Negative Brief: Child Soldiers (version 5)

By “Coach Vance” Trefethen

Summary: Plan eliminates US military aid to countries that use underage kids as soldiers. The CSPA (Child Soldier Protection Act) requires the US to suspend military aid to countries on the State Department’s list of governments that use child soldiers. But it has a loophole that says the President can issue a waiver and continue the military aid if he believes it’s in the national security interest of the U.S. AFF is mad that Presidents of both parties keep doing that.   
  
They will cite the example of Chad, where the US stopped giving waivers and suspended the aid, and supposedly that convinced Chad to clean up its child soldier problem. Big problem: Chad was never actually sanctioned under CSPA. Evidence that says “CSPA worked in Chad” is referring to threats and pressure brought by the Obama administration by “listing” Chad on the CSPA list, not from actually sanctioning them. Chad got waivers and full military aid every year they were on the list. STATUS QUO POLICIES SOLVED CHAD, not the Affirmative’s plan.   
  
Rwanda is another example possibly cited by AFF. Rwanda actually was completely sanctioned for 1 year under CSPA with their military aid completely removed. It didn’t work, and the following year they went back on waivers and got their aid restored, even though they hadn’t cleaned up their child soldier problem. They were eventually taken off the list, then put back on, then given partial waivers, then taken off the list again. That is not at all what the AFF Plan does.  
  
One has to wonder when the US, Canada, and Britain are going to clean up our/their act since all those countries employ child soldiers too. And since when are Johnny Tremain, Andrew Jackson, and Katniss on the Hunger Games war criminals? I thought they were heroes…   
  
The Status Quo allows for “partial” cutoff (or “partial waivers”), where the US cuts “some” percentage or “certain types” of military aid, but not all. Some of the AFF “success stories” are these partial waivers, not 100% cut off. They can’t claim those to prove we need their plan because partial waivers happen in the Status Quo, and never happen under their plan.

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During the time period of the Chad situation, the only 3 countries that were completely sanctioned were: Rwanda (2013), Central African Republic (2013) and Somalia (2010,2011,2012). NOT CHAD! 10

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Chad had only a few child soldiers to begin with and was not a systemic problem. They started removing them in 2007 under a UNICEF program, three years before being listed (but NOT sanctioned) by the US on CSPA in 2010 12

What actually helped reform Chad was listing them on CSPA and then granting waivers 12

Chad still has child soldiers (as of May 2020) 12

2. A/T “Rwanda example proves success of removing waivers under CSPA” 13

History of CSPA sanctions on Rwanda shows “no waiver / full sanctions” DID NOT stop child soldiers 13

No, Rwanda didn’t get full sanctions applied and then fix the problem. It’s way more complicated 14

Rwanda was listed, sanctioned, unsanctioned, unlisted, relisted, given a waiver, unlisted, and relisted. 14

3. Bigger loophole not solved and problem continues 15

State Department decides not to put countries using child soldiers on the CSPA list for political reasons. Examples: Saudi Arabia today. Afghanistan, Iraq and Burma historically. 15

Example: Chad. It was removed from the “using child soldiers” list even though they were still using them 15

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CHILD DISADS – Why it’s bad to make a big fuss about “child soldiers” 16

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Link & Impact: AFF’s failure to analyze the greater societal dimensions of violence, and their limited studies, actually impede efforts meet the needs of vulnerable children 16

Link & Impact: Treating child soldiers as powerless victims leads to wrong interventions that can make them worse off 16

CHILD DA 2. Disrespect for bravery and sacrifice 17

First, a true story of bravery and sacrifice 17

And now the impact: You’ll have to do something painful and terrible if you vote Affirmative 17

CHILD DA 3. Hypocrisy. It’s OK for adults to kill children but not OK for them to fight back? 17

Link: The U.S. had no qualms about killing 500,000 children in Iraq. Was that OK? 17

Link: Children died horribly from the US bombing of Hiroshima. We can incinerate them but they commit a crime if they shoot back? 17

Impact: Moral dilemma if you vote Affirmative 18

BIG LINK TO THE BRITAIN/NATO DISADS – We lose alliance with Britain and then we lose NATO 18

Harms / Disadvantage dilemma: If no harm to Canada and Britain using them, then no harm for anyone else 18

Solvency/Disadvantage dilemma: “NOT” putting them on the CSPA list proves the Solvency-3 argument. Putting them on the list triggers the Disadvantage 18

Big Link: Canada and Britain use child soldiers. 40% of the British army enlisted before age 18. Many at 16! 18

British law explicitly says they can use under-18 in combat 19

Big Link: US must either stop military cooperation with Britain or else AFF must concede they lose on Harms and Solvency 19

BRITAIN / NATO DA 1. Losing Britain = losing NATO = losing US national security 19

Link: Britain is vital to NATO and US/Britain special relationship is foundation of NATO defense 19

Backup link: Britain is vital to NATO 19

Link & Brink: Russian aggression makes NATO an “existential” necessary (“existential” means we might not exist if we lose it) 20

Impact: High risk of losing a major war 20

BRITAIN / NATO DA 2. Lose US hegemony without NATO (links to losing NATO are back in DA-1) 20

Link: NATO essential to US global leadership 20

Link: Russia & China are challenging 20

Impact: Civilizational consequences if we lose US hegemony 21

Impact: World peace & prosperity at risk without US influence. US hegemony is key to global peace & prosperity 21

Impact: Decline into anarchy with decline of US dominance and rise of Russia and China. Massive loss of life, money and freedom 22

SOMALIA DISADVANTAGES 22

Big Link to Somalia – US is still providing military aid to Somalia government (Feb 2021) 22

Big Link to Somalia – AFF must end aid to Somalia because their government has child soldiers 22

Big link to Somalia: CSPA Waivers are granted to Somalia because it's key to defeating terrorism 23

SOMALIA DA 1. Terror and starvation 23

a. Link: RAND study find US involvement is key to degrading Al Shabaab 23

b. Impact: Terrorism. Al-Shabaab continues to terrorize 24

c. Impact: Starvation. Al-Shabaab starves millions 24

d. Impact: Terrorism deaths. Example: Al-Shabaab killed 500 people just in one bombing in Oct 2018 24

SOMALIA DA 2. Destabilization / Collapse of Somalia 25

Link & Brink: African Union troops protect Somalia from Al Shabab but are on the brink of failure and need US support to maintain 25

Link & Impact: Last time we disengaged from Somalia (1990’s), the bad guys took over and things got a lot worse 25

Impact: Terrorism. Without military help, al-Shabaab terrorists may resurge 25

SOMALIA DA 3. Increased risk of attacks on Americans 26

Link: Last time we abandoned military efforts in Somalia, it led to take-over by terrorists 26

Brink: Al-Shabaab wants to attack the US 26

Brink: Al-Shabab threatens the US and has radicals in the US Somali immigrant community 26

Impact: Al Shabaab is a terrorist threat to Americans 26

Negative: Child Soldiers

TOPICALITY

1. Topicality / Solvency Dilemma: Plan is only topical if it fails

Topicality: If the sanctions work and foreign countries give up child soldiers, then no arms exports are reduced.

Solvency: If the plan does reduce export trade, it would only do so if the countries refused to eliminate child soldiers, which means the plan failed to solve the problem.

2. Aid not trade

Link: CSPA applies to both arms sales and military aid

Brett Wilkins 2019 (staff writer) COMMON DREAMS Nov 2019 "For 9th Straight Year, US Grants Waivers to Countries Violating Anti-Child Soldier Law" (accessed 19 Jan 2023) https://www.commondreams.org/views/2019/11/01/9th-straight-year-us-grants-waivers-countries-violating-anti-child-soldier-law

CSPA, which was signed into law by President George W. Bush in 2008, prohibits US military aid and arms sales to countries whose armed forces recruit, conscript, employ or enslave children under the age of 18.

Violation: Aid isn't trade

The resolution says the exports to be topical have to be "Within the bounds of international trade". Some of our arms exports are "trade" because the receiving country pays for them. But the rest are "aid" because nothing is exchanged, there is no "trade."

Impact: Harms, advantages, mandates and solvency outside the bounds must be dropped

All Affirmative evidence, mandates, harms, advantages and claims must be scrutinized and scrubbed of all reference to anything outside the resolution, where the Affirmative has no right to go. Any evidence they offer that is vague or that talks about "military assistance" has to be dropped from the round. It's their burden of proof to prove what advantages would come from enforcing CSPA only on arms sales and not enforcing it on military aid. They need to read evidence from someone who specifically says that would work.

INHERENCY

1. Status Quo flexibility (use waivers in some cases – not in others) is the right policy

**Affirmative’s theory is that “since canceling military aid sanction waivers eliminated child soldiers in Chad, we should cancel all waivers all the time to all countries.” But that’s not a logical conclusion. The right policy for one country may be exactly wrong for another. Cutting off exports of US oil to Japan crippled their war effort in 1941, but canceling US oil exports would not be a very effective way to sanction Saudi Arabia.**

**Sometimes waivers can be used to negotiate on the child soldier issue while still maintaining military aid to protect against terrorists and other bad guys attacking them. The Status Quo is good because it maintains that flexibility to use waivers when they’re effective and to cancel them when tougher measures are needed.**

Example: Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) dramatically reduced child soldiers while receiving waivers

Debra L. Raskin 2015 (President of the New York City Bar Association) Letter to Pres. Obama about child soldiers 28 Dec 2015 (accessed 19 Jan 2023) https://www2.nycbar.org/pdf/report/uploads/20073019-ChildsoldiersletterAFRICAN122815.pdf

Last year the Administration granted the Democratic Republic of the Congo (“DRC”) a partial waiver pursuant to Section 404(c) of the CSPA, and this year it has been granted a full waiver. The reasoning for the partial waiver last year was that the DRC was making progress to eliminate the use of child soldiers and the partial waiver allowed the United States to support the professionalization efforts within the military and assist in efforts against the Lord’s Resistance Army.  
**END QUOTE. SHE GOES ON TO SAY LATER IN THE CONTEXT QUOTE**:  
During the 2014 calendar year, the United Nations documented 241 new cases of recruitment (223 boys, 18 girls) in the DRC (although statistics from non-UN agencies involved in screening are not yet confirmed and may increase this number). Although the statistic of 241 child soldiers is still problematic, it is a huge improvement from the prior year, where 4,200 children were used in combat. The use of the waiver of the CSPA led the DRC to act, which has created marked improvements in limiting the use of child soldiers. Because of the steps taken by the government and the progress it has made in implementing the Action Plan, the waiver of the restrictions of the CSPA is warranted, and we hope continued efforts will lead to zero child soldiers in future reports.

