

BREACHING THE IRON CURTAIN: LOUIS ARMSTRONG, CULTURAL VICTORY, AND COLD WAR AMBASSADORSHIP

Everyone is familiar with hard power. We know that military and economic might often get others to change their position...But sometimes you can get the outcomes you want without tangible threats or payoffs...This soft power—getting others to want the outcomes that you want—co-opts people rather than coerces them...[It] rests on the ability to shape the preferences of others.¹

Quincy Mix

Analyses of the Cold War tend to dwell almost solely on its hard power dynamics. Arms treaties, military invasions, supply blockades—these often receive most of, if not all, the attention in academic discourse. Yet, as political scientist Joseph Nye, Jr., makes abundantly clear, “[t]he Cold War was won by a mixture of hard *and* soft power,” with the latter manifested in a wide array of U.S. cultural exports to the Eastern Bloc and the Third World.² As a number of scholars have demonstrated,³ jazz rose to preeminence in the

¹ Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004), 5.

² *Ibid.*, 50 (emphasis added).

³ See Lisa E. Davenport, *Jazz Diplomacy: Promoting America in the Cold War Era* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2009); Penny M. Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), accessed Apr 8, 2018, ProQuest Ebook Central; Danielle Fosler-Lussier, *Music in America's Cold War Diplomacy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015), EBSCOhost eBook Collection.

U.S. “arsenal of cultural weapons” throughout the 1950s and 1960s. With its lively, “democratic” rhythms and distinctly African-American flair, jazz performance could serve both as a contrast to Communism’s repressive ideology and as a means of deflecting Communist criticism over the racism of the Jim-Crow South.⁴ Out of a plethora of U.S. musical legends and icons tapped for the propaganda initiative, Louis (“Satchmo”) Armstrong emerged as America’s foremost “Jazz Ambassador” during this period. Of special importance in the rich history of “jazz diplomacy” was Armstrong’s widely-celebrated concert tour behind the Iron Curtain in the spring of 1965—a groundbreaking trip that saw Armstrong become the first major U.S. entertainer to perform in Communist East Germany. Further analysis of the lead-up to, and the outcomes of, Armstrong’s “All Stars” trip corroborates American jazz historian Daniel Stein’s designation of the tour as a “central moment” in the Cold War era.⁵ At a time when political-military relations between the West and the Soviet Bloc had reached a new nadir, the “All Stars” tour demonstrated soft power’s unique ability to erode rigid ideological barriers one song at a time. More than any other event prior to or following it, the tour testified to the magnetism of melody and the pull of persona, bringing about—in no uncertain terms—the crescendo of America’s hard-won battle for the hearts and minds of the communist oppressed. More than this, however, the Soviet Bloc tour demonstrated Armstrong’s personal and political maturation into the consummate “Goodwill Ambassador” for American values. There,

⁴ Frances S. Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War: The CIA and the World of Arts and Letters* (New York: The New York Press, 1999), 2.

⁵ Daniel Stein, “Onkel Satchmo Behind the Iron Curtain: The Transatlantic Politics of Louis Armstrong’s Visit to East Germany,” *Americana: The Journal of American Popular Culture*, vol. 13, no. 1 (2014): n.p., accessed April 3, 2018, http://www.americanpopularculture.com/journal/articles/spring_2014/stein.htm.

he fully came into his own as a decorous yet authentic diplomat, one who—by his infrequent, yet poignant protests of America’s racial injustices—embodied and championed democratic freedoms before an “unfree” world.⁶

I. Prelude to Cultural Victory: The CPP, “Ambassador Satch,” and Jazz in the Eastern Bloc

To comprehend the significance of Armstrong’s pivotal journey behind the Iron Curtain, it is imperative to underscore the diplomatic and cultural forces that made the occasion possible—not just in the United States but also within the Communist states of the Eastern Bloc. Though the All Stars contracted this particular trip in 1965 without official U.S. sponsorship (or approval—at least with respect to the band’s performances in East Germany), their tour nevertheless built upon the precedents and political assumptions set down by the U.S. Department of State’s Cultural Presentations Program (CPP) during the 1950s.⁷ With the mass de-colonization movements of Africa and East Asia in full swing by 1954, President Dwight Eisenhower sought to gain the upper hand in the arena of Cold War “spheres of influence” by projecting America’s cultural and political liberties onto the world stage—literally. Thus, in 1956, Eisenhower secured \$5 million in emergency appropriations to form the President’s Special International Program—later rebranded the CPP—as a performance vehicle for securing new “converts to ‘the

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ “U.S. Regrets Satchmo Plays in East Berlin,” *The Atlanta Constitution* (1946-1984), Mar 20, 1965, accessed Apr 8, 2018, <https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.furman.edu/docview/1557811001?accountid=11012>. Since the United States did not officially recognize the German Democratic Republic (GDR), American officials stated “they would prefer Armstrong and other Americans not to recognize it either”; Davenport, *Jazz Diplomacy*, 35.

American way of life.”⁸ Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, the initiative’s primary steward, originally developed the program as a partnership between the State Department and the American National Theatre and Academy (ANTA), sending abroad hundreds of classical orchestras, theatre troupes, and ballet companies with the assistance of corporate sponsors.⁹

Increasingly, however, the State Department began to reorient its focus around the promotion of American jazz—an initiative long promoted by civil rights activists, U.S. congressmen like Rep. Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., and eminent jazz scholars like Marshall Stearns and John S. Wilson.¹⁰ Whether performed live or broadcast to the world via radio propaganda shows like Willis Conover’s *Voice of America*, jazz would offer, in Conover’s words, “a musical reflection of the way things happen in America”: its innovative, freestyle rhythms and infectious melodies would symbolize a free America’s marked contrast to the tyranny and

⁸ John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2005), 20; Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World*, 4-6, 7.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 6, 39; Dana Gioia, “Cool Jazz and Cold War: Dana Gioia, Chairman of National Endowment for the Arts, Talks with Jazz Legend Dave Brubeck about Diplomacy in 5/4 Time,” *The American Interest*, vol. 1, no. 3 (2006): n.p., accessed Apr 3, 2018, <https://www.the-american-interest.com/2006/03/01/cool-jazz-and-cold-war/>; “Types of Performances Given Abroad by President’s Fund Cultural Groups FY 1959,” November 24, 1959, Slide print, Robert Helyer Thayer Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress (184.00.01), accessed Apr 15, 2018, http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/hope-for-america/blurringlines/cultural-diplomacy/Assets/bhp0184p1_enlarge.jpg.

