

# History Gives Us Hope

by [DL Adams](#) (July 2010)



*The following is a speech delivered by Mr. Adams to the New English Review Symposium, "Decline, Fall & Islam," June 19th, 2010.*

The crises of today are not unprecedented. They all have understandable and definable origins rooted in history.

In Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* Frodo the Ring Bearer says, "I wish the ring had never come to me. I wish none of this had happened." Gandalf the wizard replies: "So do all who live to see such times, but that is not for them to decide. All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given us."

We here have all decided to take a stand in defense of our country – to learn- to share our knowledge, analysis, and recommendations – though sometimes it seems as if we are standing against an enormous wave.

Our past lights our path.

After the United States declared its independence from England all British naval protections for American vessels understandably ceased. Thus came independent America's first international crisis; the crisis was jihad.

Attacks by the Barbary States on American shipping – which included capture of American merchant ships, enslavement of their crews and passengers, and the payment of large bribes (jizya) to stop these attacks – would eventually result in the creation of the US Navy during Jefferson's presidency – and war. The "Shores of Tripoli" in the Marine Corps hymn is a reference to this war.[\[i\]](#)

The feelings of disgrace, frustration, and helplessness that these jihad attacks caused across this country prompted Washington to write to Lafayette, "Would to heaven we had a navy to reform those enemies to mankind, or crush them into non-existence." [\[ii\]](#)

Thomas Jefferson and John Adams, then ambassadors to France and England, met with Tripoli's ambassador to England in 1786. They asked for explanations.

The response of Tripoli's ambassador illuminated a dark world – our world. He told Adams and Jefferson

*It was written in their Koran, that all nations which had not acknowledged the Prophet were sinners, whom it was the right and duty of the faithful to plunder and enslave; and that every*

*mussulman who was slain in this warfare was sure to go to paradise.* [\[iii\]](#)

Could this early American experience with Islamic jihad have been to what President Obama was referring when he said in Cairo last June that,

*. . . throughout history, Islam has demonstrated through words and deeds the possibilities of religious tolerance and racial equality.* [\[iv\]](#)

Or, this:

*I know, too, that Islam has always been a part of America's story.* [\[v\]](#)

So, we are today, much to our dismay, still suffering the effects of this extremely long historical cycle—a long wave of jihad.

But something has happened here in America that prevents us now from learning the lessons of our history, acknowledging *again* this devastating scourge of jihad (as the founding generation did), and taking appropriate and concrete actions to minimize and defeat the threat.

Our poor national response to jihad indicates a crisis of meaning and values in our culture; the timing could not be worse.

Bad timing is not unknown in American history. Lincoln saw a fork in the road in 1858 when he said in his “house divided” speech, “I do not expect the house to fall –but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing, or all the other.” [\[vi\]](#) Lincoln was referring to slave states and free states prior to the Civil War.

Today, the situation is uncomfortably similar, we can remain a free people or become dhimmis – we cannot be both.

This ongoing denial of the nature of the ideological and jihad forces arrayed against us—from the failure to acknowledge Hassan at Fort Hood as a jihadist despite the fact that he had told his colleagues quite clearly that he was in fact a jihadist<sup>[vii](#)</sup>