

What price your job?

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DO YOU REALISE that it is practically certain that you are either being overpaid or underpaid? And that there is absolutely no way of finding out which—nor to what extent—until you have had your job “evaluated”?

“Job evaluation” is the latest step forward in this scientific computerised technological age. Simple souls who still cling tenaciously to out-dated ideas of a free market in labour are going to be left a long way behind.

The first blow these free-market fuddy-duddies sustained was the almost universal acceptance that it was the Government’s business, nay, duty to step in and control wages. It began with the “pay pause” which didn’t work. This was superseded by the “wage freeze”—the same thing only different. This didn’t work either. So with a proper sense of purpose and not to be put off by ignorant cries of “we told you so,” from the fuddy duddies, our guides, philosophers, and friends—and masters—came up with the Prices and Incomes Board. This hasn’t worked either. The result is chaos in the wage market—or what is left of the market after picking up the pieces.

Now the back-room boys are talking about “job evaluation.” This is *it* of course. For one thing it will stop inflation, for every schoolboy knows that it is uncontrolled wage increases that cause inflation. We should put up with rising prices instead of bellyaching for more money just to keep pace with the cost of living thus starting off another round of inflation.

Job evaluation will stop all that. Once you have been told the wage rate for your job, you can have increases only on “merit.” Who will do the evaluating? On what basis? Unscientific? Favouritism? Don’t be silly, you are just putting up obstacles. Supply and demand? Easy. Where there is a short supply of people to fill certain jobs you simply add a percentage to the base evaluation for the job until sufficient people . . . Yes, this may be the way the free market works, but how much better for the planners to claim credit for creating a law that already exists.

Anyway the free market never worked properly. What with the closed shop, unofficial strikes and the Government being the largest employer due to nationalisation, socialism, etc., it’s not surprising the wheel’s got a bit clogged. Of course, we could unclog the wheels . . . But still, I like the idea of this modern, streamlined, sophisticated idea of job evaluation, the only thing that bothers me at the moment is: who is going to “evaluate” the jobs of the evaluators?