



CALPEEK

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BERGDAHL IN SAN ANTONIO RECEIVING MEDICAL CARE. DID HE VIOLATE GENERAL ORDER #1?

Editor's note: Army Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl is back in the U.S. after spending five years as a captive of the Taliban. Did he, in fact, break one of the Army's General Orders, specifically Order #1 – **I will quit my post only when properly relieved?** When I did my basic training in 1964 at Fort Polk in the wilds of Louisiana, all my U.S. Army basic training buddies had to memorize all of the general orders. The first general order is the one which Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl may have broken. Here's our analysis and commentary...

...It's a little early to pass judgment on Sgt. Bergdahl, but one thing is certain: Bergdahl's freedom was obtained after the U.S. released five prisoners from Gitmo, to the custody of Qatar for one year's time. U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham(R-South Carolina), says these are some of the most dangerous of all those at Gitmo. Other sources aren't sure one way or another...

...The deal was done before the U.S. Congress was given **30 days notice**. Sources know that telling Congress that a deal to free Bergdahl for five Gitmo prisoners would NOT have been a secret for long. And a leak was the last thing President Barak Obama needed. According to an AP story by Ken Dilanian and Deb Reichmann, Obama had signed off on a potential prisoner swap prior to the deal going down – but not within the 30 day notification period for Congress...

...The President has been pounded for the deal by both Demos and Republicans, including Calif. U.S. Sen. Dianne Feinstein(D) chair of the Senate Intel Committee, and Calif. U.S. Rep. Buck McKeon(R) chair of the House Armed Services Committee. DiFi was really furious and you could see her anger in a few tv interviews she gave...

...FYI: GOPers on McKeon's Armed Service panel got notice via phone of the deal five hours in advance....

...The White House pushed back saying, "All Americans should know that we did what was necessary to get Bowe back. We did not have 30 days to wait to get this done."

That explanation does it for *Calpeek.com*...

...An unwritten rule is bring everyone home...

...Bergdahl walked away from his post on August 30, 2009. A DOD official said the evidence was "incontrovertible that he walked away from his unit." Stay tuned...

CANTOR WAS SUPPOSED TO PROTECT BOEHNER FROM TEA PARTY. INSTEAD BRAT BEAT CANTOR

Editor's Note: Former GOP House Majority Leader Eric Cantor was a heavy favorite for reelection to his 7th CD House seat in Virginia. By now all of my *Calpeek* readers know that little known college professor Dave Brat pulled the upset of the 2014 primary election cycle. What's going to happen when the new House takes their seats in 2015 is the biggest unknown in DC? Even GOP House Speaker John Boehner doesn't have a clue. Here's our commentary and analysis...

...The big winner out of this GOP circular firing squad is Calif. U.S. Rep. Kevin McCarthy of Bakersfield. Odds of McCarthy winning Cantor's job is solid. It's a slam dunk. Bet your first born that after the June 19th GOP Caucus vote, McCarthy will be the number two ranking member of the Republican Caucus...

...Cantor didn't get good marks from a number of Republican sources. MSNBC *Morning Joe* host Joe Scarborough said Cantor was "radically out of touch." Joe also warned pundits not to go overboard in calling Cantor's loss a Tea Party victory. Cantor did not pay attention to Brat and that cost him. FYI: Cantor used campaign funds (nearly \$170,000) to treat contributors fancy restaurants (steak houses) in the DC area,...

...The basic Tea Party rap on Boehner and Cantor is that they were too willing to compromise with Demos on a whole range of issue. And both were too cozy with big business interests. FYI: Cantor was the only Jewish GOP member of the House...

...Best bet for a showdown with Boehner and the Demo

minority will be another vote on the debt limit. If the GOP Caucus won't compromise because of the Tea Party, another **government shutdown** is very likely. That's not good news for GOP candidates in the fall midterm elections...

...A very good and long story about Kevin McCarthy by Politico staff writers Jake Sherman, Anna Palmer and John Bresnahan. The quotes from McCarthy's GOP House colleagues are positive, but true. Remember, Kevin is fairly new to the house. He's only been there seven years. That's a very fast track he's on. Depending how he handles the Majority Leader's job, McCarthy is in line to be the next Speaker. Stay tuned...

