

## “The Fog of War” Reaction Paper

Regret is a strong emotion, especially when one cannot make up for their past actions. Robert McNamara says he has made mistakes that lead to the deaths of at least thousands of people. Many people call him a war monger, and this may be true of him during Vietnam, but people change and reflect as they age, sometimes growing in wisdom.

Through the documentary, Robert gives the viewer eleven rules of war. Most of the rules though, rather than being rules *of* war, are rules to avoid war and unnecessary killing. He has not become a pacifist, however, as his ninth rule states that sometimes one must engage in evil to do good. He seems to have learned the horrors of engaging in such evil from his many years of doing so. McNamara evidently uses the documentary as a chance to get off his chest the many regrets he has in life. He also uses it to serve a warning to future generations. His advice is to not needlessly rush into violence and death.

The filmmaker highlights Mr. McNamara’s points by leaving almost no ‘negative space’ for silence. There are jump cuts that keep Robert speaking almost the entire time, apart from when he has moments of regret. This style shows him talking fast without second thoughts about killing thousands of people. It also, however, makes the few somber moments of reflection he has about his actions even more gut wrenching by allowing silence while his eyes tear up.

Robert McNamara can never make up for what he has done, and he never wants anyone else to feel that way. War, he believes, should be done with care.