

# GLASGOW CATHOLIC WORKER

'Faith, Works, Love, Mercy'

'For Sartre hell is other people; but for us, others are Christ.' *Francois Mauriac*

## Seeing it as it is



*"Better to be a beggar in freedom than to be forced into compromise against my conscience"....Dietrich Von Hildebrand*

I have recently finished reading "The Heart of a Lion" – about the great Dietrich Von Hildebrand. Some people have called Von Hildebrand the "forgotten Catholic philosopher". I would not use the word forgotten, as his work has been read by thousands, and there is new found interest in the work of this "personalist Catholic phenomenologist". Dietrich's second wife – Alice Von Hildebrand, a writer and philosopher in her own right – has

spent a great deal of time retaining her husband's work, writing about his influence, and making sure his witness is not forgotten.

Von Hildebrand was born of a prominent and artistic German family, the youngest of 6 children – and *Continued on page 2→*

## Keep Religion out of Politics

This mantra has been repeated so often that it is now trotted out as a self-evident axiom, a truism repeated ad nauseam.

It is, however, purest baloney. Both religion and politics are concerned with the relationship between people, and how people should, and should not, behave. So there must be an interphase. As Desmond Tutu

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## They fairly make ye work



I met a woman who was nearly deaf. She lived in Dundee and had worked in the jute mills which processed jute fibre obtained from two varieties of plant native to Bangladesh. The mills produced from the 19<sup>th</sup> Century until the last one was closed in 1990. The work was mainly done by women and children as they were cheaper to employ.

The work made the jute barons very wealthy but left the workers and their families poor and malnourished. Half of all male workers who volunteered to fight in the first world war were rejected as being too weak. The children were particularly useful shifters (mill workers) as it meant the employers could reduce the pass, the space between the machines, as of course children are conveniently small. Not only did the dust and fibre in the air destroy their lungs, the incredible

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**What's going on here? More on page 7**

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the only boy. Women had a strong influence on his life and from a young age he appreciated what he considered the feminine virtues and intelligence. He had immense respect for women and even as a youth he could not bear to hear his friends demean women in any way.

Von Hildebrand's father was a sculptor and a lover of music, and the home was filled with artists, poets, classical musicians, and the academics of Europe. While the Von Hildebrands did not follow religion (they were very nominally protestant, never went to Church, and didn't profess religious teachings) there was a strong emphasis on values and morals, and a love of beauty in the home. This had a deep impact on the young Dietrich and some people refer to him as the "philosopher of beauty".

At a very young age Von Hildebrand felt a call to Jesus. As an adult he was close friends with and influenced by men such as Max Scheler, Adolph Reinach, and Feidrich Foerster and discussions of ethics and religion were prominent in their friendships. He converted to Roman Catholicism in 1914 with his beloved wife Margaret Denck (Gretchen) and pursued an academic career focusing on philosophy.

It is in the next phase of life that Von Hildebrand's life became – in many people's eyes – one of both great discernment and heroic, Christian courage. The death and destruction of World War 1 left a deep impression on the young man. He deplored violence and also fully accepted the Christian mandate to love all men. As the Nazi party, Hit-

ler and German National Socialism slowly gained influence in Germany, Dietrich Von Hildebrand very early and very strongly proclaimed it to be evil. He never wavered in this assessment and he never, no matter how scared he might be, failed to proclaim it. He particularly dis-



claimed the anti-Semitic rhetoric that was at first insidiously, and then more blatantly seeping into the national rhetoric and he said "anti-Semitism and Catholicism are absolutely irreconcilable."

Von Hildebrand's frequent and vocal criticism of the German state, combined with his influence, soon made him an enemy of the Nazis. With his life at risk he and his wife and son were forced to flee through various countries as the Nazis invaded Europe and kept him on their official death-wish list. The Von Hildebrands left their home, couldn't access any of their money and became penniless – a strange state of affairs for a man who had been raised and educated in privilege. As Dietrich said frequently to his second wife Alice– this complete destitution allowed he and Gretchen the opportunity to rely completely and totally on the Christian charity of others – and he considered this a blessing. While on the run, Dietrich wrote and ran a newspaper that told the truth about the Nazi regime. He and his wife never stopped

working, even while penniless, living in homes of others and fearing and fleeing for their lives. The story of this flight through Europe is an interesting one, and one that speaks to the role of Providence in their frequent near-misses and last minute escapes from the Nazis.