HARMS / SIGNIFICANCE

1. Age “18” is not a valid standard for harm

Different cultures view the capabilities of children differently, and the UN “18 years” standard isn’t always valid

Dr. Niousha Roshani 2016 (PhD in Education from the University College London; Master's degree in International Development) Changing Notions of Child Soldiers: Rethinking Children’s Engagement in the Armed Conflict in Colombia, June 2016 (accessed 19 Jan 2023) https://www.researchgate.net/publication/317181611\_Changing\_Notions\_of\_Child\_Soldiers\_Rethinking\_Children's\_Engagement\_in\_the\_Armed\_Conflict\_in\_Colombia

In contextualizing their study of children’s lives within local ideas about their roles, abilities, rights and responsibilities, researchers argue that considering the ways in which childhood is conceptualized and experienced within different societies and cultures is vital [UNQUOTE] (James and Prout, 1990; Mayall, 2002; Boyden, 2003; Korbin, 2003). James and Prout (1997, 8) thoroughly develop the concept of the social construction of childhood, asserting:   
Childhood is understood as a social construction. As such it provides an interpretive frame for contextualizing the early years of human life. [THE ARTICLE GOES ON TO SAY IN THE SAME CONTEXT QUOTE] Childhood, as distinct from biological immaturity, is neither a natural nor universal feature of human groups but appears as a specific structural and cultural component of many societies. As Jason Hart (2006) also notes, even in a distinct location, there is no one single definition of childhood. [UNQUOTE] Tobias Hecht (2008) further explains that in Brazil, the understanding of childhood differs according to social and economic status and distinguishes between nurtured and nurturing childhoods. He states that in urban Northeastern Brazil, rich childhood is a nurtured status and poor childhood is a time for nurturing the household. Whereas nurtured children are loved by virtue of being children, the loved received by nurturing children is to a great extent a function of what they do and how they earn love, as they struggle to win the affection of their mothers. As the author notes, the nurtured childhood of the rich in Brazil has much in common with the ideal of contemporary middle-class childhood in Europe and North America. [THE ARTICLE GOES ON TO SAY IN THE SAME CONTEXT QUOTE] In Colombia as in Brazil, there is a large disparity between social classes (World Bank, 2012). As well, many cultural and ethnic backgrounds – societies that are matriarchal and those that are patriarchal – coexist (Aptekar, 1988). Both states employ the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child designation of childhood as beginning at birth and ending at age 18 (UN General Assembly, 1989), which is incongruent to local constructions of childhood, and is also exclusive of their notions and contributions of what childhood is and should be.

Even the USA employs soldiers under 18. If it’s so bad, why do we do it? Or is it only wrong when other cultures do it?

Terry J. Allen 2007 (journalist; senior editor at In These Times) America’s Child Soldier Problem (accessed 19 Jan 2023) <https://rethinkingschools.org/articles/america-s-child-solider-problem/>

Congratulations: You have lived long enough to cringe at the bad decisions you were seduced, dared, bullied, inspired, or stoned enough to make as a teenager. Thousands of America’s children, however, are not so lucky. Almost 600,000 of America’s 1,000,000 active and reserve soldiers enlisted as teens. The military lures these physiologically immature kids with a PR machine that would make Joe Camel proud. While the age of legal and cultural adulthood can vary, science is now able to determine the physiological markers of maturity. A recent study headed by Jay Giedd of the National Institutes of Health using MRI scans shows that the brain of an 18-year-old is not fully developed, with the limbic cortex-brain structures, the cerebellum, and prefrontal cortex still undergoing substantial changes. As of March 31, the U.S. military included 81,000 teenagers. Its 7,350 17-year-olds needed parental consent to enlist, and only this April they were all barred from battle zones.

2. They’re not victims

Children make informed decisions for themselves

Dr. Niousha Roshani 2016 (PhD in Education from the University College London; Master's degree in International Development) Changing Notions of Child Soldiers: Rethinking Children’s Engagement in the Armed Conflict in Colombia, June 2016 (accessed 19 Jan 2023) https://www.researchgate.net/publication/317181611\_Changing\_Notions\_of\_Child\_Soldiers\_Rethinking\_Children's\_Engagement\_in\_the\_Armed\_Conflict\_in\_Colombia

As earlier argued, children are prominent agents in political conflicts (Boyden, 2004), which raises great issues in peace building processes: the actions of child participants in armed conflict do not conform to contemporary understandings of the ‘child’ (Berents, 2008) as passive victims. However, children clearly understand their circumstances and available options as discussed, and make decisions of their own volition based on their perceptions of the world around them.

Media erroneously portrays them as “victims” but they act of their own volition, they’re not victims

Dr. Niousha Roshani 2016 (PhD in Education from the University College London; Master's degree in International Development) Changing Notions of Child Soldiers: Rethinking Children’s Engagement in the Armed Conflict in Colombia, June 2016 (accessed 19 Jan 2023) https://www.researchgate.net/publication/317181611\_Changing\_Notions\_of\_Child\_Soldiers\_Rethinking\_Children's\_Engagement\_in\_the\_Armed\_Conflict\_in\_Colombia

Children, defined here as being under the age of eighteen, residing in areas of armed conflict or other prolonged situations of violence often become perpetrators of violence (Boyden and de Berry, 2004; Kuper, 2005; Rosen, 2005). Commonly referred to as 'child soldiers', these children are presented primarily in media, academia and policy as passive and vulnerable victims of forced conscription. However, emerging studies present evidence that many children participate in conflict of their own volition, utilizing creativity and resilience in agency to improve their circumstances (Rosen, 2005; Honwana, 2006, Hart, 2006; Rosen, 2007; Poretti, 2008).

“Humanitarian” arguments are off the mark: They deny the voice of children regarding their own agency and motivations

Michelle Lynette Jones 2016. (PhD candidate, Department of International Politics Aberystwyth University) Encountering Children in Conflict Zones: The British Experience (brackets added) (accessed 19 Jan 2023) <https://pure.aber.ac.uk/portal/files/11642984/Jones_Michelle_Lynette.pdf> **[context of this quote is talking about World War I**]

The decision for these young boys to enlist in the British military shows that, within Britain children were experiencing different childhoods; which were dependent upon their gender, location, and class. The above statements also demonstrate the agency present in the young boys’ decisions to participate in armed conflict. Although the global humanitarian discourse denies a voice to children regarding their participation in armed conflict, this section highlights that children are social actors who are able to demonstrate their agency and motivations for involvement.

3. They’re heroes, not criminals nor victims

Andrew Jackson was a patriotic hero for human rights, not a victim nor a criminal

Dr. David M. Rosen 2013. (J.D. from Pace University School of Law ; Ph.D. in anthropology from the University of Illinois. He is Professor of Anthropology, at Fairleigh Dickinson University. ) “Child Soldiers: Tropes of Innocence and Terror “ (brackets and ellipses in original) (accessed 19 Jan 2023) https://www.ledijournals.com/ojs/index.php/antropologia/article/download/200/191

One of the best examples of iconic boy soldiers was Andrew Jackson, the Seventh President of the United States. When Jackson ran for president in 1824, his campaign was bolstered by the first published campaign biography in the young history of the United States. This book, John Eaton’s The Life of Andrew Jackson, caught the attention of the nation. At its heart was the story of young Jackson, a thirteen-year-old boy soldier in the army of American Revolution (Lepore 2008).  
**END QUOTE. HE GOES ON TO WRITE LATER IN THE SAME CONTEXT QUOTE**:  
By the time of his election as President he was lauded as a hero of two wars, most notably, as the triumphant general who led American forces to victory in New Orleans in the War of 1812. But Jackson the boy soldier was also deeply embedded in the American imagination: the young patriot, the child who had been told by his mother that the ‘first duty’ of her children was ‘to expend their lives […] in defending and supporting the natural rights of man’ (Meachem 2009, p. 11).

U.S. Civil War was filled with child heroes. Would you repudiate them with an Affirmative ballot?

Dr. David M. Rosen 2013. (J.D. from Pace University School of Law ; Ph.D. in anthropology from the University of Illinois. He is Professor of Anthropology, at Fairleigh Dickinson University. ) “Child Soldiers: Tropes of Innocence and Terror“ (accessed 19 Jan 2023) https://www.ledijournals.com/ojs/index.php/antropologia/article/download/200/191

The American Civil War was also filled with celebrated child martyrs and heroes. These include Luther Ladd, age 17 years, reputed to be the first Union soldier killed in the Civil War, Clarence Mackenzie, age 12 years, who died at Annapolis, and Joseph Darrow, age 15 years, who died of wounds suffered at the Battle of Bull Run. All had enormous public funerals and were proclaimed to have gallantly given their lives in the cause of abolition and freedom.

Katniss, the 16-year-old female hero of The Hunger Games. Even the NY Times thinks she’s a hero. Would you proudly stop her with an Affirmative ballot? Or proudly celebrate her with a Negative ballot?

