

## Note from Robert Silvercruys to Paul van Zeeland (6 December 1951)

**Caption:** In this confidential note addressed to Paul van Zeeland, Belgian Foreign Minister, Robert Silvercruys, Belgian Ambassador in Washington, describes the impatience of US senior officials at the delay in implementing the French plan for a European army.

**Source:** DE VOS, Luc; ROOMS, Etienne; DELOGE, Pascal; STERKENDRIES, Jean-Michel (sous la dir.). Documents diplomatiques belges 1941-1960, De l'indépendance à l'interdépendance. Tome II: Défense 1941-1960. Bruxelles: Académie royale de Belgique, 1998. 582 p. ISBN 90-6569-670-9. p. 254-255.

**Copyright:** (c) Translation CVCE.EU by UNI.LU

All rights of reproduction, of public communication, of adaptation, of distribution or of dissemination via Internet, internal network or any other means are strictly reserved in all countries.

Consult the legal notice and the terms and conditions of use regarding this site.

**URL:**

[http://www.cvce.eu/obj/note\\_from\\_robert\\_silvercruys\\_to\\_paul\\_van\\_zeeland\\_6\\_december\\_1951-en-69caa650-1f2d-46b6-bb05-22c0398f96f6.html](http://www.cvce.eu/obj/note_from_robert_silvercruys_to_paul_van_zeeland_6_december_1951-en-69caa650-1f2d-46b6-bb05-22c0398f96f6.html)



**Last updated:** 06/07/2016

## Note from Robert Silvercruys to Paul van Zeeland (6 December 1951)

Secret.

The United States has reacted strongly to the delays in the formation of a united Europe. If the plan for a European army fails, it will endanger their policy of aid to Europe. Fears exist of a return to some form of isolationism.

[...]

Undoubtedly, many people in official circles are not surprised by the fact that Great Britain is trying to play up the importance of its ties with the Commonwealth in order to avoid making too firm a commitment to Continental Europe. On the other hand, the objections formulated in Rome by the Benelux countries were more unexpected.

Bearing in mind the commitments given by the United States in the Atlantic Treaty, it is difficult to understand the hesitation of Belgium and the Netherlands to accept the idea of an integrated European army without the participation of their traditional protector: Great Britain. Reference has been made to the fears that you expressed of seeing Belgium commit itself swiftly to a policy that will lead to too much loss of sovereignty, with all the consequent political and constitutional complications.

We hope that a compromise acceptable to Benelux may be found before the next meeting of the Council in Lisbon.

At all events, the consequences in the US of the failure of the French plan, which had unconditional American support, must not be underestimated. Without the prospect of a European army, it will be very difficult to continue the current policy of economic and military aid to Europe and, in the opinion of some in the State Department, might precipitate some form of isolationism, a sentiment never far from the surface in America and one which is openly supported by Herbert Hoover and Robert Taft.