



Joan Irwin's view

Global TV's news has homey touch

Remember Global Television? It's the southern Ontario network that nearly died a-borning but was rescued in the nick of time by the CRTC and a syndicate with enough money to pay some of the bills and keep the fledgling network alive.

We can't get the Global signal in Montreal, but last week when I was in Ottawa I had an opportunity to watch the nightly Global newscasts. I've also seen some during visits to Toronto.

Global's version of the national news must be the most complicated newscast in the country. At a full hour it's certainly the longest and if it sometimes tells you more than you ever wanted to know about Belleville, Ontario it also covers the national and international scenes fairly thoroughly as well.

It's a two-headed affair along the lines of NBC's old Huntley-Brinkley report, but instead of Chet and David Global has two Peters — Trueman in Toronto and Desbarats in Ottawa.

The double-origination arrangement and the very high percentage of taped actuality (always identified as to source if it's not Global's own) must make the production a nightly nightmare for all concerned.

Peter Trueman is as unlikely an anchorman as you'll find anywhere on television. His journalistic credits are dandy but he glowers out of the screen as if the activities of mankind make him so angry he can scarcely contain his fury and outrage.

Peter Desbarats, as Montrealers know well, is a cool and accomplished TV performer as well as a fine journalist. As anchorman he projects dispassionate civility, and he also contributes stand-up reports on the Ottawa scene which appear as taped inserts in the Trueman-anchored part of the show.

The Global newscast doesn't look at all like the newscasts of other Canadian networks.

It's partly because Global appears to have reporters in every



Peter Desbarats . . . one of the two Peters on Global Television's newscasts.

town from Windsor to Ottawa and uses them lavishly to keep viewers up to date on events throughout the Global coverage area. The length of the newscast makes this possible, and it gives the Global news package a focus on more homey concerns than CBC, CTV or TVA can manage in their network newscasts. It's as if one combined into a single program the national and local newscasts of the other networks.

The other major difference is the feeling of the production itself. Global has a jittery feeling about it, quite unlike the studied smoothness of the others. It may be that the sheer technical complexities of the production give rise to tension in the participants or it may be a deliberate attempt to project a sense of immediacy and something of the pressures of the news operation.

Whatever the reasons, the Global news package is an interesting change from the alternatives. If you happen to be in Toronto or Ottawa or Windsor or anywhere in between you might have a look.

On the literary side now, I'd like to remind those who may be admirers of the work of the Argentinian writer Jorge Luis Borges that a five-part series on Borges and his work began last night on CBC-FM's Ideas, heard week-nights at 10:03 p.m.

Borges is one of the great masters of language writing today, and after becoming a fan of his work Canadian poet Robert Zend took himself and a tape-recorder down to Buenos Aires to meet the author of such works as Alpha and Other Stories The Book of an Imaginary Being. In Praise of Darkness and Dreamtigers.

Last night's program dealt with the literary antecedents and predecessors of Borges — from the Kabbala and Thousand and One Nights through philosophy, mysticism and religions to H. G. Wells, Shaw, James and Chesterton.

Tonight the subject is the Borgesian Hero. Wednesday it's Borges and his Labyrinths; Thursday Borges — Reincarnator; Friday it will be a discussion of Borges style.