Dr. David M. Rosen 2013. (J.D. from Pace University School of Law ; Ph.D. in anthropology from the University of Illinois. He is Professor of Anthropology, at Fairleigh Dickinson University. ) “Child Soldiers: Tropes of Innocence and Terror“ (accessed 19 Jan 2023) https://www.ledijournals.com/ojs/index.php/antropologia/article/download/200/191

The Hunger Games series is a dystopian trilogy about a fantasy world in which ruling adults have institutionalized the systemic murder of children by other children at gladiator-type games organized by the state. The plot focuses on sixteen-year-old Katniss Everdeen who defies gender stereotypes and emerges as an intelligent, moral, skillful warrior who is both self-reliant and nurturing. Katniss forges an alliance with a teenage boy, Peeta Mellark, and they emerge as symbols of resistance to the authoritarian rule of the state. As the story progresses, Katniss develops not only as a symbol of resistance, but as a participant in an armed rebel movement that brings about the violent overthrow of the state and its leaders. The New York Times hailed Katniss Everdeen as one of the most radical female characters to appear in American movies. She is a female warrior, who fights for herself, her family, and her community (Scott, Dargis 2012).

4. A/T "U.S. responsibility (culpability, blame, guilt) for child soldiers in other countries"

Some versions of this case include or are entirely based on the “culpability” issue. The “harm” is that the United States is responsible (guilty, culpable) for child soldiers in foreign countries to whom we give military aid just because we’re aiding them. Aid = approval, and approval is bad. AFF’s argument is: Canceling the aid solves for culpability, even if it never reduces even 1 child soldier in any foreign country.

Response #1. Falsely assumes all child soldiers are bad

Cross apply the Harms / Significance responses showing that child soldiers in many cases are heroes, not criminals nor victims. If some child soldiers (like Andrew Jackson) are bravely defending their homes and freedoms, we would be culpable for NOT supporting them.

Response #2. Presumes Divine power of moral judgment

Assigning culpability requires an absolute moral standard by which to judge right and wrong. If the Bible is your moral standard, the only minimum military service age named in the Bible is age 20 (Numbers 1:3). And it doesn’t tell us whether that applies to all nations today. If it does, you will be morally culpable for living in the United States, since we take recruits at age 17 with parental consent. An Affirmative ballot will condemn you to a lifetime of moral culpability. If that’s not the standard, Affirmative needs to tell us where they got their moral authority from. I sure hope they’re not going to tell us that the United Nations is the source of moral values of right and wrong.

And when you declare “all” child soldiers to be morally wrong by your own judgments, you condemn one of the greatest heroes in Bible history: David killing Goliath on the battlefield, before David was old enough to serve in the army. If you play God by declaring moral values from your own wisdom, you accidentally argue that God was wrong letting David kill Goliath.

Response #3. Falsely assumes military exporter has responsibility for every action of the recipient

If you accept this in principle, it creates an endless chain of culpability we could never escape. Some welfare recipients spend some of their money on drugs. Therefore, every taxpayer is culpable until you either refuse to pay taxes and go to jail or else flee the country. You gave a birthday present to your nephew and he disobeyed his mom by not eating his broccoli the next day. You’re guilty! A contractor for the Air Force misused some funds. The Air Force is guilty, we need to de-fund it. If you don’t like these absurd conclusions, don’t accept the premise that led to them.

If we give food aid to some of the same countries we give military aid to, our food aid does not endorse their child soldiers.

Response #4. Guarantees everlasting American guilt (cross-apply HARM response 2 Civil War evidence and CHILD DA-2 card Pollerine 2008 about Glenn & Reddeck in WW2)

The Civil War ended African-American slavery in this country, finally. The first combat casualty for the Union was a 17-year old soldier. If you live in this country and are glad we got rid of slavery, you are culpable, since you are celebrating the results of the sacrifice of a child soldier (actually many).

The sacrifices of Glenn and Reddeck against the Japanese in World War 2 endure through the ages as heroic defense of our country. If you enjoy the freedom they fought for, you are culpable, because you are benefiting from the efforts and sacrifices of child soldiers.

Response #5. Military aid serves a higher purpose

In situations where there is no absolute moral standard, we have to use our own judgments about what achieves the best outcomes. When the United States gave military aid to Stalin to defeat Hitler, we didn’t become morally culpable for all the millions of people Stalin killed or oppressed. Winning World War 2 was worth it. Stalin was responsible for what Stalin did, not us.

SOLVENCY

1. A/T “Chad success story proves removing waivers on military aid sanctions solves”

Chad was never actually sanctioned. Pres. Obama “used the threat of sanctions” on Chad

Jo Becker & Rachel Stohl 2015. (*Becker is the children’s rights advocacy director for Human Rights Watch. Stohl is a senior associate with the Stimson Center* ) 28 Sept 2015 “US must get tough over child soldiers” <https://www.stimson.org/2015/us-must-get-tough-over-child-soldiers/> (accessed 19 Jan 2023)

The administration maintained partial sanctions in 2013 and 2014 to pressure Congo to implement the plan. Last year, the United Nations documented only two cases of child recruitment by Congo’s national army — a significant change. The administration also used the threat of military sanctions under the law to [press Chad](https://blogs.state.gov/stories/2014/10/02/child-soldier-prevention-act-working-end-child-recruitment) to end its use of child soldiers.

A/T “Chad reformed in 2011 after we put them on CSPA in 2010” – 1) And then got put back on the CSPA list in 2012 again – looks like it didn’t work after all. 2) Chad got full waivers every year anyway. THEY WERE NEVER SANCTIONED

Christopher Faulkner 2019. (M.A.; PhD candidate in Political Science at Univ. of Central Florida) “The Causes, Dynamics, and Implications of Child Soldiering“ Summer 2019 (accessed 19 Jan 2023) <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=7481&context=etd>

Chad’s designation on the CSPA list in 2010 was quickly followed by the government’s signing of an action plan with the United Nations in June 2011 (Becker 2014, 605). **[END QUOTE**] The action plan called for UN assistance in the verification and monitoring of military installations, criminalization of child soldiering to reflect international law, measures for punitive action against violators, and other preventive measures (Office of the Special Representative of the 181 Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict 2011). [**HE GOES ON TO SAY IN THE SAME CONTEXT QUOTE:**] By the following October (2012), Chad was removed from the CSPA list. After a year-long hiatus, Chad was relisted in October 2013 (FY 2014). However, in each year of listing, Chad has received a full national interest waiver.

During the time period of the Chad situation, the only 3 countries that were completely sanctioned were: Rwanda (2013), Central African Republic (2013) and Somalia (2010,2011,2012). NOT CHAD!

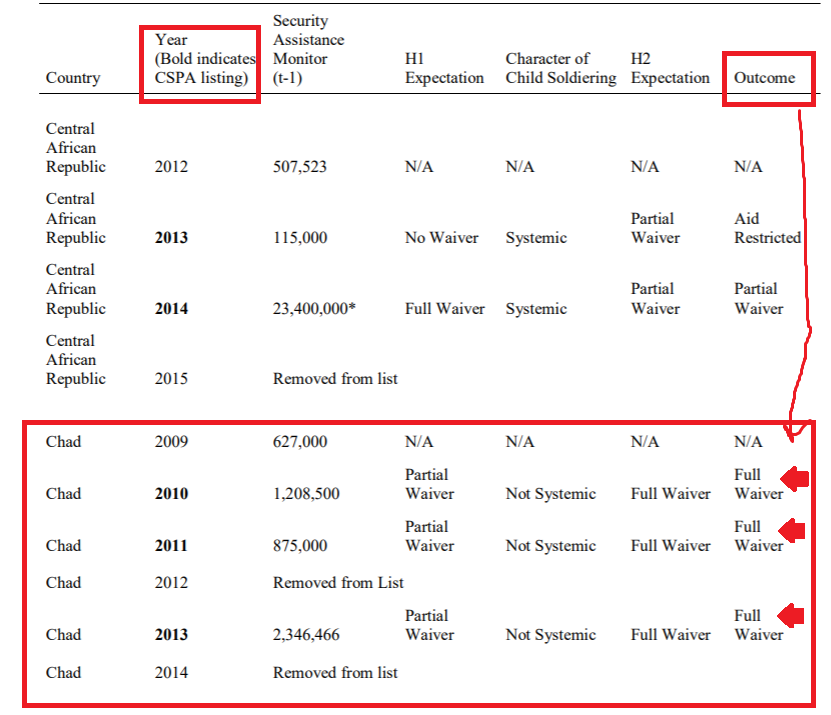
Christopher Faulkner 2019. (M.A.; PhD candidate in Political Science at Univ. of Central Florida) “The Causes, Dynamics, and Implications of Child Soldiering“ Summer 2019 (accessed 19 Jan 2023) <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=7481&context=etd>

Countries such as Chad, South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and until recently, Yemen, have each benefited from continued military assistance despite multiple years of listing. Few cases—Rwanda (2013), the Central African Republic (2013), and Somalia (2010, 2011, and 2012)—saw the US fully implement the CSPA (see Table 10). Thus, restrictions on security assistance is more exception than rule.

