

František Novosád — Paradoxy mladosti: generácie v silovom poli moci / *he Paradoxes of Youth: Generations on the Battlefield for Power*

Pre Efezanov by bolo dobre, keby sa všetci dospeli obesili a mesto prenechali nedospelým; lebo vyobcovali Hermodora, svojho najlepšieho muža s odôvodnením: nikto z nás nesmie byť najlepší, ak už, tak inde a u iných. "Tieto podivné slová adresoval starogrécky filozof Herakleitos svojim rodákom.

Efezania neposlúchli, na rady filozofov mali zrejme svoj názor a jednoducho ich ignorovali. Nakoniec, bez Hermodora sa celkom dobre zaobišli, dokonca ich ani nenapadlo vyháňať Herakleita, i keď to bol zrejme mimoriadne spurný ofrflávač všetkého, čo bolo Efezanom tak milé. Pohrdlivo sa vyjadroval o Homérovi, chcel ho vyhnať palicou, a Pytagora dokonca nazval praconcom všetkých tlčhubov. Kto by už s ním mohol vydržať. Efezania však vydržali.

A ČO NA TO MY SPOD TATIER A OD DUNAJA

Ešte v polovici deväťdesiatych rokov by sme sa mohli považovať za národ, čo kráča po stopách Efezanov, a rady tak excentrických filozofov odmieta: keď odhliadneme od niekoľkotýždňovej výnimky na prelome desaťročí tak všade, kam sme sa len vo verejnom živote pozreli, všade prevládali starší ľudia. Za staršími politikmi stáli ešte starší poradcovia, priemerný vek poslancov slovenského parlamentu bol zrejme najvyšší v Európe, ináč to nebolo ani na úradoch, v médiách a veľkých podnikoch. O dôvodoch by sa dalo dlho špekulovať, zrejme tým najsilnejším bolo to, že v čakárni na moc sa tiesnili už skoro tri generácie a počas dlhého času čakania si tí starší, i keď neskoro, predsa len skôr uvedomili, že moc je v prvom rade o moci a až v druhom rade o ekonomike, estetike, alebo nedajbože, o etike.

Samozrejme, iná bola situácia v tých sférach, kde sa začínalo „na zelenej lúke“, tam rozhodovala výlučne vôľa presadiť sa v ešte celkom amorfnom prostredí. Nové inštitúcie, predovšetkým tie, do ktorých vstupenkou bola schopnosť ovládnuť výpočtovú techniku a angličtinu, sa

The Ephesians would do well to hang themselves, every grown man of them, and leave the city to beardless lads; for they have cast out our Hermodorus, the best man among them, saying: we will have none who is best among us; if there be any such, let him be so elsewhere and among others."

This was the harsh advice given by the ancient Greek philosopher, Heraclitus, to his countrymen. The Ephesians did not act upon it, having as they did their own set opinion about the advice of philosophers; they simply ignored it. After all, they could do well enough without Hermodorus. It did not even occur to the Ephesians to expel Heraclitus, even though he spoke so insolently of everything that they valued so much. He spoke of Homer with contempt, he wanted to cast him out with a stick, and, what is more, he called Pythagoras "the primogenitor of all blabbermouths". Who would be able to withstand such a man? Believe it or not, the Ephesians could, and did.

AND WHAT ABOUT US SLOVAKS?

Until the mid-nineties, one might have viewed us as a nation walking in the Ephesians' footsteps, rejecting the advice of "eccentric" philosophers. Except for a few weeks at the turn of the last decade, older people have predominated in all spheres of public life. Aging politicians have been backed by even older advisers, while the average age of our Members of Parliament has been among the highest in Europe. The situation in the offices of our mass media and corporate enterprises has been much the same. No doubt the reasons for this gerontocracy are numerous, but probably the most important is that the former communist regime delayed generational turnover. By 1989, there were almost three generations pushing impatiently from the "waiting rooms" for their turn in power. During this seemingly endless waiting of the "younger", the older cohort realised that having power is, firstly, about maintaining power

