Civiltà Cattolica, July 7, 1934, pages 100-102, re Hitler’s state visit to Italy, June 14-16, 1934

Heading: Colloquy between Mussolini and Hitler at Stra [a resort in Italy between Venice and Padua]

Text: In the afternoon of June 13th, the Italian Head of State, with Hon. Suvich, the Deputy Foreign Minister, Count Galeazzo Ciano, the Head of the Press Office, all arrived in Stra, taking up lodgings in the Villa Reale, of Pisani. The next morning, the German Chancellor, Hitler, coming from Munich, landed at the airport of St. Nicholas at Lido and was greeted by Hon. Mussolini, who accompanied him to the ‘Grand Hotel’ of Venice, returning afterwards to the Villa Reale in Stra. Then, in the afternoon, the first colloquy took place, lasting more than two hours, between the two Heads of Government, a colloquy that resumed on June 15 and concluded ‘in a spirit of cordial collaboration,’ agreeing on ‘the consideration of issues of general policy and of those that most directly concern the two countries.’ To the necessarily general announcement were added a few statements made by the Head of State after a grand review of the Fascist troops before a crowd that packed the Plaza of St. Mark (in Venice). Recalling the visit [p.101] of 11 years earlier, when Venice and the Veneto region still bore the marks of war wounds . . . the Italian Head of State said: ‘A meeting took place in Venice these past days on which the world’s attention was focused. But I tell you, Italians, and all beyond our borders, that Hitler and I have not met here to remake or in any way modify the political map of Europe and the world, or to add any cause for concern among those who are troubled in any of the countries from the farthest East to the farthest West. . . .’ For his part, Chancellor Hitler, having departed from Venice the evening of June 15, in a speech at Gera in Thuringia (Germany) on June 17, put forth basically peaceful propositions, saying that Germany respects the rights of others, as it wishes to have its own rights respected, and that it claims equality of rights in matters of armaments, that is, not for ability to attack, but for power to defend. Far from any ‘conspiracy’ with other powers, it guards against any insidious efforts against it, and is disposed to peace yet ready to defend itself against attacks to the last drop of its blood. From the words themselves of these two men of state one can conclude that Italian-German action does not want to be a menace to anyone . . . Thus, this is not an arrangement or combination or bloc that seeks to

[p.102] . . . do not want this to be the result of an act of force, but completely peaceful. The newspapers commented on the meeting in Venice, adding that Italy would be obligated to help Germany regain its place in the community of nations, with parity of rights and treatment, which is implicit in any international assembly but has thus far been refused. Finally, it is said that one of the points agreed upon was the absolute independence of the Republic of Austria.