

# Terrorism - A Peaceful Jihad is an Oxymoron

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## Terrorism - A Peaceful Jihad is an Oxymoron

In June of 2002, when asked to give a graduation speech at Harvard, Zayed Yasin, a Muslim, wrote a speech in which he explained his definition of a Jihad. In accordance with the subject matter, Yasin titled his speech "My American Jihad." When [Harvard](#) requested him to change the title, he complied. This action, though, stirred up many who believed Yasin had a right to use his original title. From the stance John Milton takes in his essay, *Aeropagitica*, one can clearly see that he would argue against Harvard's decision to censor the title of Yasin's speech. Milton, however, overzealously defends free speech and fails to recognize that the authorities must withhold some things from people under their governing authority.

Though Yasin appears to attempt to portray a different aspect of the word "[Jihad](#)" in his speech than that aspect that has dominated America over the past year, he fails to recognize its more common meaning. Rather, he excuses the common meaning as having been "corrupted and misinterpreted." In his speech, Yasin explains that to him, Jihad "is the determination to do right, to do justice even against your own interests. It is an individual struggle for personal moral behavior." Yasin continues to explain his definition of

Jihad and gives more details about it. According to author Abdullah Al Araby, although Yasin correctly describes Jihad as a personal, inner struggle, Jihad also means, "fighting in the name of Allah." Al Araby explains, "In this sense Jihad is the struggle for the cause of spreading Islam, using all means available to Muslims, including force. This kind of Jihad is often referred to as 'Holy War'." As a result of the recent [September 11 attacks](#) on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, people refer to this definition when discussing the term Jihad. Contrary to popular belief, Islam does not teach peace to the extent most Americans think it does. The Qu'ran, the holy book of Islam, commands, "Fight (kill) them (non-Muslims), and Allah will punish (torment) them by your hands, cover them with shame" (Surah 9:14). Numerous similar commands exist in the Qu'ran (Al Araby).

Not only does Yasin present a misleading and deceptive argument by explaining merely half of the meaning of the term Jihad, but he also, by using the term in conjunction with the adjective "American," implies that Americans participate in Jihad.

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