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## No – It's Not Over – It's Just Begun

May 8, 2022 This article was posted by TLB Staff COMMENTARY, FREEDOM, GOVERNMENT, MEDIA 1



### It's Not Over. It's Just Begun

*By: Naomi Wolf*

For the last two days I've felt an uneasy sense of grief, or of a heavy pressure on my heart. At first I could not figure out the cause of it.

Nothing unusual was wrong in my personal life. My loved ones were safe and well, thank God. The battle for liberty was ongoing, as it has been for over two years, but I was used to the rigors and stresses of that. What was the matter?

I was just driving with Brian over Taconic foothills, and through the vast early-Spring expanses of the beautiful Hudson Valley. The sun was shining. Daffodils, creamy-white and bright yellow, displayed their trumpets shyly in shadowy recesses under old ash trees with wide-spreading boughs. The lighter-yellow forsythia dotted the roadsides in a riot of buzzy color.

We'd just been talking to a realtor acquaintance who described how the area had changed when the city people fled their Brooklyn apartments at the start of the pandemic, to sit out the crisis in the gracious, creaky old farmhouses that they could purchase for a relative song.

We'd driven through reopened businesses flush with newly transplanted money. An old railroad car diner had been revamped and now offered curated organic-beef hash, and tasty, if ironic, egg creams.

We drove past little 1960s ranch houses with some land around them, now being redone with costly cedar shingles and white trim, for the farmhouse look that the ex-Brooklynites liked. Sotheby's signs were out on the lawns already, in preparation for the lucrative flipping.

On driveway after driveway of the ex-Brooklynites, of the former weekend people — (and I confess that I too was once a weekend person, but something has happened to me in the last two years that has changed me even more than my change of home address) there were now Ukrainian flags. Not American flags. No one cared or even asked about the town halls being closed for the past two years. Tyranny overseas was more pressing than the rights that had been suspended just up the road.

Otherwise most things were almost back to normal! Almost pre-2020 normal!

The masks had recently come off. Hudson, New York, and Great Barrington, Massachusetts, the two cities nearest us, and also, by chance, both left-leaning, had also been two of the maskiest and most coercive of places when it came to pandemic policies and pandemic cultures. Now businesses were being allowed to reopen.

(I'd been fired from my Great Barrington synagogue because I'd dared to invite people over to my house at the depth of the pandemic — if they had wanted, as adults, affirmatively, to join me — to watch the Zoom Friday Evening Shabbat service together. Shocking behavior on my part, I know.)

As if a switch had been flicked, now the cruel moral judgments, the two-tier society, the mandates, the coercions, the nasty looks, the desperate masked children with their laboring breath, the loneliness, the desolate centrally-planned economies — had evaporated and were no more.

A memo from a political consultancy had gone out to the DNC, warning about how these policies spelled defeat in the midterms, and Puff! — a whole retinue of “mandates” messaged as if they had been matters of life and death, a raft of Board of Health demands, a plethora of social strictures, and baroque instructions on how and when to discriminate against one's fellow Americans — vanished, like the smoke from an unwelcome cigarette on a breezy veranda. An MSNBC commentator said, in a logical non sequitur, that now that vaccines were available for kids, in-person office life would resume.

Overnight, a new concern, a new moral signifier, was presented, wholly formed: and it involved a conflict area half a world away. Now, war is always bad and invasions are always cruel; but I could not help noticing that there are wars, refugees, invasions and conflict areas around the world, and that only this one — this one one — demanded the attentions of my irksomely cultish and uncritical former tribe.

I could not help noticing that the dozens of devastated conflict areas and war zones being totally ignored by the ex-Brooklynites — from Ethiopia, where there have been 50,000 deaths since September, to Sri Lanka, with its catastrophic food shortages, to Mexico's drug war, which has led to 300,000 deaths, to Afghanistan, where women are being rounded up and people are being shot in the street — do not involve white people who look like the ex-Brooklynites; and for various other reasons, are not attracting a lot of television cameras.

You'd think the ex-Brooklynites, with their expensive educations, would bear those complexities in mind.

But no; the ex-Brooklynites are so easily led, when it comes to anyone invoking their particular moral high ground.

When they are directed to pay attention to one conflict out of dozens, and ignore the rest, no matter how dire the rest may be, they do so. Just like, when they were instructed to present their bodies uncritically to an untried mRNA injection and to offer up the bodies of their minor children, they did so. When they were asked to shun and to discriminate against their blameless neighbors, they did so.

So the great apparatus of messaging about COVID was switched off, almost overnight, as the politics clearly soured and as Republicans consolidated an increasingly popular, multiracially inclusive, transpartisan-ly appealing freedom message; and the comms apparatus simply replaced the COVID drama with a new, equally gripping European-conflict drama.

These dramas are real, of course, but there are also highly messaged; a fact about politics that adults such as these are, would do well to understand at last.

But — when politics required it — Look over there!

So now — as I was driving through the sunny valley that looked and felt like it was becoming America again, with freedom coursing through the towns and rural areas like blood slowly returning to a limb that had been asleep — I started to realize what my sense of sorrow really was.

People who had joined school boards that had masked ten year olds — their lives were back to normal! People who had told family members that they were unwelcome at Thanksgiving dinner — their lives were back to normal!

Huzzah.

On MSNBC that morning, Dr Anthony Fauci, that entangled mass of compromised spiritual matter, who had presided over the intentional wastelands of the pandemic; who had for two years delivered in his nasal Brooklyn cadences its lie-based soundbites with their dearth of scientific studies, that wrecked livelihoods, destroyed kids' educations, and that drove whole communities into destitution — had declared, as if he were God Himself, that the pandemic was over.

Well — okay then!

