

□ filed
Indochina/Comment

Where We Are

by Anthony Lewis

By the end of this week President Nixon will have presided over the Vietnam war for longer than it took the United States to fight and win World War II. From Pearl Harbor to Japan's surrender it was three years, eight months and one week.

This is, therefore, an appropriate time to look at the record. What have been the costs and the achievements of the Nixon policy in Vietnam over the last three years, eight months and one week?

.....

In short, three years, eight months and one week of American fighting in Indochina have not achieved stability on our terms. The reason is no secret: We are trying to impose an alien system on a people with a long history of resistance to alien intrusion, against a political force that is the legitimate representative of Vietnamese nationalism. Until we stop that attempt, there can be no stability and no peace.

The other day an American officer in Danang said: "We are really giving it to them with B-52 strikes. Out in the hills around Quangtri, wherever there are reports of two or three people gathered together, they are being hit with B-52s." In terms of military effectiveness, politics and morals, that is where we are in Vietnam.