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## The Synod of the "Chr. Geref. Kerk in Nederland" Received a Letter, Written On This Date, from the Reformed Church in America Over the Issue of Freemasonry

Reformed Church in America

Nella Kennedy

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10 June 1889

. . ...

the Netherlands

The synod of the "Chr. Geref. Kerk in Nederland" received a letter, written on this date, from the Reformed Church in America over the issue of Freemasonry. The synod made a lengthy response to the letter in its response.

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In Dutch; translation by Nella Kennedy, 2002.

Original in the Archives of the Gereformeerde Kerk in Rotterdam.

To the Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States of North America

Welcome Brothers in our Lord Jesus Christ

The Synod of the "Chr. Geref. Kerk in Nederland" read with more than ordinary interest your brotherly and important letter of June 10, 1889.

It was good to appear in our midst, adding your voice to your heart, albeit it through a written epistle. How bad we would feel to see the brotherly ties broken which connect us in so many ways and so tenderly. Everything within us tells us that that may not, and must not, take place, but that the striving and seeking must be under the blessing of the Lord whose {two words illegible] ..... to get with the taking away in the power of the Lord of the more or less disturbing speeches [?] which presently marks and disturbs us. [the translator could not make this sentence any more clearly]

How much we would like to be able to report that this so brotherly letter would have taken away all the objections in our midst concerning the allowing of Freemasonry in your midst.

#### [2]

Our hearts would have exulted in joy and thanksgiving to the Lord in the communion of saints.

And now, we beg of you, brothers, do not regard our further remarks as having originated from the desire to lay down the law to our brethren in Christ or to establish lordship over you. We are well aware of our insignificance and weakness.

We also do not desire, against the Word of the Lord, to meddle [in the affairs] of others. What propels us is the feeling by the community of saints according to the Word of God, and interest in the well being of the sheep of the Lord's flock. Many of those have been entrusted to us for years [are now] submitted to your care after emigration.

It pains us therefore very much that your writing disappointed the real issue.

We do feel the difficulty of your position in this. We actually have such great respect for our unalloyed Reformed principle not to interfere with the rights of the local churches and respective classes, but that they do <u>not tolerate</u> Freemasonry was not clear in your letter[s]. They do declare that they, as Synod, do not

#### [3]

sympathize with it, which we gladly accept, but even so they express not to be able to give testimony pro or con in a reasonable way. That especially draws our attention since it is not named under the [....word is illegible; therein???] [and?] condemned secret societies.

We even fear that the resolution of your Synod of 1880 (also with the best intentions) will promote tolerance of Freemasonry. In that resolution, after the character of various secret societies are described as wrong, without naming them. Also undoubtedly many will recognize Freemasonry in that [resolution]. Even so, finally, the admonition is heard that "this Synod advises consistories and classes "to be very kind and forbearing, and strictly constitutional in their dealings with individuals on this subject, and that they be and are hereby affectionately cautioned against setting up any new or unauthorized tests of communion in the Christian Church."

Does it not have all the appearance, to say it mildly, as if one is afraid that the evil, [even] as characterized as evil in it, will be seized forcefully and to go [word illegible]. Where do we see evidence and guarantee, dear brethren, also in your correspondence, that the evil of Freemasonry is not tolerated in your midst, but, as much as possible, is rejected and purged according to the Word of God

### [4]

Also with the best will and with close considerations of your letters we did not succeed in discovering this anywhere.

This letter disappointed us the more since it only made mention of the Synodical resolutions until 1881, already taken before and we were more or less acquainted with them when the well-known resolution of 1882 was passed by the Synod of Zwolle by us. Whether since that time another position concerning Freemasonry has been accepted in your midst has to be doubted now unfortunately, although it may be possible that since that time more peace and harmony concerning this matter is reigning in your midst now, for whatever reason.

That, beloved brethren, has lead to our position also. We have not spoken rashly, and prayerfully have addressed you. We cannot do else than to continue to pray and to beseech that this evil Freemasonry may be taken away from your midst.

To hear this would be joy to our soul. We look forward to that. We continue to hope and encourage it according to the Word of the Lord and in the Name of our God.

Brotherly blessings and greetings on behalf of the Synod of the "Chr. Geref. Nederland" The Ad Hoc Committee

chan de Synne i de Ver. Staten van N. America. Mellenn. Brockers in onien Sileme ferns Christens, Met men dan gemone belangstel hing heft de dynade den Chin gieret ven in brochentigte en belangrijte schrijs nen. d. d. to fami woog. Flet deed have blighteren your an het harte numanes une them, in has not blechts per missione, in have might te home, too mode two Te der broedentighen band uarbraken tien, die and in the mengenter app, tient en two keeder aan elkanden norbindly. Al mat is and is regt and, dat dit mich many en mach geschicken, man all has strenen? en progen most zin ander den zegen des bleenen die namen tal te hale met meneming in de magand heid des lleene en ent thank min of meen inertonene taspene and mentes a maching. Hve goom sunder me da un mensionen a te kanne meloten, dat dit um too londerligh achingmen Tancing to alle bermanshi zahen het dulden den unipmeteelanig is van

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