I realized as we drove that my grief was not actually grief. As any pop psychologist will tell you, just beneath depression is rage.

I realized — I was *furious*.

Brian and I had been fighting, side by side, relentlessly, for over two years, in a bitter, exhausting war to return America to — simply to normal; to its historic status as a great, free society, in which people could enjoy their Constitutional liberties.

We were part of a loose community —a movement, say — of people braver and more dedicated than we; we were part of what you might call a liberty movement. But these heroes and heroines alongside whom we fought, were all pitifully few in number. There were maybe hundreds; maybe a few thousand. Many more perhaps were in sympathy with us, but our energies were still spread very thin. As I have written before, these heroes and heroines risked medical licenses, risked livelihoods. They were smeared and mocked by their peers. They were stripped of credentials. They staked their savings and lost them as they had their incomes taken away.

But they burned, as the rebels in 1775 had burned, to defend our way of life and our institutions. They would not let the dream of America die.

They were the miserably few real doctors and real reporters, real activists and real lawyers. They were the truck drivers; they were teachers and cops and firefighters.

They were patriots.

They did not have easy lives.

You know who had easier lives over the past two years? The damn quislings.

The people who stayed at the cocktail parties and who mocked the unvaccinated. The doctors who were silent about vaccine harms when teens presented with heart damage, because they might lose their licenses if they breathed a word of what they knew. The ex-Brooklynites who were supposed to be journalists but who smeared and attacked the medical freedom movement instead of reporting on Pfizer's internal documents showing massive undisclosed medical catastrophes, in what is turning out to be one of the great corporate coverups of our generation.

I realized the source of my rage: the labor and nightmares and isolation and persecution and money worries and — well — awful *battles* waged by us few hundreds, few thousands, had helped these quislings and collaborators have back what — what we had wanted them to have back; indeed, what we had wanted us all to have back; our America.

The fight was not over — it would not be over til open-ended emergency law was made impossible by new legislation, and until every last criminal was charged and tried; but hey, the folks who had gone along with it all, they were getting their America back, in many ways.

I thought of the Biblical phrase —that the rain falls on the just and the unjust alike.

But I wanted — justice.

I wanted, I blurted out to Brian, some kind of closure. Some kind of Nuremberg Trials, of course. Some kind of Truth and Reconciliation Commission — the South African kind, not the CCP kind. I wanted people to face what they had been, what they had done.

“It’s like the partisans after the end of the war — or the revolutionaries after the fall of the Bastille; I want to shave people’s heads and march them through the town square,” I said to Brian, uncharitably.

I am not proud of that — but there is a reason societies display their collaborators and quislings and traitors. There is a reason treason is a capital offense. There is a reason fraud and coercion, battery and child abuse, unlawful detainment and theft and child endangerment, all of which crimes were committed against us “in the pandemic”, are criminal offenses.

To be healing, there has to be justice.

To have a free society we have to have a history, and in this major historical moment, we had a massive betrayal of the social contract — a betrayal committed by millions. The social contract cannot be re-knit without public accountability, confrontations, and even condemnation.

Let the school board members who masked the children be sued in civil court. Let them do community service in bright orange vests and pick up garbage along the sides of the roads.

Let the members of the Boards of Health who shut down their neighbors’ businesses for no reason, face civil charges. Let their names be published in the newspapers.

Let the ones who shunned the unvaccinated and disinvited them from their galas and dinner parties, experience for themselves what that feels like and face the fact that they were hateful and engaged in hate.

Let the deans who took millions of dollars from nonprofits to adopt policies to mandate vaccines for healthy young college students — vaccines that disrupted the cycles and damaged the hearts of perfectly healthy young women and men in their charge — face trials for racketeering and reckless endangerment and coercion. Let the Pharma executives and the heads of the FDA be tried for fraud and battery. Let the trials begin.

For people to be part of a healthy society they need to face themselves; and these quislings and collaborators should confront what they did. If they committed crimes, they should be tried and convicted.

Will I let it go? Will I forget? Will I forgive? On another morning, maybe, I pray that I will.

But not yet. Not this morning.

Amos [KJV 5:24] promised: “Let judgment run down as waters and righteousness as a mighty stream.” Jesus said, Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth; I did not come to bring peace but a sword [NKJV: Matthew 10:34-39].

Maybe they meant that there are times to make amends, but there are other times to overturn the tables of the corrupt.

I am angry that beautiful America is mostly back, mostly free again, overnight, just because a shameless creature who should never have had the power to suspend our liberties in the first place – *said* so; just because the whiny-voiced evildoers of the last two years, now that evidence of their fraud and coercion emerges irrevocably to light, want to tiptoe away from the scenes of their massive crimes.

I say: Not so fast.

Freedom is not free, as many veterans have said, and I never really understood what that meant except superficially.

But you don't get freedom back so easily if you yourself committed massive crimes.

Freedom is not free. You don't get to take away the freedom of others and enjoy it, without penalty, for yourselves.

The people you harmed, the parents of the children you harmed – they are coming. Not violently; not vengefully; but with the righteous sword of justice; with the law in hand.

Don't rest too easy, leaders who did wrong, in this bright American sunlight. You don't get America back as if nothing happened.

The Statue of Liberty holds up a torch. Crimes must be illuminated.

You cannot yet know that it's really over — just because you said so.

You can't know yet that you will never be unmasked; never revealed to all, in the bright sun of the town square.

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*About the articles Author: [Naomi Wolf](#) is a bestselling author, columnist, and professor; she is a graduate of Yale University and received a doctorate from Oxford. She is cofounder and CEO of DailyClout.io, a successful civic tech company.*

*This article was originally reposted from the author's [Substack](#)*

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