¹⁰ Elizabeth V. McGregor, *Jazz and Postwar French Identity: Improvising the Nation* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2016), accessed Apr 14, 2018, Google Books; Fosler-Lussier, *Music in America’s Cold War Diplomacy*, 79.

suppression of the Soviet Bloc.¹¹ Through jazz, America hoped to subvert the rigid order of Communist Eastern Europe and, ideally, imbue its youths with “a degree of interest in the western way of life.”¹² Equally important was jazz’s potential to offset embarrassing allegations of U.S. hypocrisy over segregation and racial unrest in the American South. With civil rights tensions flaring up at home, the U.S. could rely on African-American music—and especially its African-American performers—to “rescue America’s prestige” when it came to race relations and to demonstrate that the United States was making progress on the race issue.¹³

U.S. cultural victory would not be so easily secured, however, for Communist leaders already understood and resented jazz’s propagandistic potential. Denouncing the genre as a foreign import of “cultural barbarism aimed at conditioning people for war,” the Soviet Union and its satellites harbored intense fears that jazz would exact a “corrupting influence” on the socialist ethic of their populations, most of all their youth.¹⁴ Consequently, the late 1940s and early 1950s

¹¹ Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World*, 17; Margo Shohl Rosen, “Willis of Oz: How Willis Conover Enchanted the Thaw Generation of Poets with His ‘Jazz Hour’ Radio Program.” *Urbandus Review* 16 (2014): 198, accessed Apr 14, 2018, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24391991>.

¹² Gleb Tzipursky, “Jazz, Power, and Soviet Youth in the Early Cold War, 1948–1953.” *The Journal of Musicology*, vol. 33, no. 3 (2016): 352, accessed Apr 3, 2018, DOI: 10.1525/jm.2016.33.3.332

¹³ Fosler-Lussier, *Music in America’s Cold War Diplomacy*, 77, 85.

¹⁴ Central File: Decimal File 962B.40, Other Internal Affairs, Communications, Transportation, Science., Russian Zone, Radio, Radio Broadcasting, Radio-Telegraph, Reception, Monitoring., March 22, 1950 - November 4, 1953. March 22, 1950 - November 4, 1953, Records of the Department of State relating to Internal Affairs: Germany 1950-54, U.S. National Archives, Archives Unbound, accessed Apr 8, 2018, <https://goo.gl/2P9kx4>; William J. Risch, *Youth and Rock in the Soviet Bloc: Youth Cultures, Music, and the State in Russia and Eastern Europe* (Lanham: Lexington

witnessed the rollout of the Kremlin's "anti-cosmopolitan" initiative to rid the communist world of all foreign infections—jazz being the foremost. Issuing a union-wide prohibition against jazz, jazz instruments, and western dances like the foxtrot and the tango, Soviet authorities inaugurated an era of rigid isolationism and cultural totalitarianism.

Launched in tandem with this widespread suppression of jazz were Communist endeavors to promote a distinctly socialist brand of popular music. In Poland and the German Democratic Republic (GDR), for instance, Soviet puppets attempted to indoctrinate and motivate their citizenry through the commissioning of "mass songs," catchy proletariat tunes lyrically drenched with political rhetoric and Communist ideology.¹⁵ While an appetite for jazz certainly persisted in small contingents throughout the Eastern Bloc, the state's far-reaching powers over life and culture in Eastern Europe nevertheless presented a formidable barrier to the spread of American jazz and its associated values.

To break past that barrier, the U.S. would depend on the irresistibility of its "Jazz Diplomats," both black and white. Forerunning a long queue of musical celebrities like Duke Ellington, Benny Goodman, Thelonious Monk, and Miles Davis, African-American trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie was the first jazz performer commissioned to travel abroad under State Department sponsorship in 1956—but only because his contract cost less than Louis Armstrong's at that time.¹⁶ Internationally beloved and wildly successful in European tours since the 1930s, "Satchmo" Armstrong had soared

Books, 2015), 25, 44, accessed Apr 14, 2018, EBSCOhost eBook Collection.

¹⁵ Gleb Tsipursky, "Jazz, Power, and Soviet Youth in the Early Cold War, 332-334, 338-339; Risch, *Youth and Rock in the Soviet Bloc*, 44-45.

¹⁶ Gioia, "Cool Jazz and Cold War," n.p.; Pierangelo Castagneto, "Ambassador Dizzy: Jazz Diplomacy in the Cold War Era," *Americana E-Journal of American Studies in Hungary*, vol. 10, Special

above his colleagues as jazz's "most effective ambassador" by 1955, according to *New York Times* Special Reporter Felix Belair.¹⁷ Moreover, to quote Armstrong's friend and colleague Dave Brubeck, Armstrong was "probably the most famous American in the world" when the State Department began its tours.¹⁸

Yet some conservatives remained skeptical of Armstrong's effectiveness as an ambassador for American prestige, especially after the jazzman publicly excoriated President Eisenhower for his initial response to the Little Rock High School riots in 1957. Incensed by Eisenhower's delay in compelling Arkansas Governor Orval Faubus to obey a federal court mandate on school integration, Armstrong riled his critics by calling the President a spineless, "two-faced" leader. After Armstrong told reporters that the U.S. government could "go to hell" and cancelled his plans for a tour with the State Department that year, his detractors argued that Satchmo had lost all credibility as an envoy of American goodwill.¹⁹ Relations between Satchmo and the State Department warmed soon enough, however, after Armstrong sent Eisenhower a telegram thanking him for his later deployment of federal reinforcements to Arkansas. Just three years later,

Issue on Jazz (2014): n.p., accessed Apr 3, 2018, <http://americanacjournal.hu/vol10jazz/castagneto>.

