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Joni Mitchell was one of the more unlikely weapons to threaten the Kremlin

Musicians seen as Cold War weapons

Kaya Burgess

Bob Dylan, Joni Mitchell and James Taylor were suggested as US Government secret weapons in bringing down communism, a Cold War memo has revealed.

The names of A-list stars who should be urged to tour the Soviet Union are included in a secret 1975 memo from the US Embassy in Moscow. Walter

Stoessel Jr, the US Ambassador, wrote: "Believe 'soul' genre not top of interest here, and suggest priority consideration be given to 'soft rock', 'blues/rock', or 'country rock'."

The memo — released this week in the WikiLeaks file of 1.7 million diplomatic cables — lists the main contenders for each genre. Dylan did, in fact, appear at a poetry concert in Moscow in 1985, and Taylor played there in 1987.