

Amsterdam

Ngereb Shabbat Kodesh Ve'ele Hamishpatim

23 February [1968]

Dear Sir,

Thank you for your letter of 14 February, informing me of your intention to visit Holland in the near future. Naturally, I would be happy to receive you.

Nevertheless, I feel obliged to tell you that I already dealt with the matter regarding the lifting of the ban that the late rabbis of my community pronounced against Spinoza, when I responded to a question posed from the United States almost ten years ago. In my answer on that occasion, I indicated that I would act as our sages have directed: a rabbinic court may not negate the decision of a previous rabbinic court unless it is wiser and greater in number.

I am just a cadet on the rabbinic throne of the holy Sephardi community of Amsterdam, and who would dare imagine that they were wiser than the eminent rabbis that preceded them on that throne in their community? Far be it from me to do such the thing!

So as long as I am the rabbi of this holy community, the ban will not be lifted.

Shalom and all the best

The cadet Salomon Rodrigues Pereira