¹⁷ Fosler-Lussier, *Music in America's Cold War Diplomacy*, 102; Felix Belair, "United States Has Secret Sonic Weapon—Jazz," *New York Times* (1923-Current File), Nov 06, 1955, accessed Apr 8, 2018, <https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.furman.edu/docview/113385875?accountid=11012>. That same year, Armstrong released his *Ambassador Satch* album, which included live recordings from his recent European concerts.

¹⁸ Gioia, "Cool Jazz and Cold War," n.p.

¹⁹ Davenport, *Jazz Diplomacy*, 55-56; "Nations' Entertainers Air Views on Little Rock School Setback," *Plain Dealer* (Kansas City, KS), Sep 27, 1957, accessed Apr 14, 2018, NewsBank/Readex, SQN: 12C4FE1DFAF87B38; "Sayings of Satchmo," *Ebony* 15, no. 2 (1959): 88, accessed Apr 8, 2018, <https://goo.gl/yo1s3w>.

Armstrong and his All Stars embarked on their first (and highly successful) U.S.-sponsored tour of sub-Saharan Africa.²⁰ Though Armstrong's Africa trip would be the extent of his official affiliation with the CPP, the State Department "was delighted to *claim him* as an ambassador" during his private forays into South America, Western Europe, and, ultimately, behind the Iron Curtain in 1965. As the U.S. sought to sway the cultural allegiances of Communist and Third-World citizens alike, Armstrong's superstar capital was simply "much too valuable" for the U.S. government to pass over.²¹

The roughly four years between Armstrong's trip to Africa and his foray into the Eastern Bloc would prove especially crucial in laying the groundwork for the success of the Iron Curtain tour, for within the Communist nations of Eastern Europe jazz was making rapid and significant inroads. As has already been suggested, the Communists' efforts to constrain "musical life" via state censorship of jazz and western dance proved largely effective in the postwar period. Thanks to the aforementioned *Voice of America* programs and the swelling fandom of underground "Jazz enthusiasts," however, Communist citizens and their officials gradually succumbed to the "alluring" jives of the West. At the dawn of the sixties, increasingly pro-western initiatives in Josep Tito's Yugoslavia coincided with Soviet concerns over "the penetration of American non-culture" into Poland and the

²⁰ Davenport, *Jazz Diplomacy*, 55; Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World*, 58; Memorandum for Mr. McGeorge Bundy, 11/30/61, I, Department of State: General, 11/22/61-11/30/61, JFK and Foreign Affairs, Part 1: National Security Files, Section 3: Departments & Agencies File, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library, Archives Unbound, accessed Apr 8, 2018, <https://goo.gl/FpnPJ6>. In this report to the Kennedy White House, the State Department praised Armstrong's tour as a prime example of CPP's "effectiveness," declaring that he had "conquered" sub-Saharan Africa.

²¹ Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World*, 64 (emphasis added).

GDR.²² In Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Romania, moreover, a flourishing of jazz clubs and cafés signaled a weakened Communist resistance to western influences.²³

Yet these cultural wins paled in comparison to America's subsequent gains within the Soviet Union itself. As "internationalist impulses" reached a new zenith among Soviet youth and Premier Nikita Khrushchev demonstrated a certain degree of tolerance for state-regulated jazz performances, the U.S. secured a key agreement to send the University of Michigan Symphony Band on an official tour of the Soviet Union in early 1961.²⁴ Not long after, jazz artist Benny Goodman made his own debut in the USSR to appreciative audiences, including Khrushchev.²⁵ Starting in 1963, moreover, Soviet leaders initiated a period of *cultural* "détente" with the United States by relaxing restrictions on both the performance of American jazz pieces and the operation of jazz clubs throughout the USSR. By the mid-sixties, the Soviets had all but forsaken the "cultural barbarism" label—from then on, jazz was to be regarded as "serious music" worthy of appreciation, cultivation, and critique.²⁶

²² Tsipursky, "Jazz, Power, and Soviet Youth," 343, 347; Risch, *Youth and Rock in the Soviet Bloc*, 52.

²³ Eric Bourne, "Jazz in the Soviet Sphere," *The Christian Science Monitor* (1908-Current File), Apr 03, 1962, accessed Apr 18, 2018, <https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.furman.edu/docview/510329893?accountid=11012>.

²⁴ Davenport, *Jazz Diplomacy*, 91-92.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 94. Soviet leaders flatly refused to invite Armstrong, citing the concern that his boisterous performances would ignite riots across USSR; Bourne, "Jazz in the Soviet Sphere."

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 97; "Ambassador with Trumpet," *Chicago Tribune* (1963-Current File), Mar 30, 1965, accessed Apr 8, 2018, <https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.furman.edu/docview/179848148?accountid=11012>. In this particular article, the author refers to the cultural détente period as "a cultural exchange kick" between Moscow and Washington.

Understood in the context of world events, these critical developments in the jazz relations between America and the Eastern Bloc during the lead-up to Armstrong's 1965 tour take on a more remarkable hue. That the USSR accepted Benny Goodman just after the U.S.-orchestrated fiasco at the Bay of Pigs in the spring of 1961 reveals the extent to which authorities felt pressured to appease their populations' gnawing "hunger for jazz" and Western culture *despite* their outrage over alleged American military aggression. Furthermore, the construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961 and the onset of the Cuban Missile Crisis a year later saw Cold War tensions reach their pinnacle, and by 1965/1966 American involvement in Vietnam had elicited threats of a cultural "freeze" from Romania, Czechoslovakia, and the USSR. Even so, Communist concessions to the "creativity and freedom" of jazz continued to abound throughout this period.²⁷ Simply put, the worst "political disputes" or setbacks in international relations could not hamper jazz's seductive appeal: the citizenry of Eastern Europe had fallen for jazz hook, line, and sinker—and they wanted more. Overcoming a wealth of confounding factors, then, America's powerful "Secret Sonic Weapon" had, by 1965, paved the way for a dramatic and definitive demonstration of U.S. cultural victory in the Eastern Bloc. The time had arrived for Louis Armstrong and his All Stars to work their magic.²⁸

II. Satchmo on Tour: The Climax of Cultural Victory

In 1965, Armstrong was still coasting on the success of his latest hit single—a jazzed-up rendition of "Hello,

²⁷ Ibid., 97-99; "Russians Devouring U.S. Culture," *The Hartford Courant* (1923-1992), Jul 04, 1965, accessed Apr 8, 2018, <https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.furman.edu/docview/548845089?accountid=11012>.

