First Family

The Obamas

a graphic novel

BLUEWATER COMICS

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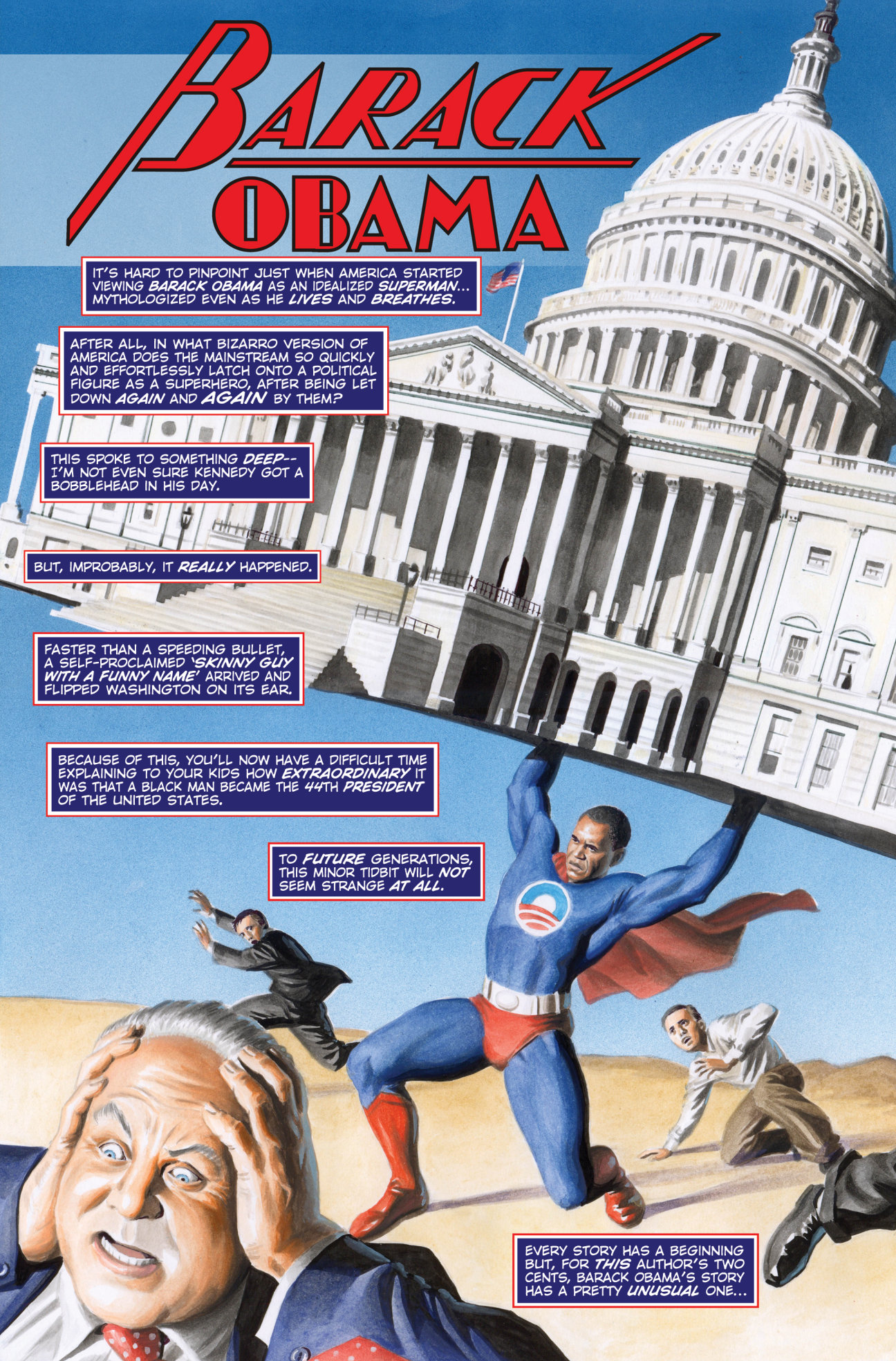
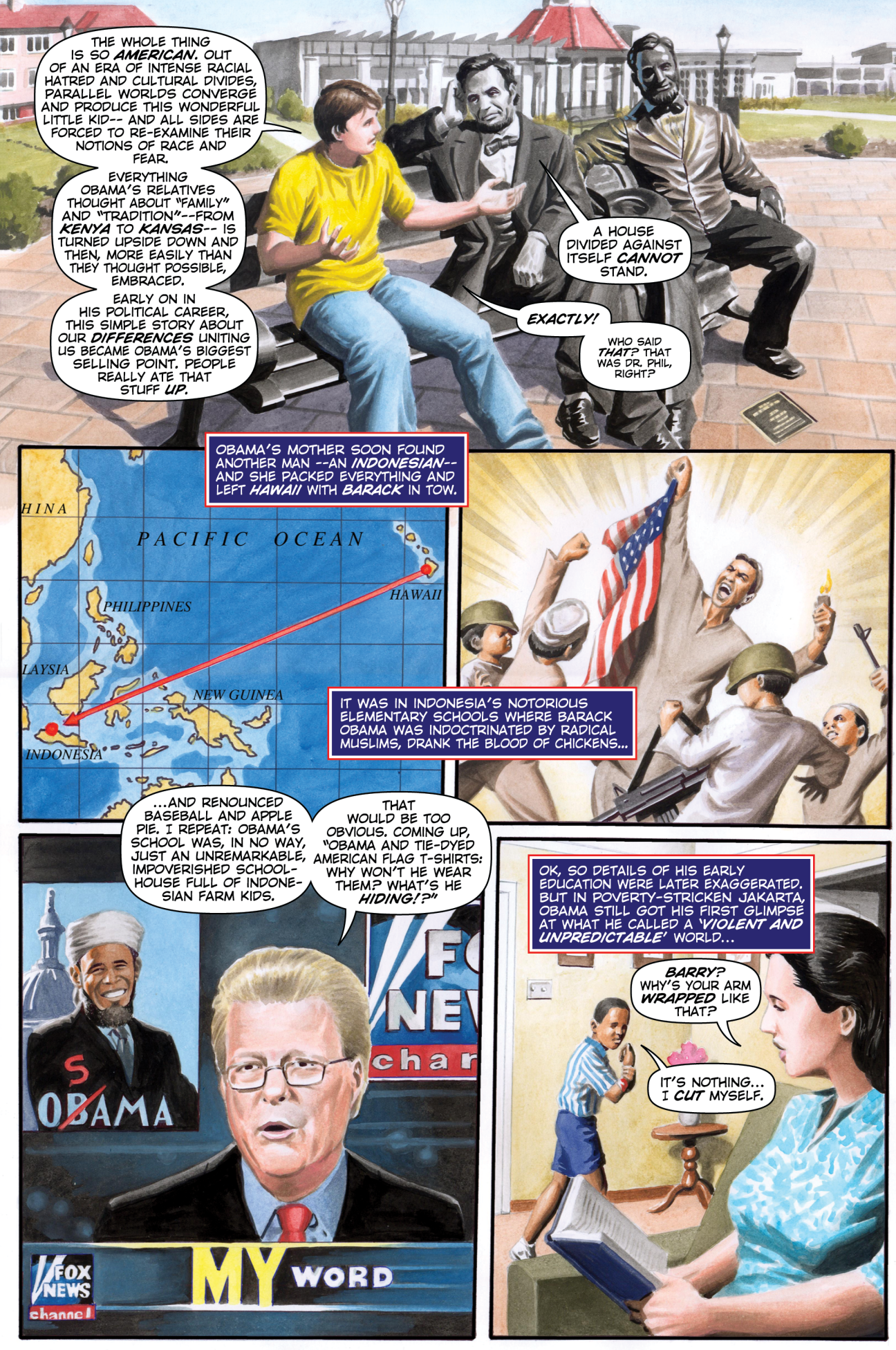
the President