hneď od začiatku stávali doménou dvadsiatnikov. Ako sa obyčajne neskoršie ukázalo, nebolo to preto, že by v týchto zručnostiach boli lepší, ale preto, že sa im ľahšie predstieralo, že to vedia. A oboje, počítače i angličtina patria k tomu typu zručností, ktoré -- keď dostatočne dlho predstierate, že ich ovládate -- tak nakoniec ich aj ovládnete. Tí starší si predsa len ťažšie zvykali na svet, v ktorom väčší úspech má ten, kto sa „zdá“ ako ten, kto „je“, kde zdanie je rovnako silné ako bytie, ba dokonca ešte silnejšie. Zvykli si na to, že príležitosť „nie je zajac“, že počká, niektorí boli ochotní čakať dokonca dvadsať rokov. V novom svete je to však ináč: čo nelapíš dnes, zajtra už nebude. Tento typ mentality sa v starom režime vyskytoval len na okraji spoločnosti: u hercov, športovcov, aparátčikov, u ľudí z podsvetia. Niet sa čo čudovať, že práve tieto skupiny tvoria aj „podhubie“ dnešných elit.

VRÁTME SA VŠAK K PROBLÉMU DETÍ A OTCOV

Rok 1989 uviedol do pohybu aj pomer medzi generáciami. A aj keď to spočiatku vyzeralo na boj medzi generáciami, veľmi rýchlo si generácie našli svoje oddelené priestory pôsobenia. Ako si ich vymedzili, o tom sa nedá hovoriť všeobecne: v každej branži je to ináč, možno dokonca je to ináč v každej inštitúcii. Toto „oddeľovanie“ generácii bolo zreteľne vidieť na v štátnych a na štáte závislých inštitúciách. Starším zostal štát, mladším vznikajúce sektory trhu a „občianskej spoločnosti“. Proces oddeľovania prebiehal na všetkých rovinách ich existencie. Na jednej strane zanedbané budovy, opotrebované zariadenie, zastaraná technika. Starli aj štátne inštitúcie: starli spôsoby ich riadenia, znižoval sa tlak na výkonnosť. Starli ľudia, ktorí v tomto vecnom a inštitucionálnom prostredí pôsobili, a to nielen fyzicky, ale aj mentálne, príliš rýchlo sa obnovila averzia k všetkým inováciám.

Na inú dráhu rozvoja sa dostali podniky, organizácie a inštitúcie, ktoré sa rozvíjajú nezávisle od štátu. V elegantne zariadených kanceláriách sedeli mladší ľudia, ktorí si dokázali rýchlo uvedomiť, že ide len o čas, o nič iné. Nové in-

er, and only secondly about sound economics or aesthetic appearances -- let alone ethics.

Obviously, the situation has been quite different in those newer fields in which people can start from scratch, in which simply the will to assert oneself in a totally amorphous environment is sufficient, and often decisive, for success. In the 1990's, new sectors, -- primarily those accessible to people with a knowledge of information technology and English language competence - rapidly became the domain of the "twenty-somethings". As usual, it became clear that their success was not necessarily because they were better-equipped in these two skills, but because it was easier for them to pretend they were. Both computer ability and fluency in English are the sorts of skills that one can somehow acquire the longer one pretends to be able to perform them. True, the older generation encountered more serious problems in getting accustomed to the new environment where those who "seem to be" competent are in fact more successful than those who really "are", where appearances have as much influence as real competence, if not more. The older generation got used to a world in which the opportunities for advancement were both rare and slow in coming -- and many of them were willing to wait for as long as twenty years for their opportunity to come along.

However, things are different now. Here, in our new circumstance, such opportunities now come and go like rabbits; and so, that which is not caught today may well be gone tomorrow. Under the old regime, only those individuals from select segments of society -- such as actors, athletes, aparatchiks, and people from the underworld-understood this dynamic and could act appropriately. It is no wonder, then, that today's élites arose largely from among these groups.

BACK TO THE PROBLEM OF THE FATHERS AND THEIR CHILDREN

Let us go back for a moment to the problem of inter-generational relations, of the socio-

štitúcie hrali o výkon, prežil v nich len ten, kto vedel, že sa hrá „kto z koho“ (v terminológii doby „hra s nulovým súčtom“). A aj vzťah tohto novovznikajúceho sektoru k štátu bol hrou o to, kto z koho, išlo o to, štát odsunúť bokom, donútiť ho, aby nevyrušoval pri „pôvodnej akumulácii“.

