

DINESH  
D'SOUZA



WHAT'S SO  
GREAT ABOUT  
AMERICA



*Since 1947*

**REGNERY  
PUBLISHING, INC.**

*An Eagle Publishing Company • Washington, DC*

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

D'Souza, Dinesh.

What's so great about America / Dinesh D'Souza

p. cm.

Includes index.

ISBN 0-89526-153-7

1. United States—Civilization. 2. National characteristics,  
American. 3. Civilization, Western. I. Title.

E169.1 .D78 2001

973—dc21

2002000672

Published in the United States by  
Regnery Publishing, Inc.  
An Eagle Publishing Company  
One Massachusetts Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20001

Visit us at [www.regnery.com](http://www.regnery.com)

Distributed to the trade by  
National Book Network  
4720-A Boston Way  
Lanham, MD 20706

Printed on acid-free paper  
Manufactured in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Books are available in quantity for promotional or premium use.  
Write to Director of Special Sales, Regnery Publishing, Inc.,  
One Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20001,  
for information on discounts and terms or call (202) 216-0600

***For Danielle  
Who Will One Day Understand***

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## PREFACE

# A FUNERAL ORATION

## Pericles' Dilemma, and Ours



**I**n 430 B.C., shortly after the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War, Pericles delivered a funeral oration to the people of Athens.<sup>1</sup> His dilemma was the classic one faced by free peoples throughout history: how to articulate the blessings of freedom which are usually taken for granted, how to communicate to citizens the necessity of making sacrifices—including the ultimate sacrifice of one's life—in the name of freedom, and how a society accustomed to the pleasures of private life can prevail against a more militaristic regime inured to hardship whose fighters are cheerfully willing to endure death.

Sound familiar? This is what Pericles said: "Our system of government does not copy the institutions of its neighbors. It is more the case of our being a model to others, than of our

## CHAPTER ONE

# WHY THEY HATE US

## America and Its Enemies



The cry that comes from the heart of the believer  
overcomes everything, even the White House.

—AYATOLLAH KHOMEINI

**B**EFORE THE TERRORISTS DESTROYED THE WORLD TRADE Center, crashed a plane into the Pentagon, and began their campaign to bring to America the horrors of the war-ravaged Middle East, life in the United States was placid and even a little boring. The dominant issue in politics was the Social Security lockbox, an especially curious subject of dispute since no such lockbox exists or has ever existed. For diversion and entertainment, Americans could follow the Gary Condit sex scandal or watch “reality TV” shows like *Survivor*. Newspapers devoted front-page reports to such issues as road rage, a man bitten by a shark, and the revelation that overage kids were playing Little League baseball. The biggest issue in the airline industry involved something called “economy class syndrome.” Essentially this