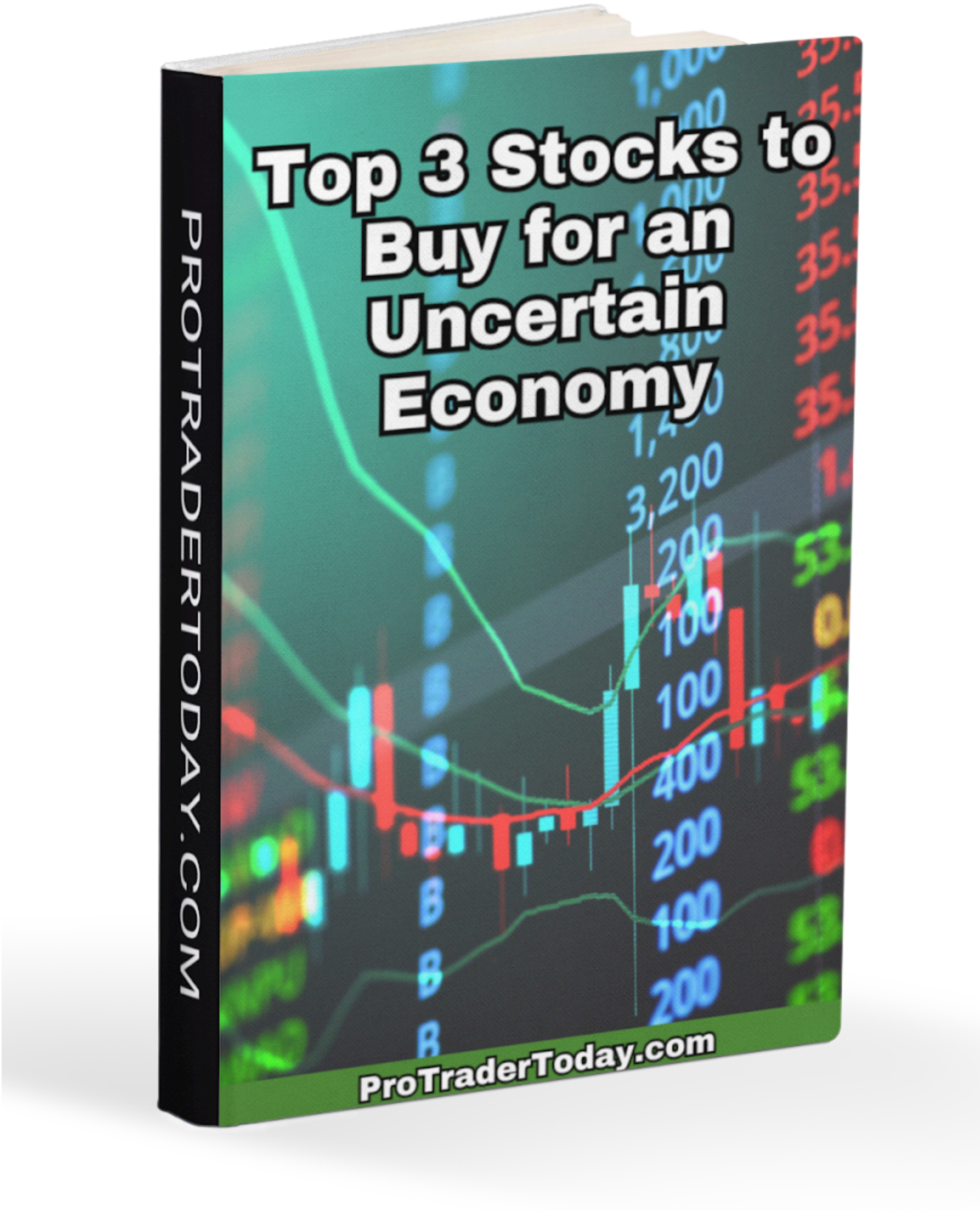

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Top 3 Stocks to Buy for an Uncertain Economy

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Top 3 Stocks to Buy for an Uncertain Economy

The dual threat of a full-blown global trade war and the fear of stagflation has investors on high alert. And rightly so. After all, historically speaking, trade wars typically breed economic uncertainty.

Perhaps the most notable goes back to 1930, after the 1929 stock market crash. This was when President Hoover signed the Smoot-Hawley Act into law.

The law was designed to use tariffs to protect American farmers from foreign competition. Other products were ultimately included, which sparked retaliatory tariffs and a trade war. Three years later, U.S. exports fell by more than 60%. It actually made the U.S. economic crisis even worse. It was also seen as such a failure that it led to President Hoover's failed re-election campaign.

Then there's the issue of stagflation, which is a combination of stagnant growth and increased inflation. Stagflation wreaked havoc during the 1970s when it resulted in high unemployment and high prices. Those who remember the stagflation crisis of the 1970s likely don't remember it fondly.

Of course, there's always a bull market somewhere. Even back then, while equities were tanking, gold, silver and energy were killing it. The same holds true today.

If we truly are entering into stagflation territory, you definitely want some exposure to gold, silver and energy, as historically, these do well in times of stagflation. It's also good to seek out gold, silver and energy opportunities that pay healthy dividends.

