127. February 7, 1711. Letter of Runckel to Fagel, complaining about the delay of matters, especially because of the influence of the local Bernese magistrates, who do not gladly give up the financial advantages secured to them in the persecution of the Mennonites. With this letter Runckel enclosed a copy of a resolution of the Great Council of Bern and his memorandum against it.

[recto]

Bern

February 7, 1711

Copy Confidential

Sir,

Since my very humble, confidential [letter] of the 28th of last month concerning the unfortunate Anabaptists of this country and their departure for Holland, I have not ceased to request dispatches concerning what has been resolved in the Sovereign Council of this Canton in that regard, along with the implementation of these same resolutions. I have not been able to achieve that up until now, as much on account of the number of small formalities that must be observed in this affair as on account of several unexpected incidents which occurred all at once. Meanwhile, at last, the day before yesterday in the evening, the chancellor’s office[[1]](#footnote-1) gave me minutes concerning the points agreed upon, and, most respectfully, I have the honor to append a copy[[2]](#footnote-2) to this letter. But since I have not found that this agrees completely with the aims for which we have convened the Commission established for this affair, for myself I have already prepared a short memorandum on the items in dispute, a copy[[3]](#footnote-3) of which I once again have the honor most humbly to append, [a memorandum] which with the aforementioned minutes I also presented yesterday to the President of the Commission, with a request that he be willing to have mistakes corrected without delay, inasmuch as no person knows better than he himself the points on which we agreed and [verso] how they have been approved by the Sovereign Council.

He promised me that he would bring first one and then the other [document] before the Commission, which was about to assemble without these, and that he would try to have the contested points altered. But up to now I have been able to learn nothing more about what took place in that

respect. Meanwhile the said Commission has also been solely occupied for several days now in preparing the open diplomatic letter of amnesty,[[4]](#footnote-4) which ought to be made widely known in favor of the Anabaptists dispersed and hidden. And the President has assured me that next Monday and Tuesday we ought to have the reports of the local magistrates concerning the guarantors for the prisoners, and that immediately thereafter those of the prisoners for whom guarantors will have been found sufficient should be set at liberty, and that the same should be done with respect to the others, according as their guarantors are readily available and found to be valid. I dare not give assurance that without doubt that will happen, inasmuch as I make note of the fact that the local magistrates would be sorry to lose such a fine practice, that being the fleecing of the poor Anabaptists at random. They are doing all they can to drag out the affair to still greater length. Nevertheless, I shall do impossible things in order once more to overcome these difficulties, and meanwhile I have the honor of always framing my statements with profound respect.

1. 127 Chancellerie. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. This is Document 121, dated January 28, 1711. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. This is Document 126, dated February 6, 1711. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. la Patente pour l’Amnestie. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)