Približne v polovici deväťdesiatych rokov sa však proces „oddeľovania“ zastavil: boj so štátom sa premenil na boj o štát, až vtedy vlastne začal „generačný boj“. Dvadsiatnici začínajú dominovať aj vo sférach, kde to ide aj bez počítača a angličtiny, resp. kde na tieto zručnosti sú tu „iní“. Najprv sa radikálne omladzuje okolie politikov, ono povestné „křoví“ a potom sa z tejto masy politizujúcich postpubescentov začínajú vynárať jednotlivé tváre tých, ktorí s elegantnou brutalitou a nenápadnou systematickosťou odstrkávajú nechápavých štyridsiatnikov a začínajú sa predierať do popredia. Paralelne sa tento trend presadil v médiách, najmä v tých, kde celý kumšt „imidžu“ je založený na sebedomom predstieraní informovanosti, teda v elektronických médiách. Potom tento trend preskočil aj do ústredných úradov a postupne preniká na nižšie stupne štátnej správy. Do samospráv ešte akosi neprenikol, aspoň som ešte nepočul o mutujúcom primátorovi alebo starostovi.

VLÁDA DETÍ

Skrátka, Slováci sa predsa len rozhodli nebyť ako Efezania a poslúchli radu gréckeho filozofa. Samozrejme, nejdú do dôsledkov -- predsa sme len opatrní a do radikálnych projektov nás nikto tak ľahko nedostane -- moc postupne presúvajú do rúk síce ešte nie desaťročným, ale dvadsaťročným. Tak, či tak, k moci sa dostávajú „deti“: „Dzurindove“, „Čarnogurského“, „Migašove“, „Langošove“. A je tu aj Robert Fico, ktorý najdokonalejšie pochopil, aká hra sa dnes hrá. Vlastne zisťujeme, že politik, ktorý sa nedokázal včas obklopiť deťmi, je odpísaný. Nepochopil dobu, tak nech sa nečuduje!

Nakoniec, čo je na tom také zlé? Sme predsa len trochu ťažkopádnou spoločnosťou a chvíľu nám to trvá, kým sa rozhybeme. Mladosť

political dynamics between parents and their children. The political changes of 1989 saw also the relationship between the generations change. Although at first it seemed that the different generations might end up struggling against one another, they rapidly succeeded in defining their own spheres of influence. It is not possible to generalise about how these spheres of influence were established, as the precise delineation was different from sector to sector, if not from one institution to the next. This inter-generational division of labour and influence is plainly evident in our state and state-dependent institutions. The state remained the sphere of the older generation, while the newly developing sectors of the market and of “civil society” fell into the orbit of the younger. This process of division took place on all levels of existence, social as well as material. Faded buildings, worn-out equipment, and outdated technology were the trappings of the older elites. As state institutions and their management were getting older, the emphasis on efficiency had lessened. Those who worked in this institutional environment were growing older not only physically, but also mentally; an aversion against all forms of innovation was their hallmark.

New commercial enterprises, civic organisations, and other institutions separate from the state developed along a different trajectory. Young people sitting in elegantly equipped offices realised immediately that socio-economic opportunity had a new, and faster, temporal dimension, and that success depended on how quickly one could seize the moment. The new institutions were about efficiency, and only those who understood that they were involved in a game of “winner takes all” survived. At the same time, however, the relationship between this new-born sector and the state was a game in which only the stronger could win; and for those in the modern sectors, this meant pushing the state aside and preventing it from meddling in what Karl Marx called the process of “primitive capital accumulation”.

By about the mid-nineties, this process of division had been consolidated. At this juncture,

predsa sľubuje dynamiku, zvýšenie tempa, nápa-
dy, schopnosť vytrvať. Nakoniec už vtedy, keď
vek vlády detí bol ešte vo hviezdach, tak už o
tom patetické verše napísal najnečítanejší slo-
venský klasik.

