

American Agrarianism's Answers to the Nation's (In)Securities

JAMES PHILLIPS[†]

Security has become a public policy magical password that instantly adds urgency and gravitas to any topic. Beyond national security and social security, beyond job security and home security, the proliferation of securities in the American political and cultural lingo can be witnessed with such ideas as homeland security (13,500,000 hits on Google), environmental security (325,000 hits), marriage security (13,200 hits), human security (926,000 hits),¹ emotional security (196,000 hits), and spiritual security (53,200 hits), to name but a few. Of course, every security has numerous proposed solutions on how to achieve or maintain that security, with some securities even getting their own institutes for research² or their own government departments.³ And in the specialization and fragmentation of human knowledge and expertise common to this age, there is very little overlap between solutions in this smorgasbord of

[†] B.A., Arizona State University; M.A., Brigham Young University; PhD candidate in Jurisprudence and Social Policy, University of California-Berkeley. The author wishes to thank Lynn Miles for introducing him to the work of Wendell Berry.

¹ The topic of human security has spawned much international activity. *See, e.g.*, the Human Security Report Project, <http://www.hsrgroup.org>, (last visited Mar. 28, 2010); the United Nations Commission on Human Security, <http://www.humansecurity-chs.org>, (last visited Mar. 28, 2010); the Human Security Network, <http://www.humansecuritynetwork.org>, (last visited Mar. 21, 2010); Tufts University's Institute for Human Security <http://fletcher.tufts.edu/humansecurity/>, (last visited Mar. 28, 2010).

² *See, e.g.*, The Institute for Environmental Security, <http://www.envirosecurity.org> (last visited Mar. 21, 2010).

³ *See, e.g.*, The Department of Homeland Security, <http://www.dhs.gov/index.shtml> (last visited Mar. 21, 2010).

security. Yet, a once fundamental and still extant vein of American political and moral thought—Agrarianism—offers an answer to the issues of security in the United States. This paper explores American Agrarianism and its yeoman farmer ideal in relation to security, both in its original form as laid out most famously by Thomas Jefferson and in its revived form in the writings of Wendell Berry; it points out that a more ecological view of security would be more productive in assessing the American condition.

I. EARLY AMERICAN AGRARIANISM

Agrarianism is the philosophy that “the practices associated with the agricultural life are particularly—and in some cases uniquely—well-suited to yield important personal, social, and political goods,”⁴ and it is not unique to American soil. For Adam Smith, the paragon of citizenship was the self-sufficient farmer. Smith observed, “How much the lower ranks of people in the country are really superior to those of the town, is well known to every man who either business or curiosity has led to converse much with both.”⁵ A French movement in the 1700s called the “Physiocrats” also extolled the virtues of the yeoman farmer,⁶ and the most well-known example of the yeoman farmer model during Jefferson’s time was Crèvecoeur’s *Letters from an American Farmer*.⁷ Before the Enlightenment, agrarianism can be dated back to the Greeks.⁸

But agrarianism found a permanent and influential home in American thought and practice. Historian Richard Hofstadter argues that “[a]mong the intellectual classes in the eighteenth century the agrarian [ideal] had virtually universal appeal.”⁹ Brent Gilchrist posits that the cementing of American agrarianism in the mid-1700s “coincided with the entrenchment in America of Lockean ideology and its self-justified demands for the appropriation of nature as property.”¹⁰ Gilchrist sees early American agrarianism as religious in nature, a component of what would come to be known as American civil religion:

⁴ Jeremy Beer, *Agrarianism*, THE NORTHERN AGRARIAN MONTHLY, Apr. 29, 2008, available at <http://northernagrarianarchive.wordpress.com/2008/04/29/agrarianism-article-by-jeremy-beer/>.

⁵ ROGER G. KENNEDY, MR. JEFFERSON’S LOST CAUSE: LAND, FARMERS, SLAVERY, AND THE LOUISIANA PURCHASE 248 (2003).

⁶ CHARLES A. MILLER, JEFFERSON AND NATURE: AN INTERPRETATION 205–06 (1988).