²⁸ Ibid., 98; Belair, "United States Has Secret Sonic Weapon—Jazz."

Dolly!" taken from the Broadway production of the same name and released in the spring of 1964. The tune, which topped the Beatles' "Can't Buy Me Love" on the charts and even became the official anthem of the 1964 Democratic National Convention (rewritten as "Hello, Lyndon! [Johnson]"), grew into a worldwide sensation by November 1964. During Armstrong's 1964 tours of Asian countries like India and South Korea, especially, the number elicited wild enthusiasm and crowd participation never-before-seen by the All Star crew.²⁹ As they soon became aware, though, audiences in the Eastern Bloc (and especially in the GDR) also shared a great fondness for the track and were themselves hankering for a live Satchmo performance.

After toying with the idea of breaching the Iron Curtain for years, Armstrong finally granted Eastern Europeans their wish. Securing arrangements for twenty-eight concerts through his agent, Joe Glaser, Satchmo and his six All Stars embarked on March 9, 1965, for a four-week tour of five Communist nations: Czechoslovakia, Romania, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and East Germany.³⁰ The unprecedented responses

²⁹ Ricky Riccardi, *What a Wonderful World: The Magic of Louis Armstrong's Later Years* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2011), 218, 229; Joe Nocera, "Louis Armstrong, the Real Ambassador," *New York Times*, May 1, 2015, accessed Apr 3, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/02/opinion/joe-nocera-louis-armstrong-the-real-ambassador.html>; John P. Shanley, "'Hello, Lyndon!' Joins Campaign at Democratic Parley Next Week," *New York Times* (1923-Current File), Aug 21, 1964, accessed Apr 14, 2018, <https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.furman.edu/docview/115893475?accountid=11012>.

³⁰ "Iron Curtain Dislike for Jazz OK with Satch," *Afro-American* (1893-1988), Mar 20, 1965, accessed Apr 8, 2018, <https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.furman.edu/docview/532150875?accountid=11012>; "Iron Curtain Not Noticeable to Armstrong," *Los Angeles Times* (1923-Current File), Apr 10, 1965, accessed Apr 8, 2018, <https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.furman.edu/docview/155168230?accountid=11012>; Stein, "Onkel

they would garner from audiences in each of those countries would prove to the United States, the Communist Bloc, and the rest of the watching world, that jazz—or, more broadly, American popular culture—was truly “erod[ing] the Soviet system from within.”³¹ As the evidence will demonstrate, reporters at home and abroad would declare the tour a pivotal cultural triumph—both for the entertainer and for the United States as a whole—before Armstrong’s trip had even finished.

On March 12, the All Stars made their first stop in Prague, Czechoslovakia, a city that had already earned a reputation as a “center of jazz activity in the Eastern [B]loc.” There to welcome them with decorum and style was Czechoslovak Prime Minister Alexander Dubček, along with an entourage of VIP’s and consuls from Europe, Africa, China, and Russia that had been summoned to attend Armstrong’s debut performance that evening. Opening to an energetic crowd at Lucerna Hall, Satchmo and his bandsmen made headlines with their riveting performances of “Royal Garden Blues,” “Struttin’ with Some Barbecue,” and, of course, “Hello, Dolly!”³² Ovations for the All Stars after each of their concerts made such an impact on the Communist media that Radio Prague described the performance in terms of a classical Roman victory: repurposing Julius Caesar’s dramatic “Veni, vidi, vici” pronouncement, the radio announcer

Satchmo Behind the Iron Curtain,” n.p. In his article, Stein adopts the German spelling of “uncle” because “Armstrong had been embraced as *Onkel Sachmo* on several concert tours through West Germany since the 1950s.” That Satchmo was considered an uncle-figure for the West Germans further demonstrated his momentous potential as an ambassador to the Communist world and prefigured his tremendous success in winning hearts behind the Iron Curtain.

³¹ Nye, *Soft Power*, 50.

³² Riccardi, *What a Wonderful World*, 231; Tom Baumruk, “Louis Armstrong - Hello Dolly,” YouTube video, 06:00, Posted Nov 4, 2012, accessed Apr 18, 2018,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yw15kBVGclM>.

instead proclaimed, “Satchmo came, blew, and conquered.”³³ Back in the U.S., the *Chicago Tribune* boasted that after “bowling down the Communists” in Prague, Armstrong’s incredible performance had even persuaded the USSR to discuss the possibility of hosting an Armstrong concert of their own.³⁴

As had been the case in Czechoslovakia, the citizens of Romania and Yugoslavia went into raptures upon seeing Armstrong. One U.S. reporter covering his arrival in Bucharest remarked, “...It’s jazz by Satchmo that lifts [the] Reds,” while the *Washington Post* credited Armstrong’s sellout concerts on March 28 and 29 with advancing the Romanian Communist government’s “cultural shift to the West.”³⁵ Having presided over Bucharest’s “jazz holiday weekend” with amazing success, the All Stars flew to Belgrade airport, where authorities had arranged to honor Armstrong with a local jazz band’s performance of the gospel tune “When the

³³ Riccardi, *What a Wonderful World*, 231; Ilse Storb, *Jazz Meets the World—The World Meets Jazz* (Münster: LIT, 2000), 109, accessed Apr 8, 2018, Google Books.

³⁴ “Ambassador with Trumpet,” *Chicago Tribune*. “Reds Reject Satchmo’s Entry Bid,” *New York Amsterdam News* (1962-1993), Mar 13, 1965, accessed Apr 8, 2018, <https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.furman.edu/docview/226755849?accountid=11012>. Although the Soviets did not ultimately grant Armstrong permission to perform in the USSR, the fact that they even considered welcoming him after expressing disgust at his “riot[ous]” style a few years earlier reveals the extent to which the USSR—via the influence of jazz—had relaxed in its cultural intolerance for the West by the mid-1960s (see Note 22).

