Nasdaq. Understandably so, for the Nasdaq determines the value of the stock options held by the high-tech millionaires who are the ''masters of the universe'' in the new economy, the stars whose spectacular success draws envious glances from those Americans who cannot imagine enjoying such riches, unless they hit the lottery or have a spectacular run of luck on one of the TV game shows.

As Shawn Hubler, a Los Angeles Times columnist, noted last week, ''the janitors' strike . . . has brought to the surface something deeply resonant about the lives, now, of all 1.3 million of the region's working poor.'' Hubler described how the janitors arrive to begin their tedious, wearying chores just after most of the tenants have left the building, and how she watched one late-working executive push open the door to a freshly cleaned bathroom, with nary a nod of acknowledgment to the woman janitor who had her equipment cart just a few feet away. ''There is a dimension now,'' Hubler wrote, ''in which whole human beings can be rendered invisible, just erased.''

Ralph Ellison described the phenomenon as experienced by black folks in his novel of the last generation, ''Invisible Man.'' But we imagine we have become more sensitive, more aware in our time. Not so. There are millions of people whose work makes our life easier, from busboys in the restaurants we patronize to orderlies in the hospitals we visit, but whose own lives are lived on the ragged edge of poverty. Most of us never exchange a sentence with these workers.

Meanwhile, the rich get steadily richer. The wall Street Journal, not exactly a radical publication, printed its annual survey of executive pay on April 6. Reporter Joann S. Lublin cited a study of 350 major firms, conducted by William M. Mercer Inc., a New York compensation consulting firm. It found that the median salary and bonus package for the top executives of those firms in 1999 was $1,688,088. That's about $120,000 higher than it was in 1998 and just about what 80 of the striking janitors combined would make three years from now—if they got what they are asking. But it's only one-hundredth as much as the $170 million in salary, bonuses and stock options the highest-paid executive in the survey, L. Dennis Kozlowski of Tyco International, made in 1999.

How do you justify those extremes? the Journal quotes Jeffrey D. Christian, head of a Cleveland executive recruiting firm, as explaining that the business heads he meets ''all want the same opportunity for extreme wealth creation and legacy creation as their dot-com counter-parts. It's billionaire envy.''

Another article in the special section—and remember this is the Wall Street Journal, not Mother Jones—reported about the increasing use of bonus guarantees to recruit or retain executives. One boss named Thomas Evans ''will collect as much as $10 million if his vested stock options would yield a profit of less than that by August 2002,'' the Journal said. And then there are the sweetheart deals, in which outside directors on a firm's compensation committee grant lavish salary increases or stock options to the CEO, who in turn arranges lucrative consulting contracts for those same directors.

It's doubtful many of the striking janitors have read the Journal's special section. If they did, they wouldn't be quite so polite.

NATIONAL READING PANEL

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, on April 13, 2000, the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services and Education received the report of the National Reading Panel. The subcommittee also heard testimony from Dr. Duane Alexander, Director of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development; Dr. Kent McGuire, Assistant Secretary of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement; and Dr. Donald N. Langenberg, Chairman of the National Reading Panel and Chancellor of the University System of Maryland.

The National Reading Panel was created as a result of legislation I introduced in 1997, titled the ''Successful Reading Research and Instruction Act.'' Subsequently, the report accompanying the Fiscal Year 1998 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations Act called on the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development and the Department of Education to form a panel to evaluate existing research on the teaching of reading to children, identify proven methodologies, and suggest ways for dissemination of this information to teachers, parents, universities and others.

I was convinced at the time that there was an absence of consensus on a national strategy for teaching children to read. Meanwhile, we had statistics which showed that 40 to 60 percent of elementary students were not reading proficiently and there seemed to be no plan to help remedy the situation.

The Health Research Extension Act of 1985 had mandated research on why children have difficulties learning to read. The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development had conducted this research and in 1997, they had some answers. However, Congress hadn't asked for the results and the information was literally trapped in the academic and research world.

Since 1997, we've made some progress. Today more people know that reading research exists, but very few of us are able to decipher what it means, or how to translate it into meaningful practice.

Mr. President, what most parents want to know is simple, ''How can I make sure my child will learn to read?'' Until now, the response to that question was often vague, and the so-called ''expert'' or ''research based'' methods were conflicting. Consequently, there is a great deal of confusion among parents, teachers and school administrators about improving reading skills of children. Meanwhile, the Federal government has spent nearly $100 million on programs which one researcher described as, ''at best, it shouldn't hurt.''

The National Reading Panel identified over 100,000 studies on a variety of topics related to reading instruction. It held regional hearings to receive testimony from teachers, parents, students, university faculty, educational policy experts and scientists who represented the population that would ultimately be the users of its findings. The panel used the information from these hearings and their preliminary research to identify five topics for intensive study: alphabetics; fluency; comprehension; teacher education and reading instruction; and computer technology and reading instruction.

The panel then narrowed its review to materials which met a defined set of rigorous research methodological standards. It is the development of these standards which the panel describes as ''what may be its most important action.'' By finding successful techniques that meet the same kind of scientific review that are used to test medical treatments, the panel presents its recommendations with a confidence that has never before been applied to the teaching of reading.

One of the National Reading Panel's objectives was to ensure that good research results were readily available. On April 13, the report was sent to every Senator and Member of Congress. Within the next few weeks, the report and supporting documentation will be delivered to state education officials, colleges and universities, and public libraries. A long-term strategic plan that will address wider dissemination and classroom implementation will be ready by next fall. It is my hope that the report of the National Reading Panel will guide us in making informed decisions on reading issues.

I commend the efforts of the National Reading Panel and I hope educators will implement their recommendations and use the new teaching methods and programs outlined in the report.

ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY IN COUNTERING PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, this week the sixth Nonproliferation Treaty Review Conference opened in New York.

At the last conference five years ago countries agreed to extend indefinitely the treaty. I recently introduced, along with Senators BAUCUS, KERRY, ROTH, BINGAMAN, KERREY, KOHL, and SCHUMER, Senate Concurrent Resolution 107, expressing support for another successful review conference. A similar bipartisan resolution will be introduced in the House. I hope my colleagues on the Foreign Relations Committee will consider this resolution as quickly as possible.

Some delegates to the conference have suggested that the United States is not as strongly committed as it once was to arms control, citing as examples the Senate failure to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and Administration negotiations with the Russians to modify the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. I wish, as do many of my distinguished colleagues, that the CTBT had been ratified. I hope that it will be. Nevertheless, I believe all my colleagues, regardless of their position on this issue, share a strong and abiding interest in pursuing arms control agreements and making the