⁷ *Id.* at 209 n.164.

⁸ VICTOR DAVIS HANSON, THE OTHER GREEKS: THE FAMILY FARM AND THE AGRARIAN ROOTS OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION 3 (1995).

⁹ Richard Hofstadter, *The Myth of the Happy Yeoman*, in 2 MYTH AND THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE 98, 100 (Nicholas Cords & Patrick Gerster eds., 1973).

¹⁰ BRENT GILCHRIST, CULTUS AMERICANUS: VARIETIES OF THE LIBERAL TRADITION IN AMERICAN POLITICAL CULTURE, 1600–1865, at 238 (2006).

[Benjamin] Franklin, and additional early stalwarts of the civil religion pointed to America's mythic agrarianism as an alternate source of communion with God. In this American church of the soil, 'farmers' carried the Holy Ghost with them naturally, as chosen sons of God who would lead American prosperity into the new century. The purity emanating from 'virgin' soil was expected to imbue them with a righteousness that would overcome history and return mankind to Eden—the Puritan cycles of spiritual decline in the midst of luxury would finally be undone in a perfect state of incorruption.¹¹

Agrarianism was not far from the halls from which the nation's government was born, as James Madison informed the Constitutional Convention that "a population of freeholders," or yeoman farmers, was "the safest depository of republican liberty."¹² And even the proverbial father of the country, George Washington, viewed yeomen farmers as "real farmers," proposing that some of his estates be divided into smaller holdings and given to such family farmers to be worked without slave labor.¹³

But by far the most elegant and influential spokesman of the movement was Thomas Jefferson, who has been called "the father of the family farm."¹⁴ Jefferson himself was no yeoman farmer with his plantations at Monticello, but he nevertheless repeatedly preached the classical republicanism tenant that there were irreplaceable "virtues found in laboring the land and enjoying the pastoral life."¹⁵ Some have seen Jefferson's agrarianism as inseparably linked to his famously penned "pursuit of happiness," for without stifling social hierarchies and oppressive governmental regimes, Americans could enjoy "the personal autonomy and independence that enabled [an] individual[] to be truly free," with "the independent, self-governing yeoman farmer moved to the fore while the state faded into the background."¹⁶

Yet the virtue of the yeoman farmer and the agrarian lifestyle was, for Jefferson, about far more than just happiness—in agriculture Jefferson's "ethical, political, and economic theories of nature [were] completely

¹¹ *Id.* at 184.

¹² KENNEDY, *supra* note 5, at 80.

¹³ *Id.* at 17.

¹⁴ *Id.* at 42.

¹⁵ MATTHEW S. HOLLAND, *BONDS OF AFFECTION: CIVIC CHARITY AND THE MAKING OF AMERICA—WINTHROP, JEFFERSON, AND LINCOLN* 156 n.52 (2007).

¹⁶ PETER S. ONUF & LEONARD J. SADOSKY, *JEFFERSONIAN AMERICA* 124 (2002).

intertwined.”¹⁷ Thus, agriculture would remain his public policy passion in a myriad of areas, as noted by Charles Miller:

Agriculture was the first of ‘four pillars’ of national prosperity and the last to benefit from a public debt. It was the first of the interests that higher education was charged with promoting. It was the first of several ‘objects of attention’ for Americans traveling in Europe. It was the first occupation deserving of protection in wartime, because farmers were exercising a natural right ‘for the subsistence of mankind.’¹⁸

While Jefferson would begrudgingly acknowledge a place for other occupations, such as commerce, navigation, and manufacturing, agricultural never lost its primacy in his vision of America.¹⁹ And it was his vision of American greatness, and his hope in the noble experiment in self-government he had helped begin, that fueled his almost religious views of agrarianism. Some have seen in Jefferson’s thought the Enlightenment notion that nature could shape human nature.²⁰ By working the land, the soil could act upon the farmer in almost “therapeutic” fashion, forming the character of laborer towards a higher moral plane, making “both the soil and the yeoman...moral agents.”²¹ Thus, sound land and agricultural policy was also sound moral policy, and to treat them separately would be to undermine them.