NIE JE VŠAK VŠETKO ZLATO, ČO SA BLYŠTÍ

Keď sa pozornejšie započúvame do rečí
týchto detí, s úžasom zisťujeme, že väčšina z
nich melie z brožúrok, ktoré písali ich starí ot-
covia. Skúste si pozorne vypočúť mladých par-
lamentných lavičiarov: to je predsa rétorika dru-
hej polovice štyridsiatych rokov, možno začiat-
ku päťdesiatych. Nielenže frázy z týchto rokov,
ale i tá zvláštna predstava, že stačí sa spravdli-
vo rozhorčiť a už sa veci zmenia. A napravo je
to ešte podivnejšie: tam sa u detí objavila no-
stalgia po konci tridsiatych rokov, radi by mali
ľudovú stranu, s hlbokými koreňmi v dedinke,
kde sa narodil ich dedko. A nakoniec ani u neo-
liberálov to nie je ináč: čím mladší tým s väčšou
zaťatosťou opakuje frázy dávnominulých čias. A
pozrime sa na mediálne hviezdy tejto generácie:
veď to je mentalita ich starých materí a starých
otcov, len svoju principiálnosť nepredvádzajú v
modrých košeliach vyrobených v Číne, ale v po-
sledných modeloch od Huga Bossa (aj tie sú
možno vyrobené v Číne).

Našťastie, rozdiel je aj v inom, vtedy to bo-
la tragédia, dnes je to len fraška.

TERAZ TROCHU VÁŽNEJŠIE

K optimálnemu fungovaniu spoločnosti pat-
rí aj istý vzorec riešenia „generačného problé-
mu“. Súčasťou tohto vzorca je predstava o tom,
aký by mal byť pomer medzi „mladými“ a „star-
šími“ na jednotlivých úrovniach spoločenskej
hierarchie, v akom veku by sa mali ľudia dostá-
vať v jednotlivých sférach života do vedúcich
pozícií, v akom by ich mali opúšťať. Tento vzorec
je diferencovaný podľa jednotlivých sfér spo-
ločenského života: predsa ináč sa pomer medzi
generáciami utvára v podnikateľskej sfére, ináč v
športe, na univerzitách, v politických stranách. A
aj v jednotlivých sférach sa tento vzorec vyzna-

what had been a fight against the state became
a fight for the state, for political power and in-
fluence. And it was at this point that the prob-
lem of the “generation gap” actually began in
earnest. The twenty-somethings began to vie
for dominance in spheres other than those
where computer knowledge and English fluen-
cy were a vital necessity or --to put it more
aptly - they moved into arenas where “others”
were in charge. The realm of the politicians is,
as a consequence, now becoming the domain of
the younger, formerly outsider, elites, together
with their retinue of followers. From this mass
of post-pubescents involved in politics, a new
cadre has emerged and now is pushing aside
the uncomprehending forty-somethings. With
sophisticated cruelty and subtle deliberateness,
they are making their way to the fore. This
trend has also been evident in the mass media
sector, especially in the electronic media,
where the ‘art of image’ confidently simulates
‘being informed’. Likewise, what was first mani-
fest at the highest levels of our ministries of
state and other top organisations has been gra-
dually penetrating to the lower echelons of ad-
ministration. To date, it has yet to make itself
felt at the level of municipal administration - or,
at least, I have not yet heard of a mayor whose
voice is still breaking.

THE REIGN OF THE CHILDREN

In short, it would seem that Slovaks have
finally decided to depart from the Ephesians’
example and to take the advice of the Greek
philosopher. Of course, we do not go to extre-
mes. (We are indeed a cautious people and are
not given to extremist projects). Instead, we
have quietly undergone a gradual transfer of
power into the hands of the twenty-some-
things. Luckily, we have not yet proceeded to
pass power over to the cohort ten-year-olds.
Nevertheless, “the young Turks” of Dzurinda,
Čarnogurský, Migaš, and Langoš are gaining po-
sitions of power. There is Robert Fico, for
example, who has best managed to managed
today’s rules of the game. In fact, what is now

čuje relatívne veľkou mierou voľnosti: športovec sa dokáže udržať na vrchole svojej výkonnosti desať rokov, politik a umelec vari pätnásť, podnikateľ a vedec možno dvadsať. Potom nevyhnutne prichádza rutina, tá sa najprv javí ako majstrovstvo, potom však sa vždy ukáže, že majstrovstvo je predstupňom stagnácie a úpadku. Taký je zákon života a spoločnosť sa voči jeho absolútnej platnosti bráni práve obmenou generácií.