Here are three to consider …

Barrick Gold (NYSE: GOLD)

Barrick Gold is one of the largest gold producers in the world, and *the* largest gold producer in the United States.

The company's U.S. operations are in Nevada, and globally, Barrick has a footprint in Canada, Tanzania, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali, Papua New Guinea, Dominican Republic, Cote D'Ivoire, and Argentina.

In 2024, Barrick's net earnings clocked in at $2.14 billion, representing a 69% increase over FY, 2023. Operating cash flow also increased by 20%, coming in at $4.5 billion and free cash flow more than doubled over FY, 2023 numbers.

While Barrick's value should increase under the pressures of stagflation, the company is also one of the largest copper producers in the world. This is of particular interest as copper demand is expected to increase dramatically in the coming years. This, as a result of increased demand for electricity from AI data center growth and cryptocurrency applications. Increasing electricity supplies cannot happen without massive amounts of copper. So couple tariff anxiety with a tightening of supplies, and you're looking at the perfect storm from which Barrick will benefit.

As a play on gold, Barrick is an obvious choice. Especially with its 2.06% dividend. But having exposure to copper also adds significant value to the stock.

Pan American Silver Corp. (NYSE: PAAS)

Gold and silver often move in tandem as silver tends to mirror the performance of gold. The advantage of silver, however, is that unlike gold, its price is significantly influenced by industrial demand.

Now silver is typically operating within a 50/50 balance between industrial applications and investment-grade categories. But today, industrial silver actually represents about 60% of the silver market, with some predictions putting that as high as 75% by the end of the decade.

This is the result of rapidly growing markets (mostly solar, electric vehicles, and cryptocurrency) that require large amounts of silver to operate. So to capitalize on this demand growth in silver (both for industrial purposes and as a hedge against stagflation), it's good to have some exposure to silver. Pan American Silver Corp. is an excellent way to do that.

Pan American Silver is one of the largest silver producers in the world. The company boasts mining projects in Mexico, Peru, Bolivia, Chile, and Argentina. It actually owns 100% of the
Navidad project in the north central Chubut Province in Argentina. This is one of the largest undeveloped silver deposits in the world.

Pan American's proven and probable mineral reserves contain an estimated 468 million ounces of silver. 2025 estimates have the price of silver clocking in at around $40 per ounce, valuing Pan American's 2025 reserve estimates at around $18.7 billion.

Worth noting, the company is also a gold producer, with current gold reserve estimates clocking in at around 6.7 million ounces. 2025 estimates have the price of gold coming in as high as $3,300 per ounce, thereby valuing Pan American's 2025 gold reserve estimates at around $22.1 billion.

Silver and gold reserve estimates combined put the company's reserve value at nearly $41 billion. Not too shabby! And Pan American also pays a 1.55% dividend.

MPLX LP (NYSE: MPLX)

In addition to gold and silver, it's good to have exposure to energy during times of economic uncertainty and stagflation. One way to do that is through MPLX LP.

MPLX is a diversified, large-cap master limited partnership that provides fuel distribution services and owns and operates midstream energy infrastructure assets. These assets include:

- Crude oil and refined product pipelines
- Marine vessels and barges
- Crude and light-product marine terminals
- Docks
- Light-product and asphalt terminals
- Rail facilities

- Liquified petroleum gas storage caverns
- Refinery tanks
- Loading racks and associated piping
- Crude oil and natural gas gathering systems
- Natural gas and natural gas liquids processing and fractionation facilities

Basically, all the things the energy industry needs to operate.

MPLX is also the primary midstream provider for Marathon Petroleum Corp. (NYSE: MPC), which is the largest refiner in the United States in terms of refining capacity.

MPC has crude oil refineries in the Gulf Coast, Mid-Continent and West Coast regions of the country, and also has long-term relationships with a diverse set of producers operating in the Permian Basin, Marcellus Shale, Utica Shale, STACK Shale and Bakken Shale.

In FY, 2024, MPLX generated $5.9 billion in net cash provided by operating activities, $5.7 billion of distributable cash flow, and $3.9 billion of adjusted free cash flow, compared to $5.4 billion, $5.3 billion, and $4.1 billion, respectively, in 2023.

Bottom line: the steady, unobstructed flow of energy in the United States largely depends on MPLX. Which makes the stock quite attractive. It also pays a very generous 7.1% dividend.

Conclusion

While it’s impossible to control the levers of power that move our economy in one direction or the other, it is possible to insulate yourself from economic uncertainty. And in 2025, there’s certainly a lot of it.

This doesn’t mean we’re headed into an economic meltdown.

But it does mean you should take the proper steps to ensure that you can continue to create and protect your wealth in anticipation of economic uncertainty.

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One of the limitations of hypothetical performance results is that they are generally prepared with the benefit of hindsight. In addition, hypothetical trading does not involve financial risk, and no hypothetical trading record can completely account for the impact of financial risk of actual trading.

For example, the ability to withstand losses or to adhere to a particular trading program in spite of trading losses are material points which can also adversely affect actual trading results. There are numerous other factors related to the markets in general or to the implementation of any specific trading program which cannot be fully accounted for in the preparation of hypothetical performance results and all which can adversely affect trading results.

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