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# **ACTION PHILOSOPHERS!**

**The lives and thoughts of history's A-list brain trust**

## **VOLUME TWO**

**by Fred Van Lente and Ryan Dunlavey**

NY IS NOT A  
ACTIVITY."  
TGENSTEIN,  
SOPHICUS

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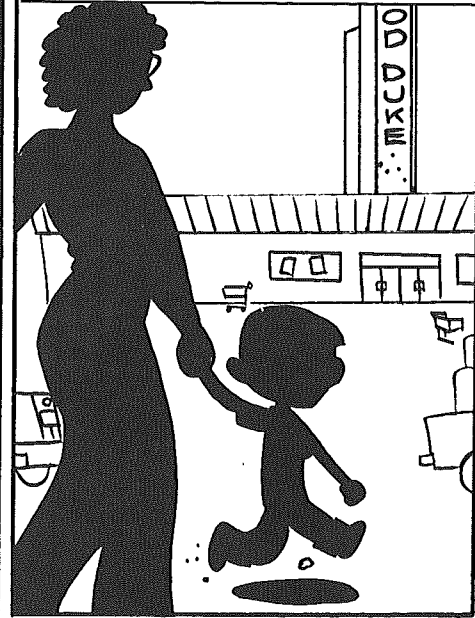
A SPECTER  
IS HAUNTING  
EUROPE--

THE SPECTER OF  
ACTION PHILOSOPHER #10:



KARL  
MARX

WHEN I WAS A KID, THERE WAS ONE  
THING ABOUT THE WAY THE WORLD WORKED  
THAT I NEVER ENTIRELY UNDERSTOOD.

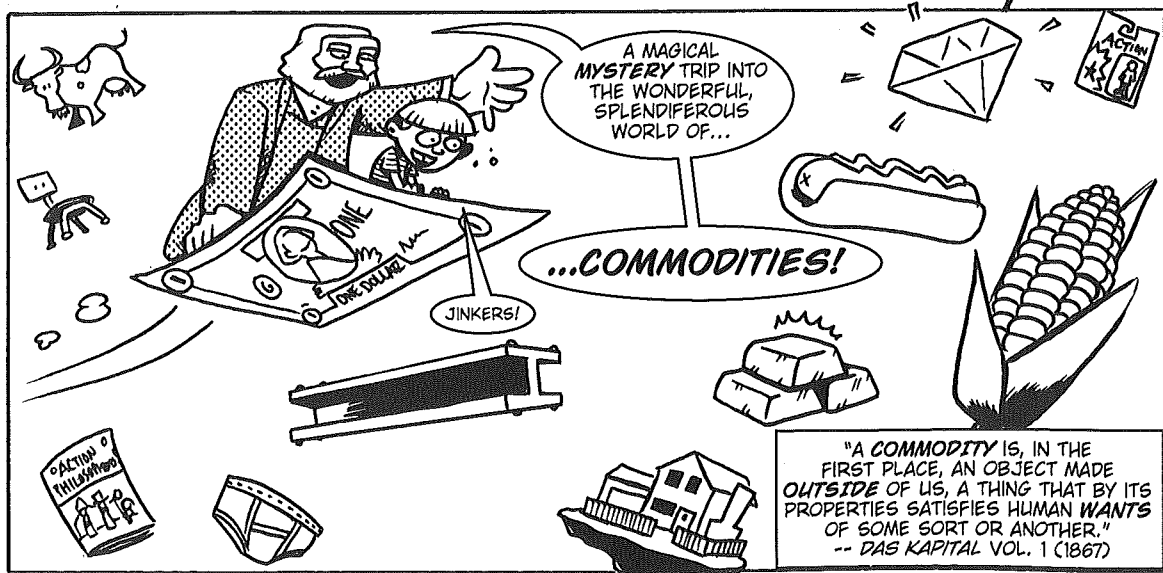
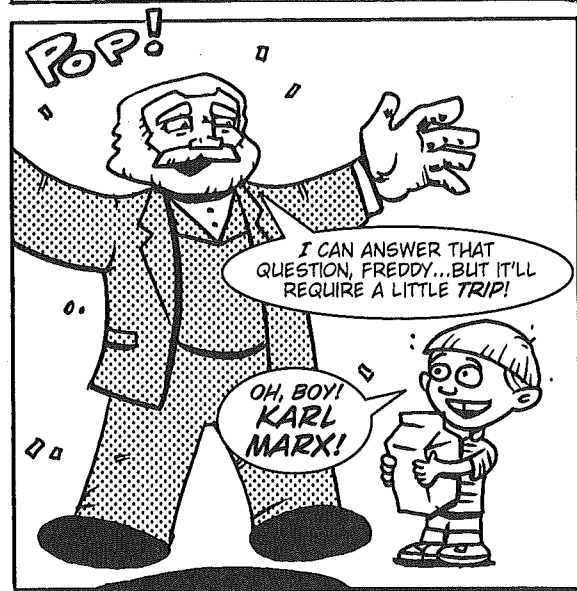
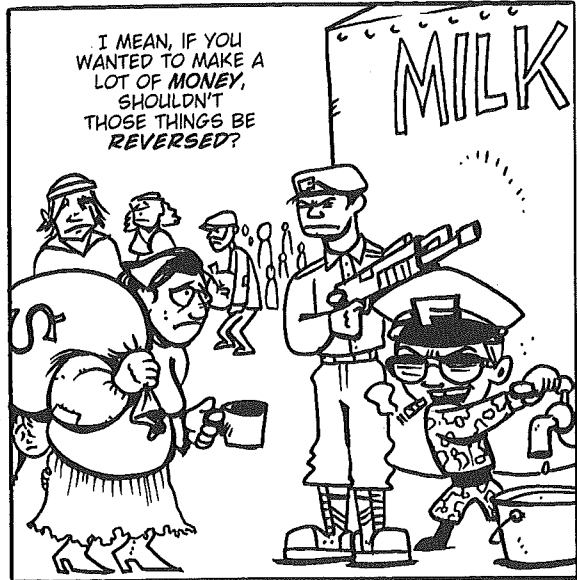


