**47. November 15, 1687.** *Letter from David Holzhalb at Zurich,[[1]](#footnote-1) representative of the Reformed Swiss cantons, to David Rutgers, Mennonite deacon at Amsterdam, reporting on the condition of the Mennonites in Switzerland and assuring Rutgers that his concerns are being heard.*

[page 1]

Sir,

Your courtesy and goodness should have moved me to write to you sooner, but as I tell you that I have only been back from my trip fourteen days, I think you will forgive me.

On my arrival I did not miss the opportunity to propose the matter at length to my Sovereign Lords, as you had recommended, adding also what the Amsterdam Lord Deputies solicited on your behalf, and all that has happened in The Hague. I can say that there is nothing in our country, that is, in the Canton of Zurich, that could disturb or cause you the least concern. Moreover, my Sovereign Lords are so concerned about your request that they ordered their two deputies, who are going to Bern as of today for certain state issues, to inform themselves at that place on whether there are prisoners from your people, or what could have happened, in order to have exact information and to get hold of it, so afterwards you may have some [page 2] satisfaction in the matter.[[2]](#footnote-2) When the said deputies return, I shall not miss the occasion to pass on to you the news which they bring back. I promise to devote myself always to satisfying you, that it be a testimony that I truly am

your very affectionate

Zurich, November 15, 1687. and very humble servant.

David Holzhalb.

I ask you to greet Doctor Galenus,[[3]](#footnote-3) and

your beloved wife, as well as your sons on my behalf.

[page 3: address and notations]

Mr. David Rutgers[[4]](#footnote-4)

merchant at Amsterdam

[at right angles to the above, a later notation in an eighteenth-century Dutch hand]

November 16 Zurich

David Holzhalb

was envoy of the

Swiss Reformed cantons

OXdam[?]

1. **47** 1 In April 1687 the Reformed cantons had sent David Holzhalb to The Hague to get aid for the Waldenses. Christine Freifrau von Hoiningen-Huene, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Beziehungen zwischen der Schweiz und Holland im XVII. Jahrhundert* (Dessau: Anhaltische Buchdruckerei „Gutenberg“, 1899), pp. 24-25. The Dutch Mennonites were less willing than they had been in the 1650s to contribute to this cause while their brothers were still imprisoned in Switzerland at the time. See Document 11, p. 173. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The meaning of the last part of this sentence is unclear. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Galenus Abrahamsz de Haan (1622-1706), physician and minister from the Lamist congregation. *ME* II, 431, ff. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. David Rutgers III (1629-1706), Lamist Mennonite deacon at Amsterdam. *ME* IV, 394. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)