

terrorist activities, his vulnerability to internal opposition, and the imminence of new US military action. Lacking specific guidelines for the execution of this campaign, Administration officials had passed the disinformation to the US press, and a story based on this first appeared in the Wall Street Journal on 25 August. The disclosure of this attempted deception put a strain on the Administration's credibility in its dealings with the domestic press.

Libyan fortunes in Chad worsened in the late fall of 1986 when the rebel forces of Goukhouni Oueddei defected to the Government of Chad following the wounding and detention of their leader in the Libyan capital on 30 October. The newly united forces of Chad then launched an offensive to dislodge the 7000 Libyan troops occupying the northern part of the country; they received logistic and material support from France and the United States including a US\$15 million shipment of weapons and ammunition announced by the Administration on 18 December. By early January 1987, Government forces had recaptured several important towns in the north, inflicting heavy losses on Libyan forces. Libya responded to these setbacks on 4 January by bombing two towns south of the 16th parallel - the line set by France in 1983 effectively partitioning Chad into Libyan- and Government-controlled zones - and by doubling its forces in Chad to 14,000. The following day, Qaddafi acknowledged for the first time the presence of Libyan forces in Chad, explaining that "several hundred" troops had entered that country to free Libyan technicians allegedly held prisoner. The Chadian victories continued and in late March and early April the Libyans suffered severe defeats and fled from their strongholds in northern Chad leaving behind large quantities of equipment most of which originated in the Soviet Union. Since then there has been little fighting. The Libyans are believed to be consolidating their position in the Aozou strip, an area of border territory which Libya claims, but which is generally recognised as belonging to Chad.