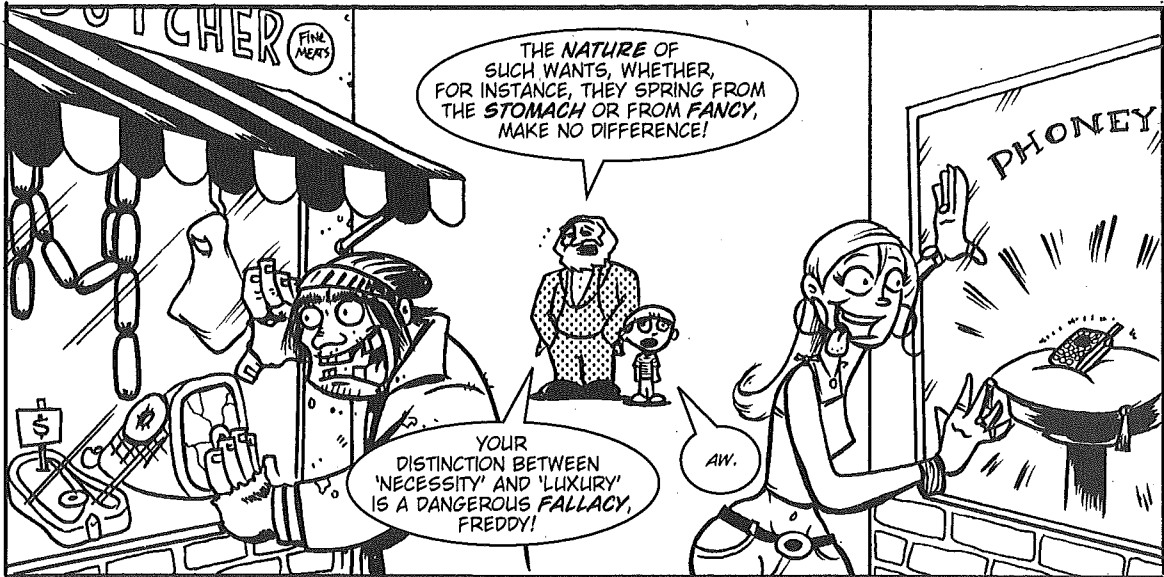
I MEAN, BY THIS POINT I HAD  
FIGURED OUT THAT THE WHOLE POINT  
OF LIVING WAS TO MAKE MONEY.



WRITERS OF THE WORLD! UNITE BEHIND  
FRED VAN LENTE! DOWN WITH EFFETE  
BOURGEOIS "ARTISTE" RYAN DUNLAVEY!

D FLOOR, BROOKLYN NY,  
CONTENTS ARE COPY-  
RIGHT PUBLICATION MAY BE  
PRINTED IN CANADA.

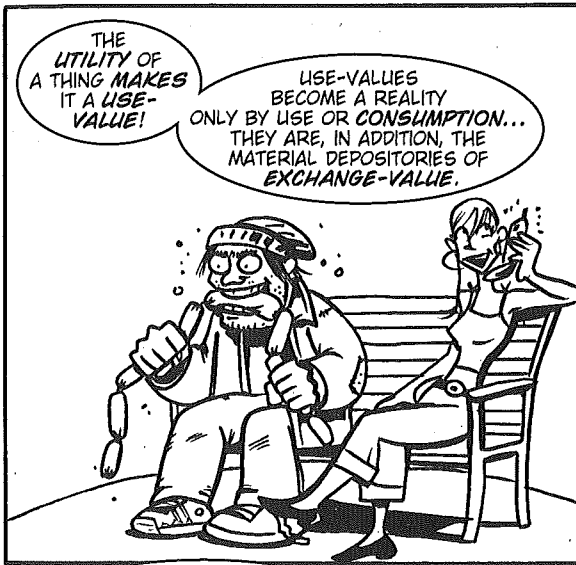




THE NATURE OF SUCH WANTS, WHETHER, FOR INSTANCE, THEY SPRING FROM THE STOMACH OR FROM FANCY, MAKE NO DIFFERENCE!

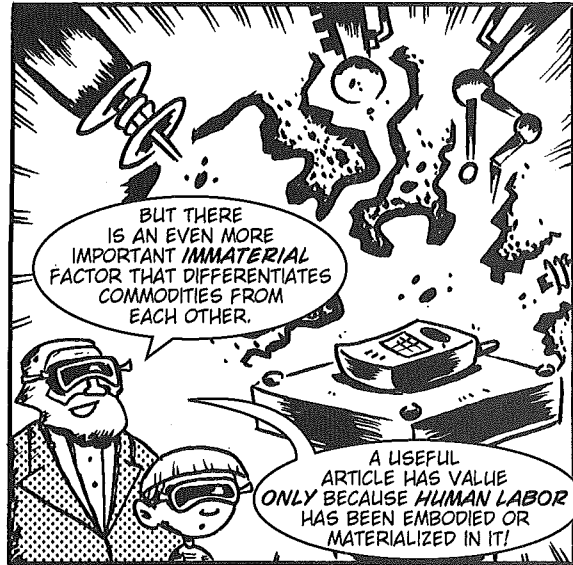
YOUR DISTINCTION BETWEEN 'NECESSITY' AND 'LUXURY' IS A DANGEROUS FALLACY, FREDDY!

AW.



THE UTILITY OF A THING MAKES IT A USE-VALUE!

USE-VALUES BECOME A REALITY ONLY BY USE OR CONSUMPTION... THEY ARE, IN ADDITION, THE MATERIAL DEPOSITORIES OF EXCHANGE-VALUE.



BUT THERE IS AN EVEN MORE IMPORTANT IMMATERIAL FACTOR THAT DIFFERENTIATES COMMODITIES FROM EACH OTHER.

A USEFUL ARTICLE HAS VALUE ONLY BECAUSE HUMAN LABOR HAS BEEN EMBODIED OR MATERIALIZED IN IT!



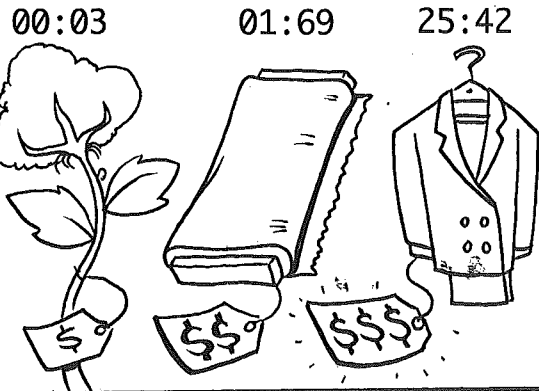
THE MAGNITUDE OF THIS VALUE IS MEASURED BY THE QUANTITY OF THE LABOR CONTAINED IN THE ARTICLE!