Jefferson feared that America would follow in the footsteps of Europe, becoming corrupt due to being “piled upon one another in large cities.”²² His thinking was clear in its dichotomy: urbanization equals corruption, agriculture equals virtue. His most famous explication of this thinking was later quoted on a frieze in the Thomas Jefferson Room at the Library of Congress:²³

Those who labor in the earth are the chosen people of
God, if ever He had a chosen people, whose breasts He has
made His peculiar deposit for substantial and genuine

¹⁷ MILLER, *supra* note 6, at 205.

¹⁸ *Id.*

¹⁹ *Id.*

²⁰ KENNEDY, *supra* note 5, at 41.

²¹ *Id.* at 42.

²² Letter from Thomas Jefferson to James Madison (December 20, 1787) available at <http://etext.virginia.edu/jefferson/quotations/jeff1320.htm>.

²³ MILLER, *supra* note 6, at 154.

virtue. It is the focus in which he keeps alive that sacred fire, which otherwise might escape from the face of the earth. Corruption of morals in the mass of cultivators is a phenomenon of which no age nor nation has furnished an example.²⁴

While historians may quibble with his history, the argument is clear—a rural people working the land will be more moral than their counterparts dwelling in cities. It would not be a far stretch to tie solutions to crime and the classical notion of personal and property security, then, to agrarianism.

But yeomen farmers are more than just virtuous; they are also ideal citizens in Jefferson's view: "Cultivators of the earth are the most valuable citizens. They are the most vigorous, the most independent, the most virtuous, and they are tied to their country, and wedded to its liberty and interests, by the most lasting bonds."²⁵ In arguing that the yeoman farmer is inextricably linked to his nation, Jefferson is hinting at an element of national security often overlooked. Most concepts of and debates around national security tend to deal with threats to the nation, whether external or internal. But inherent in national security is a populace interested in preserving the nation and willing to defend it, by arms if necessary. Without such citizens, or patriots, defense would be lackluster at best and impossible at worst. Jefferson sees a steady supply of crucial linchpins in national security in the yeomen farmers. Jefferson makes this connection between cultivation and patriotism more clear in this 1786 quote: "The cultivators of the earth are the most virtuous citizens, and possess most of the amor patriae."²⁶ Thus, the more there are, the better off the nation's security will be.

Agrarianism also offered economic security in Jefferson's eyes, though he seldom separated out the different types of securities: "Agriculture...is our wisest pursuit, because it will in the end contribute most to real wealth, good morals and happiness,"²⁷ and, "the pursuits of agriculture [are] the surest road to affluence and best preservative of morals."²⁸ Jefferson's focus on the pursuit of agriculture in these two quotes indicates his previously mentioned theme that it is the process of working the land, not

²⁴ BARBARA MCEWAN, THOMAS JEFFERSON: FARMER viii (1991).

²⁵ *Id.*

²⁶ Thomas Jefferson: Answers to de Meusnier Questions (1786) available at <http://etext.virginia.edu/jefferson/quotations/jeff1320.htm>.

²⁷ Letter from Thomas Jefferson to George Washington (1787) available at <http://etext.virginia.edu/jefferson/quotations/jeff1320.htm>.

²⁸ Letter from Thomas Jefferson to John Blair (1787) available at <http://etext.virginia.edu/jefferson/quotations/jeff1320.htm>.

just having the land or living in a rural setting, that creates the desired fruits of which he speaks. There are no shortcuts to wealth, morality, freedom and happiness—just paths more or less likely to bring one to such bounties. Unfortunately for Jefferson, this verity was not always easily accepted by others, as he hints in the following excerpt from a letter: “The United States...will be more virtuous, more free and more happy employed in agriculture than as carriers or manufacturers. It is a truth, and a precious one for them, if they could be persuaded of it.”²⁹ Again, we see that for Jefferson, the benefits of agrarianism—making sundry securities more secure—cannot be separated. Freedom, happiness, virtue, wealth, and patriotism are all tied together and tied to working the land.

