

Why Did Mubarak's Thugs Ride In On Camels?

By [Washington's Blog](#)

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The photos of Mubarak's thugs riding in on camels to attack the peaceful protesters with whips is getting worldwide attention:



As CNN [notes](#):

All at once, about 50 or 60 people carrying clubs and riding horses and camels charged into the square, beating some protesters. At least one man was pulled off his horse and beaten.

As a FoxNews blogger [writes](#):

Just seen guys racing in on camels into Tahrir square to join the protests. Amazing sight.

But the situation is getting very tense. Aggressive pro-Mubarak supporters, some seemingly organized by the government, are driving into the square and coming face-to-face with angry anti-regime protesters.

The pro-government groups are much smaller than those calling for change, who gather in large clusters of 500 or more and then stream endlessly into the square.

Given that a CNN news crew was attacked, and Anderson Cooper was [punched in the head 10 times by pro-Mubarak forces](#) (and see [this](#)), it is safe to say that the anti-democracy thugs were not trying to be subtle.

Instead, it is obvious that they were trying to make a statement.

The statement is that [there will be chaos unless](#) the protesters go home and agree to let Mubarak stay in power, at [least until September's elections](#).

Indeed, the guy riding on a camel has a very Arab-looking headscarf, and a wildly bright and eye-catching orange camel blanket.

That's a "look at me" get-up if there ever was one.

But why camels - a uniquely Arab symbol? And why such blatantly Arab looking head-covering?

Well, pictures of millions of peaceful protesters wearing largely Western clothing is a universal image of people power.

Mubarak and his backers couldn't have that, could they?

Instead, most Western media is now showing the camel shots and saying ["Pro- and Anti-Mubarak forces clash"](#), without providing any explanation that the pro-Mubarak forces did all of the attacking.

Moreover, many consumers of Western news will see the camel pictures and think to themselves:

There go those camel jockeys again.

("Camel jockey" is a racist slur for Arabs used by Rush Limbaugh, Ann Coulter and their ilk.)

In other words, people who get their news from Limbaugh, Coulter, Fox News and the like will see the pictures and decide that the entire Egyptian struggle for freedom can be written off as dusky Arabs fighting other dusky Arabs.

Maybe I'm taking it too far. Maybe there wasn't a decision to use propaganda in such a scripted manner.

But – at the very least – it is important to understand how these images will be interpreted by many busy people in the West who have no time to learn the facts.

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