QUANTITY OF LABOR IS MEASURED BY DURATION --TIME!



AFTER ALL, IT TAKES MORE TIME TO SEW A SUIT THAN IT DOES TO WEAVE CLOTH -- AND LESS TIME THAN THAT TO PICK COTTON!

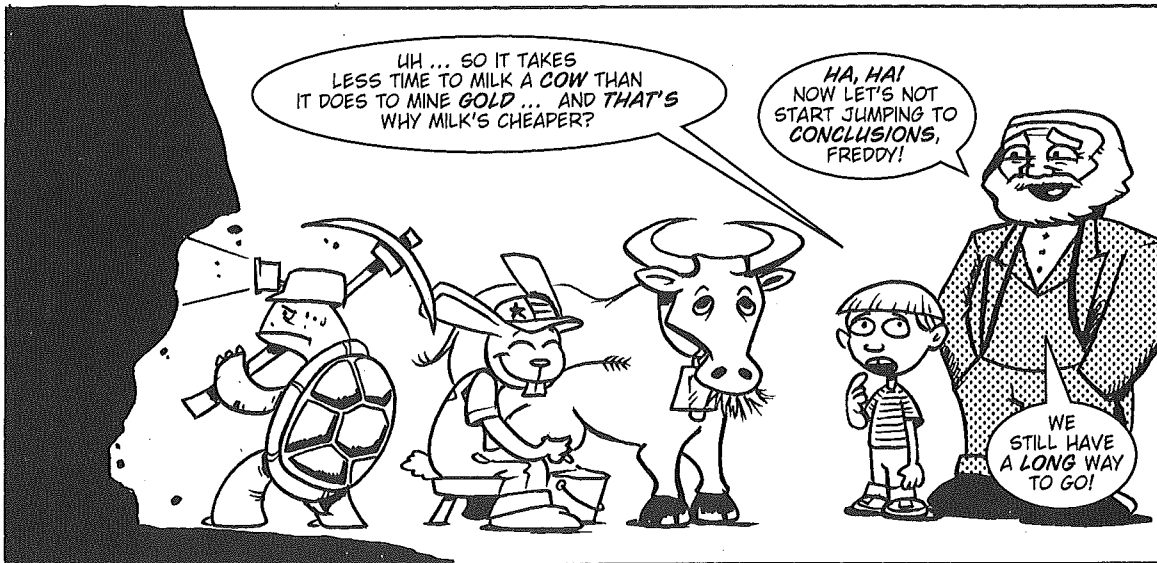
AND THE EXCHANGE VALUES OF THOSE ITEMS REFLECT THAT DIFFERENCE!



00:03

01:69

25:42



TO BECOME A COMMODITY, A PRODUCT MUST BE TRANSFERRED TO ANOTHER, WHOM IT WILL SERVE AS A USE-VALUE, BY MEANS OF AN EXCHANGE.

**NOT A COMMODITY**



IN OTHER WORDS, A COMMODITY MUST NOT ONLY PRODUCE USE-VALUES, BUT USE-VALUES FOR OTHERS... SOCIAL USE-VALUES!

**COMMODITY**



BUT THIS IS NEVER AN EQUAL EXCHANGE!

THERE IS ALWAYS AN EXCESS LEFT OVER ...

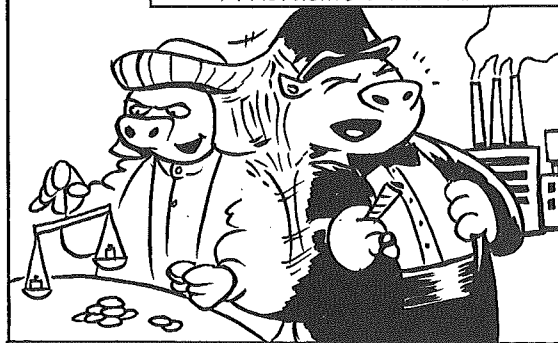
SOME CALL THIS PROFIT...

IN MARXIAN ECONOMICS, IT'S KNOWN AS SURPLUS VALUE...

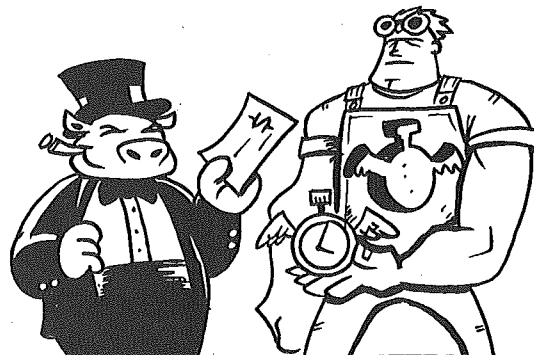
OR CAPITAL!

"CAPITALISTS" ARE PEOPLE WHO BENEFIT FROM THE EXCHANGE, NOT THE PRODUCTION OF COMMODITIES. THEY ARE THE **BOURGEOISIE**...THE MIDDLE CLASSES WHO WERE MONEYLENDERS AND USURERS IN MEDIEVAL TIMES...

... AND IN OUR MODERN ERA, THEY'RE THE **FACTORY OWNERS** AND **LANDLORDS** WHO CONTROL THE MEANS OF PRODUCING COMMODITIES.



THE MIDDLE CLASSES EXCHANGE THE MEANS OF PRODUCTION WITH THE WORKING CLASSES' **LABOR POWER** THAT ACTUALLY PRODUCES THE COMMODITIES!



THIS EXCHANGE TAKES THE FORM OF **WAGES**, FOR THE WORKING CLASS HAS ONLY HIS **LABOR-TIME** --CHUNKS OF HIS OWN **LIFE**--TO SELL AS A USE-VALUE!



WE  
WILL HAVE  
LONG WAY  
TO GO!

