



Asian-American Network
Against Abuse of Women

Dear Member of Congress:

I am writing to bring to your attention my outrage and disgust at the statements made by General Pervez Musharraf, the unelected President of Pakistan. In a recent interview given to the Washington Post "*No challenge from Bush on reversal*" (September 13, 2004), General Musharraf said in reference to rapes in Pakistan "This has become a moneymaking concern. A lot of people say if you want to go abroad and get a visa for Canada or citizenship and be a millionaire, get yourself raped."

In the past few months cases of women like Mukhtar Mai and Dr. Shazia Khalid have come to light. Both of these women openly defied social and cultural taboos and harassment by the Musharraf administration to speak out about their brutal rapes. Each time General Musharraf feigned concern and tried to shroud his discriminatory, sexist and shameful disrespect for women with deceitful political rhetoric. With his recent statements, the truth of his views and his absolute lack of concern for women is now glaring and obvious. Given General Musharraf's views on rape victims, how can any rape victim in Pakistan break the oppressive silence imposed on her? If anything, his words have announced a free for all for perpetrators of sexual crimes, assuring them that the government of Pakistan will not take any action if women are raped and tortured.

As you well know, the Musharraf government is touted as one America's biggest allies. Equal respect for all citizens both male and female, and legal prosecution of crimes against women are a fundamental principle of our government and legal system. If as Americans we denounce violence against women in our own country, how can we support a man who considers speaking out against sexual violence a "moneymaking concern"? As a member of Congress I urge you to take action and publicly condemn General Musharraf's statement and expose his regime's dismal record in protecting the rights of women. As your constituent, I would be deeply grateful for your action in this matter.

Sincerely,

Your constituent