

yellow school bus parked at the end of the block.

Cabrera said the bus driver, dressed in civilian clothes, hit him as well as Perales and several other dissidents with a wrench once inside the bus.

The bus driver hit them with a wrench once they got inside the bus.

Other photos show dissidents Misael Valdes Diaz and Alexis Yanch OICQ with black eyes and Emilio Dinza with a large bump on his forehead. Other dissidents reported black and blues from police strikes.

Angel Moya, a former political prisoner who was reported beaten in a police station after his arrest in Palma Soriano Dec. 2, said police punched him on the way from the house to the school bus but not afterwards.

How nice of them not to punch him afterwards.

Moya said Friday that he spent 12 days in a police lockup, in a cell that was smelly and had no water or lights and that he shared with common criminals.

This is Cuba. I doubt this experience is something these tourists traveling on U.S. licenses are going to get to see on their next visit to Cuba.

The other day I talked about one of these visits that the United States has licensed called Ethics and the Cuban Revolution. How interesting—Ethics and the Cuban Revolution.

I wonder if part of that ethics course will be a part about schoolbus drivers dressed as civilians hitting protesters with a wrench. I wonder if that is part of their itinerary. I wonder if the part about cracking people's heads open because they are going to peacefully protest in the street is part of the itinerary in this Ethics and the Cuban Revolution.

Why do I bring this up again? No. 1, it is outrageous. It should be denounced, and this is a great forum to do it because the world needs to know what happens 90 miles from our shores. It is one of the most repressive regimes in the Western Hemisphere's history. It is still in place. It is still ongoing. But here is No. 2. Where do they get the money to pay these people? Don't you think those guys are getting paid, the civilian busdriver is getting paid to hit people with a wrench or do you think he is doing it for free? How are they paying these police officers? How do you get people to do this stuff? You have to pay them. Where do they get their money to pay them?

Their government is a fiasco. They don't know anything about the economy. Do you want to know why the Cuban economy is in the tank? It is because the people who run Cuba are incompetent. They have no idea about what a modern economy looks like or how to create one, apart from the fact that they cling to a broken ideology.

So where do they get the money to pay for all these things? Sadly, where they are getting a lot of the money to pay for these things is from us. It is from people who live in this country who are curious about what happens in Cuba, who are curious—and some who outright sympathize with this idea that somehow Cuba is this socialist

paradise—and they travel there and they leave money there. All these trips, Cuba gets a huge take, and they use it to fund this repressive apparatus.

As I said the other day, I understand and I don't have any false illusions that the President is going to change his travel policy toward Cuba or this people-to-people program. But at least make sure these programs are furthering what you say you are trying to further, which is bringing freedom and democracy to Cuba, instead of being a source of hard currency and hard revenue.

A few days ago, I denounced two specific itineraries. I didn't denounce 5 or 10; I pointed out 2 of the most outrageous ones on this floor in a speech I gave. Then I sent that to the State Department and said: Would you look at this for me? They responded that they would. They told me they would send me a letter. In fact, in conversations I had, they gave me great hope that in fact they too were troubled by these itineraries and that they would start to look at these more seriously.

Sadly, as a result of what they told me—because one of the things that has been going on around here is I had placed a hold on two nominations in the Western Hemisphere as a result of their inaction on this issue.

After I spoke to them on the phone, I was hopeful about it and I lifted those holds. We were going to vote on those today. Then I got this letter today that, to summarize, basically says: Thank you for your letter, but we can't talk to you about it.

That is not what I expected to get, and so we are going to hold those nominations again until we take this seriously.

This is a problem. This is a problem. We have these companies in America that are advertising tourism to Cuba—tourism that is not just a source of irritation, it is a source of hard currency. It is the money this regime is using to crack people's heads, to pay so-called busdrivers to beat people with wrenches. It is the money they are using to stick people in jails with common criminals, with no access to food or water for 12 days, without charges. We are funding a repressive regime through these practices, and it has to stop. Someone better take this seriously. When they take this seriously, then we can talk.

I hope where we are headed here in the coming year is that we will stand not just on the side of the Cuban people's desire for freedom and democracy—no political prisoners, respect for human rights—but stand for that in the hemisphere and the world, because our voice still matters, and I hope this country will always stand firm on those issues.

Before I left today, I wanted to stand on the floor and talk about this because it is something very important to me and should be important to our country. I hope in the coming year we

will have the opportunity in our Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere and in this body and in our conversations with the White House and State Department to bring these programs into focus. This people-to-people program is a sham. Maybe they are very well intentioned but some of these trips are nothing more than tourism that plows millions of dollars into the hands of one of the most disgusting and grotesque, repressive apparatuses this hemisphere has ever seen, and it has to stop. Someone has to start cracking down on these people, someone has to start cracking down on these agencies, someone has to start cracking down on these trips, and make sure they do what they are intended to do, and that is real access to the ways of freedom, to the ways of opportunity, to opening the eyes of the Cuban people to the fact that the rest of the world does not live under what they live under—even though most of the Cuban people already know that.

It is time we start holding these people accountable. If they are filing these licenses under false pretenses, they need to be prosecuted, their licenses need to be suspended. They have to be barred from having these trips. We have to have people actively monitoring these itineraries that are being sold. We need to match their applications for these licenses, and we need to stop approving licenses for these tourist trips.

I hope we will make progress on that in 2012 and I hope that is what we will focus on in the year to come.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### BOARMAN NOMINATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, let me wish you and your family and all those who work here a merry Christmas and happy new year. I hope God gives you and your families a very good, outstanding, happy, healthy new year.

