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History Shows Innovation will Dictate the Future of Energy

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What is it about wintertime that gets my thoughts percolating?

Maybe the atmosphere of summer and all the outdoor activities it invites slows my mind down during the warmer weather, while the shorter days and inside hours of winter lend themselves more easily to ruminations.

And it's funny where our minds will wander, given the opportunity. This week I actually found myself thinking about how cavemen used fire to heat their caves.

Not only that, I began contemplating the progression of how homes have been heated in general throughout history, and the energy that's been favored over the centuries to make it happen—wood, coal, oil, electricity ...

Needless to say, there's been an arc of progress to be seen in these changes over time. But more significantly, the world has demonstrated—and continues to demonstrate—that humankind is not only driven by the need for innovation, but by the opportunity for it.

I, for one, think it's not only primitive to continue contemplating fossil fuel for the future of our energy needs, but it's downright foolhardy. I'm not even talking about from the standpoint of environmental consequences, which alone are considerable, but more from

the practicality of embracing progress and innovation.



I think about what we've done as a species and what we're capable of doing in the best sense of it. I look at how we've gone from the resourcefulness of the Neanderthals who were able to turn flint and fleck into fire, to the clever design of steam and then combustion engines. These were legendary steps that humankind was able to take—wonderful game changers—and they deserve to be celebrated and recognized.

Likewise, we've arrived at a newly remarkable time where the pressing needs for—and interest in—sustainable practices have prompted people to put the old paradigms on the shelf and explore new and better ways to meet our energy needs.

It's because I'm so in awe of the rapid advancements we're seeing in the last few years alone that I'm so outspoken about my urge to invest in them. As I've expressed, it's not merely about random opportunities to make a fast buck with one or another new gimmick, it's about the future and melding one's investment strategy to that future.

Of late, renewed attention has been given to digging deeper, as it were, into the possibilities of making fossil fuel continually viable going forward. I don't want to get into a political debate about perceived evils associated with those struggles, nor do I mean in any way to denigrate the work and efforts of those who sincerely believe in that pursuit and have committed their lives and time to it because of that belief.

At the same time, humankind's fresh innovations alone are reason to reexamine how we mine our energy. The plethora of new products and practices associated with sustainability

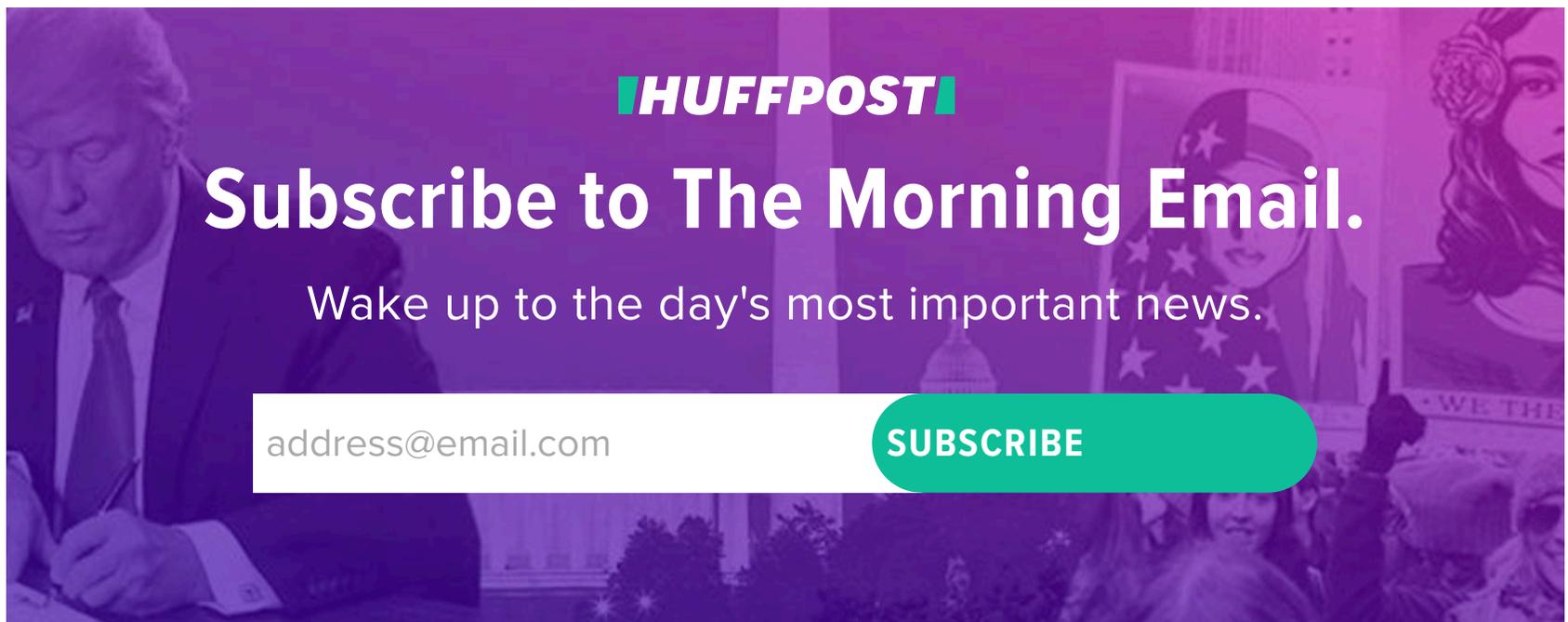
are not simply alternatives. They represent the products of evolution and that's what needs to be understood.

I propose that, quite simply, because the innovation has led and is leading in a new direction, it's pointless—and in the long run impractical—to fight it. It's literally like fighting the tide, which in this metaphor has changed from outmoded forms of fuel to more efficient, more long-lasting, and of course healthier alternatives.

It's pointless and foolhardy to fight the tide.

But I'm a businessman, so I'm not naïve about why there's still a market for so many outmoded products and practices. I will argue, however, that the more an investor focuses their attention on coat-tailing with those, the less likely they'll be to recognize the great wealth opportunities that are sitting there in the areas of sustainability.

I urge intelligent investors to take a closer look at where innovation is leading us. Whether it's now or later, in the end our energy needs are going to be met with efficiency and practicality. History demonstrates it and the future will prove it.

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