BARACK OBAMA
IT'S HARD TO PINPOINT JUST WHEN AMERICA STARTED VIEWING BARACK OBAMA AS AN IDEALIZED SUPERMAN... MYTHOLOGIZED EVEN AS HE LIVES AND BREATHES.
AFTER ALL, IN WHAT BIZARRO VERSION OF AMERICA DOES THE MAINSTREAM SO QUICKLY AND EFFORTLESSLY LATCH ONTO A POLITICAL FIGURE AS A SUPERHERO, AFTER BEING LET DOWN AGAIN AND AGAIN BY THEM?
THIS SPOKE TO SOMETHING DEEP-- I'M NOT EVEN SURE KENNEDY GOT A BOBBLEHEAD IN HIS DAY.
BUT, IMPROBABLY, IT REALLY HAPPENED.
FASTER THAN A SPEEDING BULLET, A SELF-PROCLAIMED 'SKINNY GUY WITH A FUNNY NAME' ARRIVED AND FLIPPED WASHINGTON ON ITS EAR.
BECAUSE OF THIS, YOU'LL NOW HAVE A DIFFICULT TIME EXPLAINING TO YOUR KIDS HOW EXTRAORDINARY IT WAS THAT A BLACK MAN BECAME THE 44TH PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.
TO FUTURE GENERATIONS, THIS MINOR TIDBIT WILL NOT SEEM STRANGE AT ALL.
EVERY STORY HAS A BEGINNING BUT, FOR THIS AUTHOR'S TWO CENTS, BARACK OBAMA'S STORY HAS A PRETTY UNUSUAL ONE...