Due to help from philosopher Jacques Maritain, the Von Hildebrands finally ended up in New York City in 1940 and Dietrich became a Professor at Fordham University. His life and work are witnessed to in his multiple books, his passionate teaching, his love for his students, for both his wives, and his willingness to stick

up for the truth. A recent Catholic Herald article on this philosopher said if you had to sum up the witness of his life it is "you must always bear witness to the truth – even at great personal loss."

There are many things about the life of this remarkable man to comment on but the one I want to briefly focus on is this – where did he get the



*"He who wants to win the world for Christ must have the courage to come in conflict with it." Titus Brandsma*

*Above: A young Titus Brandsma, (later Father), killed at Dachau*

discernment and the courage to both understand the evil of the Nazi regime and to fight it? One of the severe disappointments he experienced was the fact that not all Catholics – and not all Priests and even Bishops – saw the evil festering before their eyes. Von Hildebrand witnessed sermons, speeches, and written documents by prominent Catholics who felt that German nationalism and Catholicism were perfectly compatible, and indeed desirable. He witnessed men and women he thought were people of Christ starting to



*A young girl blinded by looking at the bright explosion of the atomic bomb.*

turn on their Jewish neighbours. He abhorred this, was mystified by it, and had to keep reminding himself that God never promised us good leaders – all He promised was that the “gates of Hell would not prevail against the Church”. Thus he was able to maintain his faith in the Church – while being constantly distressed at the lack of Christianity he witnessed in some proclaimed Christians.

I often ask myself – how can we, as Christians, have such different understandings of what it means to be followers of Christ? Von Hildebrand could not understand how, for example, someone could compliment

him on his writings about Christian charity – and in the next breath praise the German Nationalist state. I often ask myself how anybody who calls themselves a Christian can actually defend the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings. How come I see these bombings as an atrocity against God and man – and other Christians see them as compatible with the teachings of Christ? I don’t know the answer to this.

I hope that I can look at a man such as Dietrich Von Hildebrand (and indeed the “other” heroic Dietrich – Bonhoeffer) and take inspiration from their commitment to their faith. Both of these men remained firm in their understanding of Christ as our redeemer, and firm in their belief that He mandated us to “love others as ourselves”, “serve the least of these our brethren” and proclaim the truth with clarity and courage. They watched others become complicit in evil, through either silence and fear or blatant activity – and yet both Dietrichs retained their faith. They are also inspirations for us when we fear ourselves becoming “complicit” in evil. I think it is worth our while to constantly ask ourselves “am I proclaiming the truth? Have I become too afraid? Am I being the Christian Christ has called me to be?” When I ask myself these questions – I am not always happy with the answer I see. I then remember to “take the plank out of my own eye first”, before judging others.

Dorothy Day (who read and admired Von Hildebrand’s work) once said that when we start to get discouraged with the Church we should “turn to the Saints”. The lives of the Saint will remind us of heroic virtue, true Christian witness, and love of all people. I believe that Dietrich Von Hildebrand is one of the Saints in Heaven we can turn to

for inspiration. There is nothing we face today – violence, racism, war, poverty, loss and fear – that he did not experience in multitudes – and yet he remained a faithful Christian to the end of his days. I can only hope that I have even a morsel of his courage and his faithfulness – but somehow I doubt it.

*Tamara Horsburgh*

## On the one hand...



Yemen faces bombing and a blockade from a Saudi Arabia led coalition contributing to a potential humanitarian disaster.

According to new UN figures, more than 14 million people in Yemen, about half of the population, are going hungry. More than 370,000 children are at risk of starvation.

The UK government’s international development secretary, Priti Patel, announced the government would spend an extra **£37m** this year in aid in Yemen, taking total UK spending to £100m.

## and on the other...

Britain has sold more than **£3.7bn** of arms to Saudi Arabia since the air-strikes in Yemen began.





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noise caused many to go deaf, like the lady from Dundee.

