led approaches were more effective than 'child-centred' approaches.

But it's that word 'surprisingly', used by PISA in their report, that troubles me. Why was it surprising to the authors of the PISA report that enquiry-based approaches produce lower results? I believe it is because much modern education thinking continues to be influenced, often deeply entrenched, by well-established, but poorly evidenced educational doctrine.

A 2016 OECD report into the teaching of maths – making all too familiar assumptions about the importance of 'child-centred' approaches – stated that 'educationalists have encouraged giving students more control over their own learning' for decades.

John Dewey – the famous American educationist and godfather of the 'child-centred' education movement who was born in 1859 – is quoted as having said:

Give the pupils something to do, not something to learn; and the doing is of such a nature as to demand thinking; learning naturally results.

In 'Democracy and Education', written in 1938, Dewey criticised the teacher-led approach to teaching science. He wrote:

Pupils begin their study of science with texts in which the subject is organized into topics according to the order of the specialist. Technical concepts, with their definitions, are introduced at the outset. Laws are introduced at a very early stage, with at best a few indications of the way in which they were arrived at. The pupils learn a 'science' instead of learning the scientific way of

treating the familiar material of ordinary experience.

Dewey's ideas and arguments remain influential in education around the world, but as Douglas Carnine wrote in 'Why Education Experts Resist Effective Practices':

In education, the judgements of experts frequently appear to be unconstrained by objective research.

The question before us today is how can evidence inform policy. The evidence is clear – however much it may shock the pre-conceived expectations of some education experts. It is imperative that pupils are taught a knowledge-rich curriculum. And the body of evidence on effective teaching practice is now overwhelming. The PISA results from last year serve to confirm the ever-growing body of international evidence on this point, that teacher-led instruction is more effective than child-centred, enquiry-based approaches.

Project Follow-Through is, to this day, the most expensive piece of education research ever carried out. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, teaching approaches were measured across the United States. Direct Instruction, a teacher-led programme, comprehensively out-performed a multitude of 'child-centred' approaches.

Kirschner, Sweller and Clark's 2006 paper 'Why Minimal Guidance During Instruction Does Not Work' dispels many of the myths which surround the belief in 'child-centred' instruction. Despite being popular and intuitively appealing, argue the authors, 'these approaches ignore both the structures that constitute human cognitive architecture and evidence from empirical studies over the past half-century that consistently indicate that minimally guided instruction is less effective and less efficient than instructional approaches that place a strong emphasis on guidance of the student learning process.'

Andersen and Andersen's 2015 paper 'Student-Centred Instruction and Academic Achievement' carried out extensive investigation into teaching methods in Denmark. Andersen and Andersen concluded that 'a student-centred instructional strategy has a negative impact on academic achievement in general, and for students with low parental education in particular.'

It is for this last reason that Douglas Carnine's swipe at education experts is so pertinent. Poor teaching methods harm all pupils, but a growing body of research suggests that it harms disadvantaged pupils most of all.

The evidence must constrain education experts. Their recommendations must be evidence-based. As education ministers, we have a vital role – and I would even say a duty – to base our policies on sound evidence, not fashionable, experimental theory. And as I hope I have made clear, I believe that the evidence is overwhelming.

The most effective, teacher-led practices should be twinned with a knowledge-

rich curriculum. That is how evidence can and should be turned into policy, action and change.

Speech: “People are really good at heart”: speech to the Anne Frank Trust

“In spite of everything I still believe that people are really good at heart.”

That idea, so simply and so beautifully expressed by a young girl more than 70 years ago, has been sorely tested of late.

In recent months and years, hatred, bigotry and sometimes violent intolerance of others has crept back into popular consciousness.

It springs from and targets all communities, and it manifests itself in a variety of ways.

We’ve seen vicious abuse doled out online, going way beyond the boundaries of legitimate debate.

We’ve seen a spike in hate crime on the streets of Britain, including a significant surge in reports of anti-Semitic abuse.

And of course we’ve seen the shocking, disgusting murder of a bright young Member of Parliament at the hands of a hate-fuelled extremist.

Brendan, I think I speak for everyone here when I say that your strength, courage and positivity in the face of such a tragedy has been an inspiration to us all.

Of course, hatred of people who are different is nothing new.

What’s different today is that we have no excuses for not tackling it.

We have all seen, too many times, where hatred leads if left unchecked.

We all know the harm that can be inflicted on people and the damage that can be done to communities if we allow bigotry to spread and divisions to grow.

In 2017, we can’t look the other way and pretend we didn’t know what was happening.

Each of us has a moral duty to tackle hatred and prejudice.

And the Anne Frank Trust is undoubtedly leading from the front in doing just that.

Every year the Trust reaches out to 30,000 schoolchildren, shaping and changing attitudes in the next generation.

It has delivered more than 100 projects in 70 prisons, bringing its vital message to people who are too often overlooked in the fight against bigotry.

And its touring exhibitions have taken the lessons of Anne's life and death into the heart of communities right across the UK.

Thanks to the Trust, countless men, women and children around the world have pledged to stand up for what is right, to defend those who cannot defend themselves, and to strive for a world in which our differences make no difference.

It's incredible work and I'm proud to support it.

I'm also proud to be part of a government that's serious about tackling hate crime.

We already have one of the strongest legislative frameworks in the world.

Last year we published our new [anti-hate crime strategy](#), which included £1 million for projects specifically targeted at young people.

Today I'm delighted to announce that [we're giving another £375,000](#) to five groups working with communities that face challenges in reporting hate crime.

These organisations work with a huge range of people.

Gypsies and travellers, religious and ethnic groups, even members of alternative sub-cultures such as goths.

The scope of these projects shows that hatred and bigotry is something that affects millions of lives across the country.

And I should know.

It's something I've experienced myself.

Growing up in the 70s and 80s, and looking like I do, it was kind of inevitable.

There's one incident that stands out, when I was at school and a fellow pupil called me a "Paki" to my face.

I should have taken the moral high road and challenged his behaviour.

Instead, I did what you probably wouldn't expect of a future Cabinet Minister.

I punched him.

In the face.

And then he hit me back...

And all that happened was that we both got in trouble with the head.

20 years later I was in a lift in a Bristol shopping centre, when the doors opened and this guy stepped in.

I recognised him instantly.

And he recognised me.

And then, out of nowhere, he said:

“Saj, I’m sorry for what I did. I’m so sorry.”

He’d changed.

He’d learned that the way he treated me back then was wrong.

He’d learned the damage that abusive language could do.

And he was raising his own kids to see that racism was unacceptable.

For me, it showed that, yes, “people are really good at heart”.

We are capable of changing.

We can see the error of our ways.

That’s why it’s so important that we educate young people about where hatred can lead.

They are the parents, the leaders, the opinion-formers of tomorrow.

The new national Holocaust Memorial will have a huge role to play in making this happen.

I’m proud to be leading the project, and very happy to say that concept designs will be unveiled later today.

I’m also very happy to have Robert on our educational advisory panel.

Few people know as much about using education to challenge bigotry.

That’s why I applaud the work of the Anne Frank Trust, and of anyone who devotes themselves to tackling prejudice in all its forms.

Because we all have a moral duty to stand up to hatred.

And we’ve all seen what can happen if we don’t.

Thank you.