³⁵ “Romania Swings to the West.” *Chicago Tribune* (1963-Current File), Mar 29, 1965, accessed Apr 8, 2018, <https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.furman.edu/docview/179844989?accountid=11012>; “Satchmo Has Role in Swing by Rumania,” *Washington Post*, *Times Herald* (1959-1973), Mar 29, 1965, accessed Apr 8, 2018, <https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.furman.edu/docview/142396892?accountid=11012>.

Saints Go Marching In”—no small lyrical concession for an atheist regime that still heavily censored religious expression.³⁶ “Add[ing] another triumph to his tour of Eastern Europe,” reported the *Chicago Daily Defender*, Armstrong wowed 5,000 “widely enthusiastic” comrades at the Belgrade Trade Unions Hall on March 31 before drawing in 8,000 hollering fans for another sold-out concert the next day. Once again, the Communist news sources sang Armstrong’s praises: Yugoslavia’s state news agency Tanjug marveled at the “tremendous excitement” of the concert-goers, even going so far as to remark that “the applause for [Armstrong] had rarely been equaled in Belgrade.”³⁷ Although reports for the All Stars’ April trip to Sofia, Bulgaria, have yet to be uncovered, one can easily deduce how joyous the reactions must have been, especially from a citizenry that—until

³⁶ “Romania Keen on U.S. Culture,” *The Hartford Courant* (1923-1992), Mar 29, 1965, accessed Apr 8, 2018, <https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.furman.edu/docview/548737262?accountid=11012>; “The World This Morning,” *Chicago Daily Defender* (Daily Edition) (1960-1973), Mar 31, 1965, accessed Feb 24, 2017, <https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.furman.edu/docview/494138146?accountid=11012>; “Yugoslav Crowd Meets ‘Satchmo’ at Airport,” *The Hartford Courant* (1923-1992), Mar 30, 1965, accessed Apr 8, 2018, <https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.furman.edu/docview/548734090?accountid=11012>; Paul Mojzes, “Religious Liberty in Yugoslavia: A Study in Ambiguity,” *Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe* 6, no. 2 (1986): 25, accessed Apr 18, 2018, <http://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/ree/vol6/iss2/2>.

³⁷ “The World This Morning,” *Chicago Daily Defender* (Daily Edition) (1960-1973), Apr 01, 1965, accessed Feb 24, 2017, <https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.furman.edu/docview/494148188?accountid=11012>; “Thousands in Belgrade Cheer Louis Armstrong,” *New York Times* (1923-Current File), Apr 01, 1965, accessed Apr 8, 2014, <https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.furman.edu/docview/116798217?accountid=11012>.

then—had been denied access to “all songs in foreign languages.”³⁸

Yet it was Armstrong’s visits to East Germany—first in mid-March and then again in early April 1965—that would truly “seal the deal” of America’s cultural ascendancy in the Communist Bloc. No major American artist had ever performed in the GDR—which was still not officially recognized by the United States—and, as Armstrong biographer Ricky Riccardi points out, “not a single Armstrong recording was available for purchase” in that country. Yet neither of those obstacles could deter “the most recognizable entertainer on the planet” from capturing the hearts of the East German populace.³⁹

Premiering their act to a packed and roaring crowd of 3,000 in East Berlin’s Friedrichstadt-Palast Theater on March 21, the All Stars performed their most electrifying show to date. The GDR’s Communist news media called the 2.5-hour event an evening “the likes of which have seldom been seen.”⁴⁰ Refrains of “Satch-mo, Satch-mo” recalled familiar rally cries of “Krush-chev, Khrush-chev,” though the chants for Armstrong “were louder and greater than anything Khrushchev—or any other visiting Communist leader ever got.”⁴¹ Nonstop clapping, whooping, and stomping “all but

³⁸ Bourne, “Jazz in the Soviet Sphere.”

³⁹ “Young East Berlin Crowd Cheers Louis Armstrong,” *New York Times* (1923-Current File), Mar 21, 1965, accessed Apr 8, 2018, <https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.furman.edu/docview/116807728?accountid=11012>; Riccardi, *What a Wonderful World*, 232.

⁴⁰ “Crowd Sings ‘Hello Dolly’: Satchmo Wows East Berliners at First Red German Jazz Show,” *Los Angeles Times* (1923-Current File), Mar 21, 1965, accessed Apr 8, 2018, <https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.furman.edu/docview/155132708?accountid=11012>.

⁴¹ “March 21, 1965 (Page 1 of 156),” *Detroit Free Press* (1923-1999), Mar 21, 1965, General edition, accessed Apr 8, 2018, <https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.furman.edu/docview/1819007857?accountid=11012>;

blew down the Berlin wall,” according to the *Detroit Free Press*, and as the band cued in with “Hello, Dolly!” a number of uniformed policemen and soldiers in the crowd joined in on the singing. Taking four encores before he “begged off” stage, Armstrong received a fifteen-minute standing ovation from the audience. Eyewitnesses described the scene as the “warmest [reception] ever given a popular entertainer in the Communist sector.”⁴² As if the audience’s reactions were not confirmation enough of Satchmo’s cultural triumph in East Berlin, the official newspaper of the GDR Communist Party—*Neues Deutschland*—applauded Armstrong as “a messenger of the good America, the America we love and respect.”⁴³ Such Communist praise for the U.S. was simply unheard of—a striking example of Armstrong’s ability to harness jazz as a formidable tool for cultural evangelism.

Traveling from the East German cities of Weimar, Dresden, and Gorlitz, an even larger audience of 8,000 crowded into the Leipzig Fair Grounds for another of Satchmo’s sellout concerts on March 25. As the *New York Times* reported on March 26, “The red carpet was rolled out for [Armstrong]...and the press, radio, and television passed the word for days in advance.” Armstrong’s visit was so highly anticipated, in fact, that Leipzig’s loudspeaker announcement program diverted time away from its report on Soviet astronauts to broadcast hourly information updates on the All Stars’ arrival at the airport. Prohibitions on taping or filming the concert “went unheeded” by energetic audience members as they brazenly raised their handheld recording devices toward the stage.⁴⁴ “Stamping,...loud applause[,]

⁴² Ibid.; “Crowd Sings ‘Hello Dolly.’”

