The following letter is excerpted from a longer letter submitted for publication, a pacifist response to *Arming the Left*, the cover story in the Independent's May 18-28 edition.

Dear peace community, *Arming the Left* (Independent May 18-25) starts with so many hypotheticals of armed inhuman Nazis shooting into crowds of pacifist demonstrators. After spinning this dystopian tale Michael Siebert writes “Let’s say you’re black or Jewish or” fill in the blanks. “You’re unarmed and your belief that something like this could never happen here has just been shattered.”

I am Jewish. I am well aware that it can happen here. It already has. Many times. Blacks, Native People and Latinos know that intimately. Anyone who is poor or a minority knows that. From lynching and Jim Crow to native genocide and gay bashing. All were and are carried out by armed men who believe they are righteous.

That’s why I advocate pacifism. A philosophy that undermines the legitimacy of violence as a solution will ultimately make us all safer. Learning the skills of non-violent communication and conflict resolution and de-escalation are critical, but are nowhere mentioned in the article. Strong community is critical. If that “20-year-old kid storming towards you with a pistol on his hip” sees you as the friendly neighbor, rather than the armed other, he’s more likely talk rather than shoot. If you are armed will he be more likely to draw that pistol. Are you likely to shoot him even if that pistol stays on his hip? Will your weapon make you more emboldened to use violence? If you’re armed, are you any different from that kid?

There’s an even darker side to weapons: You have to dehumanize your opponents to use them. Nick Campbell “thinks that people beholden to certain ideologies simply can’t be reasoned with, because they fundamentally don’t respect the rights of other people to exist.” That is a textbook example of dehumanizing your opponent, and is at the root of most violence. To say that the left should dehumanize others to make ourselves safer because they’re dehumanizing us is dangerous hypocrisy. When the left and right dehumanize each other where does that leave us? What are the limits of self-defense?

Let’s talk about building community. Let’s organize movements. Let’s learn de-escalation skills. Let’s hone our conflict resolution and non-violent communication abilities. That’s what would make me feel safer. And that’s what would build a stronger and more egalitarian society.

Robbie Liben, a computer programmer in Missoula and a lifelong nonviolent political activist.
Stop by the Friday and Saturday events (listed below) by Moms Demand Action Missoula Chapter to learn more about gun violence and what you can do about it.

... and wear orange on June 2

Calendar

**Thursday, June 1, 8,15 and 29, 5:30 pm, JRPC.** Join us for this year’s presentation by visiting Humphrey Fellow Scholars from around the world. The Humphrey Program, which was established in 1978, brings young and midcareer professionals from designated countries to the United States for a year of nondegree graduate-level study, leadership development and professional collaboration with U.S. counterparts. **This is always a welcome event to give us a view of other countries that we cannot get in our media. Please join us.** Snacks provided and time to mingle and meet our guests. This week we meet

- **Bernardo Perez** is [an architect from Nicaragua](#) and will be studying Urban and Regional Planning at MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology). His most recent project was the planning and supervision of an important archeological site in his city, which integrated environmental and urban issues. This project was a US Government grant, and introduced him to the Hubert Humphrey Scholarship program.

- **Dr. Zhenquan Jiao from Beijing, China** works for the Bureau of Disease Control and Prevention at the Chinese National Health and Family Planning Commission. Dr. Jiao has worked at Indiana University and the World Health Organization. He is responsible for China’s national HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted disease, and Hepatitis C control and prevention efforts.

**Friday, June 2, Wear Orange 2017 for Gun Sense**

**Friday, June 2 and every Friday, 12:15-12:45, Higgins Bridge.** Come stand with Women in Black and Veterans for Peace to support peace and call for an end to violence in any form.

**Friday June 2, 5-8 pm, JRPC.** We are pleased to offer you a special showing and sale of select items that belonged to Michel Colville, our long-time member and friend. The works of the late Michel Colville will be on display this First Friday in our community room. Many of Michel’s handpicked fabrics, beads, and textile features will be available for sale so they may find new life in new hands. Come on down any time from 5p-8p. There will be refreshments, laughter, and imagining what you could make with fabric!

**Friday, June 2, 5-8 pm, Outside JRPC.** Stop by the "Remembrance table" for the 3rd Annual National Gun Violence Awareness Day

**Saturday, June 3, 11:30am-1:30pm, Kiwanis Park** (350 Kiwanis St). Please join [Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense](https://www.facebook.com/events/296957034064665) to honor victims and survivors of gun violence. Inspired by friends of Hadiya Pendleton (killed by gun violence) who decided to honor her life by wearing orange -- the color hunters wear in the woods to protect themselves and others. Please wear orange ad text orange to 64433. This will be a family friendly event, so bring the kids. **AND WEAR ORANGE!** Let’s create sea of orange color!

