**49. April 12, 1690.** *Copy of a letter from the Lamist Mennonite church in Amsterdam to the church at Hamburg and Altona, in answer to the letter of January 21, 1690, concerning the needs among the Mennonites in the Palatinate and reporting the material and financial aid provided through merchants at Frankfurt and the Mennonite church at Crefeld.*

*King Louis XIV of France had laid claim to the Palatinate and his army invaded and caused heavy destruction to the area in 1689. At this time many Mennonites, already burdened with heavy taxes paid in exchange for religious toleration, lost all of their possessions.[[1]](#footnote-1)*

[recto]

Amsterdam, April 2/12, 1690.

We, the undersigned[[2]](#footnote-2) overseers and ministers of the United Mennonite congregation of Amsterdam wish much grace and peace from God our Heavenly Father to the overseers, teachers, and brothers of the Mennonite congregation of Hamburg and Altona, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen!

Dear friends and very beloved brothers,

We have received just at the right time your welcome letter of last January 21, full of concern about the sad condition of the brothers in the Palatinate, along with a report, which was sent to you from there. It has been pleasant for us to witness your Christian sympathy with them. As far as we are concerned, the great misery that has struck them there has also touched our heart. For this reason we have also been moved promptly and actively to inform ourselves about their condition and also to offer a helping hand according the state of affairs.

We have therefore acted upon this in two ways: First by means of some prominent merchants at Frankfurt,[[3]](#footnote-3) and secondly by means of our friends and brothers in Crefeld, who were quite familiar there and who had good access, and who were already active with our consent in sending some linen, stockings, and shoes, which were very needed there since the robbing, plundering, and expelling of the craftsmen.

Through the above mentioned Frankfurt merchants we have tried to become informed about the number of distressed families. [The merchants] subsequently have sent some people to the dispersed congregations there, with the request that they ought to send some of them [of their members] to Frankfurt. This has taken place accordingly, and it became clear that our brothers, as before, were for the time being still staying in their original residences and numbered about 250 families, but that they likely would not be able to stay there for long. In consequence it was proposed to them on our [verso] behalf that, in case they became too fearful there and preferred to leave the area, they might find travel money from one of the earlier mentioned merchants, provided that they brought along an appropriate church letter from their congregations. The representatives who had come to Frankfurt were requested to announce this everywhere in the congregations.

This arrangement is still valid there, and a few have come down with wives and children. We expect the arrival of the majority any time now, and, accordingly, it will be necessary that they should be helped collectively. About this we also hope subsequently to further inform the friends, not doubting that they too will be whole-heartedly inclined to do their part. For the moment, dear friends, this is all that we can inform you about, remaining meanwhile after hearty greetings,

Your well-disposed friends and brothers.

1. **49** 1 *ML* II, 598. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Signatures are lacking from this, the only copy. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Pieter d’Orville, non-Mennonite, Dutch merchant and banker at Frankfurt, is mentioned in 1689 in A 1421, and also Paulus Prijer at Crefeld, as helping with finances for refugees. *ME* IV, 88. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)