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Russian President Reveals Himself to Be Jesus Christ (Superstar)

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An apparently leaked home video of President Vladimir Putin from when he lived in East Germany in the 1980s caused a stir this week by revealing the then-KGB agent's previously unknown love for rock musicals.

The video, which appeared on the LifeNews website for less than an hour Tuesday before being taken down, shows a man bearing a strong resemblance to Putin — albeit younger and somewhat more stout than he is today — taking part in what appears to be an amateur dramatics production.

The video excerpt opens with the man playing with two young girls — presumably his daughters — in a park before suddenly cutting to a stage where he is singing a song from the Andrew Lloyd Webber rock musical "Jesus Christ Superstar" while dressed in flares and a bright yellow shirt.

"Jesus Christ, Superstar! Wer du auch bist, sag uns, bist du wahr?" sings the man, who looks suspiciously like Putin.

Bloggers commenting on the video were unable to agree whether the clothes were worn especially for the musical or simply standard fare for 1980s East Germany.

The choice of song may prove controversial for Putin, as Orthodox Church activists have campaigned in the past against the musical. In 2012, a theater in Rostov dropped the musical, which has been staged in Russian since the 1990s, after a complaint from Orthodox believers was lodged with local prosecutors.

Analysts say the leak is suspiciously timed and may represent signs of a split in the Kremlin, coming just a few days after the Culture Minister sacked the head of a theater in Novosibirsk for staging a production of Richard Wagner's "Tannhäuser" that was labeled by some Orthodox activists as sacrilegious.

It is not the first time that Putin has shown his love for jangly pop. In 2009, Björn Again, an Abba tribute group, said they were flown to Valdai to play a private concert for Putin, a mystery woman and a few other guests.

Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov denied at the time that the president had been at the concert.

When contacted Tuesday — on the eve of April 1 — and asked if Putin was still a fan of "Jesus Christ Superstar," Peskov sighed and hung up.

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