

**June 21, 1953**

**Memorandum from Karl Schirdewan to First Secretaries of the District Leadership of the SED**

**Citation:**

"Memorandum from Karl Schirdewan to First Secretaries of the District Leadership of the SED", June 21, 1953, Wilson Center Digital Archive, SAPMO-BArch, DY 30 IV 2/5/530.

Translated by Christiaan Hetzner.

<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/112614>

**Summary:**

Schirdewan orders the First Secretaries of the District Leadership of the SED to employ party members to seek out personal conversations and inquiries with individuals in the GDR after the East German Uprising. He provides specific questions for Party members to ask, in order to determine the temperament of the workers towards the GDR government and suggestions for improvement.

**Original Language:**

German

**Contents:**

Translation - English

To the  
1st Secretaries of the District Leaderships of the SED

Despite the great burden that affects all party functionaries, we must ask you to immediately deploy a group of party members and maybe 5 co-workers of your Apparatus, to determine the true attitude of the workers. They should personally seek out families, make inquiries among circles of acquaintances, that means everywhere where they can create an atmosphere of speaking one's mind, where a real conversation can happen.

What do we want to know?

- What is the worker really thinking at the present moment?
- What exactly are his main concerns at present, what does he find wanting?
- What does he wish for?
- What about the policy of the government does he find incomprehensible?
- What does his wife say, what would she like to have improved?
- Why is the atmosphere still not calm at present?
- Is there no faith in the government to improve the situation? And, according to the opinion of those people with whom they are speaking with, why not?
- Is there already the determination that in this or that question?
- This evening they must go to the bars, and, so to speak, listen in on the conversations.

Please keep us continually informed on this set of questions which are needed here urgently.

Dept. Leading Organs of the Party  
and Mass Organizations

6/21/1953 (signed) Schirdewan