I wish to speak on William Boarman's appointment as Public Printer, which has been held up for a year and a half, despite being reported out of the Rules Committee twice with unanimous bipartisan support. Earlier this year, because of the delays, he was appointed to the job on an interim basis by the President during a recess. During this year he has done an outstanding job as Acting Public Printer.

It is extremely unfortunate that this agency, which is so important to Congress, to the private sector printing industry, and to the country, will now be without an effective leader when Mr. Boarman's recess appointment expires after we adjourn, unless this Senate confirms his nomination at last.

He has moved quickly this year to make important financial and management improvements at the Government Printing Office. These include cutting costs with a buyout of 15 percent of GPO's workforce, which will save \$33 million annually; greatly reducing costs for overtime, travel, executive hires, and other discretionary costs; reducing GPO's overhead expenses; and negotiating successfully with the unions, resulting in a zero increase in salaries.

I might add, perhaps he is being held up because of his union background, but we have seen in his year as acting administrator that he has been fiscally extremely responsible and successful. Maybe he is better at doing this than other people would be.

He also has staff identifying nearly \$30 million in outstanding payments owed to the GPO by other Federal agencies and collecting almost \$15 million of that in a few months.

Mr. Boarman ordered the first survey ever of congressional offices on their need for printed copies of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, resulting in an 18-percent reduction in printed copies and more cost savings.

Mr. Boarman has aggressively pushed the GPO to extend electronic online publishing and databases, as Congress has asked. In short, he has already demonstrated he is the kind of competent, committed, experienced leader GPO needs.

The fact that we have not cleared this nomination is outrageous. The two Republican Senators who had holds on this nomination, holds that had nothing to do with concerns about Mr. Boarman but with other nonrelated nominations, finally released their holds yesterday. Now, today, some new obstacle has arisen on the Republican side. We know it is not an objection to Mr. Boarman himself but we have run out of time.

It is appalling when you get a public servant who cares about this government, in a nonpolitical place, the Government Printing Office, who has done an excellent job by all accounts—cutting costs, what we on both sides of the aisle want—and he gets held up. Instead of getting held up he should get an award for the job he has done. Yet he is held up and caught in the politics once again. It is so indicative of the dysfunction of our government. It is bothersome when someone works so hard and does a good job that his nomination can't get through for secret, undisclosed—it is hard to even figure out what reason.

I hope maybe before we leave today my colleagues on the other side of the aisle will look at Mr. Boarman's record—look at the unanimous vote he received in the Rules Committee; every Republican voted for him—and most of all look at what he has done in the Printing Office, and realizing without a leader many of these gains may be lost, costing all of us and the taxpayers millions of dollars, and maybe we will ap-

point him. Delay in this confirmation has shown the confirmation process at its worst and we are now in danger of losing this public servant whose work has produced the kinds of results we want.

I urge the Senate to confirm Mr. Boarman so that the GPO can continue to make progress.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that morning business be extended until 3 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. UDALL of Colorado). Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### TRIBUTE TO PAGES

Mr. REID. Mr. President, as we know, very clearly, today is Saturday. But the Senate had some very important work to do today, so we stayed in session to present some issues to the American public that were extremely important. One was to make sure there would be no tax increase on millions of American families—in fact, 160 million.

We had a duty to be here, the Senators, but also other people had a duty to be here, and they are here. Four very dedicated pages are here today: Grace Mason, from Roanoke, VA; Kristina Biddle, from Hockessin, DE; Mitchell Bustillo, of Fort Worth, TX; and Zach Schroeder, from Clarksville, TN.

They didn't have to be here. They could be home with their families during this holiday season, as the other pages are. Instead, they stayed to help keep the Senate running smoothly. They didn't have to be asked. They volunteered.

We expect a lot of our pages, and I so appreciate their work. I have had two granddaughters who were pages—my two oldest grandchildren—and it actually changed their lives. I say that as seriously as I could say anything. Ryan and Mattie were not interested much

about government. They had other things to do as juniors in high school. But they came back here in this environment, where they saw us wandering around and making speeches and voting and they got interested in reading the newspapers and watching the news more intently. My two granddaughters now are both in France studying abroad. One is a junior at New York University, the other is a senior at The New School in New York. I mean it when I say their lives were changed as a result of this program. I not only heard it from these two young women, my granddaughters, but I have heard it from their parents, about what a significant change it made.

As I said, we expect a lot of the pages. They work long, hard hours, as do Senators and their staffs. So I want them to know, speaking for every Senator, the pages here are terrific. We appreciate their work. It is a tradition that has been here for a long time, and I will do everything I can to protect the pages and the work they do.

I thank them for their service and wish them the very best of everything in their next endeavor. But I am confident, as with Mattie and Ryan, their lives will have been changed as a result of their being here.

#### UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations:

Calendar Nos. 67, 86, 108, 112, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 338, 339, 340, 344, 345, 346, 403, 413, 421, 422, 450, 456, 494, 495, 496, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, and 543.

Of course, Mr. President, I am asking unanimous consent that these numbers I have just read—which all are human beings—and all nominations be placed on the Secretary's desk; that the nominations be confirmed en bloc; the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to any of the nominations; that any related statements be printed in the RECORD; the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. McCONNELL. Reserving the right to object, we are ready and willing to move forward by consent with a package of nominations, with positions both in the executive and judicial branches; and just as soon as I receive confirmation from the administration that it will respect the practice and the precedent on recess appointments, we can get those people confirmed.

I look forward to receiving this confirmation from the administration so