Capitalism, the ism under which we live, is often an exploiter of workers, particularly those at the bottom of the pay scales. The condition of the Dundee jute mill workers, treated as mere objects in the profit process, continues today wherever the Barons can find the least resistance from workers and governments.

The collapse of the Rana Plaza buildings in Bangladesh a few years ago which killed 1,134 people, brought to the world's attention the working conditions of those working in the Bangladesh's garment industry. The majority who are women earn little more than £25 a month. Many are forced to work 14-16 hours a day seven days a week, with some workers finishing at 3am only to start again the same morning at 7.30am. On top of this, workers face unsafe, cramped and hazardous conditions which often lead to work injuries and factory fires.



*Jute mill workers*

Capitalism has found a new jute mill in Bangladesh. Because of heroic men and women both within the trade union movement and elsewhere such as Mary Brooksbank who wrote *The Jute Mill Song*, working conditions in the UK are not conducive to this time of exploitation. Mary Brooksbank was 12 when she started work in the mills.

We would never accept these conditions in Scotland although we are happy to buy our clothes from shops that use products from these exploited workers such as H&M, Benetton, Gap and Matalan. We are

happy to buy the latest iPhone despite the fact that Apple, the worlds richest company, has workers in China working 12 hours a day 6 days a week. It may be consoling to know that one of the firms involved Foxconn, has installed suicide nets to catch people trying to jump to their death.

Last year a report by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation on low paid workers in England stated

'Many low-paid workers, particularly in retail and hospitality, described purely functional relationships with their jobs. While work might take up a significant proportion of their time, none felt that their jobs were central to their life or identity. In describing their jobs, the most common responses centred on work as "necessary to pay the bills". "We don't do this job because we want to, it's because we have to."

Last month a report of working conditions in Scotland by the University of West of Scotland and Oxfam found that 1 in 5 workers were paid less than the Living Wage, 118,000 workers did not receive their minimum legal entitlement to paid holi-



*la poissonnerie - 1951 Bernard Buffet*

*Dundee's unusually high Catholic population is caused by hundreds of Catholic Highlanders and Irish disposed by the Highland clearances and potato famine flocking to find work in the jute mills.*

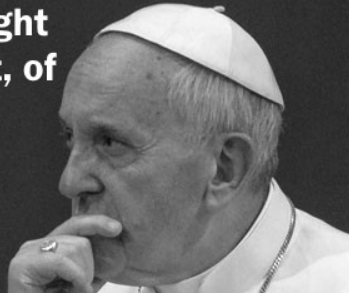
days, 51,000 workers were on zero hours contracts and more than half of Scottish adults reporting facing unrealistic time pressures at work.

'The deceiver of the whole world' is at work here, we seem to have accepted that Capitalism is the only answer and that the fact that work for many, primarily the lower paid, is dehumanising is just the way things are. We complain, tweak the system, get outraged but fail to question or consider

that another world is possible, a world that puts the person at the heart of our work places. If we Christians are to be the light of the world we need to demand that all economic activity should be judged not by how profitable it is but by how person focused it is. Despite all the Human Resource departments, people are not mere resources to put alongside other resources. We need to encourage educators to look at alternatives and promote structures which gives the person centre stage.

In *Caritas in Veritate*, Pope Benedict XVI put forward a definition of decent work: 'It means work that expresses the essential dignity of every man and woman in the con-

**A savage capitalism has taught  
the logic of profit at any cost, of  
giving in order to get, of  
exploitation  
without thinking of people**



text of their particular society: work that is freely chosen, effectively associating workers, both men and women, with the development of their community; work that enables the worker to be respected and free from any form of discrimination; work that makes it possible for families to meet their needs and provide schooling for their children, without the children themselves being forced into labour; work that permits the workers to organize

themselves freely, and to make their voices heard; work that leaves enough room for rediscovering one's roots at a personal, familial and spiritual level; work that guarantees those who have retired a decent standard of living.'

Unbridled Capitalism for many at the bottom of the chain is not working.