MOC MLADÝCH KONZERUJE

Revolúcie a prevraty, i keď ich nemeckí teoretici, teda teoretici z krajiny, ktorá nikdy revolúciu nezažila, považovali za hlavný spôsob omladenia spoločnosti, nie sú priaznivým prostredím pre organickú výmenu generácií. Je to paradox, ale je to tak. Historická skúsenosť hovorí, že najrýchlejšie degenerujú tie revolúcie (a aj kontrarevolúcie), kde sa rozhodujúce mocenské posty dostanú do rúk jednej generácii. Čím mladší ľudia sa dostanú k moci, tým je to pre danú spoločnosť v dlhšej časovej perspektíve horšie. Nie preto, aspoň nie v prvom rade preto, že by v dôsledku „nedostatku“ skúseností nedokázali vládnuť (už Herakleitos vedel, že by to tie deti zvládli), ale preto, že obyčajne zostanú príliš dlho pri moci, aspoň sa o to snažia. Z revolucionárov a radikálnych reformistov sa rýchlo stávajú konzervatívci. Predsa z veliteľských výšin nikto dobrovoľne nezíde. O zákone oligarchizácie, ktorý je naozaj železný, možno je to jediný železný zákon, ktorý v spoločnosti pôsobí, už vedia sociológovia dávno, historici ešte dávnejšie. Jeho ilustráciou je ostatne aj prípad československej normalizácie: normalizátori sa dostali k moci vo svojej štyridsiatke, dokázali režim udržať tak dlho, aby ich prevrat mohol poslať do dôchodku.

MÁME SA NA ČOTEŠIŤ

Normalizácia nám teraz určite nehrozí, stagnácia však zrejme áno. Neviem si totiž predstaviť, aký bude, čo bude hovoriť a ako bude konať dnes dvadsaťročný mlynár fráz o desať či päť-

evident is that a politician who has not succeeded in surrounding himself with children is done for; he has not understood the times we live in.

Finally, one might ask, well, what is so wrong about this? Slovakia is, in fact, a bit of an awkward society, and it takes us some time to get us in motion. The rise of the younger generation promises dynamism, rapid development, new ideas, and the capacity to thrive and endure. Yet, even at a time when this age of the reign of the children was only a remote possibility, the most unpopular Slovak classic contained portentous verses about what such a reign might be like.

ALL THAT GLITTERS IS NOT GOLD

When one tries to listen more carefully to what these “children” say, one might be astonished to find that most of them rattle out phrases that sound like so many brochures written by their grandfathers. Listen carefully to the young parliamentary leftists; theirs is actually the rhetoric of the second half of the nineteen-forties or, perhaps, of the early nineteen-fifties. Not only do they employ the same sorts of clichés from these years, they also manifest the same strange notion that for progress to occur, it is sufficient to be filled with righteous anger. Even stranger, however, are those on the political right. These children evince a seeming nostalgia for the ideals of the late nineteen-thirties; they, too, would like to build a strong People’s Party, one with deep roots in the village where grandfather was born. The matter is the same with our neo-liberals; the younger one is, the greater the fervour with which one repeats the clichés of times long since past.

And let us look at our new, young media stars. They have the mentality of their grandmothers and grandfathers, only they no longer manifest their “principled stands” wearing the blue shirts made in China. Instead, they are adorned in the latest Hugo Boss fashions (although these, too, are probably made in China).

násť rokov. Bolo by ilúziou predstavovať si, že sa ešte dokáže niečo naučiť, alebo že včas ustúpi mladším a schopnejším. Nakoniec, v politike sa neustupuje, v politike sa buď uteká, alebo vynáša na nosidlách. Zrejme nájde spôsob, ako sa udržať pri moci a to sa dá len tak, že nájde spôsob zakonzervovania pre neho výhodných hierarchií. A samozrejme, môže sa objaviť ešte priebornejšia generácia. To však tiež nie je bohvieaká vyhládka, pretože na to, aby sa dokázala dostať k moci, spotrebuje príliš veľa energie a nezostane jej dosť na to, aby dokázala dobre vládnuť. Dobre totiž dokáže vládnuť len ten, kto sa dostal k moci v optimálnej kondícii. Ak sa k nej dostal príliš ľahko, príliš ľahko aj pohorí, nezíska totiž dostatok odolnosti, aby zniesol brutalitu politickej každodennosti. O tom by tí naši zo začiatku deväťdesiatych rokov mohli piesne spievať, zatiaľ však ešte stále len lamentujú nad nevďačnosťou prostého ľudu. Ak sa k nej dostane príliš neskoro, alebo po príliš ťažkom zápase, tiež to končí trapasom. O tom si však už prečítajte v dnešných novinách. •



Peter Župník: *Pokušenie / Temptation*
Two ulity / Two Shells

Fortunately, our situation today is different from those various times in the past; what then was a tragedy, is, as Marx understood, only a farce today.

