

## CNN LARRY KING LIVE

Financial Bailout Stalled; Interview With Chris Rock

Aired September 25, 2008 - 21:00 ET



Coming up next, Chris Rock is here.

You want to mock the vote?

Here's your man. There he is. No one is safe.

ROCK: I know nothing.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP FROM "KILL THE MESSENGER," COURTESY HBO)

ROCK: Is that Zanax?

You ought to be ashamed of yourself taking an anti-depressant to come to a comedy show.

(LAUGHTER)

(END VIDEO CLIP)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK) KING: Great pleasure to welcome a return visit with Chris Rock, the Emmy-winning comic and actor. His first comedy special in five years, "Kill the Messenger," will premier on HBO this Saturday night at 9:00 Eastern. He is a supporter of Barack Obama. We'll touch a lot of politics. We'll also show you clips from the special. We had a bailout meeting at the White House today.

CHRIS ROCK, COMEDIAN: Really?

KING: Obama and McCain at opposite ends of the table. What do you make of it?

ROCK: What do I make of it? If this was a boxing match, McCain would be holding.

KING: Holding on?

ROCK: Yes. It's like he got hit really hard in the stomach like, OK. I can't let him go. He's going to knock me out. So that's what appears to be going on right now. Just a hold. Don't --

KING: Has the financial crisis affected you?

ROCK: Larry, I drove a cab over here tonight. When it's over, I'm going to try to pick up some more fares. I'm losing everything, Larry.

KING: Really downtrodden?

ROCK: Yes, it's really bad.

KING: Have HBO paid you already?

ROCK: They have paid me, but the money is worthless now. Haven't you heard? Your money's worth nothing.

KING: You must be -- forgetting endorsements -- proud that at this stage in our history a black man is running for president on a major ticket.

ROCK: Um, you know what? I'm proud Barack Obama's running for president. You know? if it was Flavor Flav would I be proud? No. I don't support Barack Obama because he's black.

KING: I said just as a proud feeling. That's normal.

ROCK: It's a proud feeling because of the character of the man. You know, I was -- I supported John Kerry and, you know -- and what's my man? Al Gore.

KING: Al Gore.

ROCK: But this guy seems to be a little bit more. He's -- seems to have watched other peoples' mistakes and, you know, seems to have a little bit more going on.

KING: From a comedic stand point, who is funnier, McCain or Obama? Seriously. Is Obama not -- it's hard to be funny about Obama?

ROCK: No, no. It's weird. People ask me that all the time. I'd rather -- Like McCain jokes are just easy jokes, like I don't want a president with a bucket list. That's like a McCain joke. Those jokes are easy. It's like you basically, you know, you know, take the dust off your Reagan jokes and tell them again. You know?

But Obama, oh, this is a whole new set of jokes. I got to find a whole new move to the basket here. So I kind of hope he wins.

KING: He will be foil for you?

ROCK: He will be -- hey, you know, if he is the -- I love Bill Clinton. I talked about Bill Clinton. Whoever the president is, you got to -- kind of got to jab them from time to time.

KING: Didn't you introduce Obama at a rally?

ROCK: I introduced Obama at the Apollo Theater not too long ago. I think Obama would be great. I mean, just look -- the big thing right now is the economy. And people are going broke. And here's -- the choice isn't Republican or Democrat. The choice is you got a guy that's worth 150 million dollars with 12 houses against a guy who's worth a million dollars with one house.

KING: Well --

ROCK: The guy with one house really cares about losing a house, because he is homeless. The other guy can lose five houses and still got a bunch of houses. Does this make any sense? Am I the only one that sees this?

KING: It's unique way of -- I guess, OK.

ROCK: I'm just saying, John McCain could lose half his houses.

KING: You got a point.

ROCK: And sleep well.

KING: You and Bill Clinton were on Letterman on Tuesday. You had some problems with the tone of his endorsement of Barack Obama. Let's watch this.

ROCK: Oh.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

ROCK: Is it me or he didn't want to say the name Barack Obama?

He did not -- he -- he went through everything he could do -- well, like, Hillary would want do it -- Hillary ain't running! Hillary's not running!

