EUROLANG'S Wabsteid cairried wittins o Scotland's twa minority leids bein brocht up in the rin up tae the election o high heid ane an depute high heid ane o the SNP. Peter Kearney, that's short leetit for depute high heid ane, haes gey strang consaits on ocht tae dae wi minority leids. He wad like tae see the British Government apologise for the seetiation that Gaelic is in the noo, wi unner a hunner thoosan fowk, maistlie in the Hebrides, speakin it. He threaps that, gin Tony Blair can apologise for the Irish tattie faimine, he can shuirlie apologise for the near mortal dingin doon o Gaelic an aw. This wad gar the government tae be morally obleeged tae gie the leid wicelik dales o siller. He eiks that Scots an aw is a symbol o Scottish identity, tho its seetiation isna the same as for Gaelic.

Ettes for the Gaelic leid, the likes o thon, git nocht but guid-willie uphaud frae Scots upsteerers like this, the hinnermaist ootcome will be standart English wi a Scots accent an then, wi nae Scots words or gremmar, the accent will suin be tint an aw. It micht weel be that it's thae twa different seetiations atween Gaelic an Scots that gars politeetians an the estaiblishment in general tae be mair ready tae uphaud the cause o Gaelic nor the ane o Scots. Efter aw, the'r nae wey Gaelic cuid iver be a thrett tae the possession o English in Scotland. Howanever, it's easy tae imagine an estaiblishment wi a monoglot mentality bein a bit sweir tae gie Scots ower muckle uphaud an exposure. If aw the sheckles wis tae be taen aff the leid an it wis gien back its officcial staunin, wad the centre o gravity o Scottish speech no pander back the wey nearer tae caird comes in a professional-like
oorsels for we ken that the mair heidwey Gaelic maks wi the government, the mair heidwey Scots is likely tae mak an aw. But hing on a wee, it haesna aye wirkit oot that wey in the bygane an whit daes Maister Kearney really mean whan he says the seetiation wi Scots isna the same as wi Gaelic? Daes he mean that wi mair nor 1.5m Scots speakers in compare wi sixtie-five thoosan Gaelic speakers, Scots is no sae likely tae dee oot an sae, daesa need an apology frae Tony Blair or oniethin like the siller he fleetches for Gaelic? Ay, he's richt tae say the't a difference atween the seetiations o Gaelic an Scots but they're baith deein an gin the end daes come for baith leids, Scots will be juist as deid as Gaelic. The difference ligs in the wey they dee. Whan Gaelic speakers gie up thair Gaelic, they turn tae English (or whiles tae Scots), maistlins the'r nae in atween tho local mellins o Gaelic an Scots is no unkent. It daesa juist happen that wey wi Scots speakers for, wi Scots an English bein on the same continuum, a wheen Scots words is tint wi ilka generation an the centre o gravity o Scottish speech panders nearer an nearer tae the English end. If naethin is duin tae conter see-throu poke whaur, like aw the rest, aw the screivin is in Scots. The abuin picter daesa dae the front o the caird justice at aw for thon shield-like caird that the tartan is steekit tae is really a siller colour but, in the scanned eemage, the siller haes taen on the colour o the scanner's ultra-violet licht.

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A Braw Guid Day Oot For The Futtrets.

IT wis reportit the middle o August that hunners o fowk wis at Ballater's saicont yearly futtret race wi mair nor thertie craiturs rinnin tae beir the gree at Ballater Futtret Fair 2000. The races, noo in thair saicont year, is juist ane in a hail leet o ongauns that maks up Ballater's Victoria Week. A vet an a destrick nurse wis thare an aw tae mak siccar nae herm cam tae aither onie o the futtrets or tae onie o thair awners. Ither ongauns that taen place thon day includit a Futtret Doon The Troosers sprunt aforth Ballater Green. We hinna heard yet gin the war onie want for the tent o the vet or the nurse efter thon race. The thocht o't wad fetch a tear tae a gless ee.

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The Neist Forgaitherin
date tae be deciddit yet
7.30pm tae 9.00pm
Comatee Rm. C.
Brunton Ha, Musselburgh.
A Puckle Guid Poems Frae Davie.

