

Subject: Mr. King Never Asked... (Please leave your comments for everyone to see)

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Larry King Swoons Over Ahmadinejad

By [Hassan Daioleslam](#)

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On Tuesday, September 23, Larry King, far from his usual challenging demeanor, offered Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad ample opportunity to present his case. The final touch was to give him a human face. "Do you have children?" King asked the brutal dictator. "How old are they?" he followed, giving Ahmadinejad an opportunity to present his "human" side.

King's gracious treatment of the Iranian tyrant can be interpreted within the context of CNN's history of handling Iranian regime figures. The first notable episode was ten years ago when Christian Amanpour introduced the "irreversible" Iranian reform movement to the American public. She interviewed then President Mohammad Khatami and prepared the public for a rapprochement with the Iranian regime.

Following Amanpour's efforts, on March 21, 2000, the American Iranian Council (AIC) honored the CNN chief correspondent with a special reward. AIC was founded in 1997 to promote the rapprochement policies towards the Iranian regime. Recently, the AIC president, Hooshang Amirahmadi, publicly admitted to lobbying in favor of the Iranian regime.¹

Amanpour was honored for her reports on the Iranian society and especially the "Revolutionary Journey" broadcast in February 2000. The report depicted young Iranians as party lovers, drinking, dancing and practicing all the aspects of personal freedom of a contemporary western life. The NY Times on February 26, 2000 summarized her work as: "She visits a college student she calls Leyla who is putting on her makeup, listening to American rock music, getting ready to go to a party... These are the sons and daughters of the Islamic revolution."

Amanpour then says: "This is a crucial moment in Iranian history. This is the turning point from a hard-line theocratic state, to a vibrant new Moslem democracy... the hard line conservatives have had to face the fact that the people are rejecting their vision of Islam."

When Amanpour was asked if she faced any restrictions while filming "Revolutionary Journey" in Iran, she answered:

"None at all. It's a remarkably free environment for journalists today.... Our reporting has

never been reviewed or censored, which in itself is an extraordinary fact. In many other parts of the world, there is censorship. Journalists are coming to Iran in record numbers. They are granted working visas, and for the most part, they are able to talk to whomever they want and go wherever they want."

Interesting to note that at that time, a record number of Iranian journalists were jailed, tortured or exiled. "Reporters without Borders" declared Iran as the largest prison for journalists.

The second episode came seven years later in 2007 when the reformists were evicted from the scene. This time, with "God's Warriors", CNN inaugurated a new series of reports on Iran. Instead of Western style party going youngsters, Iranians were depicted as fanatic Muslims beating chests, chanting militant slogans and ready for martyrdom. While both types can be found in Iran, the truth about the very large majority of the Iranians is far from these two extreme depictions. So why would Amanpour wanted to depict these as the overwhelming majority? The answer is in its timing.

In 2000, at the peak of Khatami's era and hope for engaging the Iranian regime, the lobbying arm of the mullahs in the US campaigned hard for generating the type of image that Amanpour depicted in her report. In doing so, CNN was not alone. The European media frequently showed the Iranian women in ski resorts and wealthy families practicing Western culture.

In 2007, with the prospect of the West's harsh policies toward the Iranian regime, the Iranian lobby was hard at work to promote a different image of the Iranians. The new paradigm must depict the Iranian society ideologically cemented to its rulers: Iranians will bravely and unequivocally face the eventual aggressors. In case of such aggression, 50 million Iranians will fight the US and defend their country.

Within this context, it becomes easier to understand Larry King's treatment of Ahmadinejad. It satisfies the distinct necessities of the day. There are a group of influential circles in the U.S. which believe that the only way to settle the disputes with Iran is to offer more carrots. Larry King's interview was a yet another step in preparing public opinion in offering even more carrots to Tehran.

In this game of shame, Iranian tyrants scored one more. What is next on CNN?

1- Interview with Tabnak <http://www.tabnak.ir/pages/?cid=13928>

Hassan Daioleslam is an independent Iran analyst and writer. He is well published in Farsi and English. He has appeared as an expert guest on the Voice of America-TV as well as in other Persian media. Daioleslam has three decades of history of political activism and political scholarly analysis.

The future depends on what we do in the present!
Gandhi

--- On Thu, 9/25/08, Ali Kimiai <kimiaia@msn.com> wrote:
From: Ali Kimiai <kimiaia@msn.com>

Subject: Fw: Larry King & Ahmadinejad
To:
Date: Thursday, September 25, 2008, 6:01 PM

----- Original Message -----

From: [Hassan Dai](#)
To: [Hassan Dai](#)
Sent: Thursday, September 25, 2008 10:40 AM
Subject: Larry King & Ahmadinejad

Dear friends,
My new article about Larry King's interview with Ahmadinejad was published today at

Larry King swoons over Ahmadinejad

<http://www.frontpagemag.com/Articles/Read.aspx?GUID=3639739F-EA43-419E-83EC-62D936784D8C>