

Meet Amb. Ordway

Some Czechs fear that the inability of the Obama administration to name a new U.S. ambassador to Prague - the post has been vacant for 17 months - plays into the hands of the Russians, who are keen to increase their influence in the region. It's a sign that the U.S. is losing interest in Central Europe, the argument goes. The argument lost some of its oomph in late-May, when [John Ordway](#) took over as chargé d'affaires at the U.S. embassy. Ordway is an ambassador in title, having served in the post in both Armenia and Kazakhstan. Once an ambassador, always an ambassador, and this piece of protocol helps to mitigate the fact that the next official ambassador (assumed to be Obama's top ethics adviser, Norman Eisen) is still in the approval process and is months away from landing in Prague. With experience as ambassador in two post-Soviet republics, as well as earlier stints in Prague and Moscow, Ordway is well-equipped to figure out the Russians' game plan here. Better-equipped, in fact, than the next full-fledged ambassador.

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