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KING: Do you think Bill is hesitant about Barack Obama?

ROCK: You know what? He's -- you know, he did a great speech in Denver. And Hillary's been on the campaign trail. Just at that moment, if you watched what happened on David Letterman, it appeared he was holding back. And when you tell a joke and everybody laughs, it is not because they disagree with what you're saying. So --

KING: They get it?

ROCK: Yes, they get it. The whole audience was in on it. But, you know, hey, the guy's in a weird position there. His wife ran for the thing and she didn't win.

KING: The next night, on "The Daily Show," Jon Stewart asked Clinton about the Letterman appearance and Clinton suggested that Obama supporters who questioned commitment are missing the point. Now you watching this and comment.

ROCK: Jon Stewart will straighten me out.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

BILL CLINTON (D), FMR. PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: I'm glad he has people that love him that much, but the people that hold this election. The people that hold this election are the people that think that he is on their side and he loves them. In other words, he needs to get the votes of the people that voted for Hillary or independents didn't even vote, but they know the country's off in the wrong direction. They want a change.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KING: Pretty good?

ROCK: It was great. It was great. And you're right, he does need to get some of the votes that went to Hillary and all that. I don't understand any Democrat that voted for Hillary that doesn't support Obama. Because their views are pretty similar. You know what I mean? I can understand not -- I understand people supporting Mr. McCain. But a Democrat that's going to just be mad is -- there's something kind of really messed up about that.

KING: Have you always done political humor?

ROCK: You know --

KING: When you started, did you do politics?

ROCK: I'm interested in the world. Jon Stewart does political humor. Bill Maher does political humor. I talk about stuff the way guys would talk about it at the barber shop. I don't belong on any panel on this show. You know what I mean? I don't deserve to be near Roland Martin and Anderson Cooper and all these guys. I try to talk about politics in a way a guy that works at UPS would understand.

KING: You did a lot of Brooklyn stuff. ROCK: I do all sorts of stuff, Larry. All sorts of stuff. You know, I hope Obama wins just because, you know, the country needs it. The country needs a change. We kind of seen what this whole McCain thing is. And I'll go with the guy with one house. The guy with one house is scared about losing his house.

KING: I never thought of it that way.

ROCK: It is that simple.

KING: Yes. We'll be right back with Chris Rock. The HBO special airs Saturday. Don't go away.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

ROCK: I'm glad Hillary's out of this finally. Hillary got the (EXPLETIVE DELETED) out. She was hanging out for a long time. She would not leave this. Just hanging out, like what the (EXPLETIVE DELETED) you still doing here. Would not leave. Nice girls like to leave the club before the lights come on. Hillary was holding out in the parking lot, like where are you all going? What's going on?

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KING: That's from "Kill the Messenger." Good title. We have an e-mail question from Anton -- I like that name -- in Los Angeles: "Chris, do you think Bill Clinton has irreparably damaged his relationship with the black community? Do you think black Americans will ever forgive him for using the race card in the Pennsylvania primary?"

ROCK: OK. First of all, Bill Clinton's not a racist. Bill Clinton -- I've hung out with Bill Clinton. I've flown on planes with Bill Clinton. He calls me up when my kids are born and sends letters. His wife was running for president. If you give me a choice between pissing off a whole race of people or my wife, hey, I got to piss off a race of people. Sorry, blackies. Go eat some chicken. I got to go.

So he had no choice. I'm not mad at him at all. Right, Larry? You've been married 12 times, right? Come on.

KING: You'll never be back. It's interesting. An e-mail question from Sheila in San Antonio, Texas: "Chris, do you think Bill Clinton's support will actually help Obama? Or should he step back and let Hillary do most of the campaign stumping?"

ROCK: I think Bill Clinton's support, especially if he's really supportive, will definitely help. Bill Clinton's our last great president. Let me get back to it. You know why Bill Clinton was the last great president? Because he was the last president we had that wasn't a multi-millionaire coming in to the office. He made decisions like a normal person. And normal people benefited because of it. John McCain's worth 100 million dollars. Barack Obama is the closest thing to a normal citizen in this election.

