

"All the News
That's Fit to Print"

The New York Times

VOL. CLXXV No. 60,692

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MONDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2025

Prices in Canada may be higher

\$4.00



FROM LEFT: GRAHAM DICKIE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; VINCENT ALBAN/THE NEW YORK TIMES; GRAHAM DICKIE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Running (and Cheering) Their Hearts Out

More than 50,000 athletes found streets filled with support on Sunday at the New York City Marathon, which included a women's record and a men's thriller. Section F.

SHADED MEANING FOR 'HOSTILITIES'

War Powers Deadline on Boat Strikes Rejected

By CHARLIE SAVAGE
and JULIAN E. BARNES

WASHINGTON — The Justice Department told Congress last week that President Trump could lawfully continue his lethal military strikes on people suspected of smuggling drugs at sea, notwithstanding a time limit for congressionally unauthorized deployments of armed forces into "hostilities."

In a briefing, the official who leads the department's Office of Legal Counsel, T. Elliot Gaiser, said the administration did not think the operation rose to the kind of "hostilities" covered by the 60-day limit, a key part of a 1973 law called the War Powers Resolution, according to several people familiar with the matter.

In a statement provided by the White House, an unnamed senior administration official said that American service members were not in danger because the boats suspected of smuggling drugs were mostly being struck by drones far from naval ships carrying U.S. forces.

"The operation comprises precise strikes conducted largely by unmanned aerial vehicles launched from naval vessels in international waters at distances too far away for the crews of the targeted vessels to endanger American personnel," the official said.

The U.S. military has killed about 65 people across 15 airstrikes on boats in the Caribbean Sea and eastern Pacific so far, and the administration has told Congress that Mr. Trump "determined" that the operation counts as a formal armed conflict. On Saturday, the military killed three more men on a boat in the Caribbean, Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth said on social media.

But the stance that the operation does not count as "hostilities" because the people on the boats could not shoot back builds on a precedent established by President Barack Obama during the 2011 NATO air war over Libya, to significant disagreement at the time in Congress and within Mr. Obama's legal team.

The War Powers Resolution

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Heated Mayor's Race Shakes New York's Balance

By MATT FLEGENHEIMER

New York has always been, in its own imagination and the country's, a city of self-regarding and often contradictory superlatives — the biggest, brightest, richest, harshest, give-us-your-tired-est, little-too-wired-est spot on the American map, which might as well render those other cities in the sepia tone of afterthoughts, anyway.

So it can feel especially disorienting, for a place so confident of its position in the general pecking order, to find New York edging toward a moment of such spectacular uncertainty about what it is, whom it's for, what happens next.

Answers are coming, whether

National Tensions Are Backdrop for City's Identity Crisis

the city likes it or not.

A volatile mayoral election this Tuesday appears poised to reshuffle and reconstitute the longstanding power structures of a city that often sets the political, cultural and financial course well beyond its boroughs.

The New Yorkers who run much of Washington are heckling one another during an interminable federal shutdown, with accelerating consequences for America's largest city.

And a collision of local and national forces — escalating deportation campaigns; searing mutual political disdain and disillusion; economic angst across income strata — seems primed to scramble New York's very sense of itself, compelling it to confront some of the surface paradoxes that are core to its identity.

The capitalist capital of the world is now the epicenter of an ascendant and impatient socialist-led rebellion over affordability, over who gets to make a life in the New York that bred Wall Street and Occupy Wall Street — and now finds alums and avatars of both camps credibly contending that the future is theirs.

America's archetypal city of im-

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A 'Bittersweet' Curtain Call for Understudy Slips

By MICHAEL PAULSON

For theatergoers, it produces an all-too-familiar sinking feeling. You open your Playbill and a little piece of paper flutters out, alerting you that a member of the cast is out and someone unexpected will be performing.