...IT BEGINS WITH THE HORSESHOE SANDWICH.
IT'S A SIZZLING HAMBURGER PATTY ON TEXAS TOAST, COVERED WITH CRINKLE CUT FRIES, SMOTHERED IN SPICY CHEESE SAUCE.
IT'S THE MOST WONDERFUL AND HORRIBLE THING YOU'LL EVER PUT IN YOUR MOUTH.
NO ONE EVEN KNOWS WHY IT'S CALLED "THE HORSESHOE."
I MEAN, HORSESHOES ARE SUPPOSED TO BE A SYMBOL OF LUCK, BUT A STEADY DIET OF THESE WILL ONLY PLUG YOU UP, PUT YOU SIX FEET UNDER, OR BOTH.
IN SPRINGFIELD, THE CAPITAL OF ILLINOIS --WHERE I LIVE AND WHERE OBAMA SPENT EIGHT OF HIS FORMATIVE YEARS IN THE STATE SENATE-- WE INVENTED THIS UNHOLY DELICACY. WE'RE FAMOUS FOR IT.
ALONG WITH CREATING THE NATION'S FIRST CORN DOG, FIRST DRIVE THRU RESTAURANT, AND FIRST DEEP-FRIED...
HOLY CRAP. UNTIL, OBAMA CAME TO TOWN, I GUESS SPRINGFIELD WAS PRETTY MUCH FAMOUS FOR KEEPING HOSPITALS IN BUSINESS.
I MEAN, SPRINGFIELD IS ALSO FAMOUS FOR ABRAHAM LINCOLN.
FOR 25 YEARS, THIS SMALL TOWN SHAPED HISTORY'S MOST CELEBRATED PRESIDENT.
BUT THAT WAS, LIKE, 200 YEARS AGO, SO ENOUGH ABOUT HIM...
YEAH... NOM NOM... I MEAN... URP... IT'S NOT LIKE I WAS EVER COVERED IN DELICIOUS CHEESE GRAVY, SO WHAT'S THE APPEAL, EXACTLY?
I'M NOT SURE WHAT PEOPLE EVER SAW IN ME.
I KNOW, RIGHT? THAT'S WHAT I'VE BEEN SAYING!
...CRIPES, THESE THINGS ARE GOOD. IT'S LIKE MY TASTE BUDS ARE BEING... EMANCIPATED OR SOMETHING!

SO, ANYWAY... I SUPPOSE YOU'RE WONDERING WHAT THIS ALL HAS TO DO WITH BARACK OBAMA. YOU KNOW, BESIDES THAT HE MUST HAVE EATEN HIS SHARE OF HORSESHOES WHILE HANGING OUT IN SPRINGFIELD. HEY, THE GUY USED TO CHAIN SMOKE, SO WHAT'S ONE MORE AWFUL HABIT?
...WHAT I THINK IT MEANS, IS THAT UNTIL BARACK OBAMA WALKED ON STAGE TO DELIVER THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION KEYNOTE SPEECH IN 2004, THE WHOLE OF AMERICAN POLITICS SEEMED ABOUT AS APPETIZING AS A GREASY, STOMACH-CHURNING, HAMBURGER-INDUCED BELLY CRAMP (WITH FRIES ON TOP). BUT WHEN HE TOLD HIS STORY...
ON BEHALF OF THE GREAT STATE OF ILLINOIS, CROSSROADS OF A NATION, LAND OF LINCOLN, LET ME EXPRESS MY DEEP GRATITUDE FOR THE PRIVILEGE OF ADDRESSING THIS CONVENTION.
TONIGHT IS A PARTICULAR HONOR FOR ME BECAUSE, LET'S FACE IT, MY PRESENCE ON THIS STAGE IS PRETTY UNLIKELY.
MY FATHER WAS A FOREIGN STUDENT, BORN AND RAISED IN A SMALL VILLAGE IN KENYA. HE GREW UP HERDING GOATS, WENT TO SCHOOL IN A TIN-ROOF SHACK...
...HE SEEMED TO SPELL R-E-L-I-E-F FOR A LOT OF PEOPLE FED UP WITH THE JUNK BEING FED TO THEM, WHO WERE HUNGRY FOR SOMETHING BETTER. SUDDENLY, THE NATION HAD FOUND ITS POLITICAL APPETITE AGAIN.
BUT MAYBE I'M GETTING AHEAD OF THINGS. PEOPLE DON'T START WAVING SIGNS AROUND WITH YOUR NAME ON IT OVERNIGHT.
OR NAMING LOGS AFTER YOU!
UMM... YEAH. YOU SAID IT, ABE.