IRAQ FALLING APART: SUNNI VS. SHIA. YOU CAN'T PUT HUMPTY DUMPTY BACK TOGETHER AGAIN

Editor's note: President Barack Obama is coming under pressure from neo-cons and from Obama-haters like U.S. Senators John McCain and Lindsey Graham. GOP critics are coming out of the woodwork. They want Obama to start bombing the strongholds of ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria). If the bombing and drone strikes don't start soon, the Iraqi Government of Nouri al-Maliki could crumble and Baghdad could fall. Here is our analysis and commentary...

...The only thing Senator Graham has said which make sense is that al-Maliki should resign or be tossed out of office. The Sunnis don't trust him. And with good reason: he has been extremely cruel and nasty to the minority Sunni population. Al-Maliki, is a Shia, he even arrested the Sunni vice president and sentenced him to death...

...Should the U.S. launch an air war against ISAS? Obama said, "Just because we have the best hammer does not mean that every problem is a nail." And there is lots of talk about joining forces with Iran! Iran and Iraq are both Shia nations and so is Syria. The U.S. has sent U.S. Marines and army troops to beef up security at the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad. That embassy has a huge number of U.S. employees...

...From the way McCain and Graham talk about Pres. Obama, one would think he started the Iraqi War way back in early 2003. Obama was not even elected President until 2008...

...No, the war was the work of the neo-cons and Pres. George W. Bush. Bush's team included VP Dick Cheney, DOD Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, Nat'l Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice, CIA Director George Tenet and Paul Bremer. *Calpeek.com's* book sources included *Hubris* by Michael Isikoff and David Corn, *The Longest War* by Peter Bergen and *Bush at War* by Bob Woodward. *Hubris*

gives the best account of events leading up to the war and the overthrow of Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein...

...Hussein was definitely a bad guy and murdered his own people, but in looking back he held Iraq together with an iron fist. In other words, he tried to quash the long running religious war between Sunni and Shia. Saddam didn't like the Kurds – he hated them. And the feeling was mutual...

...The thing that most Americans remember about the reasons for invading Iraq was weapons of mass destruction. **WMD**. The U.S. forces looked and looked, but never found any...

...What's going on now is that same war; 1,000 years in the making. When Al-Maliki was elected prime minister, he promised a government which would include all segments of Iraq: Sunni, Shia and Kurds. **He broke his promise** and he refused to sign a status of forces agreement with the U.S. to allow our troops to remain in country, just in case something went wrong. Remember, the U.S. suffered 4,486 killed in action with another 32,000 wounded...

...The best quote about this Iraq mess comes from U.S. Rep. Tulsi Gabbard(D-HI) who is an Iraq War Vet so she speaks with some authority. "You can't train away the core issue here, which is you have a Sunni vs. Shia battle going on. We do have the fiercest, strongest military in the world. We also have a responsibility to be careful about how and when we use that military force. It is not in our U.S. interest to go and involve ourselves in the middle of what is a religious civil war."...

...She's got it right and McCain, Graham, the neo-cons and many of the right wing radio and tv hosts have it wrong...

... The bottomline: get rid of Al-Maliki and then install a government which will satisfy all elements in Iraq. Otherwise we're looking at a total meltdown of Iraq. Time is working against the U.S. Stay tuned...

CAMPAIGN 2014: U.S. HOUSE UPDATES

Editor's note: Here are some items that appeared in print after the June 3rd primary...

☒ ***33rd CD Update*** – GOP candidate Elan Carr has been endorsed by L.A. County Sup. Mike Antonovich. "The outcome of the primary election, as well as the Supervisor's endorsement, proves that voters want new leadership, not another establishment politician," said Carr chief strategist John Thomas...

☒ **10th CD Update** -The DCCC has announced that Michael Eggman would be named to their **Red to Blue** list, indicating that incumbent Jeff Denham is being targeted by the DCCC. Denham has been named to the GOP's **Patriot Program**. According to the DCCC, the above is a program for incumbents under siege..

...One issue where Denham is vulnerable is votes against **VA backlog fixes**. The DCCC spotted three 2013 Denham votes against backlog reduction at VA facilities. He also voted against protecting VA benefits during the 2013 government shutdown...

