



CALPEEK

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U.S. & CUBA TRY TO TEAR DOWN A 53 YEAR OLD WALL BETWEEN THEM. TALK ISN'T EASY

Editor's Note: On December 19, 2014 President Barack Obama announced the release of American citizen Alan Gross from a Cuban prison AND also announced the normalization of diplomatic relations between the U.S. and Cuba. Here is our analysis and commentary...

...Most Demos were thrilled, but most Republicans didn't like this at all. Solid opposition from many in the Cuban-American communities of south Florida. U.S. Senators Marco Rubio and Ted Cruz are very much opposed and Cruz could block any attempt by President Obama to appoint an ambassador to Havana. FYI: The U.S. has a very large interests-section in Havana and the building could be turned into an embassy...

...Cuba is a very promising market for U.S. business and agriculture. The only thing right now that the U.S. gets in return are Cuban cigars, rum and some really **fantastic major league baseball players**, such as the L.A. Dodger's Yascel Puig. Cuban baseball is their #1 sport...

...Once the major hotels reestablish themselves American tourism is going to boom. Just a guess, but the hotels will be able to attract well known entertainers, but no casino gaming for now...

...Already several Demos from the U.S. Senate and House have made trips to Cuba. The latest U.S. delegation was led by Senator Patrick Leahy of Vermont and included Richard Durbin of Illinois, Debbie Stabenow of MI, Sheldon Whitehouse of RI, and U.S. Reps. Chris Van Hollen of MD and Peter Welch of VT...

...The following info was in a S.F. Chron story by Carla Marinucci on Dec.21, 2014. Of course the U.S. House member who knows the Castro brothers and Cuba best is Congresswoman Barbara Lee of Oakland. She has traveled to Cuba 21 times since 1977 and played a key role in helping to free Gross. During his time in prison Lee visited Gross several times...

...When President Obama made his historic announce-

ment about Cuba, it represented a vindication of Lee's work behind the scenes. Remember 6-year-old Elian Gonzalez? Lee played a part in returning the youngster to his father in 2000. Elian's mother died trying to reach the U.S. Republicans wanted Elian to remain in the U.S...

...Unlike Puerto Rico and Guam, the U.S. was unsuccessful in buying Cuba from Spain after the war of 1898. The president at that time was Teddy Roosevelt. Our Cuban policy has been a mess for years and years: Bay of Pigs, the Cuban missile crisis, the flood of refugees and the U.S. embargo of Cuba...

...FYI: for the record, the Castro bothers are NOT going to change their communist beliefs. In time, after the Castros and others like them have departed, maybe then we'll see democracy as Americans know it. For now, once the travel bans are lifted, enjoy Cuba. My late great Uncle Solly Berwald loved Cuba (pre-WWII) and spent time on the Isle of Pines. Stay tuned...

CAMPAIGN 2016: IOWA GOP GATHERED TO SHOW OFF MANY PRESIDENTIAL HOPEFULS

Editor's Note: Not all the big-name candidates showed up for this first gathering of Republicans. The event was organized by Citizens United and hardline conservative Congressman Steve King of Iowa. L.A. Times reporter Cathleen Decker did another good job in describing the events in Des Moines. The real Iowa GOP presidential caucus takes place a year from now. Here's our analysis & commentary, with some Republican polling by Gravis Marketing...

...No real shocks in this short Iowa poll showing former MA Gov. Mitt Romney leading with 21%, followed by former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush with 14% and Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker with 10%. The poll was conducted Jan. 5-7 among 404 registered Republicans. The covering memo from Gravis said in part, "Former MA Gov. Mitt Romney has never left the hearts and minds of Republican voters and he will hold the dominant position for the 2016 presidential nomination."...

...The big question is whether Mitt will use his high

name ID or let the “chance pass to others.” Romney and Bush did not attend the Iowa event...

...It's really too early to draw any solid conclusions, but Bush went from maybe to a full-blown candidate. Romney is about 85% in the race. Still some wiggle room to back out...

...NJ Gov. Chris Christie is the best organized in Iowa, for now. He is anti-abortion, but is otherwise considered to be pragmatic. He is still not totally out of the woods on the scandal known as BridgeGate. There are three former Christie aides still being investigated by the DOJ...

