

Some rich Americans will not rest until Washington boosts their taxes.

Berkshire Hathaway CEO Warren Buffett, Earth's second wealthiest inhabitant, complains that last year he paid \$6,938,744 in federal income taxes, just 17.4 percent of his taxable income. Twenty of his staffers earned much less than he did, but "their tax burdens ranged from 33 percent to 41 percent," Buffet recently wrote. Rather than work to cut his colleagues' taxes, the \$50 Billion Man wants Uncle Sam to hike his liability.

Other loaded luminaries lust for higher taxes:

-- "George Soros says he agrees and congratulates Warren Buffett," the financier's spokesman told Reuters.

-- "I really don't mind paying more taxes," Academy Award winner Matt Damon told video journalist Nicholas Ballasy July 30. "Why don't you just tax the really rich -- guys like me -- or raise it to 50 percent after \$50 million?"

-- A group called Patriotic Millionaires demanded last month that Washington further squeeze incomes above \$1 million. "Please do the right thing for our country. Raise our taxes."

This plutocratic taxophilia springs from a myth as enduring as the Loch Ness Monster. Assistant House Democratic Leader James Clyburn of South Carolina echoed it faithfully when he told MSNBC on July 25 that "98 percent of the American people are carrying this (tax) load while the other 2 percent seem to be getting away Scot-free."

The facts torpedo this unsinkable rubbish.

In 2008, the latest Internal Revenue Service figures confirm, the top 1 percent of tax filers

earned 20 percent of adjusted gross income and paid 38 percent of income tax revenues. The top 5 percent earned 34.7 percent of AGI and paid 58.7 percent of income taxes. The top 10 percent earned 45.8 percent of AGI and paid 69.9 percent of income taxes. Meanwhile, as the Tax Foundation's analysis revealed, the bottom 50 percent earned 12.75 percent of AGI and paid 2.7 percent of income tax revenues.

Regarding all federal taxes (capital gains, corporate, death, dividends, excise, income, payroll) an April 2009 Congressional Budget Office study found that for 2006 (the latest numbers), the top 1 percent paid 28.3 percent of all federal taxes. The top 5 percent paid 44.7 percent, and the top 10 percent paid 55.4 percent of taxes. The bottom 40 percent paid just 4.9 percent of all federal taxes in 2006.

Rich liberals seem frightfully ignorant of these serious data that demonstrate how taxes soak the wealthy while the economy's bottom half escape Scot-free.

"It's time for our government to get serious about shared sacrifice," Buffet whimpered the other day.

Why wait, Warren? Make that sacrifice today!

Like any American, Buffet can underwrite a federal fund called "Gifts to the United States." As a Treasury website explains, "This account was established in 1843 to accept gifts, such as bequests, from individuals wishing to express their patriotism to the United States."

While these millionaires and billionaires bellow their desire for higher taxes, virtually none bothers to pay extra. In Fiscal Year 2010, this gift fund received a whopping \$1,527,313.54 -- enough to fuel the federal leviathan for literally 13 seconds.

Rep. John Campbell, R-Calif., would make life even more convenient for these tax lovers.

"I have been the author of the 'Put Your Money Where Your Mouth Is Act,'" Campbell wrote in the January 12 Washington Times.

"This simple bill would add a line near the bottom of Page 2 of all Form 1040 tax returns, which would let any taxpayer voluntarily and very easily pay more tax than the law requires." The Buffet Brigade could decide if a 50 percent or even 90 percent tax rate would ease their pain. Then they could send it in.

If rich liberals truly crave more taxes, **Campbell's** measure would help them keep paying without forcing new or higher taxes on non-masochistic Americans. Fresh revenues without coercion? At last, an idea that Democrats and Republicans should love.