

Message from Jose Goldemberg:

The reflection I like to convey to the group meeting on jun. 6 to address the pathbreaking contributions of Professor Reddy is the following:

There is a tradition among some Brazilian intellectuals (and some Chinese too as exemplified by the books of Pearl Buck) of praising great values of rural life in the past and the "good old days" of people living in those areas. The truth is that these could be "good old days" for the rural aristocracy but not for the great majority of the population life was "short and barren".

The main contribution I see in Professor Reddy's lifelong work is to bring modern technology to the rural villages and poor and bringing them from the darkness of the 19th century to the 20th century. His proposals involve not only modern technology such as the use of biogas for cooking and lighting but also participation and democratic decisions in the communities.

May be an "easier" solution of the problems of rural areas would be to move the population to the slums of big cities - and this has happened in parts of Brazil. Professor Amulya's work shows that you can improve living conditions in the villages and thus gives an inspiring example that other solutions exist.

Yours,
José Goldemberg

Prof. Jose Goldemberg (Brazil)