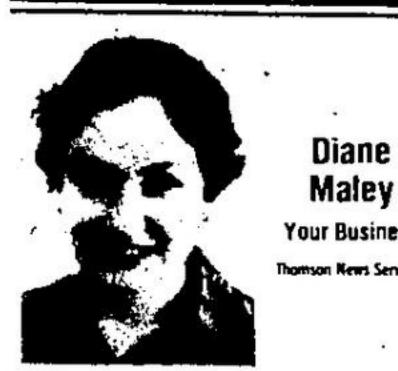
### Conrad Black's cutting remarks are needed



Maley Your Business homson News Service

I miss Conrad Black. As a columnist, I mean.

Mr. Black, you may remember, a business column for Report on Business Magazine, the glossy monthly published by The Globe and Mail. The Globe fired when he teamed up with Maclean-Hunter and the Toronto Sun to launch the daily Financial Post, the Globe's rival.

He then began writing for the Post. But he quit when the newspaper's editors toned downone of his more outrageous columns, in which he criticized a Globe reporter. No doubt The Globe would have toned it down even more, Mr. Black had a tendency to go too far.

That's what made him so interesting to read. Try as they might, people could not resist reading Mr. Black's column, if only to be enraged. Journalists would pronounce him ridiculous.

But as time went by, more and more of them were confessing among friends that they agreed with Conrad Black far more than they would like to admit.

Their reluctance to acknowledge that Mr. Black sometimes had a point is understandable, given that journalists were among his prime targets. "Swarming, grunting jackals," he called us in his infamous last column. "Vividly obnoxious," he called us in another. These are strong charges to make against people who believe they can do no wrong.

Journalists wield considerable influence in North America. Survey after survey shows that the media, television in particular, not only influence public opinion, but can actually determine the outcome of elections.

UNTOUCHABLE POWER

If he was quick with his pen, Mr. Black was equally fast off the



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mark when it came to suing. He The Globe and libel, extraclengthy retraction and apology that left Globe readers aghast.

Whether Mr. Black intended by his suit to set an example for other business people to follow is anybody's guess. The media worry about "libel chill," the fear of writing critically when one is almost sure to be sued. But as Mr. Black has said many times, not even journalists should be above the law.

The curious thing about Mr. Black is that he is part of the media he pretends to loathe. As a media baron, he is criticizing from within - sort of. As well as his 15-per-cent interest in the Post, Mr. Black owns Saturday Night magazine, a small newspaper chain in Canada, the Jerusalem Post, and the prestigious Daily Telegraph in London.

A NEW BREED

Indeed, if you have ever wondered, as I have, why everyone wants to get into the publishing business, Mr. Black may have the answer. Among other reasons, buying newspapers, magazines or television stations gives former objects of media criticism a voice with which to reply. Mind you, not all publishers use it.

There's more to the allure of thepress than a desire for retribution. Slowty and grudgingly, the business community has come to accept the fact that the media has wrested power from politicians and financiers. They want it back.

But that, too, is not all. When we go to the polls, we often choose the candidate favored by the media. How the government fares depends to a great extent on the media. In short, the group that wields the most influence in our society is neither the people nor their elected representatives.

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### Busy month for downtown Georgetown

Saturday's Santa Claus Parade in Georgetown is just one of many events the Georgetown Business Improvement Area in downtown Georgetown is planning.

From Nov. 13 through Dec. 9 the BIA is holding a Christmas shopping spree. Each week, two winners will receive \$100 to spend downtown Georgetown.

The BIA is also holding a Christmas coloring contest open to children 12 years old and under. Deadline for entries is Saturday, Dec. 9.

Tickets are now available for breakfast with Santa on Dec. 16. Tickets are available at Fletcher's Shoes, Oxbow Books, Penniesworth and Victoria Lane.

Breakfast times are at 9 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. at the McGibbon banquet room.

On Dec. 4 you can get a picture of yourself with Jolly Old St. Nick himself. The free photos with Santa will be snapped at Union Gas from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.



Donates to Seniors' Magazine

Georgetown Food Market owner Bob Creasy donated \$375 to the Seniors Magazine program on Halton Cable Systems Cable 4 last week. The Seniors Magazine collected \$100,000 in cash register tapes to make the donation possible. Here, Eleanor McLeod, treasurer of the Senlors Magazine, receives the cheque from Mr. Creasy. (Herald photo)

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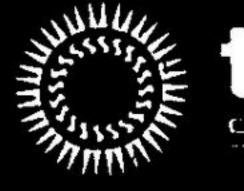
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