

Perspectives in Military History

50th Annual Lecture Series

General of the Army Omar Nelson Bradley Memorial Lecture

Vietnam: An Epic Tragedy

Sir Max Hastings

Journalist, Editor, and Author

The Vietnam War remains one of the world's most contentious conflicts, with the reverberations of its blood-soaked defiance against American interventionism echoing to the present day. On Wednesday, October 17, 2018, the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center (USAHEC) will host Sir Max Hastings, author of *The Secret War*, to present the General of the Army Omar Nelson Bradley Memorial Lecture. In this lecture, based on his new book, *Vietnam: An Epic Tragedy*, Sir Max Hastings critiques the methods, mistakes, and devastation caused by both sides during the war.

From France's crippling defeat at Dien Bien Phu in 1954 to the forced reunification between North and South in 1975, parts of the former French colony of Vietnam pushed back even the greatest powers of the world. The decades of war inflicted a huge material and human price on the Western powers, but the greatest cost inflicted by the war was suffered by the Vietnamese people themselves. Both North and South Vietnamese were forced to endure tyrannical and incompetent governments. For every American who died there, forty Vietnamese perished. When the U.S. pulled out of South Vietnam, the entire nation fell to Communist rule. The world remembers America's excesses, immortalized in gritty photography and the anti-war movement, yet forgets the vicious acts of terrorism carried out against the Vietnamese people by the Communists. Sir Max Hastings spent three years collecting accounts from both sides of the war and gathered the testimonies of people from many walks of life, both soldier and civilian. Giving no undue praise to either side, Hastings masterfully depicts the cost of misused martial power in complex cultural and political issues that reject simple answers.

Sir Max Hastings is an author, journalist, and once editor-in-chief of The Daily Telegraph. He has published twenty-six books, and has reported on eleven conflicts as foreign correspondent for the BBC, most notably Vietnam and the Falklands. In 1982, he was Journalist of the Year and Reporter of the Year in the British Press Awards, as well as Editor of the Year in 1988. In 2012 the Pritzker Military Library of Chicago presented him its \$100,000 Literary Award for lifetime achievement in military writing.

DATE: October 17, 2018

TIME: Doors open at 6:30 PM and the talk begins at 7:15 PM

PLACE: USAHEC, Visitor and Education Center, Multipurpose Rooms

For updates and any last minute changes in meeting times/places, please check the USAHEC website: www.USAHEC.org or call the Information Desk: 717-245-3972