*Michael Sutherland*

### **Oh Dear Me (The Jute Mill Song) by Mary Brooksbank**

Oh, dear me, the mill's gaen fast,  
The puir wee shifters canna get a rest,  
Shiftin bobbins coorse and fine,  
They fairly mak ye work for your ten and nine

Oh dear me, I wish the day was done  
Rinnin up an doon the pass is nae fun  
Shiftin, piecing, spinnin, warp weft an twine  
Tae feed an cled my bairnie affen ten an nine

Oh dear me, the world's ill-divided  
Them that work the hardest are aye wi least provided  
But I maun bide contented, dark days or fine  
There's nae much pleasure living affen ten and nine

.....

Affen: Off of

Bobbins: spools holding thread

Cled: clothe

Pass: passage between frames or machines in a factory

Piecers: mill workers -children who had to join the ends of broken threads

Shifters: mill workers – often children who had to move in amongst machinery to change the bobbins on the frame

Twine: twist (into a thicker fibre)

Warp: threads on a loom through which the crosstreads are passed



## **The Aims and Means of the Catholic Worker**

The aim of the Catholic Worker movement .. requires us to begin living in a different way. We recall the words of our founders, Dorothy Day who said, "God meant things to be much easier than we have made them," and Peter Maurin who wanted to build a society "where it is easier for people to be good."

When we examine our society, which is generally called capitalist (because of its methods of producing and controlling wealth) and is bourgeois (because of prevailing concern for acquisition and material interests, and its emphasis on respectability and mediocrity), we find it far from God's justice.

--In labour, human need is no longer the reason for human work. Instead, the unbridled expansion of technology, necessary to capitalism and viewed as "progress," holds sway.

Jobs are concentrated in productivity and administration for a "high-tech," war-related, consumer society of disposable goods, so that labourers are trapped in work that does not contribute to human welfare.

Furthermore, as jobs become more specialized, many people are excluded from meaningful work or are alienated from the products of their labour. Even in farming, agribusiness has replaced agriculture, and, in all areas, moral restraints are run over roughshod, and a disregard for the laws of nature now threatens the very planet.

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## Nonviolence in Early Christian Thought

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### *Second to Fourth Century*

**Ignatius of Antioch** (80-140 AD) in Epistle to the Ephesians: "And let us imitate the Lord, who, when He was reviled, reviled not again ; when He was crucified, He answered not; when He suffered, He threatened not ; but prayed for His enemies, Father, forgive them; they know not what they do. If any one, the more he is injured, displays the more patience, blessed is he."

**Justin Martyr** (110-165 AD) in Dialogue with Trypho: "...we who were filled with war, and mutual slaughter, and every wickedness, have each through the whole earth changed our warlike weapons, — our swords into ploughshares, and our spears into implements of tillage,—and we cultivate piety, righteousness, philanthropy, faith, and hope..."

**Irenaeus** (120-202 AD) in Against Heresies: "But if the law of liberty, that is, the word of God, preached by the apostles (who went forth from Jerusalem) throughout all the earth, caused such a change in the state of things, that these [nations] did form the swords and war-lances into ploughshares, and changed them into pruning-hooks for reaping the grain, [that is], into instruments used for peaceful purposes, and that they are now unaccustomed to fighting, but when smitten, offer also the other cheek..."

**Athenagoras** (about 170 AD) in A Plea for the Christians: "...for we have learned, not only not to return blow for blow, nor to go to law with those who plunder and rob us, but to those who smite us on one side of

the face to offer the other side also, and to those who take away our coat to give likewise our cloak."

**Clement of Alexandria** (150-215 AD) in Paedagogus: "In peace, not in war, we are trained."



*This is an Arabic letter ("n" inside red circle, signifying "Nasarah", Nazarene) which is being painted on Christians homes in Mosel ,Iraq to identify them as Christians. They are given the ultimatum to leave , pay a heavy tax, convert, or die by the sword .*

Clement of Alexandria in Protrepticus: "If you enroll as one of God's people, heaven is your country and God your lawgiver. And what are His laws? You shall not kill, You shall love your neighbor as yourself. To him that strikes you on the one cheek, turn to him the other also."

**Tertullian** (145-220 AD) in On Idolatry: "But how will a Christian man war, nay, how will he serve even in peace, without a sword, which the Lord has taken away? For albeit soldiers had come unto John, and had received the formula of their rule; albeit, likewise, a centurion had believed; still the Lord afterward, in disarming Peter, unbelted every soldier."