KING: Are you saying that George W. Bush was not normal?

ROCK: George W. Bush's father is a freaking president of the United States. He shouldn't have been allowed to run.

KING: You can't run if your father --

ROCK: Yes, the presidency of the United States should be run like a radio station give away. If anybody from your family works for the radio station, you can't win the prize.

KING: OK, that wipes out John Adams and John Quincy Adams.

ROCK: Yes, yes, yes. It is not fair. Arnold Schwarzenegger shouldn't have been able to run against a citizen. So there's some guy running against the Terminator. Come on. It is not fair. Nobody cares about the normal guy. I do. Watch my special.

KING: Sarah Palin has been in New York this week, doing meet and greets with a number of world leaders. Let's watch her with the new president of Pakistan and then get your thoughts. Watch.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

GOV. SARAH PALIN (R), ALASKA: How are you? So nice to meet.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: So nice to you.

PALIN: I am honored to meet you.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: You are more gorgeous in life --

PALIN: You are so nice. Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Now I know why the whole of America is crazy about you. If you keeps insisting, I might have.

PALIN: Thank you.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KING: He called her gorgeous, the president of Pakistan.

ROCK: Of course he did. Pretty bad -- I thought Al Davis made the choice, that's how bad it was. I don't know. I don't know if she's -- she's done three interviews and she's running for vice president of the United States? Jason Lee's done more interviews promoting, you know, "My Name is Earl" than she has to run for -- I did more interviews today than she has to run for vice president of the United States.

And every time they let her talk for more than four minutes, you actually start feeling sorry for her. It's kind of like Kim Kardashian or "Dancing With the Stars." All that ass and can't shake it. Just like -- what? So sad. KING: We'll be right back with Chris Rock and hopefully get him to be forthcoming on some things. Right after this.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: Congressman Alcee Hastings of Florida, I knew a long time ago when I lived there, who is both black and a Democrat, is warning against Palin because he says, quote, anybody toting guns and stripping moose don't care too much about what they do with Jews and blacks. That a little rough?

ROCK: Who is this guy?

KING: Alcee Hastings.

ROCK: I never heard of him.

KING: He was a judge. He was indicted.

ROCK: Don't compare me to a moose.

KING: No. He was not --

ROCK: Are you calling me a moose?

KING: No, I'm not calling you a moose. That's what he said.

ROCK: Who is this guy?

KING: He's a Congressman.

ROCK: Are you making news or reporting the news? Let's find the craziest black quote we can find --

KING: OK.

ROCK: And just --

KING: What he is trying to say is that a woman who --

ROCK: Who compares -- what the hell do I have to do with a moose, Larry?

KING: He says that any woman who totes guns and strips moose, that's her --

ROCK: Right.

KING: Can't care too much about Jews and blacks.

ROCK: Larry, what the hell does this have to do -- mooses (sic) or moose. I don't know.

KING: Mooses (sic)?

ROCK: I don't know. I didn't go to a fancy school, man. But -- yes. She does kill moose. She does kill them.

KING: Yes.

ROCK: Yes, I know.

KING: Do you know anybody in your community who kills moose? That's the point.

ROCK: Every time I see her with a dead moose, I'm like why is Michael Vick in jail? Isn't killing animals bad?

KING: You have a point.

ROCK: I don't know. I don't know. Maybe I'm crazy.

KING: Your new HBO special, "Kill the Messenger," puts together performances you did in South Africa, London and New York. Let's watch a sample.

ROCK: OK.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

ROCK: What happened to bin Laden? They used to talk about him all the time. Now, they don't even mention no bin Laden. I hate to sound like a conspiracy theorists, but I don't believe bin Laden really existed. I don't believe it. A seven-foot diabetic Muslim lives in a cave like Dr. Evil. There's no electricity, yet his camcorder's fully charged.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

ROCK: Yes.

KING: I gather you write all your own material.

ROCK: I write my jokes. Bin Laden did more movies last year than Sam Jackson. I think he is in Lake View Terrace, if I'm not mistaken. I better -- that's bin Laden.