Chad was never sanctioned at all under CSPA

**We can’t hold up a chart as a visual aid, but we can read the headings and column entries and make it available to the Negative and the Judge for inspection at any time. This is from Christopher Faulkner in 2019, a chart showing countries that were put onto the CSPA list and what actions were taken in each year. Under the ‘Year’ heading for Chad, it shows Chad was added to the list of countries using child soldiers in 2010, and in the ‘Outcome’ column is says they were granted a Full Waiver. They were on the list again in 2011, and again the Outcome was a Full Waiver. In 2012 they were removed from the list, so obviously no action there. In 2013 they were put back on the list, but again got a Full Waiver. In 2014 they were removed from the list. Bottom Line: CHAD HAS NEVER BEEN SANCTIONED UNDER CSPA AT ALL. We challenge AFF to name the year and the dollar amount of military aid, from any piece of evidence that says Chad ever had any aid taken away. Their evidence about the “success story” of Chad is from Obama pressuring them or threatening them, not from any sanctions that were ever actually applied.**

Christopher Faulkner 2019. (M.A.; PhD candidate in Political Science at Univ. of Central Florida) “The Causes, Dynamics, and Implications of Child Soldiering“ Summer 2019 (accessed 19 Jan 2023) <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=7481&context=etd> (markings and arrows added)



Chad had only a few child soldiers to begin with and was not a systemic problem. They started removing them in 2007 under a UNICEF program, three years before being listed (but NOT sanctioned) by the US on CSPA in 2010

Christopher Faulkner 2019. (M.A.; PhD candidate in Political Science at Univ. of Central Florida) “The Causes, Dynamics, and Implications of Child Soldiering“ Summer 2019 (accessed 19 Jan 2023) <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=7481&context=etd>

Overall, while the number of children within the military at Chad’s listing in 2010 was relatively low, evidence points to the fact that both a lack of oversight and strategic decision making during civil war led to the children serving as active combatants in the ANT [French acronym for National Army of Chad]. Given that child soldiering was less of an institutional problem post 2010 and that children were employed as active soldiers during Chad’s civil war from 2005 to 2010, expectation would suggest that at a minimum, partial waivers would be granted for FY 2011. However, the receipt of a full waiver in Chad’s first year suggests that when child soldiering is not a systemic problem, restrictions are unlikely. The draw-down of conflict in 2010 (the same year the CSPA came into effect) and the increased efforts by the Chadian government to signal commitment to demobilization of active child soldiers as early as 2007 as evidenced by the governments signing of a UNICEF [United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund] protocol to protect children in conflict (UNSG 2007, 12), further demonstrates that shifts in government’s practices can improve prospects for the continuation of security assistance, particularly when monitoring and verification corroborate a genuine commitment.

What actually helped reform Chad was listing them on CSPA and then granting waivers

Christopher Faulkner 2019. (M.A.; PhD candidate in Political Science at Univ. of Central Florida) “The Causes, Dynamics, and Implications of Child Soldiering“ Summer 2019 (brackets added) (“ANT” is the French acronym for National Army of Chad) (accessed 19 Jan 2023) <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=7481&context=etd>

While verified cases of child soldiering are not a perfect indication of the actual practices, Chad’s commitment to eradicating child soldiers in the ANT [Army of Chad] was reflected in the conclusions reached by the UN Secretary General’s 2014 report on children and armed conflict (UNSG 2014, 10-12). The UN’s general consensus suggested that the government made significant improvements in meeting all obligations aimed at demobilizing children within the ANT and was refraining from further recruitment. [**END QUOTE**] Between January 2013 and December 2013, no new cases of child soldering were documented. The UN reiterated that most child soldiers in the ANT were the result of demobilized child soldiers from other armed groups being absorbed into the national military, not the result of a systematic practice by the military (UNSG 2014, 12). By all accounts, child soldier usage by the ANT was a rare practice and often the result of a lack of monitoring and screening r recruits. Thus, the low numbers of child soldiers in the rank-and-file, coupled with the identification by the UN that the ANT was no longer engaged in the systematic recruitment of children lends some support for H2. [**HE GOES ON LATER IN THE CONTEXT TO CONCLUDE QUOTE**:] This finding also suggests that listing on the CSPA and the receipt of subsequent waivers, might actually assist with institutional transformation.

Chad still has child soldiers (as of May 2020)

Rimasbé Dionbo Jean Claude 2020 (candidate for the Degree of the Licentiate in Sacred Theology at Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University) May 2020 THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH TO POST-CIVIL WAR CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN CHAD (accessed 19 Jan 2023) https://scholarcommons.scu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1063&context=jst\_dissertations

This situation of loss of school years is complicated by the fact that during the period of confrontation, the schools remained closed because the youths were also a fighting force. And from this perspective, it is appropriate to recognize the existence of many children known as “child soldiers” within the Chadian army today.

2. A/T “Rwanda example proves success of removing waivers under CSPA”

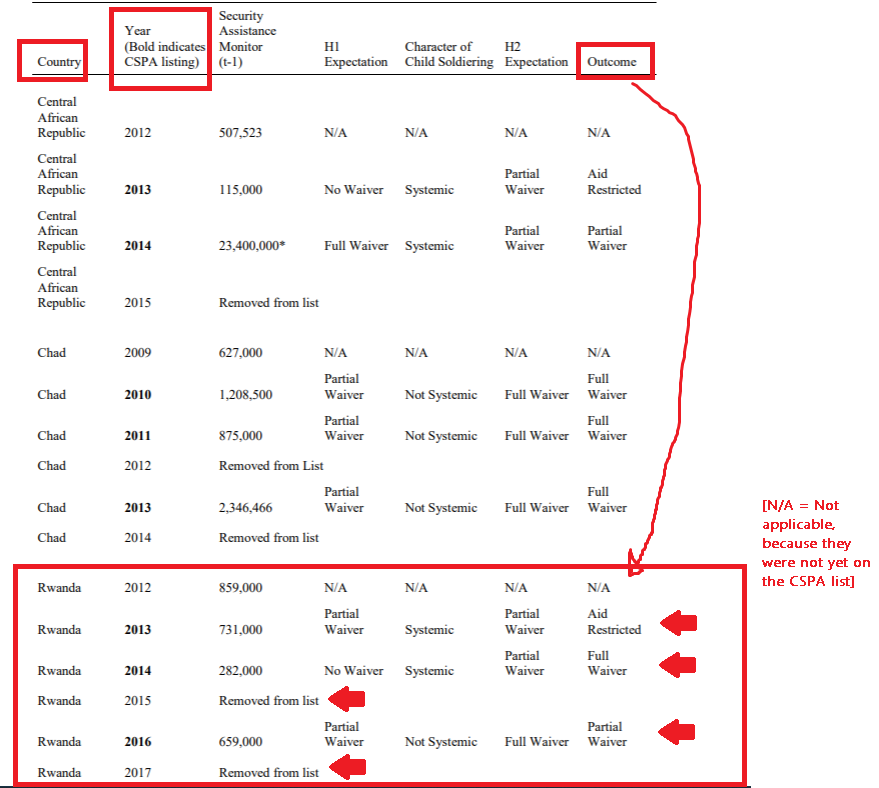
**We can’t hold up a chart as a visual aid, but we can read the headings and column entries and make it available to the Negative and the Judge for inspection at any time. This is from Christopher Faulkner in 2019, a chart showing countries that were put onto the CSPA list and what actions were taken in each year. Under “Country” for Rwanda, the ‘Year’ column shows they were first added to the CSPA list in 2013. Under “Character of Child Soldiering” column for 2013 it says “Systemic,” meaning the problem was severe. The “Outcome” that year was “Aid Restricted,” which means they got the full sanctions, no waiver.**

**And that solved the problem, right? No. In 2014, the next line shows the same “Systemic” evaluation of the Child Soldiering problem. But the “Outcome” of CSPA that year was that the US gave them a “Full Waiver.” For 2015, the chart says Rwanda was “Removed from list.” Wait, what? Full sanctions didn’t stop the child soldiering. But the year after they got a full waiver they were removed from the list??!**

**The following year, 2016, they were back on the list again with “Not Systemic” child soldiering. In other words, some of it was occurring but it wasn’t as bad as before. This time the “Outcome” column shows the U.S. gave them a “Partial Waiver.” And then in 2017, once again Rwanda was “Removed from list.”**

History of CSPA sanctions on Rwanda shows “no waiver / full sanctions” DID NOT stop child soldiers

Christopher Faulkner 2019. (M.A.; PhD candidate in Political Science at Univ. of Central Florida) “The Causes, Dynamics, and Implications of Child Soldiering“ Summer 2019 (accessed 19 Jan 2023) <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=7481&context=etd> (brackets, markings and arrows added)



No, Rwanda didn’t get full sanctions applied and then fix the problem. It’s way more complicated

Christopher Faulkner 2019. (M.A.; PhD candidate in Political Science at Univ. of Central Florida) “The Causes, Dynamics, and Implications of Child Soldiering“ Summer 2019 (accessed 19 Jan 2023) <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=7481&context=etd>

Rwanda has appeared on the CSPA list three times. The first appearance came in 2013 and Rwanda faced full restrictions in FY 2014. The following year, Rwanda was again listed but received a full waiver. Most recently, the government’s implication for child soldiering in 2016 has led to its relisting, but was only granted a partial waiver for FY 2017. Given these patterns, Rwanda is a particularly interesting case as it has experienced all three variations in the degree of implementation of the CSPA—no waiver, partial waiver, and full waiver.

Rwanda was listed, sanctioned, unsanctioned, unlisted, relisted, given a waiver, unlisted, and relisted.

**Please tell me that’s not the Affirmative Plan**

Christopher Faulkner 2019. (M.A.; PhD candidate in Political Science at Univ. of Central Florida) “The Causes, Dynamics, and Implications of Child Soldiering“ Summer 2019 (brackets and ellipses in original) <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=7481&context=etd> (“TIP” = US State Department Trafficking in Persons report) (accessed 19 Jan 2023)

Rwanda was relisted on the CSPA in 2014 largely a consequence of their support of the M23 rebels. However, the presidential determination issued in September 2014 granted a full waiver to the Rwandan government, making the state eligible for all categories of security assistance in FY 2015. As the TIP Report of 2014 noted, the Rwandan government “refrained from reinforcing the M23 during final combat operations against the group and Rwandan support…ceased following the group’s [M23] defeat” (US Department of State 2014). Thus, while the CSPA alone did not lead to Rwanda’s compliance, the penalty incurred and its designation as a violator appeared to have some effect on its shift in behavior. Interestingly, the full waivers granted for FY 2015 appear to be the result of no documented evidence that Rwanda was still actively engaged in support of the M23 nor was the government reported to have 195 engaged directly in child soldering throughout 2014. Subsequently, Rwanda was removed from the CSPA list in 2015. However, the delisting ‘success story’ was short-lived as Rwanda was relisted in October 2016. The 2016 TIP report claimed that Rwandan security forces “reportedly facilitated or tolerated the recruitment activity [of refugees, including children]” and officials “threatened, intimidated, harassed, and physically assaulted those who refused recruitment attempts” (US Department of State 2016).