Jefferson’s views would influence later generations. In fact, one scholar argued that Jefferson’s “ideal of a truly independent yeomanry and his therapeutic conception of land use have become imbedded in the American mythos, moving legislatures to allocate vast sums to farmers and, by extension, moving private owners toward careful use of the land.”³⁰ The Homestead Act testifies to the influence of Jefferson’s agrarianism. And even a century after Jefferson’s death, his vision lived on. FDR, who arguably did more than any other president until his day to make people dependent on the government for food or financial support, stated that “sturdy rural institutions beget self-reliance and independence of judgment...[On the family farmer] continuance of the democratic process in this country to no small extent depends.”³¹

II. NEW AMERICAN AGRARIANISM

Today, however, the most consistent and elegant torchbearer of Jefferson’s yeoman farmer is not a politician but a writer—Kentuckian Wendell Berry. Berry, a poet, novelist and essayist, won a Wallace Stegner Fellowship at Stanford in the late 1950’s, and later went on to teach at New York University (NYU), Stanford, and the University of Kentucky.³² He has been awarded a Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship, a Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship, the Vachel Lindsay Prize for Poetry, a National Institute of Arts and Letters award for writing, the American Academy of Arts and Letters Jean Stein Award, a Lannan Foundation Award for Non-fiction, the Ingersoll Foundation’s T.S. Eliot Award, the John Hay Award, the Lyndhurst Prize, and the Aitken-Taylor Award for

²⁹ Letter from Thomas Jefferson to M. de Warville (1786) available at <http://etext.virginia.edu/jefferson/quotations/jeff1320.htm>.

³⁰ KENNEDY, *supra* note 5, at 242.

³¹ *Id.* at 243.

³² About the Author, Wendell Berry, <http://www.wendellberrybooks.com/author.html> (last visited Mar. 23, 2010).

Poetry; but most importantly, he lives on an eighty-five acre farm where he practices what he has been preaching for fifty years.³³ He returned to the county of his birthplace in the early 1960's after teaching at NYU, a decision met with doubtful astonishment by his fellow academics, which reaction, Berry states, stemmed from:

[T]he belief, long honored among American intellectuals and artists and writers, that a place such as I came from could be returned to only at the price of intellectual death; cut off from the cultural springs of the metropolis, the American countryside is Circe and Mammon. Finally, there was the assumption that the life of the metropolis is *the* experience, the *modern* experience, and that the life of the rural towns, the farms, the wilderness places is not only irrelevant to our time, but archaic as well because unknown or unconsidered by the people who really matter—that is, the urban intellectuals.³⁴

Berry and his wife, like Thoreau, moved into their Kentucky homestead on Independence Day, and Berry sees in his and others' dedication to the land "a devotion more particular and disciplined than patriotism."³⁵ This act, this living essay, has caused one scholar to argue that:

Never in our time has there been a more dramatic example of a creative writer basing his whole vocation both as a writer and a citizen on a pious reenactment, within the context of a strong and explicit Protestant faith commitment, of the side of Jeffersonianism that fits with the broader, longer tradition of voluntary simplicity.³⁶

The influence of Jefferson's agrarian philosophy on Berry is evident, and Berry freely admits it. Berry notes that "implicit in virtually all of my essays is the impulse of agrarianism,"³⁷ which includes, among other

³³ *Id.*

³⁴ WENDELL BERRY, *THE LONG-LEGGED HOUSE* 175 (1969).

³⁵ Lawrence Buell, *Religion and the Environmental Imagination in American Literature*, in *THERE BEFORE US: RELIGION, LITERATURE, AND CULTURE FROM EMERSON TO WENDELL BERRY* 216, 230 (Roger Lundin ed., 2007).

