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Lhaih mee red ennagh er y gherrit shoh hug orrym goaill aym pene cre cha scanshoil as oddys cairyssyn glare y ve ny cheayrtyn. She Hywel Williams yn oltey Plaid Cymru jeh Ard-whaiyl Westminster son Arfon ayns sheear-hwoaie yn Thalloo Vretnagh, as t'eh screeu collo ayns *Y Cymro*, yn pabyr-naight shiaghtinoil Bretnish. Yn vee shoh chaie screeu eh mychione yn feyshtey ta'n reiltys ayns Lunnin cur er bun ec y traa t'ayn dy yeeaghyn er cooish yn chloan va drogh-ghellal currit daue er fud Vretin Vooar liorish sleih lheid as Jimmy Savile as Cyril Smith, chammah as gangyn ayns twoaie Hostyn as drogh-ghellal haghyr ayns thieyn-kiarail ayns twoaie yn Thalloo Vretnagh.

Va tuarystal er y chooish shoh jeant ayns 2000, agh cha dug eh geill erbee da'n ghlare va'n chloan as obbreyn ny thieyn-kiarail loayrt. Ayns yn Ard-whaiyl mee er dy henney loayr Theresa May, yn Screeudeyr Cooishyn Thie, mychione cur er bun yn feyshtey noa. Vrie Williams jee row geill erbee goll dy ve currit da'n Vretnish yn cheayrt shoh. Hug May booise da son troggal y chooish 'symoil' shoh nagh row ee er smooinghtyn mychione eck roie, as yiall ee dy voddagh feanishyn coontey y chur jeh ny haghyr daue ayns Bretnish ny ayns glare elley my bare lhieu.

Agh myr screeu Williams ayns y cholloo echey ta queshtanyn s'duiney bentyn da'n chooish shoh. Quid jeh'n chloan va Bretnish oc? Row ad ny smoo foshlit roish danjeyr ayns system Baarlagh? Row ny meoiryn-shee tastagh jeh cooish y ghlare, as dug ad caa da'n chloan gymmyrkey feanish ayns nyn reih glare? Row couyr as coyrlaghey ry gheddyn da'n chloan ayns Bretnish?

Ga dy vel shin cliaghtey smooinghtyn, foddee, dy vel cooishyn bentyn da cairyssyn myn-ghlare ny smoo symbolagh na practickagh son y chooid smoo, ta'n chooish shoh cur shin ayns cooinaghtyn dy vod eiyrtysyn feer trome-chooishagh ve ayn mannagh vel geill as arrym currit da'n ghlare ta sleih jannoo ymmyd jee dy dooghyssagh, er-lheh tra t'ad er surranse wheesh dy chumrailyn as creoghys elley ayns nyn mea. Ta ny thousaneyn dy leih, chammah shenn as aeg, ayns y Thalloo Vretnagh foast ta gennaghtyn foddey s'gerjoilee loayrt Bretnish mychione cooishyn doillee ny personagh—son mac-soyley tra t'ad tagglo rish yn er-lhee mychione nyn slaynt—na glare ta joarree daue nagh vel ad cliaghtey ve jannoo ymmyd jee.

I read something recently which made me consider how important language rights can be. Hywel Williams is the Plaid Cymru MP for Arfon in north-west Wales, and he writes a column in *Y Cymro*, the Welsh-language weekly newspaper. Last month he wrote about the inquiry which is being set up by the government in London at the moment to look into the subject of child abuse the length and breadth of Britain by the likes of Jimmy Savile and Cyril Smith, as well as gangs in northern England and abuse in care-homes in north Wales.

A report was published on this in 2000, but it paid no attention to the language spoken by children and staff in the care-homes. In Parliament last month Theresa May, the Home Secretary, made a statement about the new inquiry. Williams asked her whether any attention would be given to the Welsh language this time. May thanked him for raising this 'interesting point' that she had not considered previously, and promised that witnesses would be able to give statements on their experiences in Welsh or another language if they preferred.

But as Williams wrote in his column this matter raises deeper questions. How many of the children spoke Welsh? Were they more vulnerable in an English-speaking system?

Were the police aware of the language issue, and did they give the children the opportunity to give evidence in their language of choice? Was support and counselling through the medium of Welsh available to the children?

Though we tend to think, perhaps, that minority language rights issues are more symbolic than practical for the most part, this case reminds us that there can be serious consequences if the language people speak most naturally is not heeded and respected, especially when they have already suffered so much disadvantage and hardship in their lives. There are still thousands in Wales today who feel much more comfortable speaking Welsh about difficult or personal issues—for example when discussing their health with their doctor—than a language which is foreign to them that they rarely use.