

# Conversation with a mother whose only son is in Vietnam

by Verna Henderson



VERNA HENDERSON

Mothers across America are becoming more and more upset because their sons are being sent to Vietnam to fight a war they don't understand.

Black mothers with sons in Vietnam are especially disturbed. They are disturbed because they don't understand or think it is right for any Black man to defend this country when he isn't treated as an equal within the country.

When it comes to war, we Blacks are treated equal, offered one man. The man will sign us up in a minute and ship us overseas before we know it. But you let us try to make it in this country and we are the victims of all types of injustices.

One Portland mother of a young man in Vietnam for over a month discussed her son being sent to

Vietnam to fight a war she didn't understand.

THE THIRTY-NINE YEAR old mother spoke without a smile on her face. "My son is 22 years old and he has been there a little over a month in that place called Vietnam. I feel terrible about it. He is my only child. At first I thought he wasn't going to have to serve in combat duty. But after checking into the matter I found out that not to be involved in combat duty that he would have had to be the brother or son of a man killed on duty in Vietnam. I don't feel good about it at all.

But I can't understand why it is my son. But I guess every mother feels that way. Him fighting over there isn't helping with our problems over here.

Recalling when she first found out that her son was to be sent

to Vietnam, the mother stated, "I stayed off from work for three nights. My blood pressure went up, up and up. My blood pressure is still sky high."

The young mother said she didn't understand the war in Vietnam. "I don't understand the war. I don't know what they are fighting for over there. The United States is always helping someone and in the end the people they are helping end up attacking the USA. We parents with sons in Vietnam are worried. It is so sad, that war."

The mother who tried to act as if she wasn't worried, continued. "My son is a quiet and sensitive young man. If he has any problems he tries to keep them from me. He says Vietnam is a spooky jungle. The conversation was draw-

ing to an end with the mother of a Black man fighting a war she really doesn't understand. "While out in the field the Army gives my son three packs of cigarettes, water, and soda every three days. He is usually out in the field for a period of 15 days. I hope they hurry up and end the war," the mother said as she came to an end. "This country has problems here at home it must face instead of fighting a war most of us don't know anything about in another country. I pray to the Lord that my son returns home in the mental and physical shape he left this country."

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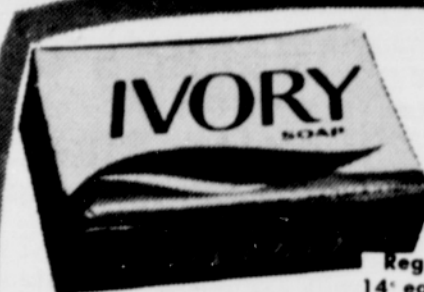


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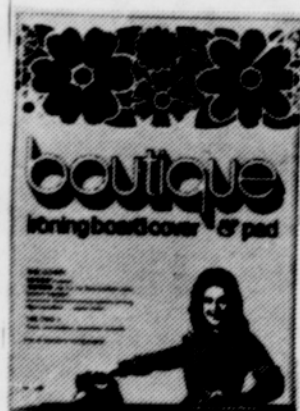
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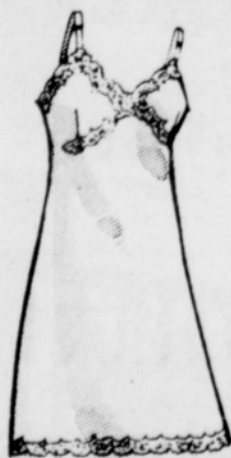


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