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Corporations, Partnerships, Estates, and Trusts

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To my father Jakob Szuprowicz a lifetime warrior against socialist imperialism

The supreme excellence is to subjugate the armies of your enemies without ever having to fight them.

Sun-Tzu in *The Art of War* **written in the fifth century B.C.**

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ONE

What Are Strategic Materials?

Raw materials such as oil, iron ore, copper, aluminum, chromium, rubber, and many others are the lifeblood of modern industries. Most occur in the form of minerals or natural resources in practically every part of the world. Theoretically the earth's crust and the seas are believed to contain enormous reserves sufficient to satisfy the needs of the whole world for centuries to come.

In practice, however, mineral deposits that are economically exploitable with currently existing technologies are often concentrated in only a few regions of the world. Moreover many of the highly industrialized countries that are primary consumers of those raw materials often do not possess sufficient deposits of all the necessary minerals within their territorial boundaries. Japan is a good example of an economy with rapidly growing needs that must rely almost entirely on the imports of most of its raw materials from overseas.

When basic industries of a country become significantly dependent on supplies of such raw materials from foreign sources these become strategically important to the economies of those countries. Conversely an industrialized nation that possesses all the necessary raw materials within its own borders can consider itself truly self-sufficient. The United States until the late 1950s and the Soviet Union at present are two rare examples of such self-sufficient superpowers. China, Brazil, and southern Africa as a region are possible future groupings where such conditions may develop.

Not all the raw materials are of equal strategic importance to all the countries at all times. Even when a particular mineral is critical to one industry it may not be of importance to another unless it in turn depends on the output of the other industry. As a result the definition of what is a truly strategic and critical material will vary not only from country to country but also among industries and even enterprises within each country.

The concentration of global oil resources in the Middle East and the OPEC cartel focus the world's attention on oil as the most strategic and

critical material in the world. But oil is only one form of energy, and although up to a point it is indispensable to all countries and all modern industries it is not necessarily the most strategic or critical of them all.

Other minerals, less known than oil, are of immense strategic importance. These include chromium, cobalt, gold, titanium, tungsten, platinum, diamonds, or uranium. In recent years most of those minerals have been the subject of violent price and supply fluctuations often more unstable than the oil markets.

A QUESTION OF ACCESS AND PRICE

Among the 194 countries of the world there are three basic groups of nations that have differing vital interests in the supply and consumption of raw materials. These include the industrialized free market economies, the centrally planned economies dominated by the Soviet Union, and the developing countries of the Third World.

The industrialized free market economies are the largest users of all raw materials and account for about 70 percent of global consumption by volume. Those countries are also the largest producers of raw materials, accounting for about 45 percent of all such output in the world. This means that already 25 percent of the world's consumption of all raw materials must be imported by the industrialized free market economies from sources outside the territories under their political control (Figure 1.1).

As a result access to sources of raw materials and secure means of transportation to end-users is of paramount importance to industrialized free market economies. The price of raw materials under certain conditions may not be the decisive factor, particularly in the case of minerals whose sources are relatively few and for which substitute materials are not readily available. Such conditions are conducive to the formation of cartels that can unilaterally dictate the prices in full knowledge that continuing supplies even at escalating prices are of the utmost importance to the end-users.

By comparison the Third World countries produce about 30 percent of the world's raw materials. This is in fact somewhat less than the total production in the industrialized free market economies. However, the Third World countries consume only 6 percent of all the raw materials used in the world. In effect most Third World countries are large exporters of raw materials and of paramount importance to them is their ability to obtain the best price for their exports. This objective is often coupled with a desire to obtain financing and technology to establish more advanced minerals processing and end-user industries within their own countries. This objective becomes extremely important when one realizes that the world will need one billion new jobs before the year 2000, most of which must be created in Third World countries.