3. Bigger loophole not solved and problem continues

**There are 3 ways a country using child soldiers might avoid getting their US military aid cancelled under CSPA. 1) If the US never gives them military aid anyway – like Iran or North Korea. 2) If a country is listed on the CSPA list of bad countries and the President issues a waiver. 3) If a country uses child soldiers but the State Department decides not to put them on the list at all, for mysterious political reasons.**

State Department decides not to put countries using child soldiers on the CSPA list for political reasons. Examples: Saudi Arabia today. Afghanistan, Iraq and Burma historically.

**Rachel Stohl** and Ryan Fletcher 2020 (Stohl is vice president of the Stimson Center, where  **Fletcher** is a research associate) [Looking Ahead - Child Soldiers](https://www.forumarmstrade.org/blog/looking-ahead-child-soldiers) 9 Jan 2020 https://www.forumarmstrade.org/blog/category/child-soldiers (accessed 19 Jan 2023)

Another notable challenge to comprehensive CSPA implementation has been the omission of key countries from the CSPA list itself. For years, countries known to support the recruitment and use of child soldiers – such as Afghanistan, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia – have been deliberately kept off the CSPA list for political reasons. In a positive move, the State Department included Afghanistan, Iraq, and Burma on the [2019 CSPA list](https://www.state.gov/reports/2019-trafficking-in-persons-report/) – countries it neglected to include in 2017, with notable controversy. However, absent from the 2019 list is the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which has been [widely reported](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/28/world/africa/saudi-sudan-yemen-child-fighters.html) to be using children as young as 14 to fight its war in Yemen.

Example: Chad. It was removed from the “using child soldiers” list even though they were still using them

Jo Becker 2014. (Children’s Rights Advocacy Director at Human Rights Watch and the founding chairperson of the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers. She is also an adjunct associate professor of international and political affairs at Columbia University) FROM OPPONENT TO ALLY: THE UNITED STATES AND EFFORTS TO END THE USE OF CHILD SOLDIERS https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/228469692.pdf

Although NGOs continued to criticize the waivers, the administration began taking other steps to encourage countries receiving US military assistance to comply with international standards. In particular, it increased diplomatic pressure on Chad, South Sudan, and the DRC to sign action plans with the United Nations to end their use of child soldiers. Chad signed such a plan in June 2011, and South Sudan signed a plan in March 2012. In both cases, UN officials said that US pressure contributed to the agreements. In November 2012, US State Department officials traveled to Chad and South Sudan specifically to press the governments to effectively implement the action plans. In 2012, the administration again issued waivers to Yemen and South Sudan, while removing Chad from its list, despite reports that children remained in Chad’s forces (Chad was returned to the list in 2013).

Example: Britain. Just as bad as North Korea and Iran

Michelle Lynette Jones 2016. (PhD candidate, Department of International Politics Aberystwyth University) Encountering Children in Conflict Zones: The British Experience (brackets added) (accessed 19 Jan 2023) https://pure.aber.ac.uk/portal/files/11642984/Jones\_Michelle\_Lynette.pdf

Although the British Army, seem to be aware that children are not part of the normative proceedings of armed conflict, the MoD [Ministry of Defense] is currently facing accusations from humanitarian groups that suggest they are recruiting ‘child soldiers’. Although the United Kingdom ratified the Optional Protocol to the CRC in 2003, which established the minimum age as 18-years-old to be involved in hostilities, the British Army continues to recruit 16-year-olds. According to a parliamentary briefing paper devised by Child Soldiers International, it is the only country in the European Union (EU) and one of ‘fewer than 20 countries in the world which still allow in law the direct recruitment of 16 year olds by their armed forces.’ Child Soldiers International, formerly the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, is a UK-based organisation which seeks to remove children from warzones and also established the straight-18 campaign. This campaign advocates raising the minimum age of recruitment to 18 for all nation states and armed force groups. When using examples of other countries that continue to recruit at 16, the UK is often placed in the same category as North Korea and Iran.

CHILD DISADS – Why it’s bad to make a big fuss about “child soldiers”

CHILD DA 1. Bad methodology blocks real solutions and makes children worse off

Link & Impact: AFF’s failure to analyze the greater societal dimensions of violence, and their limited studies, actually impede efforts meet the needs of vulnerable children

Dr. Niousha Roshani 2016 (PhD in Education from the University College London; Master's degree in International Development) Changing Notions of Child Soldiers: Rethinking Children’s Engagement in the Armed Conflict in Colombia, June 2016 (accessed 19 Jan 2023) https://www.researchgate.net/publication/317181611\_Changing\_Notions\_of\_Child\_Soldiers\_Rethinking\_Children's\_Engagement\_in\_the\_Armed\_Conflict\_in\_Colombia

To date, children’s perspectives on the impact of extreme violence on their own agency remains relatively unexplored. The existing literature on children and war focuses primarily on trauma and pathology, leaving out the greater societal dimensions of violence (Hart, 2006; Boyden & de Berry, 2004; Hilker & Fraser, 2009). Furthermore, contemporary research concerning the use of children in armed conflict is overwhelmingly limited to child soldiers, which gives rise to a conflation of child soldiering with other related issues, such as child displacement and child trafficking. This lack of a nuanced understanding of the various uses of children in armed conflict **impedes efforts to adequately address the affected children's needs.**

Link & Impact: Treating child soldiers as powerless victims leads to wrong interventions that can make them worse off

Dr. Niousha Roshani 2016 (PhD in Education from the University College London; Master's degree in International Development) Changing Notions of Child Soldiers: Rethinking Children’s Engagement in the Armed Conflict in Colombia, June 2016 (accessed 19 Jan 2023) https://www.researchgate.net/publication/317181611\_Changing\_Notions\_of\_Child\_Soldiers\_Rethinking\_Children's\_Engagement\_in\_the\_Armed\_Conflict\_in\_Colombia

While adults have a moral responsibility toward minors that entails protection from adversity as is stated in the Convention of the Rights of the Child, Boyden (2005) argues that a discourse of children as powerless and reliant on adults during difficult circumstances does not encourage children’s coping and resilience, nor does it portray their realities. The author further states that research in various regions of the world has indicated that children are social agents in their own rights, even in the most distressful of situations. She especially stresses that disregarding children’s perceptions can lead to inadequate interventions far from children’s actual needs and welfares, and can actually cause harm (ibid).

CHILD DA 2. Disrespect for bravery and sacrifice

First, a true story of bravery and sacrifice

Joshua Pollarine 2008. (Master’s degree candidate, Univ. of Montana) Children at War: Underage Americans Illegally Fighting the Second World War, Summer 2008 https://scholarworks.umt.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1210&context=etd

Just as they reached the top of the cliffs, the Japanese opened fire. The company divided as they went around a rise, advancing on the enemy; Glenn one way, Reddeck the other. Within moments somebody hollered to Glenn that his buddy Reddeck was hit. Under heavy fire, he crawled over to his comrade. Glenn tore open Reddeck’s jacket to see where he was wounded. Blood poured from an opening in Reddeck’s chest where a round had hit him at the base of the sternum. Glenn frantically fumbled for his first aid kit and pulled out a bandage as his best friend lay bleeding to death before him. All for naught. By the time he applied it, Reddeck was gone. Carl Reddeck, a two-year veteran of the Marine Corps, was sixteen years old. His best friend, Robert Glenn, also a two year veteran, was seventeen.

And now the impact: You’ll have to do something painful and terrible if you vote Affirmative

If you affirm the ideals of the Affirmative case by voting for them, then have the courage to accept the consequences of your convictions. I suggest that you and the Affirmative debaters need to decide if you could say out loud “Glenn and Reddeck were wrong.” If Mr Glenn is still alive, could you call him or his family personally and tell him you voted Affirmative to condemn and rebuke his service to this country? Don’t take the bold righteous stand the Affirmative is urging you to take unless you are willing to take it all the way to its conclusion. But if you can’t take it there, and if you can’t make that phone call or even say those words out loud, then don’t take that stand at all if you can’t accept its consequences. The Negative team stands with Glenn and Reddeck, and we beg you to stand with us.

CHILD DA 3. Hypocrisy. It’s OK for adults to kill children but not OK for them to fight back?

Link: The U.S. had no qualms about killing 500,000 children in Iraq. Was that OK?

Sheldon Richman 2004. (senior fellow at The Future of Freedom Foundation) Jan 2004 “Iraqi Sanctions: Were They Worth It?” (accessed 19 Jan 2023) https://archive.globalpolicy.org/component/content/article/170-sanctions/41952.html

In May 1996 Madeleine Albright, who was then the U.S. ambassador to the UN, was asked by 60 Minutes correspondent Lesley Stahl, in reference to years of U.S.-led economic sanctions against Iraq,  
We have heard that half a million children have died. I mean, that is more children than died in Hiroshima. And, you know, is the price worth it?  
To which Ambassador Albright responded,  
I think that is a very hard choice, but the price, we think, the price is worth it.

Link: Children died horribly from the US bombing of Hiroshima. We can incinerate them but they commit a crime if they shoot back?

Elizabeth Chappell 2019 (PhD candidate at The Open University) 2 Jan 2019 “**‘They died with stones in their mouths’: Hiroshima’s last survivors tell their stories” (accessed 19 Jan 2023)** https://theconversation.com/they-died-with-stones-in-their-mouths-hiroshimas-last-survivors-tell-their-stories-107468

A black market sprang up around the station where local women set up stalls to feed the orphaned children. Older children bullied younger children; the only way the smaller ones could survive was by scraping the food left in the pans. Towards the end of 1945, Shoso saw many children die of starvation. Some were so hungry, he said, they died with stones in their mouths.