⁴³ “East German Press Cheers Armstrong,” *Chicago Tribune* (1963-Current File), Mar 23, 1965, accessed Apr 8, 2018, <https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.furman.edu/docview/179837822?accountid=11012>.

⁴⁴ “Satchmo Blows for Leipzig ‘Cats,’” *New York Times* (1923-Current File), Mar 26, 1965, accessed Feb 24, 2017, <https://search->

and...rhythmic clapping” accompanied the “Dolly” number, as expected, but the “war was over”—said the *Chicago Tribune*—once Armstrong broke into a refrain of “Blueberry Hill.”⁴⁵ Eight minutes of applause and chanting drew Armstrong back on stage for an encore and several more bows—“the old jazz king” had scored yet another victory.⁴⁶

All told, Armstrong and the All Stars played eighteen concerts in East Germany alone, drawing in approximately 50,000 fans from all over the country. His presence and performance together aroused “an enthusiasm that had never been known before” in the GDR, or, frankly, anywhere else behind the Iron Curtain. To again quote Riccardi, Armstrong had proven himself as an “icon, an institution,” and an unstoppable cultural juggernaut for the United States. Years of radio broadcasts and “cultural relaxation” between East and West had prepared the way, but Ambassador Armstrong’s Iron Curtain tour marked the definitive turning point in America’s cultural conquest over Communism.⁴⁷

In a significant way, the Soviet response to the All Star tour gave its own attestation to this cultural breakthrough. Armstrong had long expressed a desire to “thaw out those Russian cats” with a concert tour of the USSR, and—as stated earlier—the Soviet Union did indeed flirt with the idea of inviting the All Stars after their stellar debut in Prague. Yet, for unexplained reasons, Soviet authorities doubled back on their goodwill sentiments, and negotiations for a Satchmo show never materialized.⁴⁸ Just when it seemed the Russians

proquest-com.libproxxy.furman.edu/docview/116799128?ac-countid=11012.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*; “Ambassador with Trumpet.”

⁴⁶ “March 21, 1965 (Page 1 of 156).”

⁴⁷ Stein, “Onkel Satchmo Behind the Iron Curtain,” n.p.; Riccardi, *What a Wonderful World*, 237, 232.

⁴⁸ “Reds Reject Satchmo’s Entry Bid,” *New York Amsterdam News* (1962-1993), Mar 13, 1965, accessed Apr 8, 2018, <https://search->

“[didn’t] want him,” however, Soviet authorities began to warm up to Satchmo and American culture in general by rapidly increasing degrees.⁴⁹ Two months after the All Stars returned to the United States in April 1965, Moscow television gave Soviet audiences their first introduction to Armstrong during a jazz history special on the state’s “Evening Meeting” broadcast. Overdubbing a film clip of Satchmo crooning and trumpeting to the German standard “Mack the Knife,” the program’s Soviet narrator exclaimed, “[Y]ou should see his face while he is singing—so charming.”⁵⁰ Within weeks of the show’s debut, *The Hartford Courant* declared victoriously on July 4, 1965, that even with “the current low ebb of Soviet-U.S. *political* relations,” the Russians were “[d]evouring U.S. [c]ulture.”⁵¹ While the *Courant* commented on several “live[ly] showcases” of American artistry in the USSR—with U.S. museum exhibits, Hollywood films, and imported theatre productions serving as just a few examples—it reserved special recognition for Armstrong’s Moscow TV appearance. More broadly, it highlighted jazz’s role in winning the culture wars, adding: “American jazz has made what looks like a final breakthrough in recent weeks. It is played day and night on radio, television, and phonographs

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⁴⁹ “Touring Armstrong Must Skip Russia,” *The Hartford Courant* (1923-1992), Mar 09, 1965, accessed Apr 8, 2018, <https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.furman.edu/docview/548754235?accountid=11012>; “March 9, 1965 (Page 15 of 38),” *Detroit Free Press* (1923-1999), Mar 09, 1965, General edition, accessed Apr 8, 2018, <https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.furman.edu/docview/1819019555?accountid=11012>.

⁵⁰ “Satchmo Stars on Soviet TV,” *Detroit Free Press* (1923-1999), Jun 24, 1965, General edition, accessed Apr 8, 2018, <https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.furman.edu/docview/1819068057?accountid=11012>.

⁵¹ “Russians Devouring U.S. Culture” (emphasis added).

that blare forth...from the open windows of Moscow apartments."⁵² For this triumphant Independence Day announcement, the United States had Ambassador Satch to thank above all. It was he who, "in recent weeks," had poured out his energy and talents for the citizens of the Communist Bloc. It was he who led the final charge in the cultural battle of a lifetime—and won.

III. Satchmo and Authentic Ambassadorship: The Race Issue

At the same time he was bringing about jazz's cultural victory over the Communist system, Armstrong was also solidifying a more nuanced and authentic identity as the musical diplomat for an apparently "contradict[ory]" nation.⁵³ With the advent of a more vocal and activist Civil Rights Movement in the mid-1960s, the aforementioned allegations of U.S. hypocrisy in promoting freedom abroad while still allowing Jim Crow at home increased in frequency and intensity. Whether or not the jazz ambassadors kept touring under official State Department sponsorship did not matter: so long as black musicians like Armstrong continued to perform internationally as America's "unofficial ambassador[s]," they could expect to receive highly charged "political questions" about racial strife in the United States.⁵⁴

By the time of his 1965 Iron Curtain tour, Armstrong had charted a rather unpredictable course with the race question. Throughout Satchmo's career, many African-Americans regarded his over-the-top "friendliness...and peaceableness"—especially in the presence of white audiences—as a kind of minstrelsy: rather than challenge a prejudiced system, they reasoned, Armstrong had instead accommodated himself

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World*, 4, 82.