BUT THIS  
IS NEVER  
AN EQUAL  
EXCHANGE!

THERE IS  
ALWAYS  
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SOME  
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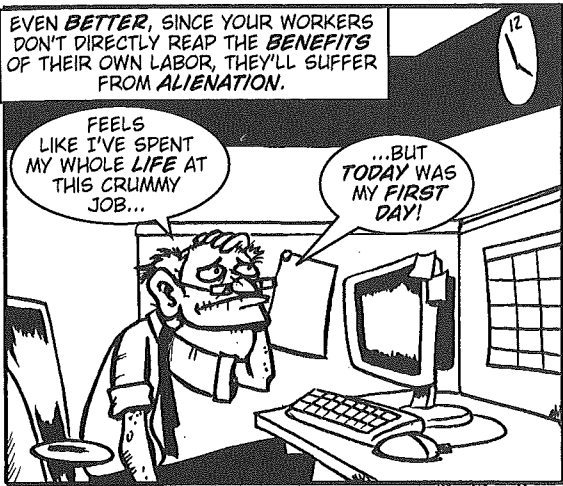
WORKING  
WELL



AGES,  
BOR-TIME  
USE-VALUE!



THE KEY TO CREATING SURPLUS VALUE IS TO MAKE SURE THAT WAGES REMAIN **LESS** THAN THE EXCHANGE VALUE OF THE COMMODITIES THAT THE WORKERS PRODUCE.



EVEN **BETTER**, SINCE YOUR WORKERS DON'T DIRECTLY REAP THE **BENEFITS** OF THEIR OWN LABOR, THEY'LL SUFFER FROM **ALIENATION**.

FEELS LIKE I'VE SPENT MY WHOLE LIFE AT THIS CRUMMY JOB...

...BUT TODAY WAS MY FIRST DAY!



TO COMPENSATE, THEY'LL GORGE THEMSELVES ON **COMMODITIES** WITH EVERY DIME THEY MAKE!

WHOEVER DIES WITH THE MOST TOYS WINS! BWHAHHAHA!

HE'S NOT JUST THE **PRODUCER**, HE'S ALSO THE **CONSUMER**...

AND I POCKET THE DIFFERENCE IN THE FORM OF **SURPLUS VALUE**! HEH-HEH!



GEEZ ... WORKERS EXCHANGE THEIR LABOR-TIME FOR WAGES... WHICH THEY GIVE **BACK** TO THE CAPITALIST SO THEY CAN **BUY** THE VERY COMMODITIES THEY **PRODUCE**!

WHAT A **VICIOUS CYCLE**! IS THERE ANY WAY IT CAN BE **BROKEN**, MR. MARX?

ACTUALLY, I CAN THINK OF **SIXTY** WAYS, FREDDY!



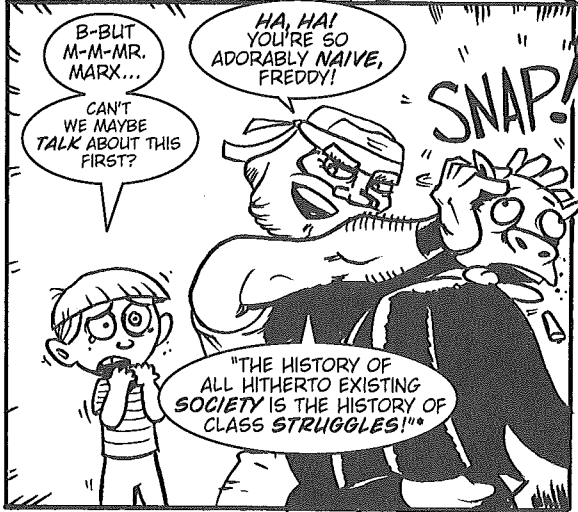
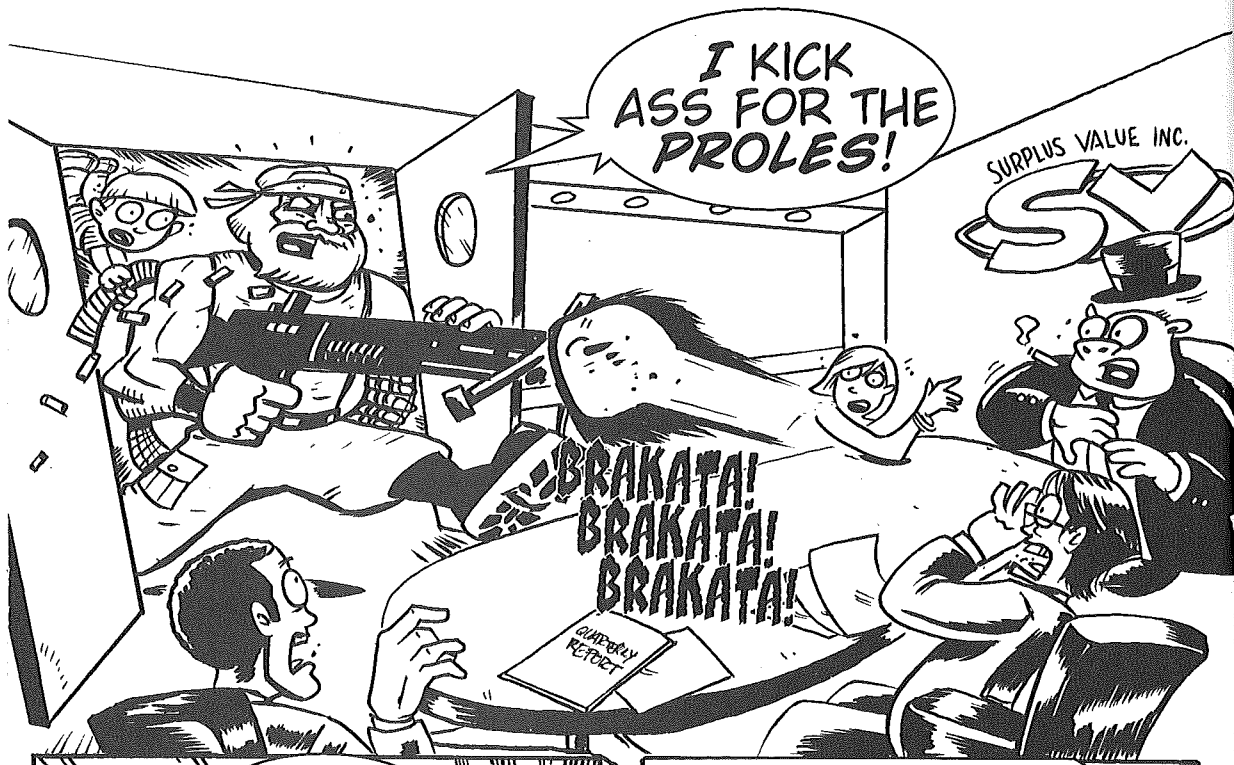
M-60, THAT IS.

