For the first time in recent months, Congress acted boldly and decisively. Wednesday in overriding President Nixon's veto of the War Powers Resolution, Congress has reversed its decision on presidential war powers as being reversed by the legislative body. Not only is this joint resolution an important and necessary piece of legislation, but Congress is to be applauded for the resolve it showed in standing up to Nixon in this case.

The War Powers Resolution is the first attempt by Congress to resolve a vague constitutional issue; i.e. who has the right to commit troops overseas in times of crisis? The Constitution states that while the President is Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, Congress has the power to declare war. In times of international crisis, the fine distinction between these roles can, and often do, become blurred. The President can claim that national security interests necessitate "incur-sions" in to foreign lands and Congress heretofore has been powerless to stop him, except by voting a cut-off of funds. Both the Korea "police action" and the Vietnam War were underwritten wars of this type.

Through the War Powers Resolution, Congress has gone on record as stating it will not allow unnecessary "temporary incursions" to occur and escalate as they have in the past. The Bill provides for a 60-day period in which the President will be allowed to commit troops in crisis areas. After this period, he can request a 30-day extension from Congress if he feels it is critical for the safe removal of US troops; or he can request a declaration of war. In either case, he cannot act beyond the 60-day period without Congressional approval.

The recent Mideast crisis was an excellent example of a situation in which the resolution would have applied. The entire crisis lasted less than a month. It would have been necessary for American troops in the Mideast the 60-day period would have been more than ample. The provisions of the bill would not have interfered with the President's power to deal with foreign crises.

The manner in which Congress - which until now has been reluctant to stand up to Nixon's rampant vetoing - acted also deserves mention. As one expert on legislative affairs at MIT said, "It was the best news we've seen out of Congress for a long time... Congress surprised itself by flexing its muscle, and this might have important effect on how the legislature feels about impeachment." He added, "This is a critical period for Congress... it's reaching a moment of decision on impeachment, and the override is important for Congress's self-esteem.

The reversal was not a partisan vote; 25 Republican Senators, and 86 Republican Congressmen joined with the Democrats in overriding the veto. The final votes were 75 to 18 in the Senate and 284 to 135 in the House - a strong rebuke to Nixon's claims of executive power.

These developments are certainly heartening; we can only hope the trend continues and that the Congress, having taken the initiative to stand up to Nixon's attempted usurpation of power will now work towards ridding America of the President if no longer wants.