



Source 6

Letter from the British ambassador in France on the French attitude to the international situation, 30 July 1914

(Catalogue ref: FO 800/55 f.129-30)



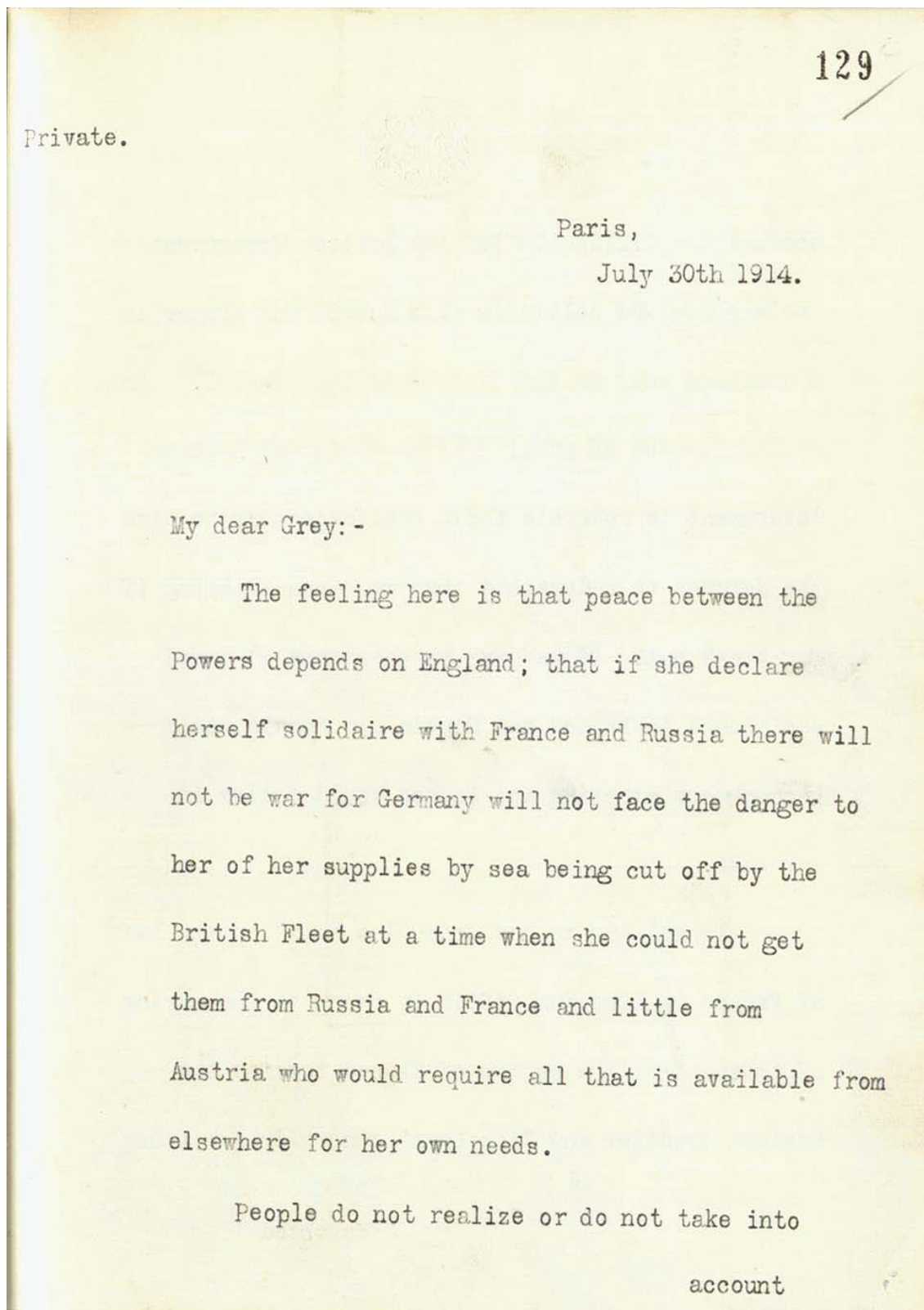
How to use this source:

Study this source carefully. There are details in this source that will help you to answer the key question. As you study the source, ask yourself:

- According to the French, why is Britain so important in terms of stopping Germany starting a war?
- Why was it so difficult for Britain to fully support France and Russia over the quarrel between Austria and Serbia?
- How is the writer criticising the French and Russians?
- Do the French seem to think war is inevitable?
- Five days after this letter, Britain declared war on Germany. Does this letter give the impression that war is so close?



Source 6a





Source 6b

account the difficulty for the British Government to declare England solidaire with Russia and France in a question such as the Austro-Servian quarrel. The French instead of putting pressure on the Russian Government to moderate their zeal expect us to give the Germans to understand that we mean fighting if war break out. If we gave an assurance of armed assistance to France and Russia now, Russia would become more exacting and France would follow in her wake.

Travelling to and from "les Eaux" in the East of France is becoming difficult owing to the moving of troops from the centre of France towards the Eastern frontier and "les Eaux" generally are being deserted



Source 6c

130

deserted even those in the West of France.

The newspapers but not yet the people are becoming bellicose. The Bourse is practically closed and the Bank of France is preparing to issue notes for 20 francs 10 francs and 5 francs, meanwhile strings of people are asking for change for notes of 50 frs and 100 francs &c, and the Bank employés make as much delay as possible in fulfilling the Banks' obligation to give coin whether gold or silver in exchange for its notes.

Yours sincerely
Francis Bertie