Ethiopia invaded by Mussolini

Italy lost its Ethiopia colony in Africa at 1896 Battle of Adowa

- Viewed by Italy as one of the worst colonial disasters of modern history
- 25,000 Italians defeated by 100,000 Ethiopians under Menelek who had accepted an Italian protectorate in 1889 Treaty of Ucciali to become king.

On Dec. 5, 1934, a skirmish at Wal Wal (Ualval) involving an Italian garrison 80 miles inside the Ethiopian border was used by Mussolini as a pretext for demanding compensation and preparing for war.

Jan. 3, 1935 - Hailie Selassie appealed to League

- Viewed as the free world's victim in Capra's film

Jan. 7 - Laval agreement with Mussolini

- gave Ethiopia to Mussolini in violation of 1906 Anglo-French agreement excluding Italy from Ethiopia

Feb. 23 - Italy sent large forces to Ethiopia - only mild protest by Stresa Front

June 23 - Anthony Eden, British minister for League Affairs

- tried to negotiate with Mussolini but fails

Oct. 2, 1935, Mussolini ordered the bombing of Adowa by planes and the beginning of the invasion of Ethiopia by Marshal Badoglio Oct. 3 who was authorized to use poison mustard gas and destroy civilian villages.

Oct. 5 - FDR invoked Act in Ethiopian conflict, but followed middle-road course

- kept separate from League - no strategic materials or oil on embargo list
- urged "moral embargo" on all trade with Italy, but U.S. exports to Italy increased

Oct. 7 - League declared Italy the aggressor

Oct. 16 - Hearst newsreel "Ethiopia War Special!" with Edwin C. Hill and Floyd Gibbons on Adowa attack.

Nov. 14 - Tories won British election on platform of League sanctions against Italian aggression
Nov. 18 - League sanctions began: arms embargo, financial embargo, nonimportation of Italian goods

Dec. 10 - secret Hoare-Laval agreement revealed in press

- Pierre Laval - "swarthy" French PM
- Samuel Hoare - British foreign secretary under PM Stanley Baldwin
- Anthony Eden would became foreign secretary in 1937 with PM Neville Chamberlain

Dec. - England concentrated its navy at Alexadria, but poorly prepared

- England allowed Italy to use Suez Canal

Feb. 1936 - League could not agree on critical oil sanctions

- mainly because FDR refused, and U.S. controlled 50% world oil trade

Feb. 12 - Senate Foreign Relations Committee approved Thomas 14-month extension bill to the Neutrality Act

- not Pittman-McReynolds discretionary bill
- not Nye-Clark-Maverick mandatory total trade restriction bill

Feb. 29 - FDR signed Thomas bill that became the 1936 Neutrality Act

1. mandatory arms embargo on belligerents and new belligerents entering a war in progress
2. discretionary travel restriction
3. mandatory ban on loans to belligerents but short-term credits exempt
4. South American Republics exempt

Mar. 23-Apr. 8 - FDR went on Bahama cruise

May 5 - Italy occupied Addis Ababa - annexed all Ethiopia May 9.

Links:

- Italy
- Chronology of Mussolini and Italy
- Museum of Tolerance
- World History In Digital Sounds & Pictures from earthstation
- World War II Web Museum
- Hailie Selassie by Mike Cutri

Films:

- 1960 Universal newsreel - 25 years Ago: Italian troops depart, Mussolini invades Ethiopia - (Universal 33-16) DVD33
- 1960 Universal newsreel - 25 years Ago: Mussolini poised to invade
Ethiopia invaded by Mussolini

- Ethiopia, allies met at Geneva, League voted sanctions, Pierre Laval, Fancour of France, Italian troops march, map of Ethiopia, Haile Selassie and his troops - (Universal 33-77) DVD33
- 1936/02/12 Universal newsreel - Red Cross Unit Bombed In Ethiopia (1) "Rain of Bombs Kills And Maims Red Cross Workers (Photographed by Howard Winner, Ace Universal Newsreel Cameraman) - Dolo, Ethiopia: Exclusive, authentic pictures graphically show the flaming terror hurled against a Red Cross field unit near Nugelli by Italian airmen. Bombs and machine-gun fire kill and cripple Swedish doctors and their Ethiopian assistants. Scores of wounded soldiers die as the raiders ignore Red Cross flags. These scenes are among the most amazing ever made by a newsreel cameraman." - shows cameraman turning crank. "These exclusive pictures were filmed at great personal peril . . ." (silent partial newsreel) - (Universal 8-432) DVD51
- 1935/10/16 Hearst newsreel - ETHIOPIA WAR SPECIAL! FIRST ACTUAL FILMS OF GREAT ADOWA DRIVE. Official pictures from the Italian front! First authentic scenes of the tremendous push by Il Duce's men to avenge the defeat of 1896 with a vivid description by Edwin C. Hill, based on the eyewitness stories, from the front line, of Floyd Gibbons, famous war correspondent. (HNR Vol.7-No.208)
- Newsreels on Ethiopia 1935-36