KING: Maybe we'll catch him.

ROCK: Maybe we'll catch him.

KING: I think I just said that. OK.

ROCK: Yes.

KING: By the way, the famous "New Yorker" cover --

ROCK: Which one?

KING: Oh, you know. The one that had -- there it is.

ROCK: There it is. Are you trying to get reactions from me? KING: No, no, no. Jon Stewart and Stephen Colbert are featured in the new "Entertainment Weekly" and they recreate the notorious "New Yorker" cover with an illustration of their own. Will people get the joke?

ROCK: People will get the joke. It's --

KING: Do you think the cover was in poor taste?

ROCK: It wasn't my favorite cover. Hey, there's a lot of mistakes going on here. This is the first time we had a black guy run for president. And, you know, any firsts, there's going to be bumps. You know? People calling me up, we want you to host the first blankety blank award show. I don't do first anything. Think of first everything you had. You messed up you first bike, your first car, your first girlfriend, wife, whatever. Everything first you mess up.

KING: All firsts?

ROCK: All firsts, yes. So in this campaign, there's a lot of bumps in the road here. But, you know, luckily Mr. Obama is like a class act. And he kind of -- he just brushes all this stuff off his shoulders and just keeps going. Every time you think he's down, hey, hey, don't worry about it.

KING: Do you fear there will be a vote against him just because he's black?

ROCK: I don't fear it. You know? One thing -- here's the crazy thing. You know, you hope it doesn't happen and what I really hope is that the Democrats that are for -- especially the ones for Hillary, vote for Obama, because -- and don't make this a racial thing, because black people have supported the Democratic party --

KING: Long time.

ROCK: -- for a long time. And we have voted for white people without blinking an eye, and we have gone down in flames with white people. Just look at Katrina. Here's a perfect example of black people going down in flames supporting the Democrats. If 30 percent of black people in New Orleans supported Bush, maybe they would have -- maybe Bush would have helped us out. Maybe Bush would have made a call. Hey, take care of my Louisiana blackies or something. But we keep all of our eggs in one basket. So I just hope that at least the Democrats are mature enough and get over whatever's bugging them to support a fellow Democrat.

KING: We'll be back with our remaining moments with Chris Rock right after this.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: We're back with our remaining moments with Chris Rock. Tell us what will happen if Obama wins. Give us the first day.

ROCK: You're asking me? Like -- are you asking me because I'm black or are you just asking me? I don't know. I'm sure he'll check to see if we really have UFOs. That's what I would do.

KING: That's the first thing.

ROCK: That's the first thing I would do.

KING: Nothing to do with black.

ROCK: I'm like, OK. That was --

KING: Will the menu change?

ROCK: I don't know. I don't know. You know? He seems like a pretty conservative-type of guy. I'm sure he'll want to know what's going on. I'm sure he'll call some world leaders. I'm sure he'll conceive building his cabinet. You know, normal presidential things. You know, it's -- you know, he's a man first and then he's a black man. You know, it is not like it is going to be radically different than the first day of any one of these candidates. But it's the second and third and first week and the first month that's really going to tell the difference of who's the president.

KING: You like his wife?

ROCK: I love his wife. Lovely woman.

KING: Terrific, smart.

ROCK: He is -- they're all -- McCain's smart and, you know, Palin's smart and Obama's smart and Michelle. They have different policies and different politics. And you can run with the rich people or you can run with the not so rich people. And America -- America's broke right now and nobody understands broke better than black people.

KING: We're almost out of town. Aren't you rich?

ROCK: I'm doing pretty good. I mean, you know, if you woke up with my money, you'd jump out the window. But I'm doing quite all right.

KING: Don't forget, the special airs Saturday night on HBO. And before we go, a quick reminder, check out all the latest on our webpage at [CNN.com/LarryKing](http://CNN.com/LarryKing). You can e-mail upcoming guests, download our latest podcast. You can even get a special King of Politics section, too. All at [CNN.com/LarryKing](http://CNN.com/LarryKing). Right now, it's time for Anderson Cooper and "AC 360." Anderson?