**60. April 29, 1695.** *The Elector Prince Johann Wilhelm[[1]](#footnote-1) responds from Düsseldorf to the letter of the States General of the Netherlands (previous Document 59). He explains that he will do as much as possible to fulfill the request of the States General through extending the deadline by which the real estate of the Mennonites would have to be sold.*

[folio 1 recto]

Translation from High German.

Elector Prince of the Palatinate

April 26, 1695

High and Mighty Lords,

We did receive Your High and Mightinesses’ friendly and neighborly communication of the 24th of the last month (March) and from that learned at full length what has already been written to us twice before concerning some well-to-do Mennonists living in this our area and territory. Since we did properly instruct our officials already quite some time ago to permit the aforesaid Mennonists to sell their goods themselves (just as Your High and Mightinesses yourselves now were pleased to report) for which purpose a deadline of six months was fixed. Accordingly, since all that time nothing to the contrary has appeared to us, we reasonably had the firm expectation that our aforementioned positive, strict orders should be fully acted upon and executed—to Your Honorable High and Mightinesses’ satisfaction.

But since we have learned to our greatest discontent the opposite from Your Honorable High and Mightinesses’ above-mentioned official letter, we shall properly correct our officials, whom we find appear to have been neglectful and disobedient in this matter, and make express and serious provisions so that our instructions on behalf of the Mennonists will be put into effect as soon as possible. [folio 1 verso] And in addition, the aforesaid Mennonists themselves will be

permitted to sell their goods, which they possess in our lands, beyond the previously [allotted] six months. In case it should become apparent that within such a time they cannot dispose of them at a fair price, then we are not disinclined, according to circumstances, to allow some further privilege or lenience, which includes those who might have the idea and understanding either to drop or to make the sales difficult, just because they feel our resentment. For that reason we do not doubt that Your High and Mightinesses will perceive from this (to your satisfaction) our good intentions and genuine opinion which we cherish in the preservation of good neighborliness, and, on the contrary, you should not suspect us when we in conformity [with our position] cannot permit the Mennonists henceforth to own real estate in our lands.

But on the other hand, since we have no intention at all to inquire of what religion Your Honorable High and Mightinesses’ subjects might be, so we could easily[[2]](#footnote-2) imagine that Your Honorable High and Mightinesses would not allow that our well-to-do subjects, [who live] in your lands, and who own and use property legally in your country, which they have obtained and possessed thus far peacefully, [that our subjects] might be molested and disadvantaged in any proceedings.[[3]](#footnote-3) [folio 2 recto] This friendly and neighborly answer we did not want to withhold from Your Honorable High and Mightinesses. Remaining inclined to do any friendly and neighborly service for Your High and Mightinesses,

Düsseldorf, April 29, 1695,

signed

Johann Wilhelm,

Elector Prince.

1. **60** 1 Johann Wilhelm, Catholic Elector Prince of the Palatinate from 1690 to 1716. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. literally, “at an appropriate time.” [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. That is, when the situation is reversed and our subjects live in your land, we expect them to be treated fairly. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)