³⁶ *Id.*

³⁷ Lionel Basney & John Leax, *A Conversation with Wendell Berry*, in *CONVERSATIONS WITH WENDELL BERRY* 122, 131 (Morris Allen Grubbs ed., 2007).

things, “the belief in the importance of small ownership, the small holding.” Berry traces this to Jefferson’s agrarianism: “There ought to be many owners, Jefferson said. The land ought to be owned in small parcels by many people, who use those parcels, who farm them and farm them well.”³⁸ Both Berry and Jefferson see America in its best form as an agrarian republic.³⁹ Where Berry differs from Jefferson, according to Kimberly Smith, is the influence of modern peace, environmentalism and sustainable agriculture movements on Berry’s thought.⁴⁰

While Jefferson’s nexus between agrarianism and national security was more implicit, Berry’s is more explicit. He saw the terrorist attacks of September 11th as a wake-up call to those laboring under the delusion that “we were living in a ‘new world order’ and a ‘new economy’” that would bring limitless affluence.⁴¹ As Smith posits,

The lesson of September 11 was for Berry an ancient one, and one that permeates all of his writings: the world is not and never will be a safe place. We must learn how to live a fully human life in a dangerous and unpredictable environment—not by seeking godlike control over the conditions of our existence but by cultivating those virtues (moderation, prudence, propriety, fidelity) that allow us to live gracefully in the presence of fear.⁴²

While many would seek to help mankind by changing the conditions in which we live, Berry would seek to change mankind, which would thus improve the conditions under which we live. This philosophy makes Berry suspect of planned communities, which he might liken to using band aids to try and cure leprosy. The cure comes from changes within. Berry contends:

If you’re going to have a decent and stable community, you’ve got to produce the cultural and social forms by which to deal with the unexpected and the undesirable. The intentional community idea assumes that when you say love your neighbor as yourself, you have

³⁸ Anne Husted Burleigh, *Wendell Berry’s Community*, in CONVERSATIONS WITH WENDELL BERRY, *supra* note 37, at 135, 142.

³⁹ Kimberly K. Smith, *Wendell Berry’s Political Vision*, in WENDELL BERRY: LIFE AND WORK 49, 50 (Jason Peters ed., 2007).

⁴⁰ *Id.*

⁴¹ *Id.* at 49.

⁴² *Id.*

some kind of right to go out and pick your neighbor. I think that the ideal of loving your neighbor has to take on the possibility that he may be somebody you're going to have great difficulty loving or liking or even tolerating.⁴³

Berry also sees agrarianism as a boon to national security in a way similar to Jefferson.⁴⁴ In an increasingly globalized economy, manmade events like September 11th, or natural disasters, have the potential to disrupt trade. Agrarianism, though, and its emphasis on local food production and self-sufficiency allows a nation to feed itself and provide its own "food security."⁴⁵ For Berry, then, "agriculture 'is the economic activity *most clearly and directly related* to national security, if one grants that we must eat.' ... 'How are we going to defend our freedoms...when we must import our necessities from international suppliers who have no concern or respect for our freedoms?'"⁴⁶ Obviously armies need to be fed, but even more than that, a nation that is hostage to other countries for its bread is not truly secure or independent, either economically, politically or militarily.

National defense, for Berry, goes beyond just better neighborly relations and local self-sufficiency, and it is a narrow vision of national security that Berry sees as a fatal flaw in the thinking of government and citizens:

The government...thinks that national defense is making weapons, and the people go along and pay for it. But soil conservation is elementary national defense. So is people conservation. So is the conservation of culture and intelligence. So is the conservation of political liberty and of the economic independence of households and communities. If the nation is to be defended, it may need fewer warheads and many more real shareholders, people who own homes, homesteads, small businesses, small farms.⁴⁷

Berry's suspicion of the power and role of government is deeply

⁴³ Bruce Williamson, *The Plowboy Interview: Wendell Berry*, in CONVERSATIONS WITH WENDELL BERRY, *supra* note 37, at 3, 10.

⁴⁴ MCEWAN, *supra* note 24, at 24.

⁴⁵ Smith, *supra* note 39, at 57.

⁴⁶ *Id.* at 56.