**Monday, June 5, 4-6 pm, University Center Theater.** You're invited to the **State of Climate Change Science in Montana** forum. Leading Montana scientists will present on the state of climate science in Montana and the impacts of the changing climate on the state’s water, forests, agriculture and wildlife. The presentations will be followed by a moderated Q and A session.
Out to Lunch -- We'll be teaching them how to make small folded journals -- fun and

Wednesday, July 19, 11 am-1 pm, Caras Park. Join the JRPC for children's activities at Out To Lunch -- We'll be teaching them how to make small folded journals -- fun and

Thursday, June 8, 5:30 pm, JRPC. Join us for this year's presentation by visiting Humphrey Fellow Scholars from around the world. The Humphrey Program, which was established in 1978, brings young and midcareer professionals from designated countries to the United States for a year of nondegree graduate-level study, leadership development and professional collaboration with U.S. counterparts. Please join us. Snacks provided and time to mingle and meet our guests. This week we meet Natalia Ariza Ramirez (Colombia), Luis Alberto Hierro Sanchez (Cuba) and Fatma Hosgör Tekesin (Turkey). Presentations continue on June 15 and 29.

Friday-Sunday, June 9-11, 5:30-8 pm, Missoula Children's Theatre. Missoula Urban Indian Health Center presents free, family indigenous film series, celebrating and encouraging resiliency.

Saturday, June 10, 9 am-5 pm, University Congregational Church. Join us for our third annual Un-conference. This year's theme is "Beyond Us and Them: What is Possible?" to help us learn to reach across the divide and work together. Free for JRPC members and $20 for others with lunch and snacks included.

Sunday, June 11, 1:30-3:30 pm, JRPC. Award-winning documentary SEMBENE! the story of Ousmane Sembene, the “father of African cinema,” who spent decades shaping a meaningful, visionary cinema for a newly independent Africa. The project is motivated by Sembene’s desire —unfulfilled in his lifetime after 50 years of focused work—to return African stories to the African people. The documentary, created by Sembene’s biographer, premiered in competition at the Sundance and Cannes film festivals, has screened throughout the world, and was included in seven best-of-2015 lists, including a top-ten-of-2015 notice from New York magazine. This event will celebrate Sembene's message of self-empowerment, ownership of one's own culture and Panafrikanism. The event will feature a post-film discussion. View trailer here: https://vimeo.com/139538743. Questions? Anuradha Gandhi, 505-417-3441. Anuradha@namchak.or For more info please visit: www.SEMBEFEfilm.com.

Thursday, June 15, 5:30 pm, JRPC. Join us for this year’s presentation by visiting Humphrey Fellow Scholars from around the world. The Humphrey Program, which was established in 1978, brings young and midcareer professionals from designated countries to the United States for a year of nondegree graduate-level study, leadership development and professional collaboration with U.S. counterparts. Please join us. Snacks provided and time to mingle and meet our guests. This week we meet Mireille L. Tchakounte Tchatat (Cameroon) and Irma Burjanadze (Georgia). Presentations continue on June 29.


Big Sky Pride events will be happening across Billings throughout the weekend. Look for the Montana Human Rights Network at

Mondays, June 19 & 26, 6:30-8:30 pm, 210 N. Higgins, Suite 207. Compassionate Communication Class, taught by Patrick Marsolek. Healthy, effective communication is essential at home, work or when having fun. Develop tools that will bring ease, clarity and personal integrity to every conversation. Register here: http://www.innerworkingsresources.com/CommunicationMissoula

Thursday, June 29, 5:30 pm, JRPC. Join us for this year’s final presentation by visiting Humphrey Fellow Scholars from around the world. Snacks provided and time to mingle and meet our guests. This week we meet Zenaida Martinez Blanco (Mexico), Juan Carlos Banda (Chile) and Alireza Bayat (Iran)

Saturday, July 1, 8 am, Downtown Missoula. RiseUp 5k in collaboration with Missoula Rises. Net profits will be donated to national nonprofits. http://https://www.facebook.com/events/1791159761200455/

Wednesday, July 19, 11 am-1 pm, Caras Park. Join the JRPC for children's activities at Out To Lunch -- We'll be teaching them how to make small folded journals -- fun and

Friday-Sunday, June 9-11, 5:30-8 pm, Missoula Children's Theatre. Missoula Urban Indian Health Center presents free, family indigenous film series, celebrating and encouraging resiliency.
Thursday, September 21, 7 pm, Shakespeare & Co. Our Written Voices: The Spoken Worlds of Central and Southwest Asia, a poetry reading series celebrating the International Day of Peace and the vibrant diversity of the Missoula community. For the first reading in our series, we invite those from Central and Southwest Asia, those who have visited, and those who have a connection to this region to share original poetry and prose as well as works by authors from this region who have inspired them. The deadline for submissions is August 18th. For submissions, inquiries, and info on forthcoming readings, please contact Susannah Cragwick at susannah.cragwick@hotmail.com or 406-207-9217.

Sunday, October 15, 3-7 pm, Home Arts Building at the Fairgrounds. Save the Date for our annual Peace Party. Call us if you have ideas or want to help with planning!

