**Citation:** James W. Lowry, "Document 162, 23 May 1711, translation," in *Documents of Brotherly Love: Dutch Mennonite Aid to Swiss Anabaptists* (Millersburg, OH: Ohio Amish Library), 917-21 (odd).

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**Date:**  23 May 1711

**Sender:**  Runckel, Johann Ludwig

**Sender Place:**  Bern, Switzerland

**Receiver:**  Need, Committee for Foreign

**Receiver Place:**  Amsterdam, Netherlands

**Language:**  English

**Translation:**

162. May 23, 1711. Letter from Runckel to accompany Document 152. Although the Amish churches in the Upper Country are reporting for the most part, the followers of Reist in the Lower Country keep themselves hidden and stubbornly refuse all instructions. He recommends greeting the envoy, St. Saphorin, who soon will return to The Hague, and to make sure of his favor. He reports that he has heard of a plan of the King of Denmark to colonize some of the Swiss, recommends taking care of passports, and explains some details about the needed remittance of funds.

[page 1]

Bern[[1]](#footnote-7) May 23, 1711

Very worthy, etc.

My especially highly honored Sirs!

My last communication[[2]](#footnote-8) with the date of the 16th of the current month, I hope, has been safely delivered with the accompanying documents, and from it you have learned in great measure how convoluted affairs are with the poor local Anabaptists. By carrying out my duties yet again, I have finally succeeded in being given a perfunctory written answer from the meeting of the Council to all the points contained in my memorandum of the 19th of last month. This, then, I shall communicate in a copy so that my highly honored Sirs may fully perceive how far the affairs concerning the Anabaptist possessions have changed and where they will finally rest.

Otherwise nothing further has occurred in this matter to deserve any attention, except that after much soliciting and pushing I have finally received the lists of the Anabaptists located in Neuchâtel and the district of Thun. I rest in the hope that soon I will receive all [page 2] those who adhere to the so-called Upper or Amish congregation because the matter is being worked on, as far as I know. Concerning the so-called Lower or Leistian congregation I have, however, received not only nothing, but despite all the efforts expended on it till now, I cannot yet learn whether they work on it or not. It is not unreasonable to fear that all trouble is thrown away on these unfortunate people concerning their complete removal and all expended concern and toil has been lost, if God does not powerfully favor [them] and move them to action and departure. For

the longer it goes, the more opinion grows that they value all human encouragement and admonition as nothing.[[3]](#footnote-9)

The Lord St. Saphorin will again travel from here to The Hague in the next few days. He can then give an oral report about various matters. And since he should omit nothing that might best assist the poor local Anabaptists, as much as is possible for him, it would not in my opinion be unserviceable if my highly honored Sirs on his arrival in The Hague would welcome him with thanks for his good offices, and with that [persuade him] to listen to reason concerning various matters. Then, if perhaps conditions should change somewhat, his friendship and [page 3] favor might be assured in any case.

Moreover, I am informed from outward sources that some Anabaptists, having come here from below [that is, from the north] and now staying in Neuchâtel, are attempting to insinuate themselves among the others, giving the impression that his royal Majesty of Denmark is inclined to take up and receive some of them and that the representative and royal Danish agent at Worms, Mr. Kneit, has some instructions in this case. What results from that, time will need to tell.

However, in the meantime I remain besides a mutual commendation to God’s powerful, gracious protection and my best commendation of myself and mine to your pious prayer,

My most highly honored Sirs’

Most devoted servant,

J. Ludwig Runckel.

P.S.

Since the longer it goes, the more closely the time for departure of the poor Anabaptists approaches, it will be useful to think about obtaining the necessary passports. According to an exactly made estimation of the

expenses required for the journey, we venture that we need at least 600 rixdollars yet of the 1000 rixdollars assigned to Daniel Rychen, which have not yet been fully deposited. And accordingly inevitable need will demand that I [page 4] make my appearance among the departing Anabaptists at Basel so as to help arrange everything for them in complete order. So it would be a special favor to me, if my highly honored Sirs could obtain a letter of credit from our High and Mighty, gracious Lords to the said Canton of Basel, because this would be useful and advantageous in every way to the poor Anabaptists and me etc., looking forward to our request, etc. I am [the same] as in the letter.[[4]](#footnote-10) etc., etc.

The closing, signature, and postscript of the letter transcribed at the bottom of page 918 and the top of page 920. The closing and signature are in Runckel’s usual hand, but the postscript is in the hand identified as Runckel 2, which occurs in Documents 85, 96, 98, 122, 142, 162, and 210. In this sample, the Z, a, ck, w, ß, v, and cht are different from Runckel’s usual writing shown in the illustration on page 217. Note in the fourth line up from the bottom a long word has been cancelled and a short word in the third line up. See also the discussion in the notes to Documents 85 and 142.

1. This document is translated into Dutch in Vorsterman’s Relaes (A 1392) on pp. 187-188. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
2. Document 160. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
3. Müller, p. 317. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
4. Vorsterman translates this as “ik ben als jn den brieff” (p. 188). This is perhaps connected with the shift in handwriting. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)