Two-way distribution

The Center For Non-Broadcast Television will present a live, hour-and-a-half program on energy next Sunday (Dec. 9) that will be telecast to both cable systems and public television stations nationwide over two separate satellites.

The show, Over a Barrel: Energy in the 80's, will present a 15-minute videotape on energy problems facing the nation, followed by a panel discussion by energy experts, with viewers able to call a toll-free number to question the panelists.

The program will go to cable systems using RCA Satcom I, while public television stations will receive the program via Westar. Approximately 500 cable systems will be able to receive the show; 12 public TV stations have so far committed to airing it live, and others have decided to tape it for future airing.

The program is being underwritten by the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, whose president, William Winpisinger, will be on the panel.

Arrangements with the Public Broadcasting Service for satellite time were made by the Public Interest Video Network, which has produced two live shows this year—on nuclear power and abortion—that were aired on some PBS stations. The Washington-based group of independents is planning additional projects, as well. It has received a planning grant for a five-day-long show, to be aired next Thanksgiving, that would take a look at the country as it enters the 1980's. Preliminary plans call for approximately 20 remotes from various locations nationwide.

China buys BBC shows

Following a trip by top officials to Britain, the Central Broadcasting Administration of the People's Republic of China has purchased the first programs from the BBC for transmission on China's nationwide television network.

The sales involve two series and one television play, totaling 18 hours of programming. The two series are Anna Karenina and David Copperfield; the play is Robinson Crusoe.

A spokesman for BBC Enterprises, Roy Bromwell, said confirmation of the purchase came less than a week after the Chinese visit, following several years of unsuccessful attempts to sell programs to the Chinese. "We now seem to have broken through the bamboo curtain," he said.

Bromwell said the BBC showed the Chinese a full range of available BBC programs and hoped this purchase would open the way for more sales in what is a major untapped world market for television exports. Bromwell would not quote the sale price, but described it as "quite substantial."

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