BUT MORE SERIOUSLY...

A certain capacity for managing the inevitable "generation gap" is a part of any optimally functioning society. Indeed, in most viable societies, there is a some accepted notion of what the desired ratio between "the young" and "the old" should be in any particular sector of society and on any given level of the socio-economic and political hierarchy. That is, there is usually an implicit or explicit social understanding about the appropriate age for entering political office and - though, perhaps, to a lesser or less formal extent -- for occupying leading positions in individual spheres of activity, much in the same way that the retirement age is either legally codified or culturally expected. Such formulas, naturally, are differentiated according to the particular spheres of social endeavour; the ratio of young and old is different, for example, in the entrepreneurial sphere than in the fields of sport or academia or political life. The tenure of one's position is also characterised by a relatively high degree of variation; athletes may remain on the top of their abilities for ten years, while politicians and artists may do so for fifteen, and scientists, possibly, for twenty. It is true that in all fields, the actual length of tenure is often longer, but this is because, inevitably, what was mastery of ability at first becomes a matter of routine, a routine in which the appearance of mastery masks actual, if sometimes subtle, stagnation and decline. This is a fact of all social life. The only thing that protects a society from the deleterious stagnation which would otherwise ensue is generational change.

THE CONSERVING POWER OF YOUTH

Although German theoreticians of revolution (being from a country that has never experienced this social phenomenon) have tradi-

tionally considered revolutions and coup d'états to be the main method of social revitalization, revolutions do not, in fact, provide an appropriate environment for the natural, and socially healthy, succession of generations. Paradoxical perhaps, but that historically has been the case. Indeed, historical experience tells us that those revolutions (or counterrevolutions) in which key posts of political power fall into the hands of one generation are those that degenerate most rapidly. Moreover, the younger that people acquire political and social power, the worse it is for the society in the long run. The primary reason is not that they are incapable -- due to their youthful "inexperience" - of governing (even Heraclitus knew the children could manage) but that they usually end up staying in power for too long. And where this occurs, sooner or later, erstwhile revolutionaries and radical reformers inevitably turn conservative. Virtually no one relinquishes power voluntarily. Sociologists have long understood this "law of oligarchy", and historians have known it even longer. It is the only law that really rules in society. Finally, as the case of the Czechoslovak era of normalisation confirms, the normalisers came to power in their forties, that is, while still relatively young. As such, their age was one factor that enabled them to preserve the regime as long as they did.

OUR FUTURE PROSPECTS

Today, we no longer face the constraints of normalisation. But, like any society, we still face the threat of stagnation. In other words, it remains, at least to my mind, inconceivable that today's twenty-something power-holder, with his mouth full of clichés, will speak and act differently ten to fifteen years from now. It would be misleading to suppose that, as long as he remains one of the powerful, he would be able to learn something new or that he might graciously and in good time give up his place to the next generation. In politics, it is rare that one voluntarily concedes the game when one can still enjoy all the trappings of power. Typically,

politicians have to be forced out -- whether in flight from an aroused public or in the arms of those who would gladly throw them out feet first. It can be presumed that they will always try to find the means to stay in power and this can be done only by finding a way of conserving the hierarchies and constituencies that are favourable to them. Naturally, even in circumstances least ripe for change, a more dynamic generation can always find some way to come into political play. But this is not necessarily a matter for optimism either, because the fight against well-ensconced power-holders often consumes the energy, resources, and personnel necessary for future good government.

Truly good government is established only by those who come to power under optimal conditions. Where political power is too easily attained, it is often also quickly lost, because those who acquire power easily are often unable to withstand the travails, or the subtleties, of political routine. Today, those in our society who came to power at the beginning of the nineties may write books about it. But, despite the fact that they themselves have experienced this phenomenon of easy attainment and quick loss, they still prefer to blame their fate on the ingratitude of the common people. On the other hand, if politicians spend too much time or effort in acquiring power, it will often also end in embarrassment. However, this is an aspect of the matter that you can learn much more about by reading today's newspapers.

