

Letter to the Editor

November 5, 2012

COMMERCIAL, RETAIL, FABRICATION

To the editor:

I'm writing to provide the opinion of a North American manufacturer and contract glazier in regards to the [letter](#) from John D'amario of Yuanda USA Corp. in the August 2012 edition of Glass Magazine.

I do not know whether to be amused or saddened at the logic that another sector of our economy that has fallen prey to Chinese competition is just "evolution." This has nothing to do with evolution or the total nonsensical concept that it still creates North American jobs. This is a simple matter of products being dumped into the North American market at unfair prices.

When some Chinese manufacturers are able to sell products at a total supply-and-install price that is less than the material-only costs of North American manufacturers, this is not evolution. When Chinese manufacturers are heavily subsidized by their government, have unfair labor practices, have a lack of environmental protections and no basis for earning profits, and are purely trying to utilize an overcapacity in their manufacturing sector, this is not evolution.

If you want to see a prime example of how well the pursuit of cheaper products has served the North American economy, all you have to do is look at the dwindling North American manufacturing sector and the stagnant American economy that can't seem to limp out of recession. Sure, it is great that everyone can buy an iPad at a cheaper price because it is made in China, but if they are soon without a decent job, a lot of good it will do them.

To say that cheaper building products allow projects to [get underway] and create jobs is a misconception. If the economy is not doing well, these jobs aren't going ahead regardless. If the projects get underway with overseas manufactured products, the jobs created are a zero net gain because of the jobs lost in the manufacturing sector.

So, if you want to talk about cycles, this is where it starts: the constant pursuit of cheaper products, greed in the corporate sector and no protection from unfair trading practices. The logic that this is just another normal cycle and we are just espousing sour grapes is laughable from someone who stands to lose if they have to compete on a level playing field.

Steve Charbonneau
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