

...there is nothing man can do to rebuild exhausted fossil fuel

reserves. They were created by solar energy 500 million years ago and took eons to grow to their present volume.

In the face of the basic fact that fossil fuel reserves are finite, **the exact length of time these reserves will last is important in only one respect: the longer they last, the more time do we have,** to invent ways of living off renewable or substitute energy sources and to adjust our economy to the vast changes which we can expect from such a shift.

Fossil fuels resemble capital in the bank. A prudent and responsible parent will use his capital sparingly in order to pass on to his children as much as possible of his inheritance. A selfish and irresponsible parent will squander it in riotous living and care not one whit how his offspring will fare.

"Energy resources and our future" - Admiral Hyman Rickover, 1957