⁵⁴ Fosler-Lussier, *Music in America's Cold War Diplomacy*, 109, 93.

to it and played along as a theatrical, happy-go-lucky Negro entertainer.⁵⁵ Famed jazz singer Billie Holiday echoed this sentiment when she reportedly exclaimed, “God bless Louis, he Toms’ from the heart.”⁵⁶ It did not help, moreover, that Armstrong appeared to shy away from anything remotely political or controversial. Whether he received an inquiry about racism in the U.S. or a question about his role in fighting the Cold War, his response was usually “[I don’t know] about politics,” or “I don’t dive into politics.”⁵⁷

Yet, as the Little Rock controversy referenced earlier attests, Armstrong *did* occasionally “dive into politics” with some heated rhetoric against racial injustice, even to the point of declaring in 1957, “It’s getting so bad a colored man hasn’t got any country.”⁵⁸ His brief stint as the star of 1962’s *The Real Ambassadors*—a satirical musical written by jazz duo Dave and Iola Brubeck to parody black ambassadors’ difficulties in representing a Jim Crow America—further demonstrated that Armstrong was capable of lashing out against the U.S. government, albeit infrequently (the musical had only one premier at the Monterrey Jazz Festival before being scrapped).⁵⁹ When ghastly footage of police brutality against Martin Luther King, Jr., and the civil rights marchers in Selma, Alabama, aired on televisions across the United States on March 7, 1965—just two days before Armstrong set out for the Iron Curtain—the question burning on many minds was: how would Satchmo respond, if at all? Would he make a scathing critique of the United States, as he had done

⁵⁵ Storbe, *Jazz Meets the World*, 108.

⁵⁶ “Sayings of Satchmo,” 87.

⁵⁷ Louis Armstrong, “They Cross the Iron Curtain to Hear American Jazz,” interviewed by U.S. News & World Report, Dec 2, 1955, accessed Apr 8, 2018, http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/Vol.8_Chap.27_Doc.07_ENG.pdf.

⁵⁸ “Nations’ Entertainers Air Views on Little Rock School Set-back.”

⁵⁹ Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World*, 82.

in 1957, or would he resort to his usual schtick of “not knowin’ about politics”?”⁶⁰

As it turned out, Armstrong did a little of both, putting an arguably greater emphasis on doing the former rather than the latter. Yet the overall tact, creativity, and poignancy with which he addressed American racism while traversing the Communist Bloc evinced the maturity and decorum befitting a “real” and emotionally honest ambassador of whom the United States could be proud.⁶¹ Armstrong made his first protest against the atrocities at Selma while he and the All Stars were staying in Denmark en route to Prague. A news report out of Copenhagen on March 20 recounted that Armstrong had felt “physically sick” after watching the police crackdown on the Selma marchers, and he reportedly opined that racists in Alabama “would beat Jesus if he was black and marched.”⁶² Once he arrived in East Berlin, however, Armstrong refrained from openly censuring the U.S. in his GDR press conference. Calling Armstrong “as much of a diplomat as an entertainer,” *The Hartford Courant* reported on March 20 that Armstrong “visibly disappointed” Communist newsmen after he declined to discuss the “race problem” in America. “I’ve got no grievances,” Armstrong told them. “I love everyone. All through the South some of my greatest friends are white people.”⁶³ While some might infer that Armstrong was “recant[ing]” his earlier position for PR purposes, he

⁶⁰ Armstrong, “They Cross the Iron Curtain to Hear American Jazz.”

⁶¹ Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World*, 260.

⁶² “‘Racists Would Beat Jesus if He Was Black’—Satch,” *Afro-American* (1893-1988), Mar 20, 1965, accessed Apr 8, 2018, <https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.furman.edu/docview/532191452?accountid=11012>.

⁶³ “Treated Fine in South, Says Louis Armstrong,” *The Hartford Courant* (1923-1992), Mar 20, 1965, accessed Apr 8, 2018, <https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.furman.edu/docview/548744773?accountid=11012>.

was—in fact—only shifting strategies.⁶⁴ As *New York Times* editorialist Joe Nocera articulated fifty years after the fact: “...[Armstrong] *did* have something to say, and he said it powerfully though his music.” Indeed, rather than loudly “bad-mouth” the U.S. as he had famously done in years past, Armstrong demonstrated his own personal maturation as a cultural diplomat by expressing his criticisms through the subtlety and grace of his art.⁶⁵ To “break his silence” in the Communist Bloc, Armstrong would rely on the power of one particular jazz ballad.⁶⁶

The song of choice was a 1920s classic called “Black and Blue,” originally written for the theatre as a “dark-skinned woman’s lament about losing out to lighter-skinned women.” Given the number’s controversial subject matter, Armstrong had removed it from his repertoire in the late fifties. With the rawness and cruelty of Selma still fresh in his mind, however, Satchmo opted to reintroduce the piece for his Eastern Bloc tour. According to Riccardi, who published a biography on Armstrong’s later years, Satchmo’s most moving rendition of the number took place during his second performance at the Friedrichstadt-Palast in East Berlin on March 22, 1965. Rather than perform the song *a tempo*, Armstrong slowed the band down, and as he adopted an uncharacteristically mournful countenance, he “assumed the air of a preacher, pointing a finger skyward” and soulfully pouring out his anguish before the transfixed audience.⁶⁷ Attentive listeners might have noticed Armstrong’s poignant adjustment of the lyrics (a change he maintained for each of his Iron Curtain concerts): whereas the original song lamented, “I’m white inside / But that don’t help my case,” Armstrong declared, “I’m *right* [inside].” Such a marked change gave the final stanza of the piece an even greater punch:

⁶⁴ Riccardi, *What a Wonderful World*, 233.

⁶⁵ Nocera, “Louis Armstrong, the Real Ambassador.”

⁶⁶ Riccardi, *What a Wonderful World*, 234.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

“My only sin...is in my skin.” No press conference rant could have expressed African-American suffering so tragically, profoundly, or tastefully.⁶⁸

By his own admission, Satchmo was no “front-line” civil rights activist.⁶⁹ Yet, in reviving “Black and Blue” for the tour, Armstrong found a way to make a “powerful...musical statement about race” in America, a way to stand in solidarity with marchers at Selma while still maintaining his decorum and poise as a cultural diplomat of the United States. In so doing, implies Daniel Stein—another Armstrong biographer and jazz historian—Satchmo proved that “music [could] further political achievements” just as well as, if not better than traditional forms of protest.⁷⁰

Furthermore, in demonstrating a willingness to address American racism in his Eastern Bloc concerts, Armstrong actually fulfilled the highest calling of an authentic U.S. ambassador. Through jazz in general and through “Black and Blue” in particular, he both “enact[ed] liberation” and presented a “vivid picture of American democratic ideals” for those who suffered under totalitarian Communist oppression. Instead of harming or subverting America’s foreign policy aims, Satchmo enhanced them with his own respectful and artistic “demonstration of free speech.”⁷¹ Simply put, in exercising his liberty to critique the shortfalls of his nation, Armstrong showed the Eastern Bloc the true meaning of American freedom and “the resilience of American democracy.”⁷²

IV. Conclusion

⁶⁸ Ibid., 234-235.

