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SIR - France shares with the United Kingdom the distinction of being the only European power with global reach. Politically, as countries, we also both share a rare willingness to deploy brave and professional armed forces for the wider good in conditions of uncertainty and risk.

Viewed dispassionately from Paris, the scaremongering that we have seen the British people subjected to makes no sense. Britain will remain a major force after Brexit, a military, security and economic power that its neighbours will want to cooperate with on close and friendly terms.

We believe that Britain, like France, has an important role to play in the world. It will not be diminished by leaving the EU, but will act as a beacon for those across Europe who see the nation state as the cornerstone of democracy and well-being.

Instead, a Leave vote will apply screeching brakes to the push for integration of the armed forces of the EU's member states, and the otherwise inevitable and dangerous development of a "common defence" as the treaties predict.

With a vote for Brexit, de Gaulle's far-seeing view of Britain will have been vindicated. But Churchill's too.

**Vice Admiral Michel Debray**

**Rear Admiral Claude Gaucherand**

*Paris*

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