**Hippolytus** (170-235 AD) in Apostolic Tradition: "Persons who pos-

sess authority to kill, or soldiers, should not kill at all, even when it is commanded of them. Everyone who receives a distinctive leading position, or a magisterial power, and does not clothe himself in the weaponlessness of which is becoming to the Gospel, should be separated from the flock."

Hippolytus in Canons: "No Christian should go and become a soldier unless a commander who has a sword compels him; let him not draw any guilt of blood shed upon himself."

**Origen** (185-254 AD) in Against Celsus: "To those who inquire of us from where we come, or who is our founder, we reply that we have come agreeably to the counsels of Jesus. We have cut down our hostile, insolent, and wearisome swords into plowshares. We have converted into pruning hooks the spears that were formerly used in war. For we no longer take up sword against nation, nor do we learn war any more. That is because we have become children of peace for the sake of Jesus, who is our leader."

"We do not indeed fight under him, although he require it; but we fight on his behalf, forming a special army -- an army of piety --by offering his prayers to God."

**Arnobius** (died 326 AD) in Against the Heathen: "A numerous band of men as we are, we have learned from his teaching and his laws that evil should not be repaid with evil. Rather, it is better to suffer wrong than to inflict it. We would rather shed our own blood than stain our hands and our conscience with that of another."

*"In peace, not in war, we are trained."*

**Lactantius** (220-330 AD, tutor for the emperor Constantine's children) in *The Divine Institutes*: "For how can a man be just who injures, who hates, who despoils, who puts to death? And they who strive to be serviceable to their country do all these things..."

"For when God forbids us to kill, He not only prohibits us from open violence, which is not even allowed by the public laws, but He warns us against the commission of those things which are esteemed lawful among men. Thus it will be neither lawful for a just man to engage in warfare, since his warfare is justice itself, nor to accuse any one of a capital charge, because it makes no difference whether you put a man to death by word, or rather by the



*Lactantius*

sword, since it is the act of putting to death itself which is prohibited. Therefore, with regard to this precept of God, there ought to be no exception at all; but that it is always unlawful to put to death a man, whom God willed to be a sacred animal."

**Martin of Tours** (316-397 AD) in *The Paedagogus* - "I am a soldier of Christ. To fight is not permissible for me."

*Prepared by Daniel Keeran, MSW  
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## What's going on here?

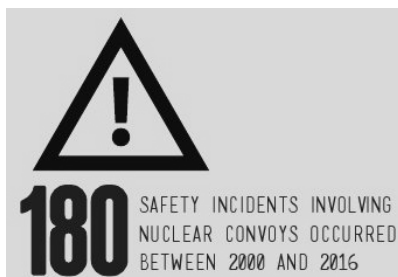


A convoy carrying nuclear weapons left Burghfield on the morning of 14th Sept and went east to the M25 and then north on the A1. By late afternoon it turned off the A1 into



*Brian Quail being removed from under the convoy escort vehicle.*

RAF Leeming for the night. On the 15th it continued on the A1 stopped for a break at RAF Boulmer and then heading to the Edinburgh bypass. After turning off for a break at Glencorse Barracks it continued on the Edinburgh bypass and the M8 and M9 to Stirling.



As it left the motorway and passed below Stirling Castle it was halted by two protesters. Brian Quail and Alasdair Ibbotson calmly slowed one vehicle then stopped the one after it. As Alasdair lay in the road Brian wriggled underneath it. It took 15 minutes to get them re-

moved and the convoy rolling again. Video here

As it emerged at the other end of the Stirling road (A811) at Balloch it was again halted, this time by two members of Faslane Peace Camp. Eventually it made it to Coulpport around 7pm.

[www.nukewatch.org.uk](http://www.nukewatch.org.uk)

### **Get involved:**

#### **Round Table Discussions**

On the 3rd Tuesday of every month we meet to discuss a topic and help us together to clarify our thoughts. We meet at 6:15. Please email us for details of where we'll be meeting.

