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# Battle of the Billionaires

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Last Sunday, Warren Buffett steered the national discussion in a sensible direction by releasing a statement arguing that it's time to stop coddling the wealthiest Americans and tax them fairly. (He also [gave a lengthy interview to Charlie Rose on Monday](#), which is worth your time to watch.)

CNN dutifully trotted out think tank columnists from both sides of the argument on Tuesday: [Brookings Institute](#) versus [Cato Institute](#) (barf). These two columns represent a sufficiently good summary of the battle lines, if you need one.

Continuing the debate, Jon Stewart [absolutely nails it with his Thursday segment about this issue](#), destroying the far right talking point of "taxing the rich will barely make a dent in the budget" (as well as the silly idea that Warren Buffett, at one point the richest man in the world, is a socialist).

[On Friday, billionaire and conservative supervillain Charles Koch responded with his own terse statement against taxing the megawealthy.](#)

Needless to say, it's been quite an important week in national politics. The battle lines are becoming clearer, with the wealthy masterminds behind the GOP baring their teeth for all to see. For them and their paid-for mouthpieces, the line in the sand is: no tax increases for the rich, period, and in fact the rich should pay less in taxes while the poor should pay more. This bit of naked greed is literally what FOX and friends were parroting at the end of the week; watch the Jon Stewart clip linked above if you don't believe me.

All this rhetoric serves as a reminder that class war is waged from the top down. The 2012 election will be extremely important in the history of our nation. Will we stop the slide into another Gilded Age? Will the rich get richer and the poor get poorer while the middle class disappears?

**Or will we decide that enough is enough!** The richest among us will not enjoy record profits while taking our infrastructure for granted. The most vulnerable among us -- the poor, the sick, the young and the elderly -- will not fall off the radar as our society decides they are not worth caring for. We will not borrow from our future to throw money away on unwinnable, neverending wars of empire. We will remember that there is such a thing as the public good, and it is more precious than private greed.

Time, and We the People, will tell.