BATTLES *continued from page 11*

• Cheysson reported back to French President Francois Mitterrand on Feb. 7 after his talks in N'Djamena, Addis Ababa and Tripoli, but political observers in Paris see no movement on the key issues in the Chad conflict. Goukouni has said he is prepared to step aside for a compromise candidate as national leader, but Habre is unwilling to negotiate with anyone in the GUNT coalition. Furthermore, France has decided it must stick with Habre and so has dumped the "third man" approach.

• Even though Libya and France are still talking, relations are deteriorating and trade between the two states has fallen off dramatically.

• A delegation representing the factions allied in GUNT spent several days in Paris early this month meeting with President Mitterrand's special advisor on African affairs, Guy Penne. But GUNT leader Goukouni Oueddei has reportedly refused further talks with Habre until the French withdraw militarily — something that doesn't appear likely any time soon.

• Finally, the French government, which has explicitly stated its preference for a political rather than a military settlement, is coming under mounting pressure from conservative political leaders in France to use force to expunge Chad of what is seen as primarily a Libyan presence and potential Libyan annexation. ■

DROUGHT *continued from page 11*

and the feelings run strong even today. Southerners, for their part, remain to some extent hostile towards northerners because of the legacy of slave-trading and more recently the bloody fighting that has marked the 18-year civil war.

In 1984 the south will barely feed itself, and its ability, much less its political will, to feed the north is questionable. The imbroglio is compounded by the type of administration exercised in the south: At times the underpaid government forces take on the character of an army of occupation, and villagers report being obliged to feed the army virtually at gunpoint.

The countries that are aiding Chad militarily may yet provide the solution to the Habre regime's food needs. The U.S. Agency for International Development has responded with nearly 20% of the Chad government's food request for 1984, a donation surpassed only by the World Food Program of the United Nations. France is third among donors, giving 8,540 tons of grain.

In one ironic benefit of the drought for Habre, the heavy undergrowth that has covered the southern part of the country for the last six months is being burned off. The denuded landscape provides less shelter for the anti-government guerrillas who operate sporadically in the south (see *AN*, Oct. 3, 1983). In addition, the increasingly desperate food situation is making the feeding of these private armies problematic.

— *Georges Chevre* ■

AROUND THE CONTINENT

EGYPT'S AFRICA CAMPAIGN

LIBREVILLE [AN] Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's trip to four African countries, coming on the heels of Israeli President Chaim Herzog's official visits to Zaire and Liberia, is being seen as an attempt to capitalize on a recent deterioration in Arab-African relations.

A cornerstone of Egypt's newly active diplomacy is its implicit bid to serve as intermediary between Arab and African nations, whose relations recently suffered the shock of Zaire's and Liberia's decisions to re-establish diplomatic ties with Israel.

Relations between the two blocs also have been clouded by complaints from many African states that the diplomatic solidarity accorded to the Arabs in their dispute with Israel has been insufficiently rewarded with strengthened economic ties.

Of the countries visited — Kenya, Tanzania, Somalia and Zaire — Mubarak's first stop was Zaire. This was seen as a significant choice, as Zaire was the first African country to re-establish ties with Israel, and President Mobutu Sese Seko received Israeli President Herzog Jan. 18 on an official visit.

Some Arab countries have blasted Zaire for the move. Following the Herzog visit, for example, the Algerian daily *El Moudjahid* said Mobutu had sold Zaire "heart and soul" to the Israelis, and it scolded the Zaire leader for abusing the powers of office to amass personal wealth.

Despite threats of immediate termination of aid and investment for renewing ties with Israel, however, Zaire has maintained discreet economic links with several Arab countries since its recognition of Israel. In addition, there have been persistent rumors of a huge investment deal between Saudi financier Adnan Kashoggi and Mobutu, seemingly unaffected by the diplomatic climate.

The preservation of economic contacts with Zaire has been advocated by some Arabs, who argue that in Arab-African relations the carrot is more effective than the stick. It may also be noted that Mobutu turned down an Israeli request that he use his influence to persuade other African states to establish diplomatic ties with Tel Aviv.

Many African states consider the Arab threat to cut off aid an infringement on their national sovereignty. Some states argue that the boycott of Israel was organized in retaliation for its seizure of Egyptian (African) territory; since this land has been returned to Egypt, the argument goes, the basis of the boycott is eliminated.

The timing of Egypt's diplomatic campaign is important, as it comes in the midst of a debate about Egypt's position within the Arab world, with the PLO, Jordan, and Iraq advocating an Egyptian return to the fold.

The Egyptian leadership appears to be looking for a two-fold gain out of its African initiative: closer ties with African states, and, as a by-product, improved status within the Arab world, bolstering arguments for reacceptance into the fold.

— *Howard French* ■

TRIBUNALS TO TRY 400

[AN] Nigeria's National Council of State has announced the formation of special military tribunals to deal with the more than 400 detainees accused of economic crimes.

The government has released few details concerning the make up and operations of the tribunals but Buhari has said that they will be conducted under a strict code of justice. Announcing the government's decision on Jan. 31, he assured Nigerians that all who are tried will be considered innocent until proven otherwise.

Over 600 people — including government officials in the former administration and their associates — initially were detained in January following the coup that toppled President Shehu Shagari, but some 200 have been released. Of the total number of detainees some 106 were soldiers, 53 of whom have been released.

Some 71 of those arrested are being held in the maximum security facilities at Kirikiri, near the port at Lagos. These include former Vice President Alex Ewkwueme and the Biafran secessionist leader Emeka Odumegwu Ojukwu.

Among those accused of economic corruption is former Kano State Governor Bakin Zuwo, nicknamed by the press "Banking Zuwo," after security officers found some 3.5 million naira ($2.6 million) in his bedroom.

According to the BBC, Nigerian authorities are eager to try the chairman of the now defunct National Party of Nigeria (NPN), A.M.A. Akinloye, the former president of the Senate, Joseph Wayas, and former Minister of Transport Dr. Umaru Dikko. All three are believed to be in Europe or the United States.