⁶⁹ “‘Racists Would Beat Jesus if He Was Black’—Satch.”

⁷⁰ Daniel Stein, *Music Is My Life: Louis Armstrong, Autobiography, and American Jazz* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2012), 253, 255.

⁷¹ Fosler-Lussier, *Music in America’s Cold War Diplomacy*, 94.

⁷² Davenport, *Jazz Diplomacy*, 55.

In recognition of Armstrong's "services to [his] country"—both as a champion of jazz's cultural victory over Communism and as an embodiment of cherished American freedoms—liberal Republican senator Jacob Javits of New York delivered a speech to his colleagues in the Senate chamber on April 17, 1965. Calling on President Lyndon Johnson and the U.S. government to "show appreciation to Armstrong for the...good will [he has] produced for the United States," Javits requested that Ambassador Satch be "seriously considered for a Presidential Medal of Freedom."⁷³ Though President Johnson ultimately passed on selecting Armstrong for that distinction, the prestigious Recording Academy posthumously honored the entertainer's global influence with a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award in 1972.⁷⁴

While Javits did not ultimately see his request granted, the fact that a U.S. senator felt so compelled to extend the nation's gratitude to Armstrong just days after his return from the Iron Curtain is significant, not least because it reaffirms the tour's "central[ity]" in the dynamics of the Cold War during the 1960s.⁷⁵ As Javits suggested—and as a wealth of documentation proves—the All Stars' tour of the Eastern Bloc was both pivotal and "triumphant," for it demonstrated to the world that American music and, by extension, American culture had undoubtedly coopted the wants and needs of Eastern Europe's captive Communist

⁷³ "Javits Urges Medal for Lou Armstrong," *Afro-American* (1893-1988), Apr 17, 1965, accessed Apr 8, 2018, <https://search-proquest-com.libproxy.furman.edu/docview/532139313?accountid=11012>;

⁷⁴ Recording Academy GRAMMY Awards, "GRAMMY Award Results for Louis Armstrong," Grammy.com, accessed Apr 23, 2018, <https://www.grammy.com/grammys/artists/louis-armstrong>. Armstrong died on July 6, 1971. In 1972, his posthumous honor was called the Bing Crosby Award, but it was renamed in 1982.

⁷⁵ Stein, "Onkel Satchmo Behind the Iron Curtain."

populations.⁷⁶ After years of buildup and growing indications of cultural “détente,” Armstrong’s “winning demeanor” and mastery of jazz finally sealed the deal. By the spring of 1965, America’s investment in soft power had proven its worth with dramatic flair—the U.S. had “won” the cultural Cold War.⁷⁷

Reverberations of this cultural victory were felt almost immediately within the Soviet Union—as stated earlier—but it is clear that they also extended elsewhere and further into the future. Less than three years after the tour, for instance, “inward dissent” and pent-up frustration with Marxism-Leninism drove Czechoslovakia to make an attempt at democratic reform during the “Prague Spring” of 1968.⁷⁸ By 1969, moreover, political relations began to catch up with cultural ones as the United States and the Soviet Union embarked on a period of nuclear “détente” with their Strategic Arms Limitation Talks.⁷⁹ Even with diplomatic setbacks like the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, the resiliency and potency of America’s cultural dominance in the Communist Bloc continued to grow. Furthermore, it is no coincidence that as America’s cultural advantage over the USSR waxed stronger in the 1980s, so too did Premier Mikhail Gorbachev’s willingness to pursue radical reform with *glasnost* and *perestroika*.⁸⁰ In the end, concludes historian Lisa Davenport, the demise of Communism in Eastern Europe and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 may be attributed in part to the “allure and diffusion of modern jazz and Western cultural values.” More than any other event before or after it,

⁷⁶ “Javits Urges Medal for Lou Armstrong.”

⁷⁷ Davenport, *Jazz Diplomacy*, 97; Storb, *Jazz Meets the World*, 108.

⁷⁸ Gaddis, *The Cold War*, 185-186.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 199.

⁸⁰ Davenport, *Jazz Diplomacy*, 119.

Armstrong's foray behind the Iron Curtain typified that critical "allure and diffusion."⁸¹

Buttressing this Cold War cultural victory was Armstrong's heartfelt "enactment" of the very freedoms that jazz was meant to convey to its audiences in the first place.⁸² Contrary to the accusations of his detractors, Armstrong was no "racial clown [or] political pushover."⁸³ Rather, years of experience had turned Satchmo into a "real" ambassador—a seasoned and dignified diplomat who knew how to strike a balance between promoting his country's democratic profile and "demand[ing] [d]emocratic accountability" from his national government.⁸⁴ In bringing the racial issue to the forefront of his artistic endeavors in the Communist Bloc, moreover, Armstrong fulfilled his responsibility as an honest spokesman for the American way of life, with all its inspiring virtues and tragic contradictions.

Given the breadth of the impact that Armstrong and his Soviet Bloc tour left on the United States and the peoples of Eastern Europe, perhaps it is worth this nation's while to revisit Senator Javits's recommendation. As America's "highest civilian honor," the Presidential Medal of Freedom is meant to honor the living and the dead who have made "an especially meritorious contribution to the security or national interests of the United States, world peace, cultural or other significant public or private endeavors."⁸⁵ By all accounts, Satchmo fits the bill.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 116.

⁸² Fosler-Lussier, *Music in America's Cold War Diplomacy*, 94.

⁸³ Stein, *Music Is My Life*, 255.

⁸⁴ Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World*, 260.

⁸⁵ National Archives and Records Administration, "The Presidential Medal of Freedom," The Obama White House, accessed April 24, 2018, <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/node/349666>.

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