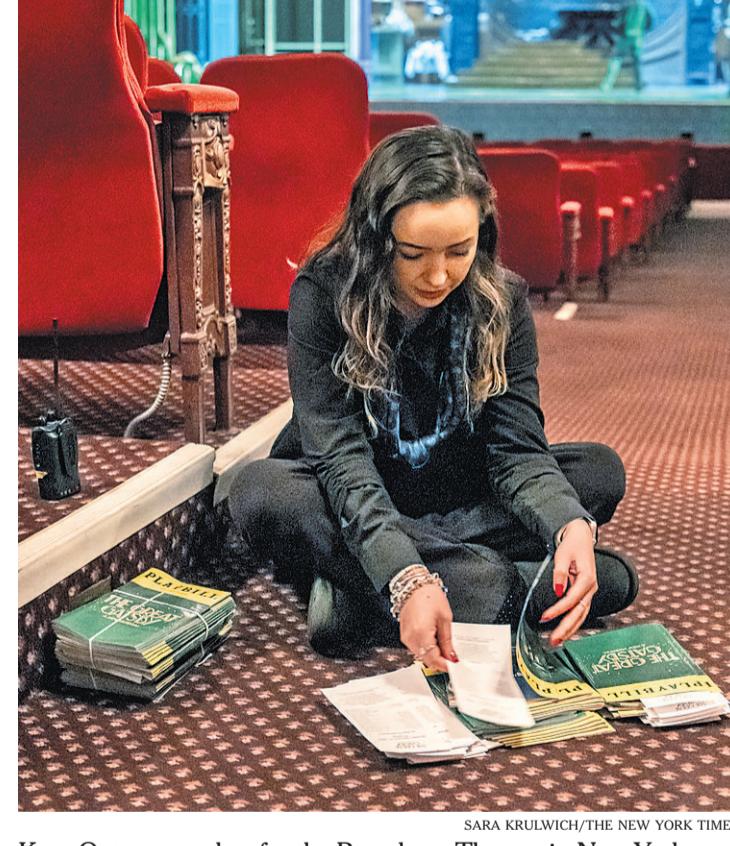
For understudies who are finally getting a turn in the spotlight, though, those little slips offer rare moments of recognition.

Love them or hate them, they are a Broadway tradition on the way out.

A little-noticed provision in the tentative contract agreed to last month between the Broadway League and Actors' Equity Association makes those inserts — "stuffers" in industry parlance — optional. The deal, which was approved Thursday by Equity members, allows shows to announce most cast changes through QR codes printed in Playbills, along with either a verbal announcement or a cast list posted in the lobby.

But some Broadway troupers who came up the hard way fear that few audience members will bother to open the QR codes on their phones to see who is performing.

"I understand, from an environmental standpoint that they're wasteful, and I understand why producers, cost-wise and for other reasons, don't want them," said Julie Benko, who was a standby for the title role in the recent revival of "Funny Girl" and created her own show, "Standby, Me," about the four musicals in which



Kara Oates, an usher for the Broadway Theater in New York, performing something of a preshow ritual that is on its way out.

she has covered principal roles.

"But," she went on, "I think the understudies, the swings, the standbys and the alternates do so much work, with so little recognition, so much of the time — this is a little piece of paper that makes sure they're acknowledged by the

people who are watching them."

The provision to move to QR codes for cast changes was proposed by producers. Both the union and the Broadway League declined to comment on the change. Members of the union approved

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For Prosecutors In D.C. Office, Turmoil Reigns

By ALAN FEUER

Under the vaulted arches of the National Union Building, a group of federal prosecutors gathered recently for what has become an all-too-common ritual: saying goodbye to colleagues.

The speeches that night reflected the despondent mood inside the U.S. attorney's office in Washington, as the lawyers who were quitting urged those staying behind to forge ahead in uncertain times. Do what's right, they said. Speak truth to power. Uphold the rule of law.

But as the hour grew later — and the bar tab bigger — the politics that have buffeted the office for months suddenly intruded on the evening, people who were there recounted later. In a quiet corner, away from the charcuterie and veggie dip, Jonathan Hornok, a top aide to Jeanine Pirro, the Trump appointee picked to run the office, was firing Jon Hooks, a senior prosecutor who had worked there for nearly 20 years.

That a respected supervisor with a long career could be stripped of his job in the middle of a farewell party for his colleagues captured something of the Dar-

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THE WEATHER
Today, early sun followed by a spotty shower in the afternoon, high 60. Tonight, partly cloudy, breezy, low 48. Tomorrow, sunny, breezy, high 61. Weather map appears on Page A20.

NEWS ANALYSIS

SNAP Crisis Makes Clear Trump Goals

**Only Selective Relief
in Painful Shutdown**

By TONY ROMM

WASHINGTON — As the federal shutdown stretched into its fifth week, imperiling the nation's largest anti-hunger program, Vice President JD Vance insisted that there was little the White House could do to help.

"The American people are already suffering," he told reporters, "and the suffering is going to get a lot worse."