...Millionaire businessman Donald Trump and Sarah Palin were the *entertainment*. Trump kept harping about Romney saying: will he or won't he? Trump endorsed Romney in 2012. As for Jeb Bush, Trump said, “The last thing we need is another Bush.” Trump is a millionaire and unpredictable, but news media loves him because he gives great quote...

...U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas got the best reception, but Walker didn't do that bad. Remember it was Cruz who led the fight to close down the U.S. Government. The Iowa crowd really liked that...

...Carly Fiorina was there too and she blasted the House Republicans for screwing up when trying to pass a really hardline abortion law. Some of the candidates tried to stay far away from King. He is toxic outside his Iowa district. His comments about illegal immigrants are over the top...

...A year from now we'll find out which GOP candidate is singing *All I know, all I owe, I owe Ioway*. That's from the musical State Fair, lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein. Stay tuned...

CAMPAIGN 2015: TROUBLE IS BREWING FOR SPEAKER BOEHNER. WOMEN IN REVOLT

Editor's Note: Republican women in the GOP House Caucus revoted last week and 22 of them were able to get the House Leadership to pull a very controversial abortion bill. Here's our commentary and analysis...

...Speaker John Boehner, Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy and Majority Whip Steve Scalise all have egg on their faces because the GOP women showed some guts by forcing the House GOP Conference to postpone this bill which dealt with late term abortion, after 20 weeks. The GOP leadership had hoped to have a vote on the bill to coincide with the National March for Life rally. The bill had 100 co-sponsors which is why Boehner felt this bill would be a slam dunk for passage..

...At issue was a provision in the legislation granting rape victims an exception, but only if the rape was reported to the police. Turns out that the DOJ estimates about **70%** of all rapes go unreported. Reason: women are afraid of retaliation...

...Marjorie Dannefeiser of the Susan B. Anthony List (the GOP version of EMILY's List) said in The Hill, “I believe in political retribution, otherwise you might as well close up shop.” Tony Perkins of the Family Research Council said, “I think there probably will be primary challenges.”...

...The two ringleaders were U.S. Reps. Renee Ellmers of North Carolina and Jackie Walorski of Indiana. The 22 Republican women argued that the bill would hurt GOP moderates in 2016, turn off young voters and would not play well in centrist congressional districts...

...The anti-abortion crowd has been assured that this bill will be brought back to the House floor. In the U.S. Senate this bill is called the Pain Capable Unborn Child Protection Act. While the GOP Circular Firing Squad has been formed for this particular abortion ban bill, Demo sources see this intra-party fight as good news in 2016 when more women and younger voters will cast ballots...

...Bet your first born that Planned Parenthood has already used this very public fight for direct mail and internet fund raising. This reminds some sources of former GOP Congressman Todd Akin and his infamous quote about “legitimate rape.” It cost Akin because Demo Missouri U.S. Sen. Claire McCaskill put that quote on tv and mashed Akin in 2012. Stay tuned...

CAMPAIGN 2015: CAMPAIGN SHORT TAKES

Editor's Note: Here are a few items that were sent to **Calpeek.com** via email...

❑ SPECIAL ELECTION IN ORANGE COUNTY TO REPLACE NEW SENATOR JANET NGUYEN

There was a special election in the 1st District on Jan. 27, with five candidates. As of 11 p.m. all 101 precincts had been counted, but there were an unknown number of mail ballots and provisional ballots that had not been counted...

...The Orange Co. GOP had hoped to win this seat without a runoff. But that didn't happen...

...Two votes separate first place finisher Andrew Do(R) and former State Sen. Lou Correa(D). Do with 16,202 and Correa with 16,200. That's 39% each. A total of 41,767 votes were cast with a 19.4% voter turn out...

...The 1st District includes Garden Grove, Santa Ana, Westminster and unincorporated parts of Midway City and Fountain Valley. The 1st District has a very large Vietnamese population and a solid part of that group are registered to vote. Most are Republicans...

