

Sydney Mayers

VIEWS THE NEWS

Sending potatoes to Wisconsin might appear as unlikely as shipping "coal to Newcastle," yet bushels of Maine spuds are in fact being bought in the heart of the Midwest farm belt. However, the reason is not hard to find — thanks to a bumper crop, Maine is able to sell its tubers in Wisconsin more cheaply than Wisconsinians can buy the locally grown product this year.

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After months of bitter wrangling, threats, demands and capitulations, the six member nations of the Common Market finally reached an accord on farm prices and policies — an accord made possible by Germany's acceptance of a lower price for its wheat, based on revised subsidy payments to German farmers. This is certainly a far cry from the "free trade" the Common Market was supposedly formed to practice.

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The Board of Supervisors of Suffolk County (N.Y.) is negotiating the proposed purchase from private owners of 588 acres of land, to be used for public park purposes, at an estimated cost of \$750,000. How kind of the Suffolk taxpayers to dig into their pockets to pay for land values they have themselves created!

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To walk along Sixth Avenue these days is to marvel at the newly-erected skyscrapers which are beginning to make the "Avenue of the Americas" one of New York's most magnificent thoroughfares. It is rather sad to realize that the City rewards those who build these towering edifices by imposing towering taxation upon them.

Then there is the reverse of the situation — the lovely 18th and 19th Century frame dwellings which here and there dot the streets of Gotham, reminding Manhattan of its past. Can it be that these picturesque old wooden houses remain as they were, not because of their charm or historic interest, but because to replace them with modern structures would bring severe penalties in the form of whopping municipal taxes on the improvements?

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A front-page item in The New York Times reports that although the suburbs of the Metropolis include some of the wealthiest areas in the country, these affluent communities are quite alarmed at the increasing incidence of poverty in their midst, which is evidenced by steadily mounting numbers of welfare recipients. Come now, dear New York Times, this is not news — eighty-five years ago Henry George not only revealed that Poverty exists in the midst of Plenty, but he also pointed out *Why!*

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A "re-assessment" of New York City's crash campaign, designed to find jobs for thousands of unemployed workers, discloses that despite dozens of programs started by public and private agencies, only a tiny percentage of the applicants have been placed, mostly in temporary, menial or dead-end positions. Someone should tell the city fathers that all labor needs to produce wealth is *land*, but labor cannot get access to land when it is held out of use by speculative private land holding, protected by archaic tax laws.