

Survivors of September 2 boat strike waved for rescue, did not know they had been attacked

Andre Damon
6 December 2025

The survivors of the US military's September 2 drone strike in the Caribbean attempted to wave to US military aircraft for rescue and appeared not to understand that the US military had attempted to kill them, the *New York Times* reported Friday.

The *Times*, citing people who saw the video following its screening at a meeting before congressional committees yesterday, wrote that "two survivors of the US military's first boat strike on Sept. 2 climbed atop the overturned hull and waved to something overhead." The people who saw the video told the *Times* the "most logical explanation was that the two survivors had seen the American aircraft above them and started signaling for a rescue."

The report in the *Times* contradicts the claims of defenders of the Trump administration's drone murders. "I saw two survivors trying to flip a boat loaded with drugs bound to the United States back over so they could stay in the fight," said Republican Senator Tom Cotton, in an attempt to defend the killings.

Rather, the video indicates that the survivors had no idea they were in any "fight." According to the *Times*, a person who watched the video added that "it is also not clear if the survivors even knew the initial explosion was an attack."

Last week, the *Washington Post* reported that Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth gave a verbal order to "kill everybody" on board the boat, leading to a second strike that killed the two survivors.

Legal experts have denounced the strikes as murder and war crime. "It is absolutely unlawful to order that there will be no survivors," a Cardozo Law School professor told *Time* magazine. "There is no actual

armed conflict here, so this is murder."

The American public has the right to view the recording of the strike, which has so far only been shown to members of Congress behind closed doors. It must be publicly released immediately.

The Trump administration, however, will no doubt seek to cover up or even destroy the tape and is counting on the Democrats to help them do it. In 2005, the Bush administration destroyed recordings of the torture of detainees at a CIA black site. At the time, congressional Democrats were made aware of the destruction of the tapes but did not inform the public.

On Thursday, Democratic Representatives Jim Himes and Adam Smith said that the full video of the September 2 missile strike that killed 11 people in the Caribbean showed that two "shipwrecked individuals" were "killed by the United States military." They added, "The video we saw today showed two shipwrecked individuals who had no means to move, much less pose an immediate threat, and yet they were killed by the United States military."

In response to the crisis, the administration has only doubled down, killing another four people in a strike in the coastal waters of Latin America on Thursday. To date, 87 people have been killed in over 20 strikes.

The details of the murder come the same day that the Trump administration published a new National Defense Strategy that places central emphasis on US domination of Latin America, as a base of power projection in the conflict with China and other states.

The document declares, "We want to ensure that the Western Hemisphere ... remains free of hostile foreign incursion or ownership of key assets, and that supports critical supply chains; and we want to ensure our

continued access to key strategic locations. In other words, we will assert and enforce a ‘Trump Corollary’ to the Monroe Doctrine.”

It demands “a readjustment of our global military presence to address urgent threats in our Hemisphere ... to control sea lanes ... and to control key transit routes in a crisis...”

It declares effectively, all of North and South America as “our hemisphere,” giving a generality to the seemingly disparate plans floated by Trump over the past year to annex Panama, Greenland and Canada, as well as the massive militarization targeting Venezuela. Control of these strategic territories and waterways would give the United States, the Trump administration hopes, the weight to confront China on the global sphere.

As the *World Socialist Web Site* wrote in February following Trump’s statement that he intended to annex Canada, there is a direct precedent for Trump’s efforts to unify “our hemisphere” in the *Anschluss* policy of the Nazi regime.

This process is akin to Hitler’s push for Anschluss (the joining of Austria to his Third Reich) and subsequent dismemberment of Czechoslovakia—pivotal preparatory steps to Nazi Germany’s launching of a broader European war. Trump aims to “reorder” US imperialism’s “near-abroad” and thereby gain unfettered control of its strategic territories and abundant resources.

This plan for world domination entails criminality on a vast scale, as has been demonstrated by the killing spree in the Pacific and Caribbean.



To contact the WSWWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

[wsws.org/contact](https://www.wsws.org/contact)