Friday-Sunday, October 20-22, 2017. Reflections of the Revolution: The October Revolution and Global Order, 1917-2017, is an international conference to be held at the University of Montana. This conference commemorates the 100th anniversary of the 1917 October Revolution in Russia. Presentations and discussions will focus on revolutions of the past as well as explore the possibility or impossibility of revolutionary scenarios today. Paper proposals are being accepted through February 20, 2017. Visit the conference website for more information: www.umt.edu/sell/cps/revolution/default.php.

Action Opportunities

There is a petition on Causes asking President Trump to keep the US in the Paris Agreement. https://www.causes.com/actions/1788651-sign-the-petition-to-president-donald-trump?

Take the Energy Smart Challenge offered by Climate Smart Missoula http://www.missoulacclimate.org/energy-smart.html

We accept nominations for peacemaker throughout the year. Now accepting for the 2018 award. Go to https://jrpc.org/programs/peacemaker-award/

Fair Trade News

The works of the late Michel Colville will be on display this First Friday in our community room. Many of Michel’s handpicked fabrics, beads, and textile features will be available for sale so they may find new life in new hands. All proceeds go to her favorite nonprofit, The Jeannette Rankin Peace Center. We will have more fabric and fun than we know what to do with. Come on down any time from 5p-8p. There will be refreshments, laughter, and imagining what you could do with all of this fabric!

Check out our online store at http://the-olive-branch.shoplightspeed.com

Ongoing Events and Meetings

Women in Black Fridays, North end of the Higgins Bridge, 12:15-12:45 pm. missoulawib@montana.com
JRPC Monthly Potluck & Global Dialogue, Second Sunday of each month 5:30 pm at JRPC. No Potluck planned for February 12. peace@jrpc.org
Veterans For Peace first Monday of each month, 4-6 pm, JRPC. 406-363-6150 or pvaughan184@gmail.com
Citizens Climate Lobby, 2nd Monday of every month, 6pm, Imagine Nation Brewery. Contact Scott at sebovard@gmail.com
JRPC Coordinating Council, Third Monday of every month, 5:30 pm at JRPC. All are welcome to attend!
350Missoula Coal & Renewables Committee third Monday of each month, 5:30 pm, Imagine Nation Brewing. leemet@bigsky.net
Women in Black of Polson Mondays, 12-12:30 pm, Polson courthouse. c211p110@earthlink.net
Knitting For Peace every Tuesday, 1–3 pm, JRPC. 543-3955.
Nonviolent Communication Practice Group Second and Fourth Wednesdays, 12-1 pm, JRPC info@patrickmarsolek.com
The Cranium creates origami delights Wednesdays, 1:15-3:15, JRPC. bonnie@bonnietarses.com
Time Bank Orientation Contact info@missoulatimebank.org for individual and group orientation for new members at a location TBD.
Missoula Moves To Amend Contact Sue at 543-3254
**Articles Of Interest**

On a Portland Train, the Battlefield of American Values. [https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/30/opinion/portland-train-attack-muslim.html?emc=edit_nk_20170531&nk1=true&nl=nickkristof&nlid=76821801&te=1](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/30/opinion/portland-train-attack-muslim.html?emc=edit_nk_20170531&nk1=true&nl=nickkristof&nlid=76821801&te=1)

Neo-Nazis Announce Nationwide Anti-Muslim March Just Days After Horrific Hate Crime [http://RESISTANCEREPORT.COM/NEWS/NEO­NAZIS­ANNOUNCE­NATION­WIDE­ANTI­MUSLIM­MARCH­JUST­DAYS­HORRIFIC­HATE­CRIME/](http://RESISTANCEREPORT.COM/NEWS/NEO­NAZIS­ANNOUNCE­NATION­WIDE­ANTI­MUSLIM­MARCH­JUST­DAYS­HORRIFIC­HATE­CRIME/)

Have you read an article that inspired you? Share it with us so we can share it with others!!

Check out the Library at JRPC for lots of great resources. Donations are always welcome!

**Ways to Help JRPC**

1. We are desperate for some storage space. Do you have some we can use? If so call us at 543-3955.
2. Want to be of service? JRPC is looking for **board members**. Call Betsy to discuss this opportunity.
3. Have a car you'd like to donate? Check us out on **Vehicles for Charity**!
5. JRPC is now enrolled as a participating organization in **Thrivent Choice**, a charitable grant program that allows eligible members to recommend where Thrivent Financial distributes part of its charitable outreach grant funds each year. [https://www.thrivent.com/making-a-difference/living-generously/thrivent-choice/](https://www.thrivent.com/making-a-difference/living-generously/thrivent-choice/)

*Jeannette Rankin Peace Center has been in Missoula since 1986, working to build non-violence, social justice and sustainability. We are pleased to be a member of the Montana Shares Network, a partnership of Montana-based nonprofit groups devoted to improving the quality of life in communities throughout the state. Give to JRPC through your workplace. [www.montanashares.org](http://www.montanashares.org)*

*The JRPC e-newsletter is sent to our listserv each Thursday. Deadline for calendar items is noon, Wednesday. We always appreciate your contributions, comments and suggestions. If you would like to be taken off our mailing list, please unsubscribe below. To sign up, click this link.*

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