...Some GOP sources thought Correa would be creamed, but his strong showing almost pushed him past Do, who was Nguyen's chief of staff. There is no doubt that the Orange Co. Republican Party will pour in tons of money to insure Do is the winner.

❑ **37th SD** - Orange County District Attorney Tony Rackauckas has endorsed Assemblyman Don Wagner(R) in the special election to replace U.S Rep. Mimi Walters in the State Senate. The certified candidates are John Moorlach, Wagner, and Naz Nam Azi(R). No Demos in this special...

❑ **21st SD** – Former State Sen. Sharon Runner(R) is the only certified candidate running in the special election to replace new U.S. Rep. Steve Knight(R)...

❑ **7th SD** – There are four certified Demos running in the March 17th special election to replace new U.S. Rep. Mark DeSaulnier(D). They are Susan Bonilla, Joan Buchanan, Steve Glazer and Terry Kremin. The one certified GOPer is Michaela M. Hertle. Stay tuned...

BRITTANY MAYNARD WENT TO PORTLAND TO TAKE HER OWN LIFE. SHE HAD BRAIN CANCER
Editor's Note: When enough is enough. That is what the family of Brittany Maynard said Jan. 21st after Senate Bill 128 was introduced. It is usually called Death With Dignity. Here's our short commentary and report...

...Debbie Ziegler was Brittany's mother. She made a trip to Sacramento to support others who are in favor of SB 128. In a very emotional speech, Ziegler said, “Californians, you now have an opportunity to bring this option to this state. Let your voice be heard, even if your voice shakes, like mine. Please help me carry out my daughter's legacy.”...

...State Senators Lois Wolk(D-Davis) and Bill Monning (D-Carmel) are the co-authors. They call their bill **The End of Life Option Act**, which like Oregon, allows doctors to prescribe life-ending drugs to mentally competent patients with less than six months to live...

...Brittany's husband, Dan Diaz, said he made a promise to his late wife that he would fight to bring a death with dignity law to Calif. to those can't afford it. “This is me keeping my promise.” Diaz also said legislators or the clergy should not get in the way. That's pretty much a quote from

Brittany, Diaz said..

...There is opposition from Californians Against Assisted Suicide. Stay tuned...

HOMEGROWN TERRORISM ALREADY IN U.S. BOSTON MARATHON BOMBER IS ON TRIAL

Editor's Note: Not counting 9/11 or the Oklahoma City bombing, the U.S. in recent years has experienced four incidents of **homegrown terrorism**. The last incident happened on April 15, 2013 when two brothers set off pipe bombs at the finish line of the Boston Marathon. Here's our analysis & commentary...

...The Boston Marathon trial of Dzhokhar Tsarnaev is now in the beginning of jury selection. The big question is whether or not the prosecutors will ask for the death penalty???

...There is also a 19-year-old Denver woman who was convicted of attempting to aid ISIS in Syria. She was stopped at the Denver International Airport with a one-way ticket to Turkey. Shannon Maureen Conley took a plea deal. She has been sentenced to 4 years in a Federal prison. When her parents discovered her plans they notified the FBI. Three other teens were also busted. One of the three was from Sudan and two sisters were from Somali. These teens were stopped in Germany. They were bound for Syria...

...In 1993 a terrorist bombed CIA Headquarters in Langley, VA. In that same year Muslim terrorists car bombed the World Trade Center in Manhattan, NY. In 2009 there was the shooting rampage at Ft. Hood in Texas. The shooter was U.S. Army Major Nidal Malik Hasan. The DOD listed the incident as workplace violence, but most of our sources say it was an act of terrorism by Hasan, who is Muslim...

...There are about 2 million Muslim Americans living in the United States, most peacefully. The heaviest concentration of Muslims is in New York (Metropolitan area); the Greater Los Angeles area; Minneapolis-St. Paul; Dallas-Ft. Worth; Detroit (including Dearborn); northern Virginia and Houston. There are hundreds of mosques all over the U.S., but NY has 257 and Calif. 246...

...All of the major U.S. counties and cities have special units which focus on counter-terrorism and keeping track of persons who have traveled to Syria or Yemen and then returned home. Estimates are about 100 who fall into this category. Most all **Calpeek.com** sources say the U.S. will be hit by terrorism sometime in this year...

