As explained by Saint Laurent, "jihad" has more than one meaning. There is the greater jihad, which is more like an internal struggle with your own spirituality. Muslims strengthen their bond with Allah through this struggle.

The lesser jihad is a defensive holy war. This concept is misunderstood frequently and often misused in the media, resulting in an unfair opinion of the Muslims. Religious leaders can often be misinterpreted as fanatics. In Islam, it is a complex religion whose followers are quite passionate about their beliefs. They can be quite fanatical. There are always going to be personalities of a religion that act in a way that is not within the teachings of the religion.

There have been particular instances of this in all religions all across the world. No religion is
without its extremists. Unfortunately there have been a few instances where a small group that was perceived to be Muslim (I do not know if they did in fact practice Islam) committed a very violent terrorist act. Opinions and beliefs about this religion were based largely on these instances.

A little understanding along with a little research would lead you far from that initial impression, I believe.

While Islam is not a religion that teaches its followers to turn the other cheek to violence or crimes committed against them, it also does not teach violence as a principle. Islam follows “an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth” philosophy. It teaches first to react with that which is better when presented with evil. If possible react to evil with good. It also teaches you can react defensively to the sting of the attack. Which I interpret
to mean if a group of people is attacking a group of people to which you belong, by all means counter attack. The Quran states that you must act defensively, you must not start a war. If you are attacked, a counter attack would be defense.

When war is necessary, there are guidelines which are to be followed.

1. You must only act defensively
2. Women, children and old must not be harmed.
3. Merchandise, treaties or agreements are made you must honor them.
4. Sacred objects or crops. Do not desecrate. Do not destroy.

There are more but these most closely lead to the point I am trying to make. The religion of Islam does not condone violence. When necessary it can't be avoided but it also can't be used without following these guidelines. Muslims admit that there have been times when leaders of the religion have committed
and orphans. A specific percentage to help the poor. These ?

The Quran teaches Muslims about religion. It is not the conversion of another race of people into their religion and persecution of those who practice their religion. It is only allowed to practice and allow them to live in harmony with other religions. It is true that throughout Islamic history Muslims have lived in harmony with other religions. Muhammad was a statesman as a believer. Further research of the religion will reveal an even more non-violent nature.

There is no more violent in the name of faith. Muslims as a whole have committed violent crimes as well. This is also true of all religious. This is permitted when following the Quran. Acts of violence that would not be
Of income and possessions are given at a specific time to the poor or needy. Islam teaches about love and charity, not just for those who are near or far, but for all humans equally. Clearly this is not a religion that love to wave around their swords. Rather, they are a religion who wields a sword only when necessary, using other means whenever possible.