DAVIE Kerr, kenspeckle maimber o the Broadly Scots Associe o West Lothian, haes juist furthset a braw buik o poems cried A Puckle Poems. Wi a muckle ninetie-twa blats haudin aichtie-nine poems, this is a buik that juist haes tae be read. The feck o whit Davie haes screivit is in his ain fameeliar West Lothian Scots an comes ower in the manner o a man that's mooth is mair at hame wi Scots nor English but that's no tae say that the ane or twa rhymes that daes kythe in English isna up tae the same heich standart as the lave. Here ye can see Davie's hert athin the blats o this buik threapin oot the passion an the insicht he hauds for his Scotland, its freedom, its history, an for the ilka-day fowk he haes kent. Like a modren artist that uises juist twa three brush strokes tae pent a braw picter, Davie daes the same wi his uiss o words. His wark reenges frae the cuttie an tae the pynt "Man an wife" tae the

Seekin The Vikings?

WE aye thocht whan Scotland's National Cultural Strategy wis furthset bi the Scottish Executive unner the nem o Creating our Future: Minding our Past, it wad be weel wordie o banner heidlines on the front blat but it's a guid job we didna hauird wir braith. We expekit an aw the likes o Allan Massie tae doon-cry the document wi words like "bureaucratic guff" but we niver thocht for a meinit we wad be greein wi him. Here is whit it haes tae say aboot the Scots language an we gie ye the wordin in English, juist as it wis screivit:-

Promoting Scotland's Languages As Cultural Expressions and as Means of Accessing Scotland's Culture.

Language lies at the heart of any culture. A diverse range of languages and dialects is spoken in Scotland. English, as a dominant international language can be regarded as both asset and threat. It enables Scotland's citizens to communicate readily with the many English speakers from other countries while maintaining the identity associated with the distinctive Scottish accents. However, the dominant position of English arguably has a negative effect upon Scotland's other languages and dialects and, more generally, upon people's motivation to learn languages of other countries.

An Example of Multilingual Multimedia:

SCOTS.

The Scots language continues to be widely spoken today and has a long and important history. It is a living language, and is the subject of increasing academic study and discussion. A group of university staff and others concerned with both Scots and Gaelic have recently put forward a proposal for a centre for the languages of Scotland. This could provide a framework for the extensive data held on the languages by various bodies, including the Scottish National Dictionary, supported by SAC, and the Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue, supported by the universities. A feasibility study is planned.

Actions to promote the languages Spoken in Scotland:

We shall:

Continue to support, where demand is sufficient, Gaelic-medium pre-school and primary education.

Examine the feasibility of a centre for the languages of Scotland covering Gaelic and the varieties of Scots which could incorporate the Scottish National Dictionary.

Ensure that through their initial training and continuing professional development, teachers are well prepared to promote and develop all pupils' language skills.

Continue to support the production of education
A series of multilingual multimedia programmes has been produced by the National Museums of Scotland's Multimedia Team Ltd. These demonstrate the potential for combining language and material culture as an effective education resource for formal and informal learning.

Looking For Vikings investigates how the historical Vikings are regarded by the Irish, Scots and Danes today and how they were viewed in the past. The programme looks at the hard archaeological evidence and what it tells us about how the Vikings saw themselves.

The CD-ROM Looking For Vikings, pressed in 1998, was produced in English, Gaelic, Irish and Danish. It was distributed free to all schools in Ireland, Scotland and Denmark.

Looking For Vikings investigates how the historical Vikings are regarded by the Irish, Scots and Danes today and how they were viewed in the past. The programme looks at the hard archaeological evidence and what it tells us about how the Vikings saw themselves.

Sae, there ye hiv it. Efter aw thae months o enquirin at an haein public forgaitherins an aw the siller that's been spent, whit haes the Scots language gotten oot o't? Mair or less the same as it haed afore the last general election wi the exceppins o a feasibeeleitie o haein a feasibility study for a centre for Scottish languages.

A freend o Rhona Brankin threaps the meenister wants Scots leid upsteerers tae gie her ideas an weel workit oot plans on whit shuid be duin for the Scots language. The'r nae invite for sic a thing in the abuin document, but oor contack is a kenspeckle honest freend sae, we'v naethin tae loss bi pittin oor doots oot the wey tae gie it a shot.

Makars' Neuk

E'en when the flames o freedom dee,
It's embers still keep glowan
In herts o men, but ti bide free,
The lowe needs constant blawan.

Davie Kerr.
The Executive values language diversity. National Guidelines 5 - 14 for schools recommend that all pupils should have opportunities to reflect upon their own use of language and to develop 'a conviction of the worth of their own accents and dialects'. They also recommend that teachers should foster 'respect for and interest in each pupil's mother tongue and its literature, whether English, Scots, Gaelic Urdu, Punjabi, Cantonese or any other'.