...And most sources agree that the **targets will be soft**, meaning not that well protected. Domestic security guards don't provide the kind of protection necessary to prevent mass murder by terrorists. Once the FBI, regular police and swat teams arrive, then you're talking about real protection...

...How does the U.S. prevent terrorists from striking in an American city? No easy answers, but intelligence is vital. And sharing intel is critical – between cities and between U.S. and local police. Stay tuned...

CALPEEK'S INFOBAHN SHORT TAKES

Editor's Note: Here are some items you might have missed. This is a mix of national and Calif. stories...

◆ **State Judges Can No Longer Belong to Boy Scouts** - Seven Calif. Supreme Court jurists voted to prohibit state judges from joining or being in the Boy Scouts of America. The grounds for the decision is that the organization discriminates against homosexuals. The BSA allows openly gay boys to join, but continues to bar gay & lesbian adults from serving as leaders...

◆ **President Obama Hits 50% in Job Approval** – A Gallup Daily tracking poll taken Jan. 23-25 shows for the first time since June 2013 President Obama's job approval went to 50%...

◆ **Tom Steyer Won't Run for Boxer's Seat** – It came as a surprise to some, including Calpeek.com. It means this contest is now between former L.A. Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and current Atty. General Kamala Harris. Some U.S. House Demos have been mentioned. This group includes Loretta Sanchez, Adam Schiff and Xavier Becerra. No free rides for those just mentioned. FYI: Steyer would have been a formable candidate. It's Calpeek.com's guess that Steyer didn't like the idea of hitting the road to do grassroots campaigning. With all his money, he could have made road trips into great news media photo ops. He needed the exposure because his name ID has to be beefed up...

◆ **NFL's Super Bowl is Wrapped in Controversy** – A huge amount of coverage from sports pages, regular television and tv sports channels all are totally obsessed with a thing the news media has dubbed **Deflategate**. For the uninformed, that's when the football is deflated or underinflated and that can make it easier to throw. Was Patriots coach Bill Belichick or his all-star QB Tom Brady involved with doctoring the footballs? NFL players are split, so are rival coaches. Lots of the sports news media think there was some hanky panky with the footballs. Who knows and Calpeek.com publisher Dick Rosengarten

doesn't care - it's all BS...

◆ **Not Everyone Wants to Move L.A. Elections** – The idea of combining the municipal elections with Statewide and Federal elections to increase voter turnout doesn't cut it with former L.A. Councilwoman Joy Picus. She says consolidating the elections is the easy way out. She suggests that placing municipal candidates and ballot measures at the end of the ballot diminishes the value and importance of local government because people stop voting before they reach the end of the ballot. It's a longer op ed, but the above gives a good reason for a NO vote on Charter Amendments 1 & 2...FYI: L.A. Councilman Bernard Parks is also opposed to Charter Amendments 1 & 2...

◆ **U.S. House Speaker Invites Israeli PM Netanyahu to Address Joint Session of Congress** – President Barack Obama wants the U.S. Senate to delay any vote for additional sanctions on Iran while negotiations continue. Not an unreasonable request. Some Demos and many Republicans aren't interested...

...It looks like Iran is dragging its feet and the Israelis don't think Iran can be trusted. They are not alone. Lest anyone forget, Iran is a state sponsor of Hamas and other terror groups. The speech is set for March a few weeks before Israel holds elections. President Obama said because of the close timing to the election, he will NOT meet with Netanyahu during his visit to the U.S..

◆ **Was Argentine Prosecutor Killed or Was It Suicide?** Alberto Nisman was investigating the 1994 bombing of the Jewish Community Center in Buenos Aires which killed 85 people. The key suspect in the bombing and perhaps Nisman's death are the Iranians. The claim from Nisman supporters is that Argentine President Cristina Fernandez was involved in protecting the masterminds of the bombing – Iran. Nisman was found dead in his apartment a day before he was set to testify before an Argentine Congressional committee. A single shot to the head. This info is from an AP story in Buenos Aires. Stay tuned...