☒ **7th CD and 52nd CD Updates** – Both incumbent Demo U.S. Reps. Ami Bera of Elk Grove and Scott Peters of San Diego have agreed to debate their GOP challengers: Doug Ose and Carl DeMaio. Both campaigns will work out debate schedules...

☒ **31st CD Update** – Eloise Gomez Reyes(D) called Demo primary winner Pete Aguilar and not only endorsed him, but offered her full support. Gomez Reyes won lots of support during the primary including EMILY'S List, U.S. Rep. Xavier Becerra, the Progressive Change Campaign Committee, SEIU Calif. and NOW...

☒ **15th CD Update** - State Sen. Ellen Corbett(D), for some unknown reason, wanted to challenge freshman Demo U.S. Rep. Eric Swalwell. Those dreams have gone up in smoke as Corbett came in 3rd in the 15th CD primary behind GOP candidate Hugh Bussell who got 25.7% to Corbett's 25.2%. Swalwell came in first with 49.1%...

☒ **24th CD Update** - U.S. Rep. Lois Capps(D-Santa Barbara) will face Chris Mitchum who edged out his GOP rival Justin Fureed. Stay tuned...

CALIF.'S \$156.4 BILLION DOLLAR BUDGET PASSES ON TIME AND NOW GOES TO GOV. JERRY BROWN

Editor's note: Calif.'s fiscal condition can best be described as good, not great. With that in mind, the State Legislature passed a balanced budget and on time. Despite the high fives from Demo lawmakers, Republicans are still grumbling about spending money on Calif.'s controversial \$68 billion dollar **bullet train**. The money for the train is from the state's cap and trade program. Here's our analysis & commentary...

...A mixed bag for Calif.'s poorest citizens. Doctors who treat Medi-Cal patients will continue to receive payments that have been reduced. Problem is that with the Affordable Care Act, there are more patients to treat. A trailer bill may be in the works to solve this shortfall...

...Welfare payments will go up – in L.A. County the

checks will be for \$704 per month, up from \$670. There will be more money for preschool kids (4-year-olds)...

...The lawmakers also approved Calif.'s drivers licenses for non-citizens without the necessary paperwork...

...Although Democrats were generally happy with the budget, GOP candidate for governor, Neel Kashkari, was blasting the majority Demos, saying, “The Legislature's budget powerfully demonstrates how out of touch Sacramento is with the rest of Calif. While so many Calif. families struggle to make ends meet, the Legislature has approved a \$156 billion budget plan that will set another new spending record and is more than \$15 billion higher than the 2013-14 budget.” *Calpeek.com* didn't expect anything positive from Kashkari. This is the guy who in 2008 ran the \$700 million dollar **Trash for Cash** for the bailout of U.S. banks...

...However, there was at least one Republican lawmaker who liked the budget deal. State Sen. Anthony Cannella of Ceres said, “While this year's state budget was not perfect, I was pleased to support it. Not only is the budget fiscally restrained, but it also puts billions towards paying down state debt and building our rainy-day fund.”...

...The jobs picture for Calif. is still mixed. And so are jobs being shipped to Texas and other states. Stay tuned...

CAMPAIGN 2014: POLITICAL SHORT TAKES

Editor's note: Here's an update on local, legislative and statewide offices,,,

☐ The newest turnout number is 24.4% as of June 13th...

☐ It's official: State Sen. Kevin de Leon has been elected President pro tem of the State Senate. He replaces PPT Darrell Steinberg, but won't take over the post until Oct. 15. However, de Leon is immediately going to assume the role of chief election strategist for the Demo Caucus. His goal is to restore the Demo Caucus to super-majority status...

☐ The day after the June 3rd primary, Interim Sheriff John Scott demoted L.A. Co. Sheriff James Hellmold who finished fourth in the race to replace former Sheriff Lee Baca. He was demoted from Asst. Sheriff to Chief. Hellmold was Baca's driver and was put on a fast track by Baca. Sheriff John Scott said Hellmold was promoted too fast and will benefit working at a lower rank...

