

TAWK TV

The Tawks, the fearless tribe who functioned as the information specialists on Horizontal Stepsister IV, were under attack in the planetary media. Each of their far flung iNfoCenters was the object of intense demonstrations, led by ignorant ranting AntiEverythingers spewing the AE Party's unintelligible talking points.

Marston Tidwell, former Bergen Bugle newsman and celebrity survivor of the Great Cloud Experiment, faced the demonstrators out front of his station. The TawkTV van powered up, linked to TawkSat and the finest investigative reporter in the known universe spritzed his hair, adjusted his wide lapels and faced Bobo, his Kauffion cameraman.

Three...two...one...you're live!

"Welcome to iNfoCenter NewsFlash. I'm Marston Tidwell and we're coming to you live from outside our studios at Skidmore Station in downtown Luxo City, where an angry crowd of AEP supporters have gathered to rail against...against..." He hesitated, unsure of where to go with this.

"Let's talk to the people." He moved into the crowd and collared a beefy middle aged man in leather chaps, a NASCAR hat, and a dog collar with trailing leash still attached. He was yelling indecipherable gibberish and fondling his legal taser array.

"Sir, can you tell us what your group is opposing today?"

The man replied with a nasty lisp. "Well, they told uth to thshow up armed and ready, and dammit, here we are!"

"Who said to show up?" asked Marston.

The man appeared stumped, eyes searching the sky for an answer. Another man, identically dressed, broke in. "We're just not gonna take this anymore!" he screamed through toothless gums. Actually, he had one tooth, a yellowing lower bicuspid.

"What is it you're not going to take anymore?" Marston held his mike out to the man. This guy didn't have an answer, either. Marston pushed his way further into the mass of people, looking for the next photogenic person to quiz.

A bony man with a mullet stood by himself, wearing a sandwich board. The front board exclaimed in fancy gothic letters, "The Exalted Arm of the Apocalyptic Vision Political Action Committee says, *We've had it!*" On the back board was the TEAAVPAC logo...a sword, a noose, and a chipmunk. Bobo zoomed the camera in on the logo, held it there. Marston approached the man.

"Sir, can we ask you what the chipmunk is all about?"

The man smiled and spoke the first semi intelligent words Marston had heard thus far.

"Nobody knows." His voice was wheezy, he coughed every other word.

"It's...*cough*...been...*hack, hack*...lost...*cough*...to...*hawwwwwk*...history!" A phlegmatic paroxysm wracked his skinny frame. Marston turned toward the camera.

"Once again, the activities of the AEP have left citizens guessing. We still don't know what they want...or what they're doing here...and apparently they don't either. Stay tuned for sports with Luthor LongJohn reporting from the Extreme Tiddlywinks Playoffs. I'm Marston Tidwell and this has been a TawkTV NewsFlash presentation."