**KICK-KICK!**

LET'S DO THIS THING.

UH...

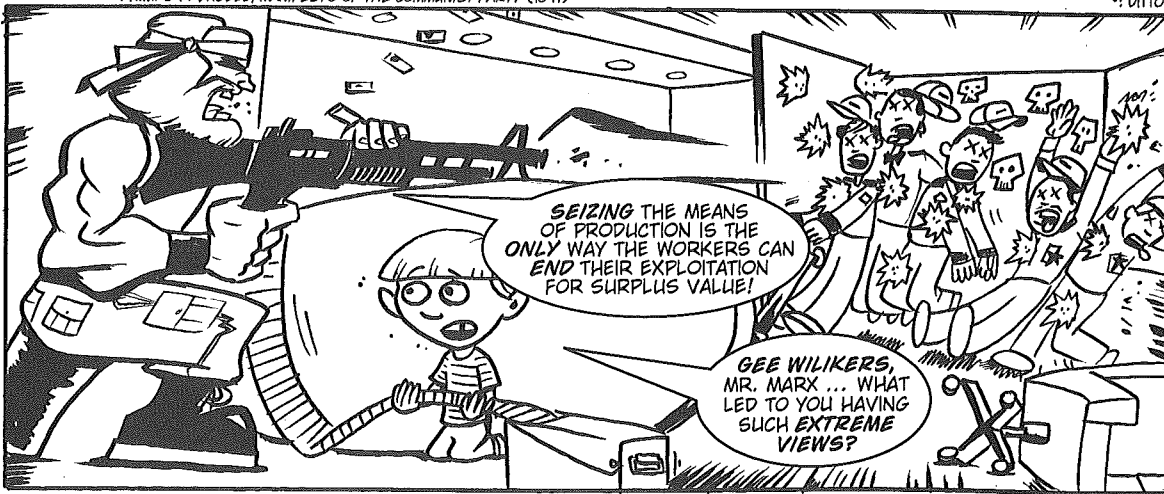
...WHAT THING WOULD THAT BE, MR. MARX?



\*: K.M. & F. ENGELS, MANIFESTO OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY (1847)



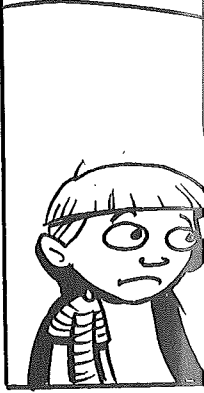
\*: DITTO



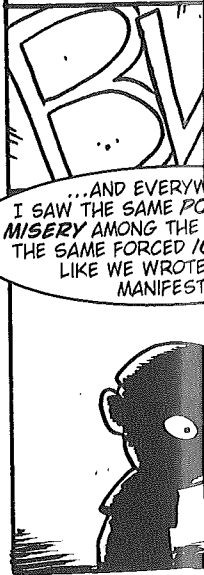
GRENAD ME, FREDDY.



JOURN... A BUNCH OF LI... THAT GOT ME... THEN FRA... CO...



...AND EVERY... I SAW THE SAME PO... MISERY AMONG THE... THE SAME FORCED /... LIKE WE WROTE... MANIFEST...





GOSH KNOWS I DIDN'T START OUT THAT WAY, FREDDY! I WAS BORN IN PRUSSIA IN 1818. MY DAD WAS A LAWYER, AND I WENT TO SCHOOL TO STUDY LAW, BUT I GOT BITTEN BY THE PHILOSOPHY BUG, INSTEAD...

GRENADE ME, FREDDY.

FLASHBANG OR INCENDIARY?

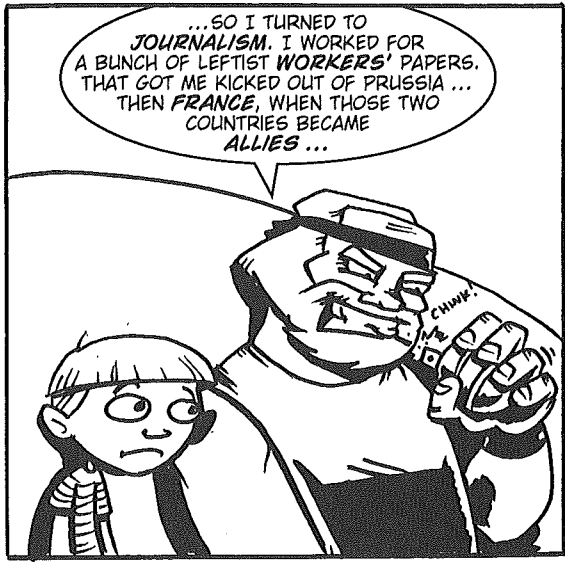
INCENDIARY.



THANKS.

I WAS A STUDENT OF HEGEL'S, BUT I REJECTED HIS IDEALISTIC DIALECTIC FOR A MATERIALLY-DETERMINED THEORY OF HISTORY.

IDEAS ARE ALL WELL AND GOOD, BUT I HUNGRED TO CHANGE THE WORLD, NOT MERELY INTERPRET IT...