□ GOP gubernatorial candidate Neel Kashkari has accepted debate invitations from KGTV and KPBS in San Diego. Four years ago Brown challenged Meg Whitman (R) to 10 debates. Sources doubt Brown will do more than 2-3 debates and not until at least September...

□ Tuck to Torlakson; Marshall Tuck sent a letter to incumbent SPI Tom Torlakson calling on the SPI not to appeal the landmark decision in the Vergara v. Calif. case which found that law governing teacher tenure, dismal and layoffs violated Calif. law. "The state's top educator must be an independent advocate for parents and students, not an apologist for a broken system."...

□ Connie Leyva, president of the CA Federation of Labor and president of UFCW Local 1428, has won the Demo nomination in the 20th senate district against three Demo rivals. Leyva got 21.2% and her nearest Demo challenger, Alfonso Sanchez, got 18.6%. Leyva will face GOP rival Matthew Munson in the fall. Munson came in first with 33%...

□ Before he was busted by the FBI, State Sen. Leland Yee(D-S.F.) was on cable tv at a forum for Secretary of State candidates. *Calpeek.com* publisher Dick Rosengarten saw the cable show and has to admit Yee was pretty good at this particular forum. GOP candidate Pete Peterson did NOT impress me at all, but State Sen. Alex Padilla (D) was pretty good too. Bottomline: no more forums for Yee...

□ Bill Brough, GOP nominee for the 73rd AD, has been endorsed by State Sen. Mimi Walters, Assemblywoman Diane Harkey and Orange Co. Sup. Pat Bates. Brough will face Demo Wendy Gabriella in November....

□ Who got the most votes cast in Santa Clara County on June 3rd? It was Santa Clara Co. Assessor Larry Stone who received 193,656 votes. He was unopposed, but so what...

□ Demo John Coffey will face GOP candidate Jay Obernolte who won against seven other Republican rival. They are running in the 33rd AD...

□ Orange County results. Incumbent Supervisor Shawn Nelson won reelection in the 4th District with 83.5%. Orange Co. Sheriff Sandra Hutchens also won reelection

...There will be runoffs in the 2nd District between BOE member Michelle Steel with 47.7% vs. GOP Assemblyman Allen Mansoor with 22.9%. And there is a runoff in the 5th District between Robert Ming with 30.9%, Lisa Bartlett with 28.4% and Frank Ury with 23.7%. These results were taken 6/15...

...FYI: In 2012, voting by mail in the presidential election

was 61%. In 2014, voting by mail in Orange Co. was 73%...

□ In San Bernardino Co.'s 4th District, U.S. Rep. Gloria McLeod finished ahead of GOP Assemblyman Curt Hagman by a margin of 43% to 40%. Stay tuned....

CALPEEK'S INFOBAHN: RECENT SHORT TAKES WORTH NOTING

Editor's note: Here are some items you might have missed or just didn't read.

◆ ***U.S. Senate Approves VA Reform*** – No partisan gridlock on this bill to allow vets facing long waiting times to go outside the VA system to private hospitals and doctors. 26 VA facilities in 17 states are now under an FBI criminal investigation...

◆ ***The Gitmo Five Terrorists Don't Live Up to the Hype*** – Sorry, U.S. Senators Lindsey Graham and John McCain have been scaring the hell out of the U.S. population with stories about how dangerous the five released terrorists are. In a story by the L.A. Times, reporters Shashane Bengali and Hashmat Bar-tash report that only one of five was extremely dangerous. In other words these Gitmo prisoners were not hard-core militants...

◆ ***9th U.S. Court of Appeals Kills Election Reform Law***—In a 2-1 decision, the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals killed an election reform law that would have forced backers of proposed initiatives to list their names on the signature petitions. There is a remedy: a voter who wants to know the sponsor's name can go to the local City or County clerk's office to get the info....

◆ ***L.A. Co. Sup Candidates Looking for John Duran*** – Duran, a West Hollywood councilman who until the June 3rd primary, was almost unknown outside of his home base of West Hollywood, is now being courted by Bobby Shriver and Sheila Kuehl – wanting his endorsement for the runoff in November. Who gets Duran's endorsement? Shriver was backed by county business PACs and Duran claimed to be more business-friendly than either Shriver or Kuehl. **Calpeek.com** has no clue. Stay tuned...