Impact: Moral dilemma if you vote Affirmative

You will have to find a way to live with yourself if you tell other countries that they can’t use child soldiers because it’s “wrong,” but it’s OK for the U.S.A. to kill children because it’s “worth it” for our national objectives. Who in the world are we to tell other countries that we can kill their children but their children can’t fight back? To cast an Affirmative ballot in today’s round, you have to be able to say with a straight face that it was morally fine for the United States to drop an atomic bomb that killed thousands of children in Hiroshima, but morally wrong if one of those children age 17 had fired a single shot at the plane that carried that bomb.

BIG LINK TO THE BRITAIN/NATO DISADS – We lose alliance with Britain and then we lose NATO

Harms / Disadvantage dilemma: If no harm to Canada and Britain using them, then no harm for anyone else

If “child soldiers” are bad, then we MUST put Canada and Britain on the CSPA list and cancel all US military cooperation with them, since they use child soldiers. And that will trigger Disadvantages. If the Affirmative says they don’t cut off Canada and Britain, then the harms of child soldiers must not be that bad.

Solvency/Disadvantage dilemma: “NOT” putting them on the CSPA list proves the Solvency-3 argument. Putting them on the list triggers the Disadvantage

If you say “these are our allies so we won’t put them on the CSPA list” (which is what Status Quo does), then the Status Quo can continue to do that after an Affirmative ballot. Instead of using waivers, the State Department will just change the list to not include any country that we don’t want to sanction. That means no solvency.

But if you ARE consistent and you treat US allies the same as the ones currently on the CSPA list, then you have to accept the disadvantages of ending US military cooperation with Britain and Canada

Big Link: Canada and Britain use child soldiers. 40% of the British army enlisted before age 18. Many at 16!

Alexandre Vautrevers 2008. (Head of the International Relations Department, Migration, Refugee and INGO Programme, Webster University, Geneva, Switzerland) Dec 2008 “Why Child Soldiers are Such a Complex Issue” (accessed 19 Jan 2023) https://academic.oup.com/rsq/article/27/4/96/1541946#:~:text=The%20difficulties%20in%20implementing%20them,or%20mobile%20or%20displaced%20populations.

In Canada, the minimum recruiting age into the reserve is 16 years with parental permission, while the regular component is 17 years and deployment may not take place below the age of 18 years. In the United Kingdom, the minimum enlistment age is 16.5 years with parental permission below 18 years of age. The British army argues that approximately 40 per cent of its numbers enlisted at the ages of 16–17 years.

British law explicitly says they can use under-18 in combat

Michelle Lynette Jones 2016. (PhD candidate, Department of International Politics Aberystwyth University) Encountering Children in Conflict Zones: The British Experience (brackets added) (accessed 19 Jan 2023) https://pure.aber.ac.uk/portal/files/11642984/Jones\_Michelle\_Lynette.pdf

A key concern of many humanitarian groups is the UK’s failure to implement the total prohibition of deployment of under-18s, when many other countries have acknowledged the Straight 18 position. When the UK ratified the Optional Protocol to the CRC [Convention on the Rights of the Child] , they added a clause which stipulated that The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland will take all feasible measures to ensure that members of its armed forces who have not attained the age of 18 years do not take a direct part in hostilities. The United Kingdom understands that article 1 of the Optional Protocol would not exclude the deployment of members of its armed forces under the age of 18 to take a direct part in hostilities where: -  
a) there is a genuine military need to deploy their unit or ship to an area in which hostilities are taking place; and b) by reason of the nature and urgency of the situation: - i) it is not practicable to withdraw such persons before deployment; or ii) to do so would undermine the operational effectiveness of their ship or unit, and thereby put at risk the successful completion of the military mission and/or the safety of other personnel. The decision to place such a clause contradicts the UK’s position on the use of under 18s in armed conflict situations. It advocates that children should not be present within conflict scenarios and openly condemns those who continue to recruit children, yet they have reserved the right to deploy when needed. The British Armed forces enlist approximately 22,000 people each year, of which around 4,700 are under-18 years of age.

Big Link: US must either stop military cooperation with Britain or else AFF must concede they lose on Harms and Solvency

But what happens when the US stops cooperation with Britain? We lose NATO.

BRITAIN / NATO DA 1. Losing Britain = losing NATO = losing US national security

Link: Britain is vital to NATO and US/Britain special relationship is foundation of NATO defense

*Gen. David Richards and Prof. Julian Lindley-French 2020. (Richards - former Chief of the Defence Staff of the United Kingdom. French - Chair of The Alphen Group of strategy and defence experts ) 21 Dec 2020 “*[Britain, Brexit and NATO 2030](https://thealphengroup.home.blog/2020/12/14/britain-brexit-and-nato-2030/)” (accessed 19 Jan 2023) https://thealphengroup.home.blog/page/2/

Second, the US must reaffirm the importance of Britain in NATO. To paraphrase Dean Acheson, Britain has lost a Union but has yet to find a role.  The Biden Administration will need Britain to be fully committed to NATO and the defence of Europe if it is to ease the burdens on the US for the defence of Europe. Therefore, the Biden administration should move quickly to co-opt Britain in the drafting of a new NATO Strategic Concept.  A new Strategic Concept would not only put Brexit in its proper strategic context, but also enable post-Brexit Britain to play a leading role in better preparing the Alliance to meet twenty-first century challenges.  Third, Brexit could accelerate the decoupling of NATO. The US-UK Special Relationship remains the defence and intelligence foundation of the Alliance.

Backup link: Britain is vital to NATO

*Gen. David Richards and Prof. Julian Lindley-French 2020. (Richards - former Chief of the Defence Staff of the United Kingdom. French - Chair of The Alphen Group of strategy and defence experts ) 21 Dec 2020 “*[Britain, Brexit and NATO 2030](https://thealphengroup.home.blog/2020/12/14/britain-brexit-and-nato-2030/)” (accessed 19 Jan 2023) https://thealphengroup.home.blog/page/2/

Britain led the creation of NATO in 1949, it must now help lead the way to NATO 2030. However, Britain, Brexit and NATO are inseparable and must be seen as such.  Deal or no deal years of Brexit political turbulence lie ahead and it will affect the Alliance. Therefore, whatever happens in the coming weeks this a moment for cool heads in Britain and amongst fellow Europeans.  In the dangerous world of which Europe is a part Brexit is a strategic sideshow. For the sake of NATO and the future defence of Europe it is time that Allies and Partners remember precisely that.

Link & Brink: Russian aggression makes NATO an “existential” necessary (“existential” means we might not exist if we lose it)

Constanze Stelzenmüller, 2016. (expert on German, European, and trans-Atlantic foreign and security policy and strategy; senior fellow in the Center on the United States and Europe at Brookings. Formerly Kissinger Chair on Foreign Policy and International Relations at the Library of Congress) “NATO: Necessary but not sufficient” December 7, 2016. https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2016/12/07/nato-necessary-but-not-sufficient/ (accessed 19 Jan 2023)

The events of the past two years have dispelled any doubts about the need for NATO. Russia’s annexation of Crimea, its support for the separatists fighting Ukrainian forces in the country’s east, its military buildup, its threats to NATO members over missile defense, its provocative encounters with NATO ships and aircraft, its loose talk on the use of nuclear weapons, its carpet-bombing of Syrian opposition forces and civilians, its ruthless prodding and exploitation of Western vulnerabilities including through cyber espionage and disinformation, its flaunting of international institutions and norms: all these have shown that the military arm of the alliance remains a necessary, indeed, existential element of the transatlantic relationship.

Impact: High risk of losing a major war

Brandon J. Weichert 2020. (former Congressional staffer; holds an M.A. in Statecraft and National Security Affairs from the Institute of World Politics in Washington) “World War III is Coming—And So is the Draft” January 7, 2020. (accessed 19 Jan 2023) https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/world-war-iii-coming%E2%80%94and-so-draft-111576

Today, however, the chances for great state conflict are high. As the threat of interstate warfare increases, America’s small expeditionary force (which is wearing thin from decades of constant deployments) will be insufficient to meet the challenges that rival great powers, such as China or Russia, pose to the U.S. military. This is especially true, considering the focus of America’s enemies on depriving U.S. forces of their aforementioned technological advantages.

BRITAIN / NATO DA 2. Lose US hegemony without NATO (links to losing NATO are back in DA-1)

Link: NATO essential to US global leadership

Kathleen Hicks and Michael O'Hanlon, 2016. (Kathleen Hicks is senior vice president at the Center for Strategic & International Studies; Michael O’Hanlon is senior fellow and director of research for foreign policy studies at the Brookings Institution.) “Donald Trump is wrong about NATO: Column” July 8, 2016. https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/columnist/2016/07/08/trump-nato-defense-summit-allies-column/86679096/ (accessed 19 Jan 2023)

But whatever the imperfections of America's allies, it is unconvincing to view them as a drain on the country. On balance, they are not just an advantage for America; they also are the central characteristic of its global leadership. Russia and China are blessed with the likes of Belarus and North Korea as their formal security partners. Meanwhile, America has nearly 60, most of them among the world's dominant technological and economic powers. Two-thirds of global GDP and two-thirds of global military spending is found within the broad, U.S.-led Western security coalition. This is unprecedented in the history of the world, especially in the absence of a clear agreed threat that would motivate such an alignment.

Link: Russia & China are challenging

Frederico Bartels 2020 (Senior Policy Analyst for Defense Budgeting at Heritage Foundation) 2 Nov 2020 Defense Budget Debates Should Start With Strategy, Not Dollars (accessed 19 Jan 2023) https://www.heritage.org/defense/commentary/defense-budget-debates-should-start-strategy-not-dollars

The current strategy was released in early 2018 and states that we are currently in “an increasingly complex global security environment, characterized by overt challenges to the free and open international order and the reemergence of long-term, strategic competition between nations.” The strategy states that Russia and China are the two main challenges to the free and open international order.