⁴⁷ Gregory McNamee & James R. Hepworth, *The Art of Living Right: An Interview with Wendell Berry*, in CONVERSATIONS WITH WENDELL BERRY, *supra* note 37, at 19, 25.

entrenched in his thought. Part of this is due to his belief that bureaucrats and officials, as outsiders, do not know or understand the people they are trying to “help,” tend to deal with people impersonally as abstractions, and are likely to be short on “respect, fairness, and sensitivity.”⁴⁸ And part of Berry’s distrust of government is due to his wariness of dependence, much like Jefferson.⁴⁹ Berry has written that “the most meaningful dependence of my house is not on the U.S. government, but on the world, the earth.”⁵⁰ But, while criticizing a swollen government, he also lambasts the shrinking citizen: “It is certain...that the best government is the one that governs least. But there is a much-neglected corollary: the best citizen is the one who least needs governing. The answer to big government is not private freedom, but private responsibility.”⁵¹ Berry eschews the libertarian-like view of independence as freedom to do what one desires, or independence as isolationism, and instead promotes the self-reliance aspect of independence as a solution to the nation’s ills and a fundamental element of democracy:

The only way I can see out of the predicament we’re all in is to promote that old ideal of personal independence. I don’t mean the kind of independence that makes people act without regard for other people or that makes them assume they can get along without other people. I mean the independence by which a person provides some of his own needs and which permits him to do what he sees to be right without the approval of a crowd. That’s why Thomas Jefferson said you need to keep as many as possible on the land. That’s necessary for democracy. You need to keep people independent in the way that the ownership and care of a piece of land can make them.⁵²

Agrarianism also has a political aspect to it in Berry’s opinion because “economic and intellectual independence...is founded on land ownership.”⁵³ Linking himself back to the famous Virginian, Berry notes, “[T]he political value that Jefferson saw in the small farm” was that

⁴⁸ Smith, *supra* note 39 at 51.

⁴⁹ Jefferson wrote, “Dependence begets subservience and suffocates the germ of virtue, and prepares fit tools for the designs of ambition.” KENNEDY, *supra* note 5, at 43.

⁵⁰ BERRY, *supra* note 34, at 77.

⁵¹ *Id.* at 57.

⁵² Williamson, *supra* note 43, at 3, 12.

⁵³ Burleigh, *supra* note 38, at 122, 142.

“[p]eople who are economically independent can think and vote independently.”⁵⁴

Besides national security or democratic security benefits for yeoman farming, Berry perceives economic, environmental and moral implications as well:

The fact is that most farmland requires close care to be used well. That is the agricultural justification for the small holding. It permits close care in a way that large holdings farmed by hired people or even owners on large machines can't be farmed well. The moral benefit of independent small farmers is that it broadens the connection of the whole society to the land, and it increases the number of self-employed people.⁵⁵

Working the land, or being useful to one's community, is Berry's direct solution to unemployment, which, he argues, is caused because people become “alienat[ed] from land and community. People who own even tiny parcels of land on which they can work for their support, and people who own shops or have trades or skills directly useful to their own communities, are not going to be unemployed.”⁵⁶ And so the intertwining of self-reliance and community connection provide for Berry the type of security most desperately needed in current society, because, unfortunately, “[h]umans are abandoning real community...not realizing that the security of a local, interdependent community is better than the security of the stock market, or Social Security, or so-called homeland security.”⁵⁷

But Berry's focus on local community does not call for a monk-like retreat from the world. As Smith describes:

⁵⁴ *Id.*

⁵⁵ *Id.*

⁵⁶ McNamee & Hepworth, *supra* note 47, at 24. Berry would expand the concept of the yeoman farmer somewhat to include all small property owners, at least as far as the economic and civic benefits are concerned:

In defending the small farm, I am defending the idea that the great numbers of ordinary people should own property—not money or stock certificates or insurance policies, but real property that can give them direct practical support, the means to help themselves, and so make them to a proper extent independent, both in their domestic economies and in their minds. People who have a measure of economic independence can obviously afford to think and speak and vote more freely than people who do not.”

Id.

⁵⁷ Gene Logsdon, *Wendell Berry Agrarian Artist*, in WENDELL BERRY: LIFE AND WORK, *supra* note 39, at 241, 253.

