

In just the past month or so, 6,500 valves of Chinese origin have been judged defective and must be replaced in several petrochemical sites in France. These valves did not match their low temperature requirements, and 2,000 of these 6,500 valves are in one petrochemical plant alone in Gonfreville, France. So how much money did these petrochemical purchasing agents save by going to China? They got what they paid for — low-quality valves at a cheap price. If an American manufacturer did the same, they would be out of business the next day.

Another disturbing story is the drywall problem in Florida. It is bad enough that the drywall has been found defective, but at least three insurers have cancelled or refused to renew policies of homeowners replacing their drywall. We have already heard of an insurance company threatening to cancel an end user's insurance because they felt the end user did not use "due diligence" when specifying and verifying pipe for a project that resulted in product failure and the death of workers. I think Ms. Adams should visit the manufacturers in this country and see what they are doing to improve their standing in the world market. This year alone, in a down economy, Weldbend has spent millions of dollars on new equipment, and we know others in our field that have done the same. She also should take a trip to different countries like China, not on a tour bus seeing how wonderful the Great Wall of China is, or how lovely the food is, but to actually see the dinginess and the conditions in some of the plants that she is talking about that are supplying PVF products to our country.

I have never been so upset about an article that *Supply House Times* has printed as I am about this one. We are not making any excuses in our field. There are no "bogeymen." Weldbend has a workforce second to none, and the best and most modern equipment I have seen in my travels throughout the world. My complaint is in comparing low-quality material that comes into the United States at ridiculously cheap prices with first-class quality material from our company and the handful of first-class manufacturers in the United States and around the world. This article makes me wonder if *Supply House Times'* people, freelance or not, have knowledgeable insight into our industry anymore.

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> Just wanted to send a note regarding recent articles in *Supply House Times* by Joan Adams on "What's Killing U.S. Manufacturers." The central crux of Ms. Adams' argument seems to be that American manufacturers are prone to long lead times because they don't want to take the time to change out tooling to make more breadth of product. "Shorter runs and lightning response time" will lead our manufacturers out of stale thinking, according to the author. That and erasing the belief that American workers are slow and incapable. Presumably, the Chinese, who are an ocean away, have a more enlightened view of manufacturing and are therefore better able to respond to the needs of the industry than our homegrown American manufacturers and that's what's killing U.S. manufacturing.

Untrue. Inaccurate. Irresponsible. Simplistic. Unprofessional. These are a few words that come to mind in assessing these articles (September and October issues).

Question: Who did Ms. Adams interview for this article?

Industrial Valco has been buying from domestic manufacturers for 60 years. They are among the most efficient and highest quality manufacturers in the world. Among them:

Bonney Forge: Bonney's forged steel fitting operation is among the finest in the world. They produce over 1,000 line items and can ship 90+% from stock. Their product is approved everywhere and their service is outstanding. Bonney is an industry leader.

Boltex Mfg: Boltex has invested more in forging production and flange manufacturing than anyone in the world. Their product is on every approval list. They also produce close to 1,000 line items and ship 90% from stock. Boltex is an industry leader.

Tube Forgings of America, Mills Ironworks, and Westbrook Manufacturing are a few other U.S. manufacturers that offer tremendous service, rapid response time, thousands of line items and 90% shipment from stock.

All of these manufacturers are industry leaders that have embraced what Ms. Adams argues for — shorter runs, rapid response times and streamlined operations pulling the best from American workers.

And I can buy every one of these products overseas at half the price.

What Ms. Adams should focus her time and attention on is, how is it possible for foreign manufacturers to sell weld fittings, as an example, at a cost below what U.S. manufacturers *pay for the pipe?*

Just wanted you to know the journalistic quality of these articles is far below the standards that I know you have for your fine magazine. I've cc'd some of these manufacturers so they know how I feel about their product and how proud I am to represent them.

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Leaving A Legacy

> I just finished reading Rick Johnson's article "Start Fashioning Your Legacy" in the October 2009 *Supply House Times* (p. 73). I recently moved into my fifties and have been thinking quite a bit about some of the points he raised in his article. Thanks for the insightful piece. It is refreshing to see some thoughtful writing in this magazine.

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Submit letters to Editor Jim Olsztynski at wrwdzrd@aol.com, or via *Supply House Times*, 1050 Route 83, Suite 200, Bensenville, IL 60106. Letters may be edited at our discretion. We will grant anonymity upon request but will not publish any letters if the author's identity is unknown to us.