In fact, the administration had billions of dollars at its disposal — more, by its own admission, than it needed to sustain food stamps for the roughly 42 million low-income people who depend on them. And it was only after a federal judge intervened that President Trump signaled he could use the money for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, known as SNAP.

Even now, much remains unclear about whether or when poor families may receive their scheduled benefits. Still, the saga has laid bare the shutdown strategy at the White House, where Mr. Trump has been willing to shield only some Americans from the harms of a fiscal standoff that he has made no effort to resolve.

In what may become the longest federal stoppage in history, the president has frequently bent the rules of budgeting, primarily to reap political benefits or exact retribution. He has found new and untested ways to spare certain Americans, like the military, from the pain of the government closure, while claiming he has no power to help others, including low-income individuals who rely on benefits like SNAP.

The result is a shutdown unlike any other, one that has posed disparate and debilitating risks for those unlucky enough to depend on the many functions of government that Mr. Trump has long aspired to cut.

"They are willing to hurt people at the bottom when they take care of their friends and priorities," said Senator Patty Murray of Washington, the top Democrat on the Appropriations Committee.

The White House did not respond to a request for comment. But Mr. Trump said in a social media post on Friday that he

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SHUTDOWN POLITICS In 2013, Republicans failed to leverage power to kill Obamacare. PAGE A11

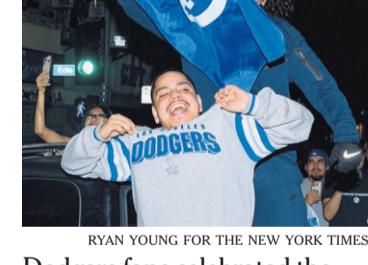
In Dark Year for Los Angeles, Dodgers' Win Is Soothing Glow

This article is by Shawn Hubler, Rachel Parsons and Lauren Hershik.

In their blue caps and Ohtani jerseys, they texted loved ones and filled the night sky with fireworks. They celebrated in homes on the edges of burn scars. They hugged in suburban bars where protests rattled the windows just months ago.

As Southern Californians watched the Los Angeles Dodgers power through 11 innings on Saturday to beat the Toronto Blue Jays in Game 7 of the World Series, an impromptu party erupted with a catharsis and joy that was about more than baseball — a celebration not only of excellence, but of the will to endure.

Southern California has been through a grueling year that in-



Dodgers fans celebrated the back-to-back champions.

cluded disasters that devastated Pacific Palisades and nearby Altadena in January and federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement crackdowns. In an interview during the first inning of Saturday's game, Mayor Karen Bass of

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Racing for Glory (and Salmon)

Speed-eating contests are part of a growing list of pet-related events attracting crowds in Thailand. PAGE A6

New Wave of Displacement

A rocky transition after Bashar al-Assad's ouster has led to more than 400,000 Syrians fleeing. PAGE A4

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A Times analysis of a congested route in Brooklyn illuminates the possible promise and tension in one of Zohran Mamdani's top proposals. PAGE A12

Weighing New Voting Maps

A Republican lawmaker in Indiana said he was undecided on a redistricting plan backed by the president. PAGE A15

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Appraising the freshmen, the transfers and the established stars on college basketball's best teams. PAGES D4-5

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Incentives for a Nuclear Plant

Developers in Britain have finally broken ground on the Sizewell C project, but it required dealing with wary investors and local opposition. PAGE B1

Push for Quick Rate Cuts

Stephen I. Miran, the newest member of the Federal Reserve's Board of Governors, thinks some of his colleagues are too worried about inflation. PAGE B1

A Blurry Economic Picture

Tariffs and uncertainty have made the economy hard to read. The loss of government data during the shutdown has made the situation worse. PAGE B1



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Doubling Down on Funny

The "S.N.L." alum Tim Meadows appears in a new CBS sitcom and also has a role in the DC Comics universe. PAGE C1

A Good Bet on High Rollers

Colin Farrell and the director Edward Berger team up for "Ballad of a Small Player," about a British gambler. PAGE C1

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Poet and Paratrooper

Hannah Senesh fled Hungary just before World War II. She returned to fight the Nazis. Overlooked. PAGE A16

Kingpin in Cocaine Boom

Juan Ramón Matta Ballesteros made a fortune as a Honduran power broker connecting cartels. He was 80. PAGE A17

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Nicholas Kristof

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