Impact: Civilizational consequences if we lose US hegemony

Brook Manville 2018 (principal of Brook Manville LLC, consulting on strategy and organization) 14 Oct 2018 “Why A Crumbling World Order Urgently Needs U.S. Leadership” FORBES [https://www.forbes.com/sites/brookmanville/2018/10/14/why-a-crumbling-world-order-urgently-needs-u-s-leadership/#2bb8912f2e61](about:blank#2bb8912f2e61) (brackets added)(accessed 19 Jan 2023)

The botanical metaphor in [Brookings Institution Senior Fellow Robert] Kagan’s book title began our recent conversation. “We’ve been living in a tranquil garden of largely peaceful practices and liberal expectations across much of the world, ignoring the dark forces of jungle multiplying under the rocks. If we don’t defend civilization’s cultivation—especially American’s guarantee of peace and economic integration across the world—the toxic creatures and weeds will roar back.” Thus [China’s determined military rise](about:blank), [Russia’s continuing aggressions](about:blank), [fiery authoritarians on the march in so many once democratic countries](about:blank). [**END QUOTE]** As [Brookings Institution Senior Fellow Robert] Kagan continued, “[Trump has been damaging the system](about:blank)—he too seems to have forgotten what good it has delivered—but actually America’s desire for maintaining the global order has been diminishing for years. After [the dissolution of the Soviet empire in the 1990s](about:blank), people talked about [‘the end of history”](about:blank)—that America didn’t have to worry anymore about war or aggression. History doesn’t end, it simply paused. [**He goes on later in the same context to say QUOTE:]** The ugliest aspects of human nature are surging again.”  
**Vanishing Leadership, Vanishing Peace**  
Kagan’s apocalyptic message, repeated [in other recent writings](about:blank), is lucid and terrifying, all the more devastating for its relentless use of history. It’s a footnoted plea that “we’ve seen this movie before.” He reminds us that Americans have frequently turned away from defending world order, with regrettably familiar outcomes: to be dragged in later at greater cost (e.g. [helping to stop Hitler earlier might have prevented World War II](about:blank)); or, simply hoping that “the problem would go away,” to watch it get ten times worse (e.g. [Obama’s policy in Syria](about:blank)). Kagan acknowledges that America has sometimes misstepped (e.g. Viet Nam, Iraq), but he still argues that overall our foreign engagement has produced more peace and prosperity than not. “History shows,” he summarized, “that world order has never been achieved without some constructive force to keep the peace. The relative harmony and fair play we’ve created in the modern world will vanish if the U.S. forsakes international leadership.”

Impact: World peace & prosperity at risk without US influence. US hegemony is key to global peace & prosperity

Capt. M. V. Prato 2009 (United States Marine Corps,Command and Staff College, Marine Corps Combat Development Command,Marine Corps University) “The Need for American Hegemony” (accessed 19 Jan 2023) https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/citations/ADA508040

The world witnessed a vast shift in the polarity of geopolitics after the Cold War. The United States became the world’s greatest hegemon with an unequalled ability to globally project cultural, political, economic, and military power in a manner not seen since the days of the Roman Empire. **[END QUOTE]** Coined the “unipolar moment” by syndicated columnist Charles Krauthammer, the disparity of power between the U.S. and all other nations allows the U.S. to influence the world for the mutual benefit of all responsible states. Unfortunately, the United States is increasingly forced to act unilaterally as a result of both foreign and domestic resentment to U.S. dominance and the rise of liberal internationalism. [**He goes on to conclude later in the same context QUOTE**:] The United States must exercise benevolent global hegemony, unilaterally if necessary, to ensure its security and maintain global peace and prosperity.

Impact: Decline into anarchy with decline of US dominance and rise of Russia and China. Massive loss of life, money and freedom

Dr. Robert Kagan 2017. (PhD in American history; Stephen & Barbara Friedman Senior Fellow - [Foreign Policy](https://www.brookings.edu/program/foreign-policy/), [Project on International Order and Strategy](https://www.brookings.edu/project/project-on-international-order-and-strategy/) at Brookings Institution) 6 Feb 2017 ‘Backing into World War III” <https://www.brookings.edu/research/backing-into-world-war-iii/> (accessed 19 Jan 2023)

Think of two significant trend lines in the world today. One is the increasing ambition and activism of the two great revisionist powers, Russia and China. The other is the declining confidence, capacity, and will of the democratic world, and especially of the United States, to maintain the dominant position it has held in the international system since 1945. As those two lines move closer, as the declining will and capacity of the United States and its allies to maintain the present world order meet the increasing desire and capacity of the revisionist powers to change it, we will reach the moment at which the existing order collapses and the world descends into a phase of brutal anarchy, as it has three times in the past two centuries. The cost of that descent, in lives and treasure, in lost freedoms and lost hope, will be staggering.

SOMALIA DISADVANTAGES

Big Link to Somalia – US is still providing military aid to Somalia government (Feb 2021)

Oriana Pawlyk 2021. (journalist) 1 Feb 2021 “After Most US Troops Pull Out of Somalia, Some Reenter for Training Event” <https://www.military.com/daily-news/2021/02/01/after-most-us-troops-pull-out-of-somalia-some-reenter-training-event.html> (accessed 18 Mar 2021)

The U.S. military on Sunday held its first training engagement in Somalia after the recent drawdown of most American troops stationed there, Africa Command announced Monday. "Our first engagement back into Somalia so quickly after the repositioning shows we remain committed to our Somali and regional partners and support their fight against violent extremism," U.S. [Air Force](http://www.military.com/air-force) Maj. Gen. Dagvin Anderson, head of Special Operations Command Africa, said in a release.

Big Link to Somalia – AFF must end aid to Somalia because their government has child soldiers

Anelise Borges 2021. (journalist) 12 Feb 2021 AFRICA NEWS “Red Hand Day 2021: COVID-19 pandemic 'increases risk of children being recruited by armed groups'” <https://www.africanews.com/2021/02/12/red-hand-day-2021-covid-19-pandemic-increases-risk-of-children-being-recruited-by-armed-gr//> (accessed 18 Mar 2021)

The Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia, Syria and Yemen currently have the largest number of child soldiers. A total of 170 countries have ratified the Optional Protocol of the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict (OPAC).

Big link to Somalia: CSPA Waivers are granted to Somalia because it's key to defeating terrorism

US State Department 2020. “ Report in Accordance With Sections 405(c) and (d) of the Child Soldiers Prevention Act (CSPA) of 2008 (22 U.S.C. 2370c-2(c) and (d))“ 17 July 2020 https://www.state.gov/report-in-accordance-with-sections-405c-and-d%E2%80%AFof-the-child-soldiers-prevention-act-cspa-of-2008-22-u-s-c-2370c-2c-and-d/ (accessed 19 Jan 2023)

The President has determined it is in the national interest of the United States to waive in part the application of the prohibition in section 404(a) of the CSPA with respect to Somalia to allow for the provision of IMET, PKO, and support provided pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 333 and has certified the Government of Somalia is taking effective and continuing steps to address the problem of child soldiers. The U.S. strategy in Somalia focuses on achieving a unified, peaceful, and democratic Somalia, with a stable and representative government able to defeat the foreign terrorist organization al-Shabaab; prevent terrorists and pirates from using its territory as a safe haven; provide for its own internal defense; and facilitate and foster development, growth, and political inclusion, while progressing towards long-term stability and prosperity. The waiver for IMET assistance will support the professionalization of the Somali military. This assistance enables the U.S. government to continue to fulfill its goal of assisting the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) to build effective and rights-respecting security forces, which are indispensable to achieving greater military effectiveness. The waiver for PKO assistance, used in assisting efforts to form broad-based, multi-clan Somali security forces, will also support this goal. Further, a waiver for support provided by the Department of Defense pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 333 will allow for U.S. government assistance to build the Somali military’s capacity to conduct effective, sustained counterterrorism operations against al-Shabaab.

SOMALIA DA 1. Terror and starvation

a. Link: RAND study find US involvement is key to degrading Al Shabaab

Seth G. Jones, Andrew Liepman, Nathan Chandler, 2016. (Jones is director of the International Security and Defense Policy Center at the RAND Corporation, as well as an adjunct professor at the School for Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University; former representative for the commander, U.S. Special Operations Command, to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations. Andrew Liepman, a senior policy analyst at the RAND Corporation and a 30-year veteran of the CIA; formerly the Principal Deputy Director of the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC). Nathan Chandler is a project associate at the RAND Corporation, where his recent work focused on counterinsurgency, counterterrorism, and counternarcotics theory and conduct) 2016 “Counterterrorism and Counterinsurgency in Somalia” <https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR1539.html> (accessed 19 Jan 2023)

This study finds that a tailored engagement strategy — which involved deploying a small number of U.S. special operations forces to conduct targeted strikes, provide intelligence, and build the capacity of local partner forces to conduct ground operations — was key in degrading al Shabaab. Still, progress in Somalia is reversible in the absence of continued and consistent pressure and political, economic, and social reforms.

b. Impact: Terrorism. Al-Shabaab continues to terrorize

Seth G. Jones, Andrew Liepman, Nathan Chandler, 2016. (Jones is director of the International Security and Defense Policy Center at the RAND Corporation, adjunct professor at the School for Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins Univ.; former representative for the commander, U.S. Special Operations Command, to the Asst Secretary of Defense for Special Operations. Andrew Liepman, a senior policy analyst at the RAND Corporation and a 30-year veteran of the CIA; formerly the Principal Deputy Director of the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC). Nathan Chandler is a project associate at the RAND Corporation) 2016 “Counterterrorism and Counterinsurgency in Somalia” <https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR1539.html> (accessed 19 Jan 2023)

Despite progress in pushing al Shabaab out of areas it once controlled, the organization is still dangerous and lethal. It conducted an increasingly violent terrorist campaign, shifting from an insurgent group that controlled territory to a terrorist group that commits indiscriminate attacks on civilians and combatants alike. These attacks— including al Shabaab’s targeting of civilians, AMISOM forces, and Somali government officials—underscores that the campaign against it is far from over. Al Shabaab leaders have indicated their desire to increase control of territory, which would allow them to collect more taxes, profiting from port activity; recruit more supporters; and oversee an Islamic emirate. Still, the group retains an ability to conduct attacks and disrupt normal life in Somalia and neighboring countries such as Kenya.

