

MR. GONCALVES REPLIES

I MUST say that, as your correspondent points out, V_x should be defined as including slack variables in $\mathbf{AX} \leq \mathbf{p}$.

Secondly I do not claim that the use of the formula:

$$D(T) + \sum_{i=1}^v D(F_{d_i}) + N - \sum_{i=1}^v d_i - v \geq 0$$

as a criterion to state whether a basic feasible solution of the master program corresponds to a non-basic feasible solution of the given problem, is better—in the sense of the amount of work required to check its sign—than to count V ; however, the theorem proved there is stated in geometric terms and establishes a necessary and sufficient condition for the above phenomenon to occur which is obviously richer in meaning than the criterion of counting simply V .

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PROBLEMS IN SIMPLE VOTING PROCEDURE

I HAVE nothing to offer Mr. Flowerdew that will help him to propose a more satisfying voting procedure. But, using Richard Titmus's phrase, mathematics will not solve a problem that has not been adequately diagnosed. It may be unrewarding to devote time to weighing up the various methods of voting that are in use, one of which at one time throws up Pope John and, at another, soon afterwards elects Pope Pius and a different system which presents to the American electorate Nixon and Humphrey who, if what we are told and indeed can see for ourselves, had little to offer the Americans that would help them to solve their problems. There can be no joy or benefit in debating how to select the best of a bad lot.

I believe that the real worth-while problem is to determine how organizations can ensure that men of high quality and with the essential intellectual and physical stamina come forward to offer themselves as servants of their community be this a body of operational research scientists or licensed victuallers. The important task for us is to find ways and means whereby the members become more involved in the affairs of the Society and committed to enlarging the scope and power of the subject.

One gratifying feature of recent years has been the growth in the numbers of people who actively participate in Council Committees, in the Study Groups, at Conferences and increasingly in the lively activities of the Local Groups outside London. When the involvement and commitment is widely spread, then there is a better chance that those who offer themselves for high office or who may be persuaded to do so will be men who have experienced the rigors of establishing public knowledge and have been tempered thereby. The utility function may then begin to have some meaning. In the early years of a society