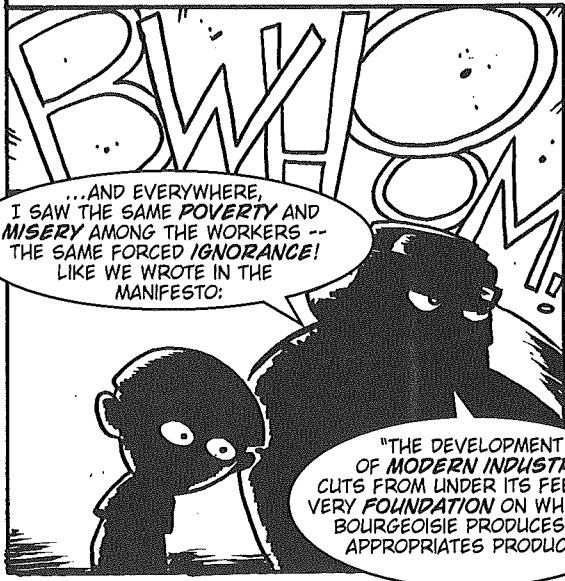
...SO I TURNED TO JOURNALISM. I WORKED FOR A BUNCH OF LEFTIST WORKERS' PAPERS. THAT GOT ME KICKED OUT OF PRUSSIA ... THEN FRANCE, WHEN THOSE TWO COUNTRIES BECAME ALLIES ...



... THEN I WOUND UP IN LONDON, WHERE THE COMMUNIST LEAGUE ASKED ME AND MY COLLEAGUE FRIEDRICH ENGELS TO WRITE A MANIFESTO ON THEIR BEHALF.

Toss!

THAT WAS IN 1847. I BECAME A BIG WHEEL IN THE MOVEMENT AFTER THAT. I TRAVELED ALL OVER EUROPE, ORGANIZING WORKERS' PARTIES...



...AND EVERYWHERE, I SAW THE SAME POVERTY AND MISERY AMONG THE WORKERS -- THE SAME FORCED IGNORANCE! LIKE WE WROTE IN THE MANIFESTO:

"THE DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN INDUSTRY CUTS FROM UNDER ITS FEET THE VERY FOUNDATION ON WHICH THE BOURGEOISIE PRODUCES AND APPROPRIATES PRODUCTS."

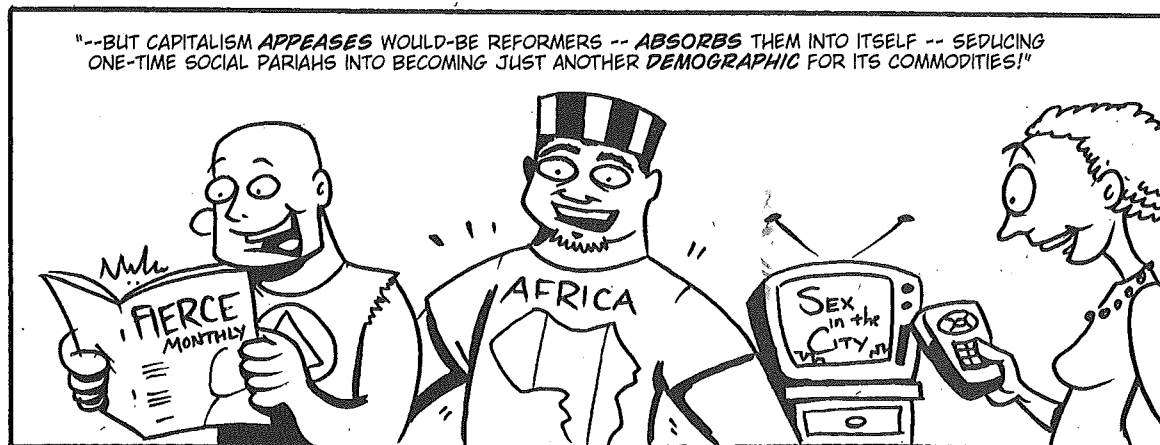
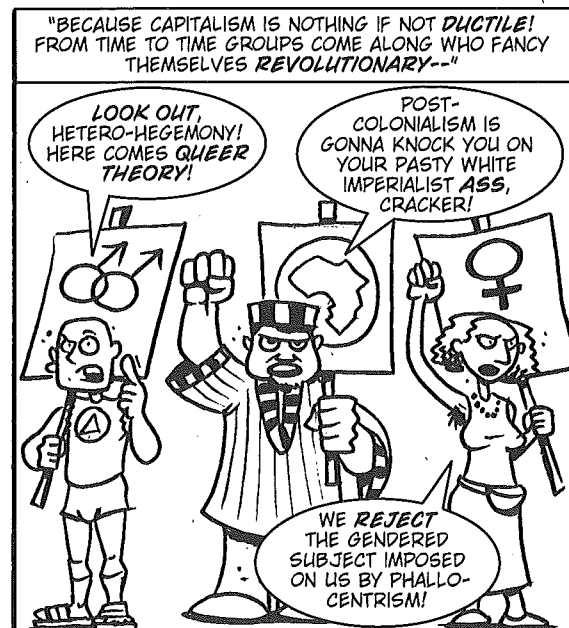


"WHAT THE BOURGEOISIE PRODUCES, ABOVE ALL, IS ITS OWN GRAVE-DIGGERS."

"ITS FALL AND THE VICTORY OF THE PROLETARIAT ARE EQUALLY INEVITABLE."

AAAAAH!  
AAAAAH!

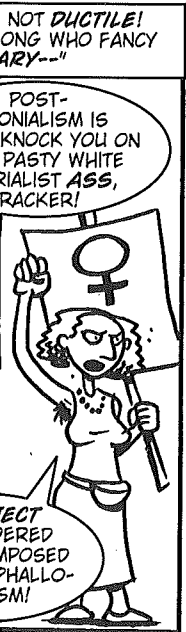






FOR CAPITALISM IS NOT FUNDAMENTALLY WHITE -- OR STRAIGHT -- OR MALE!

IT HAS NO QUALMS ABOUT "EMBRACING" ANY IDEOLOGY, SO LONG AS ITS OWN EXISTENCE IS PERPETUATED!



NOT DUCTILE! LONG WHO FANCY MARY--"

POST-IONIALISM IS KNOCK YOU ON PASTY WHITE RIALIST ASS, RACKER!

ECT ERER APOSED PHALLO-SM!

PRODUCING YES!"