c. Impact: Starvation. Al-Shabaab starves millions

Jason Burke, 2017. (Africa correspondent of the Guardian, based in Johannesburg, and reporting from across the continent. In 20 years as a foreign correspondent, he has covered stories throughout the Middle East, Europe and South Asia.) 27 Jul 2017 “Al-Shabaab militants ban starving Somalis from accessing aid” (accessed 19 Jan 2023) <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jul/27/al-shabaab-militants-ban-starving-somalis-from-accessing-aid>

Islamist militants in Somalia have imposed a ban on humanitarian assistance in areas they control, forcing hundreds of thousands of people to choose between death from starvation and disease or brutal punishment. **[END QUOTE]** In some towns, hungry and weak people have been ordered by extremist leaders to remain where they are to act as human shields against US airstrikes. Somalia is suffering its worst drought in 40 years, with the effects of climatic catastrophe compounded by war and poor governance. Interviews with villagers in the swaths of land controlled by al-Qaida-affiliate al-Shabaab, in the centre and south of the east African state, reveal a population on the brink of catastrophe, with children and older people already dying in significant numbers. [**HE GOES ON TO SAY QUOTE**:] Al-Shabaab has told people they will be punished – possibly executed as spies – if they have any contact with humanitarian agencies. [**END QUOTE**] Strict British and US counter-terrorism laws are also discouraging humanitarian organisations from delivering vital emergency assistance, aid agencies have said. Although aid officials say a huge international effort and donations by Somalia’s vast diaspora have so far averted a repeat of the 2011 famine, when 250,000 people died, conditions in much of the country have continued to deteriorate in recent months. [**HE GOES ON TO CONCLUDE QUOTE**:] An additional 500,000 people now need humanitarian assistance, bringing the total to 6.7 million. Almost half of these people face starvation if they do not receive help.

d. Impact: Terrorism deaths. Example: Al-Shabaab killed 500 people just in one bombing in Oct 2018

CBS News 2018. June 9, 2018 “4 U.S. soldiers wounded in Somalia are now in Kenya, military says” <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/somalia-attack-4-u-s-soldiers-wounded-now-in-kenya-2018-06-09/> (accessed 19 Jan 2023)

The al Qaida-linked al-Shabaab extremist group, which is based in Somalia and controls parts of the country's rural south and central regions, claimed responsibility. The group was blamed for the truck bombing in Mogadishu in October that killed more than 500 people and raised concerns about al-Shabaab's ability to build ever-larger explosives.

SOMALIA DA 2. Destabilization / Collapse of Somalia

Link & Brink: African Union troops protect Somalia from Al Shabab but are on the brink of failure and need US support to maintain

Sam Kiley, 2018. (Senior International Correspondent at CNN. Prior to CNN, he was the Foreign Affairs Editor of Sky News. He is a journalist of over twenty years experience.) February 12, 2018 “Funding al-Shabaab: How aid money ends up in terror group's hands” <https://www.cnn.com/2018/02/12/africa/somalia-al-shabaab-foreign-aid-intl/index.html> (brackets in original) (accessed 19 Jan 2023)

Ugandan soldiers prepare for a day of patrol. 22,000 AU troops have been fighting al-Shabaab for years, but are now set to withdraw by 2020. For now, the country's primary fighting force is a 22,000-strong African Union (AU) contingent that has been protecting the country's fledgling government in Mogadishu, and working to wrest control of south back from al-Shabaab. But it's withdrawing slowly and is expected to be out of the country in two year's time. The African Union military leadership admits that it can't push al-Shabaab off the major roads that provide it with so much income. "Instead of reducing [AU forces], it should have been increased," said Lt. Colonel Chris Ogwal. "We are now overstretched, we are just conducting minor offensive operations." That remains al-Shabaab's financial artery. Ogwal said that any reduction in AU forces would inevitably leave a vacuum that al-Shabaab would fill. This leaves a growing number of American troops -- more than 500, including Special Operation Forces -- shouldering the ever-increasing security burden in Somalia.

Link & Impact: Last time we disengaged from Somalia (1990’s), the bad guys took over and things got a lot worse

Lt. Col. Nicholas Nyesiga 2017 (officer in the Army of Uganda) US Naval Postgraduate School, “Combating transnational terrorism in the East African region: The role of the African Union Mission in Somalia” June 2017 (accessed 19 Jan 2023) https://calhoun.nps.edu/bitstream/handle/10945/55509/17Jun\_Nyesiga\_Nicholas.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

The disengagement of international community allowed the warlords to entrench themselves in Somali society and also opened the way for foreign jihadists to radicalize the population. This factor is partly responsible for the escalation of the conflict and expansion of Al Shabaab influence. Islamic militant organizations capitalized on the U.S. withdrawal as a propaganda tool to superficially indicate the strength of Islamic forces against a perceived western Christian crusade and their narrative coincided with the earlier Russian forces’ retreat from Afghanistan in 1989. The narrative, though deceitful, motivated many young jihadists to join the Al Shabaab cause.

Impact: Terrorism. Without military help, al-Shabaab terrorists may resurge

RAND corporation, 2016. (research organization that develops solutions to public policy challenges to help make communities throughout the world safer and more secure, healthier and more prosperous.) September 13, 2016 “Al Shabaab Weakened but Not Defeated in Somalia” (accessed 19 Jan 2023) <https://www.rand.org/news/press/2016/09/13.html>

Efforts to weaken the al Qa'ida-linked terrorist group al Shabaab in Somalia have had some success over the past five years, but the U.S. campaign there is now in jeopardy, according to a new RAND Corporation study. Al Shabaab may resurge if urgent steps are not taken to address the political, economic and governance challenges at the heart of the conflict, researchers say. The report finds that a key to degrading al Shabaab was a tailored engagement strategy that involved deploying a small number of U.S. special operations forces to conduct targeted strikes, provide intelligence and build the capacity of local partner forces to conduct ground operations.

SOMALIA DA 3. Increased risk of attacks on Americans

Link: Last time we abandoned military efforts in Somalia, it led to take-over by terrorists

NPR, 2013. (National Public Radio is a privately and publicly funded non-profit membership media organization based in Washington) Oct 5, 2013 “What A Downed Black Hawk In Somalia Taught America” <https://www.npr.org/2013/10/05/229561805/what-a-downed-black-hawk-in-somalia-taught-america> (brackets added) (accessed 19 Jan 2023)

"So we, by withdrawing from Somalia, left a lawless region ripe for al-Qaida and gave at least a whole generation of Somalis over to these Islamist fundamentalists to be educated and groomed," Bowden says. When the U.S. announced its withdrawal, it also gave Osama bin Laden a narrative to latch onto. "His message was, 'Well, we can defeat this great power because they're not used to hardship and tragedy, so if we can inflict that they'll retreat,' " [journalist Mark] Bowden says. That message was aimed at those who might have previously been deterred by the United States' power.

Brink: Al-Shabaab wants to attack the US

Faith Karimi, Ashley Fantz and Catherine E. Shoichet, 2015. (Faith works with CNN teams to report, write and edit stories for CNN.com. Ashley has been a producer and reporter for CNN since 2006. Catherine Shoichet covers immigration for CNN Digital.) February 21, 2015 “Al-Shabaab threatens malls, including some in U.S.; FBI downplays threat” (accessed 19 Jan 2023) <https://www.cnn.com/2015/02/21/us/al-shabaab-calls-for-mall-attacks/index.html>

But after a video from terror group Al-Shabaab calling for attacks on shopping malls in Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States, how worried should shoppers be? [END QUOTE] Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson told CNN Sunday that there's "no credible or specific evidence" suggesting a U.S. mall attack is in the works. But he warned Americans to watch out. "If anyone is planning to go to the Mall of America today," he said, "they've got to be particularly careful." [THEY GO ON TO SAY QUOTE:] The Minnesota mall is among those mentioned in the video the Somalia-based terror group apparently posted on Saturday. The video talks about Al-Shabaab's September 2013 attack at an upscale mall in Nairobi, Kenya, calling for similar attacks in the three Western countries. More than 60 people were killed in the Kenyan mall siege, which lasted four days.

Brink: Al-Shabab threatens the US and has radicals in the US Somali immigrant community

Conor Gaffey, 2017. (staff writer for Newsweek covering Africa, with a focus on Nigeria, security and conflict.) 4/19/17 “Why Is Trump Sending More U.S. Troops to Somalia?” <https://www.newsweek.com/us-troops-somalia-donald-trump-al-shabab-586004> (accessed 19 Jan 2023)

Besides the 1998 embassy bombings, Al-Shabab has not launched any successful attacks on U.S. interests in the region. But the group has called for attacks in the West—and even used Trump in a 2016 propaganda video—and tens of American citizens have joined or attempted to join the group, many coming from Minneapolis, which has one of the largest concentrations of Somali immigrants in the United States. The deployment of extra U.S. troops to Somalia follows a presidential directive in March that loosened the conditions for airstrikes against Al-Shabab in Somalia, a sign that the Trump administration may wish to expedite its military efforts against the group.

Impact: Al Shabaab is a terrorist threat to Americans

Congressional Research Service 2020 (non-partisan research agency of Congress) 16 jan 2020 " Al Shabaab" (accessed 19 Jan 2023) https://sgp.fas.org/crs/row/IF10170.pdf

Al Shabaab has threatened U.S. and Western targets in East Africa and called for attacks against the United States. The Obama Administration described the U.S. strike on Godane as responding to an “imminent threat,” citing his oversight of “plots targeting Westerners, including U.S. persons in East Africa.” The group has killed at least 10 U.S. citizens in the region. Six U.S. citizens were injured in the 2013 Westgate Mall attack; over 50 were reportedly on site at the time.