1967. JIM MORRISON SHOCKS AMERICA BY MAKING A SUBTLE DRUG REFERENCE ON THE ED SULLIVAN SHOW. I KNOW... RISKY STUFF.
BUT PERHAPS MORE SHOCKING...
...IS THAT INTERRACIAL MARRIAGES WERE STILL ILLEGAL IN VIRGINIA, AND 16 OTHER STATES, UNTIL A SUPREME COURT RULING IN '67.
IT WAS IN THIS TENSE CLIMATE THAT THE UNTHINKABLE PAIRING OF A SWEET KANSAS GRAD-STUDENT AND A CHARISMATIC, STUDIOUS EX-GOAT HERDER FROM KENYA'S LUO TRIBE OCCURRED IN HAWAII... WAY BACK IN 1959.
ON ONE OF OUR FIRST DATES, HE TRIED TO DANGLE A GUY OVER A CLIFF!
WHAT COULD I DO? HE DROPPED MY FAVORITE PIPE OVER THE EDGE! CAN'T ANYONE TAKE A JOKE?
LOVE
NECTION
59
HAHAHAHA
BARACK HUSSEIN OBAMA II WAS BORN IN 1961. BEFORE HE WAS THREE, HIS DAD LEFT THEM-- FIRST TO HARVARD FOR A MASTERS IN ECONOMICS, THEN BACK TO KENYA FOR GOOD.
WHAT WAS HE LIKE, GRAMPS?
HEH. YOUR DAD COULD HANDLE JUST ABOUT ANY SITUATION, BAR. AND THAT MADE EVERYBODY LIKE HIM. SURE OF HIMSELF. NOW THERE'S SOMETHING YOU CAN LEARN FROM YOUR DAD...
CONFIDENCE.
THE SECRET TO A MAN'S SUCCESS.


THE WHOLE THING IS SO *AMERICAN*. OUT OF AN ERA OF INTENSE RACIAL HATRED AND CULTURAL DIVIDES, PARALLEL WORLDS CONVERGE AND PRODUCE THIS WONDERFUL LITTLE KID-- AND ALL SIDES ARE FORCED TO RE-EXAMINE THEIR NOTIONS OF RACE AND FEAR.
EVERYTHING OBAMA'S RELATIVES THOUGHT ABOUT "FAMILY" AND "TRADITION"--FROM *KENYA* TO *KANSAS*-- IS TURNED UPSIDE DOWN AND THEN, MORE EASILY THAN THEY THOUGHT POSSIBLE, EMBRACED.
EARLY ON IN HIS POLITICAL CAREER, THIS SIMPLE STORY ABOUT OUR *DIFFERENCES* UNITING US BECAME OBAMA'S BIGGEST SELLING POINT. PEOPLE REALLY ATE THAT STUFF *UP*.
A HOUSE DIVIDED AGAINST ITSELF *CANNOT* STAND.
EXACTLY!
WHO SAID *THAT*? THAT WAS DR. PHIL, RIGHT?
OBAMA'S MOTHER SOON FOUND ANOTHER MAN --AN *INDONESIAN*-- AND SHE PACKED EVERYTHING AND LEFT *HAWAII* WITH *BARACK* IN TOW.
HINA
PACIFIC OCEAN
HAWAII
PHILIPPINES
LAYSIA
NEW GUINEA
INDONESIA
IT WAS IN INDONESIA'S NOTORIOUS ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS WHERE BARACK OBAMA WAS INDOCTRINATED BY RADICAL MUSLIMS, DRANK THE BLOOD OF CHICKENS...
...AND RENOUNCED BASEBALL AND APPLE PIE. I REPEAT: OBAMA'S SCHOOL WAS, IN NO WAY, JUST AN UNREMARKABLE, IMPOVERISHED SCHOOL-HOUSE FULL OF INDONESIAN FARM KIDS.
THAT WOULD BE TOO OBVIOUS. COMING UP, "OBAMA AND TIE-DYED AMERICAN FLAG T-SHIRTS: WHY WON'T HE WEAR THEM? WHAT'S HE *HIDING!?*"
OBAMA
FOX NEWS channel
MY WORD
OK, SO DETAILS OF HIS EARLY EDUCATION WERE LATER EXAGGERATED. BUT IN POVERTY-STRICKEN JAKARTA, OBAMA STILL GOT HIS FIRST GLIMPSE AT WHAT HE CALLED A *'VIOLENT AND UNPREDICTABLE'* WORLD...
BARRY? WHY'S YOUR ARM *WRAPPED* LIKE THAT?
IT'S NOTHING... I *CUT* MYSELF.