AND IF THE BOURGEOISIE CANNOT EXPLOIT THEIR OWN COUNTRYMEN FOR SURPLUS VALUE--

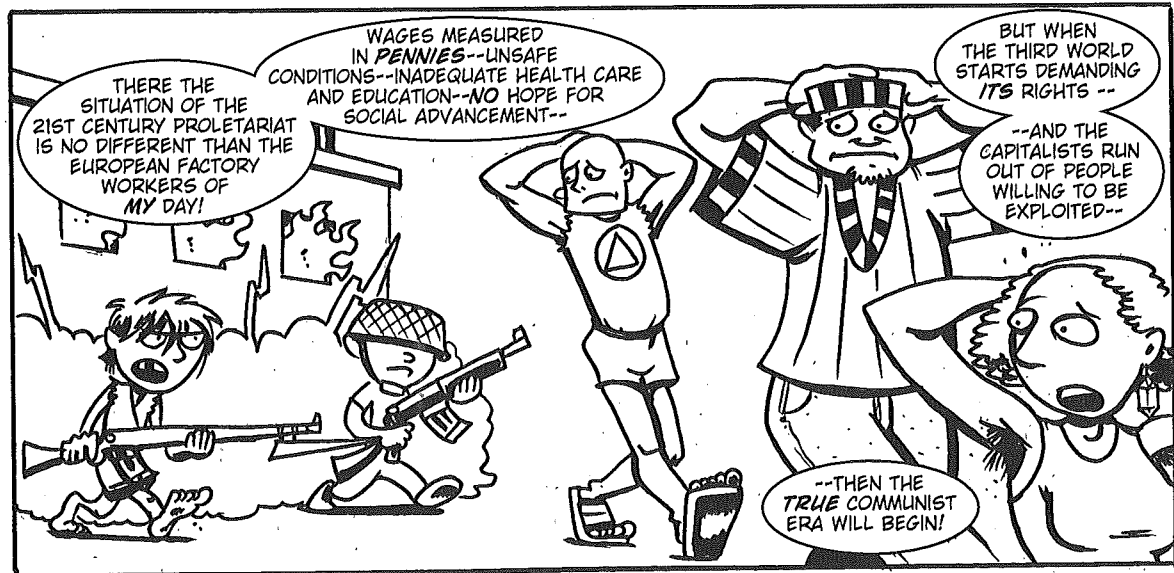
--THEY'LL JUST MOVE JOBS OVERSEAS IN ORDER TO FIND NEW VICTIMS!



THOUGH CAPITALISM APPEARED THE FIRST WORLD'S LABOR MOVEMENT WITH REFORMS LIKE MINIMUM WAGE...

...THE VAST MAJORITY OF THE COMMODITIES PRODUCED FOR YOUR "LIBERAL" REPUBLICS...

...ARE PRODUCED FAR FROM THE MALLS AND SUBURBS WHERE THEY'RE SOLD!



THERE THE SITUATION OF THE 21ST CENTURY PROLETARIAT IS NO DIFFERENT THAN THE EUROPEAN FACTORY WORKERS OF MY DAY!

WAGES MEASURED IN PENNIES--UNSAFE CONDITIONS--INADEQUATE HEALTH CARE AND EDUCATION--NO HOPE FOR SOCIAL ADVANCEMENT--

BUT WHEN THE THIRD WORLD STARTS DEMANDING ITS RIGHTS --

--AND THE CAPITALISTS RUN OUT OF PEOPLE WILLING TO BE EXPLOITED--

--THEN THE TRUE COMMUNIST ERA WILL BEGIN!



"ONCE THE WORKERS SEIZE THE MEANS OF PRODUCTION, SURPLUS VALUE WILL BE ELIMINATED!  
THE BASIS OF THE COMMUNIST ECONOMY IS:"

**"From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs."**

"WORKERS WILL NO LONGER FEEL ALIENATED BECAUSE THEY SHALL BENEFIT DIRECTLY FROM THE PROCESS OF PRODUCTION!"

"THIS WILL END COMMODITY FETISHISM -- THE PRACTICE OF MAKING PRODUCTS MORE IMPORTANT THAN PEOPLE!"

BUT, UH, MR. MARX, HUMAN NATURE HAS ALWAYS SEEMED KIND OF... Y'KNOW, COMPETITIVE TO ME... OBSESSED WITH STATUS!

DON'T YOU THINK THAT TO EXPECT HUMANS TO SUPPRESS THEIR INNATE URGE TO DOMINATE EACH OTHER TO FORM A COMMUNIST UTOPIA IS A LITTLE...

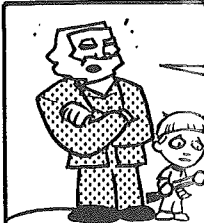
...UH... UNREALISTIC?

"HUMAN NATURE!" PISH-TOSH! AREN'T YOU A LITTLE OLD TO BELIEVE IN FAIRY TALES, FREDDY?

NO SUCH THING! THE MATERIAL CONDITIONS OF OUR LIVES DETERMINE THIS "HUMAN NATURE", NOT THE OTHER WAY AROUND!

OF COURSE CAPITALISM HAS PRODUCED A "HUMAN NATURE" OBSESSED WITH STATUS AND COMPETITION! THAT'S WHY THE FIRST STEP TOWARD COMMUNISM IS TO GET RID OF THE CAPITALISTS!

GRAB SOME SKY, BOURGEOIS WHELPS!