His writings taken as a whole suggest another reason to support local self-sufficiency: not that it makes us safer but that depending on our friends and neighbors and our own efforts requires *more* from us—more conscious effort, more awareness of our duties toward one another, and more active involvement in the life of the community. In other words, promoting local self-sufficiency makes us better citizens, local *and* global. Seeking local self-sufficiency is after all nothing more than preserving the community's productive capacities—which is for Berry the very definition of patriotism.⁵⁸

The citizen in Berry's agrarian republic "must attempt to care as much for the world as for [their] household. Those are the poles between which a competent morality would balance and mediate: the doorstep and the planet."⁵⁹ Berry thus takes what appears to be the most local of concepts—neighborliness—and envisions it spreading "between ourselves and the other people and other creatures who live where we do—both on the earth and in the local neighborhood."⁶⁰

Berry's agrarianism, then, covers much more than just owning a piece of land and cultivating it well, though that may be its foundation. It includes "the desire for an economy that would be careful to the land, just to human workers, neighborly, democratic, and kind to all the gifts, natural and divine, on which our life depends."⁶¹ It does not require all to move to the country, though more would if they caught his vision.⁶² It does require a sense of permanence, a commitment to a place, in order to create and nurture community, and a personal commitment that cannot be legislated or funded: "If one disagrees with the nomadism and violence of our society, then one is under an obligation to take up some permanent dwelling place and cultivate the possibility of peace and harmlessness in it."⁶³ It requires a new (or perhaps old) type of politics, as Stanley Hauerwas observes:

⁵⁸ Smith, *supra* note 39, at 57.

⁵⁹ BERRY, *supra* note 34, at 77.

⁶⁰ McNamee & Hepworth, *supra* note 47, at 22.

⁶¹ Basney & Leax, *supra* note 37, at 131.

⁶² "Well, I'd be the first to say that there are a lot of people who oughtn't come to the country, and I devoutly hope they won't come. That solution isn't feasible for everybody. We need people to stay in the cities and make them decent and livable again in order to have a healthy nation." Williamson, *supra* note 43, at 18.

⁶³ BERRY, *supra* note 34, at 87.

In *The Presence of the Past* Sheldon Wolin has a wonderful essay titled "Tending and Intending a Constitution: Bicentennial Misgivings," which provides categories that make clear the significance of Wendell Berry's work...Wolin suggests that 'tending' and 'intending' characterize two persistent modes of thinking about politics that confronted one another during the ratification of the American Constitution. A politics of 'intending' Wolin describes as one shaped by the language of contract in which a system of power seeks to ensure a future by bringing all life under a single rational order. A politics of intending comes fully to fruition in our time by the development of the 'science' of administration that legitimates the expert as the power behind the throne of those who rule us. In contrast, a politics of 'tending' is best identified with what we do when we look after another, as in tending the sick or a garden. Tending requires 'active care of things close at hand.' To 'tend' is to care for objects whose very being requires that they be treated as historical and biographical beings. Such a politics requires the existences of a political culture comprised of shared beliefs, habits, practices, and memories that define the particularity of a place and determine how the future will be negotiated. Wolin suggests that in such a setting politics is best understood, not as something practiced separate from the ordinary, but rather as a form of cultivation analogous to tending fields or flocks. Wendell Berry obviously exemplifies a politics of 'tending.'⁶⁴

Thus, American security, be it national, social, economic, or moral, comes not from Congress but from community, is directed not by power but by people, and is crafted not by legislation but by the land and one's relationship with it. And attempts to deal with security otherwise, or to treat security piecemeal, are bound to be futile. Until the person is changed, the program will do nothing. And what will change the person? The land.

⁶⁴ Stanley Hauerwas, *Foreword to WENDELL BERRY: LIFE AND WORK*, *supra* note 39, at xi.

The land. The notion seems too simple. But if it seems simple, it is anything but easy. If it were it would not accomplish the change that both Berry and formerly Jefferson call for in their agrarian vision of the virtuous yeoman farmer, secure and independent in a nation made likewise thus.