#### **Soup Kitchen**

Help out at our weekly Soup Kitchen in Cadogan Street, Glasgow City Centre

#### **Place of Welcome for Refugees: Saturdays 9am-1pm**

Help teach English at Garnethill Multi-cultural Centre (Basement) 21 Rose Street Glasgow or just socialise.

#### **Monthly Witness at Faslane Nuclear Submarine Base**

Join us on the first Saturday of each month at 2:30pm outside the North Gate.

**Website:** [www.catholicworker.org.uk](http://www.catholicworker.org.uk)

**Email:** [glw@catholicworker.org.uk](mailto:glw@catholicworker.org.uk)

**Twitter:** @CatholicWorkerG

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/glasgowcatholicworker](http://www.facebook.com/glasgowcatholicworker)

#### **Donating to the Catholic Worker**

We exclusively depend on donations from people who support our aims and vision. We do not pay anyone for the work they do and do not in principle register as a charity. Any money donated helps us to pay rent and costs we need cash for. If you would like to contribute money to our work you can transfer donations to us using your bank's phone or online service:

#### **Account name:**

Catholic Worker Glasgow

**Bank:** Triodos Bank

**Account number:** 20467753

**Sort code:** 16-58-10

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said “\*anyone who thinks they can keep religion apart from politics, knows little about either”. Just think about the Holy Land and the debate over the status of Jerusalem, for example - not to mention Northern Ireland.

This cliché is often reinforced with a glib rehash of what must be the most miss-quoted passage in scripture - “Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s”. I say miss-quoted, because it is generally truncated. The second part is left out, as if that were unimportant - “and unto God the things that are God’s”.

But this second half is absolutely crucial to a Christian. We must place our loyalty to Jesus above all other considerations, and fidelity to the Gospel must always be our guide.

Which gives us a problem. “The truth will set you free”, Paul writes. He did not add the words he perhaps should have...”and get you into a lot of trouble”. Fidelity to Jesus will not make you popular, admired and fashionable. In fact the very reverse will happen.

The initially scandalous and shocking verses in Luke 4-16 “If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters--yes, even their own life--such a person cannot be my disciple” needs to be understood in the light of this consideration.

Jesus is not telling us to hate, but to recognise that He - love incarnate - is Lord of all. Let Caesar - the state -

have his taxes and earthly authority, but the Kingdom of God is supreme. And where there is a conflict, His law must prevail.

There are real and vital implications for us today. To take an analogy: In the past many Christians accepted slavery as right, and defended it. Few, if any would attempt to justify slavery now.

Today, many Catholics regard nuclear weapons as acceptable, and support political parties which advocate this. (“Render unto Caesar...”) This, in spite of fact that such weapons have been condemned by the Bishops and the Pope, and devastate Gospel values.



*Catholic Chaplain, George Zabelka,*

This year marks the 71st anniversary of the greatest single-act war crime in history, the annihilation of Hiroshima. This massacre was blessed by the Catholic Chaplain, George Zabelka, who later raised a cry from the soul “My God, what have we done? He wrote “I never preached a single sermon against killing civilians to the men who were doing it. To the best of my knowledge no American cardinals or bishops were opposing these mass air raids.” It wasn’t the godless Communists who used the A Bomb on other human beings - it was

Christian America - with the backing of Christian Britain. And we are unrepentant.

Theresa May said that she would personally press the button and kill millions of people. Kezia Dugdale agrees. These people claim to be practising Christians. If this is Christianity, thank God for good atheists.

Which leaves me to a final puzzle. Why is it that the pro-life movement (which I support) so evasive about the babies threatened by nuclear bombs? I mean, if abortion is wrong when performed one at a time, how much more wrong is it when performed en masse, and compulsorily, by means of the world’s most powerful abortifacient, Trident?

*Brian Quail*

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## **Shadow on the Rock**

*by Daniel Berrigan, S.J.*

At Hiroshima there’s a museum  
and outside that museum there’s a  
rock,  
and on that rock there’s a shadow.  
That shadow is all that remains  
of the human being who stood there  
on August 6, 1945  
when the nuclear age began.  
In the most real sense of the word,  
that is the choice before us.  
We shall either end war and the  
nuclear arms race now in this generation,  
or we will become Shadows On the  
rock.

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