



Last U.S. Flatware Maker Expects Boost From Trump Tariffs

Following President Trump's September 17 announcement that the United States would impose 10-percent tariffs on \$200 billion worth of Chinese goods, the CEO of America's last remaining manufacturer of stainless-steel flatware expressed optimism that his business would benefit greatly.

The executive was Greg Owens, CEO of Sherrill Manufacturing in upstate New York.



"It could be a game changer," Owens told a reporter from New York Upstate.com, a local news outlet. "Certainly, a 10 percent tariff will have everyone's attention."

New York Upstate reported that Sherrill Manufacturing manufactures a brand of flatware called Liberty Tabletop in a plant once owned by Oneida Ltd. Owing to economic pressures, including foreign competition, Oneida Ltd. decided to close the Sherrill plant in 2005. Owens and Matt Roberts — who were both former Oneida Ltd. Executives — bought the plant for \$1 million and reopened it the next day as Sherrill Manufacturing.

While Sherrill has survived as the nation's last manufacturer of flatware, most flatware is now imported, with more than 70 percent of flatware imports coming from China. Owens believes that the new tariffs on Chinese imports will increase the chances that some companies currently having their flatware manufactured in China will consider moving manufacturing back to the United States.

"I would imagine at some point in time the phone will be ringing at Sherrill Manufacturing from an importer trying to move some production back to the United States," Owens told New York Upstate.com.

The article "Are Tariffs Good for America?" published by *The New American* last March, posed the rhetorical question: "Are *protective* tariffs, designed to protect American industry from foreign competition, a good thing?" We observed: "For businesses and workers in the protected industries, they would no doubt answer in the affirmative."

We also noted that many on the "free trade" side of the debate argue that protective tariffs do more damage to the American economy than good. However,

... This issue is really much more complicated than that. As [Pat] Buchanan argued, "Production comes before consumption. Who consumes the apple is less important than who owns the orchard. We should depend more upon each other and less upon foreign lands."

In this case, Sherrill Manufacturing owns the flatware "orchard" in upstate New York and, if all goes well, will continue to expand it.



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on September 25, 2018



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