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Mr. Presidents Group

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George Washington

As outlined in the Constitution, the President holds certain constitutional authorities, such as veto power, pardon power, acting as Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces and creating treaties.

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Franklin D. Roosevelt

GW, that veto authority was a good call. I topped the list with 635 vetoes during my presidency. I guess that's what happens when you're in office for nearly four terms and handled major worldwide crises like WWII and the Great Depression.

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Grover Cleveland

I'm right there with you, FDR. I had 238 vetoes, which is the most for a two-term president. Most of which were private bills that seemed like pork barrel politics to me.

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Gerald Ford

Well, I used my fair share of vetoes, but the one presidential power I'm most known for is the authority to issue pardons. In 1974, I issued a full pardon to former president Richard Nixon for his role in the Watergate scandal. That way, Nixon could never be charged for crimes related to the scandal. I thought it was best to issue the pardon so the country could move forward. Click the following link to hear my address to the nation: <http://watergate.info/pardon/ford-pardons-nixon-address-to-nation>.

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Bill Clinton In my last day in office, I issued 141 pardons, one of whom was Marc Rich. This was referred to as "Pardongate," but the federal investigator found nothing wrong with the pardons.

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Harry S. Truman

I guess you caught a lot of slack for that one! I never had to pardon anyone, but I was president during wartime, in which I executed my power as Commander in Chief. I depended heavily on my advisors to help make decisions in Korea and Japan, but I understand Abraham Lincoln was extremely involved in strategy during the American Civil War.

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Abraham Lincoln

You're right on that one, Mr. Truman. I often communicated directly with my commanders through telegraph to keep them in check. Unfortunately, I disagreed with the war strategies of Generals McClellan and Halleck and gave General Grant full command of the Union Army in 1864.

Another authority measure I took full advantage of was the implied power of presidential prerogative. I guess the Emancipation Proclamation was technically unconstitutional because it should have been an amendment to the Constitution, but I still proceeded with this proclamation as a matter of presidential prerogative. To see the full proclamation, click the following link: http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/featured_documents/emancipation_proclamation/transcript.html.

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Thomas Jefferson

Hey, thanks to presidential prerogative, I was able to nearly double the size of the United States with the Louisiana Purchase. Congress technically could have impeached me for this transaction, but as I said then, "A strict observance of the written laws is doubtless one of the highest duties of a good citizen, but it is not the highest."

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