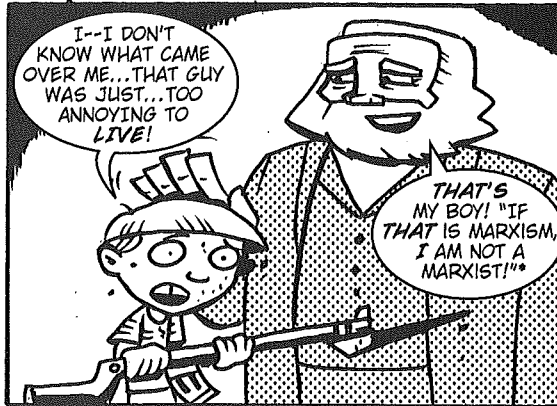
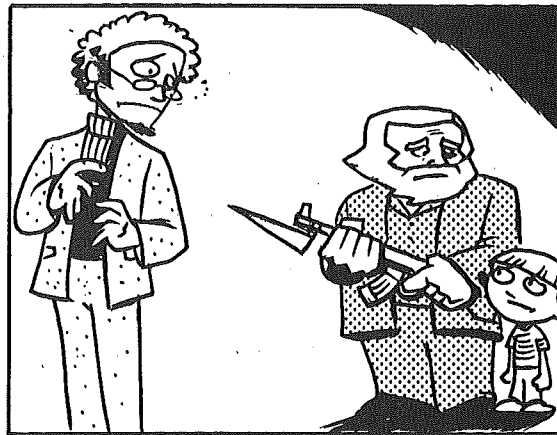
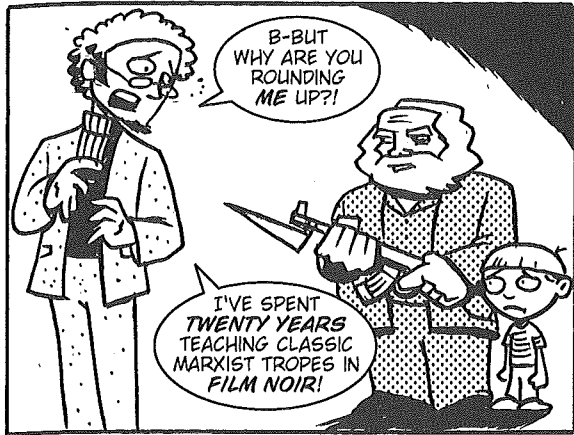
eds."

THINK THAT HUMANS TO THEIR INNATE DOMINATE R TO FORM A UTOPIA LITTLE...

A... ISTIC?

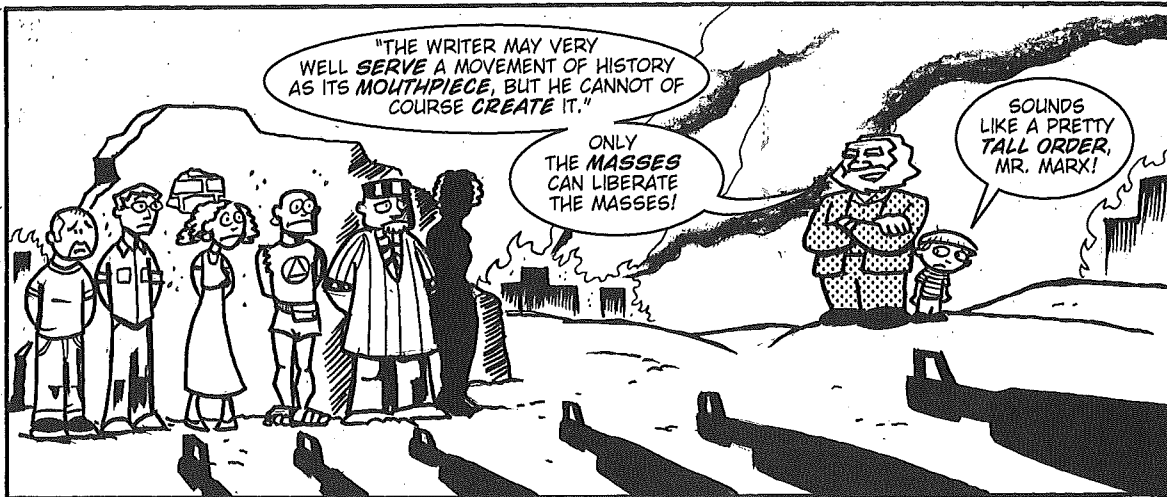
SUCH E MATERIAL OF OUR LIVES THIS "HUMAN T THE OTHER ROUND!

GRAB SOME SKY, BOURGEOIS WHELPS!



\*: ACTUAL QUOTE!

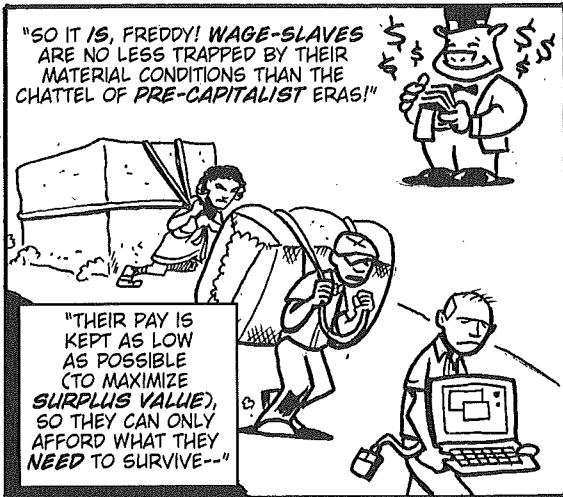




"THE WRITER MAY VERY WELL SERVE A MOVEMENT OF HISTORY AS ITS MOUTHPIECE, BUT HE CANNOT OF COURSE CREATE IT."

ONLY THE MASSES CAN LIBERATE THE MASSES!

SOUNDS LIKE A PRETTY TALL ORDER, MR. MARX!



"SO IT IS, FREDDY! WAGE-SLAVES ARE NO LESS TRAPPED BY THEIR MATERIAL CONDITIONS THAN THE CHATTEL OF PRE-CAPITALIST ERAS!"

"THEIR PAY IS KEPT AS LOW AS POSSIBLE (TO MAXIMIZE SURPLUS VALUE), SO THEY CAN ONLY AFFORD WHAT THEY NEED TO SURVIVE--"



"--AND PRODUCE MORE LABORERS FOR CAPITALIST EXPLOITATION! (EVER NOTICE HOW THE POORER AND LESS EDUCATED A FAMILY IS, THE MORE KIDS IT PUMPS OUT?)"

"SO THE NECESSITIES OF LIFE MUST REMAIN CHEAP AND PLENTIFUL SO WORKERS CAN BUY THEM EVEN WITH THEIR PITIFUL WAGES..."



BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!

...AND THAT'S WHY MILK IS CHEAPER THAN GOLD!

SO WHAT DO YOU THINK, FREDDY?

I--I THINK I WANT MY MOMMY...



WHY, SURE--SHE'S RIGHT OVER THERE!

SAY-- YOU NEVER MENTIONED SHE WORKED IN A BANK!

WAAAAA!!

ENDINGS OF THE WORLD! UNITE!



I CAN THIS ME OF THE CO OF THE TE FLOREN REPUL TO OR