

Thurs Jan. 15/87.

Hey, Posy, can we talk?

Ms. Posy Chisolm c/o The Toronto Sun. Dear Posy: Your interview with Pakistani opposition leader Benazir Bhutto last Sunday was a knockout. Boy, you girls really let your hair down. I could almost see the tear stains on the page. Holy heartthrob!

That General Zia sounds like a really bad man. First he hangs poor Benazir's sainted daddy, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, then he locks her up in jail — with no *toilette* paper, yet, not to mention cleanser and eyeliner — and now he's busy persecuting her and other Pakistani democrats. Gosh, Posy, you really got the inside story. I had no idea you were so tuned in to Pakistani politics.

Come to think of it, your piece would make a great pilot for a new TV series — sort of a Third World *Dynasty*. What a nifty plot for female viewers. A beautiful female politician in a chauvinist country, struggling against the evil ruler, trying to restore her father's wonderful code of ethics and just style of government. Think of the exotic accessories you could feature in each show. And isn't that General Zia all the things that are wrong with men? He's got tanks, medals and guns and all the things that girls hate.

Of course, Posy, there will be sullen male critics who may insist on making irrelevant, insensitive and unimportant observations. Some may be tasteless enough to recall the days of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the period most Pakistanis refer to as the worst era in their troubled history. There are, for example, all those old stories about Bhutto's goon squads, his assassination teams, political terrorism and the massive jailing of anyone whom Bhutto didn't like — without *toilette* paper.

Punch



"You can't possibly eat the snail—you'll ruin the symmetry."

ERIC MARGOLIS



You were certainly right to call for a return to Bhuttoism in your article. Just because almost the entire nation rose up to overthrow him doesn't mean that Bhuttoism is a spent force. Benazir might have mentioned to you, though, that the crowds that greeted her return from exile were smaller than the crowds that called for the overthrow of her dad.

Oh, never mind, it's only one more of the silly details that make political reporting so much more boring than writing about St. Moritz or cocktail parties.

Then there's that irritating problem of how Bhutto nationalized or confiscated everything in Pakistan and brought the country to the edge of economic collapse. How to portray his rule as a golden era is going to be a bit difficult.

Highlighting the evilness of old Zia is going to be a problem, too. These days, Pakistan is better off economically and socially than ever before. In spite of what Benazir gushed to you, Pakistan has considerably more individual and press freedom than most other Third World nations. In fact, Miss Bhutto and her opposition alliance would not be tolerated for a moment in most of them — and particularly those socialist dictatorships upon which Canada lavishes so much money.

Also, more silly, irksome issues, like Benazir's calls for "democracy" while she imposes dictatorial rule inside her own party. Or her links to Libya and to the Soviets. Or those unseemly stories about her brothers. I'm sure you and the scriptwriters will find a way. Gee, maybe we have the making here of a new *Evita*!

Oh, I can picture it. A balcony scene, dusk falling on Karachi as a golden sun sinks into the Arabian Sea. Benazir appears, sobbing softly. She opens her veils to reveal a pale face of striking beauty and delicacy. As the violins slowly rise in orgiastic accumulo, the frail girl sings, *Don't Cry for Me, Pakistan*. What a blockbuster.

You know, the trouble with world affairs is that people — and I really mean men — just spend too much time on silly details like politics, economics or warfare. What we need more of is *feelings*! Like the kind you gave us in this great interview. Maybe though, a tiny note of caution. Don't quote me, but you know how girls sometimes have a slight tendency to tell eentsy little fibs or to leave out a bit of the story. You don't think Benazir might have done this, do you? Maybe just a bit?

Posy, I can't wait for you to sink your teeth into some more world problems and really give us the bottom-line lowdown. I'll bet Margaret Thatcher is boiling hot to *tell all*!