

75 years ago 200 unemployed men from Jarrow marched from their home in the North East to London to demand jobs and an end to their poverty conditions.

This October Youth Fight for Jobs is marching their route again to demand:

- A massive government scheme to create jobs which are socially useful and apprenticeships which offer guaranteed jobs at the end - both paying at least the minimum wage, with no youth exemptions.
- The immediate reinstatement of EMA payments, expanding them to be available to all 16-19 year olds.
- The immediate re-opening of all youth services that have been closed, including reinstating sacked staff.
- The scrapping of 'workfare' schemes - benefits should be based on need not forced slave labour.
- A massive building programme of environmentally sound, cheap social housing.

To get involved with the march and for updates from the marchers, see the website (opposite), email youthfightforjobs@gmail.com or call 020 8558 7947

This page was planned and written by young Socialist Party members in Yorkshire.

March for jobs
www.jarrowmarch11.com

Chilean students in fifth month of protests

Iain Dalton
Youth Fight for Jobs Yorkshire organiser

The last five months have witnessed the biggest social movement in Chile since the fall of former dictator General Pinochet. Hundreds of thousands have taken to the streets in a series of demonstrations and last month, Chilean workers staged a two-day general strike. On the back of the Arab Spring, the Chilean youth is rising.

After 'the other 9/11', when Pinochet took power in a bloody coup in 1973, Chile was used as a test bed for neoliberal policies - with Milton Friedman's Chicago Boys being unleashed, ordering cuts and privatisation on a massive scale. In Chile only 45% of students are able to attend a publicly run school and most universities are privately run.

The result is a picture of the horrors that could come to Britain if the Con-Dem plans for education aren't stopped. Even Chile's publicly funded universities only receive 14% of their funding from the state and charge massive amounts in tuition fees. Student debt averages at around \$45,000.

Many teachers are dubbed 'taxi

teachers' as they have no contract and have to rush from one school to the next to give individual lessons. Such is the spread of neoliberalism through every part of Chilean society even in hospitals you have absurdities such as 100% surcharges for babies who aren't born on time!

While the western media has focused on the more 'gimmicky' protests such as a mass 'kiss-in' outside the presidential palace or dressing up in super hero costumes, this is only a small part of the story.

Schools and universities have been occupied, mass demonstrations take place on a regular basis. From the off, links have been built with ongoing workers struggles including a one-day strike in solidarity with the students by copper workers in July. The Chilean TUC (CUT) was forced to call a two-day general strike in August.

The right-wing government of Sebastian Pinera has been forced to announce several concessions, including £4 billion of new funding for the education system as well as lowering interest rates on student loans and the dismissal of the education minister in July.

But as yet the government hasn't budged on the fundamental issue of taking the whole of the education



'Five years studying, 45 paying'

system into public ownership and the movement continues with 180,000 demonstrating on 23 September.

Like the M-15 movement in Spain, young people are rejecting the mainstream parties. While Pinera's approval rating languishes at a meagre 26%, the opposition Concertacion

coalition is on only 16%. The Communist Party finds similarly low support from young people, not least because it actually runs one of the country's private universities!

The mood may be anti-party, but it isn't un-political. Protesters have taken up demands including for the

nationalisation of the copper industry to pay for the full financing of a publicly owned education system.

Only by such measures, taking the key sectors and industries into public ownership can the vast inequalities under capitalism in Chile and around the world be ended.

Danger: young people's futures at risk

As a gesture to battling rising youth unemployment, the previous Labour government launched the Future Jobs Fund (FJF) in 2009. The scheme was very limited, offering nowhere near enough places to make a significant dent in youth unemployment and not being available to 16 and 17 year olds. There was also no guarantee of a permanent job at the end of the six month placement. However, the Con-Dems have even scrapped this limited scheme in favour of more exploitative measures. Here, Patrick Timson who took part in the FJF, comments on this.

Having been one of the final people to benefit from the FJF I am left with little hope for an adequate solution to youth unemployment under the Con-Dems. When 25% of young people are leaving school having never received any careers advice, it is clear that we need more than just cheap ways of disguising the lack of real jobs available.

The FJF offered young people the chance to earn the minimum wage for six months. In order to receive funding the job had to benefit communities. The confidence and self worth I personally gained clearly weren't a consideration in

the Con-Dems' new proposals.

The £1 billion FJF is gradually being replaced by a £60 million package to create apprenticeships, offering a minimum of just £2.50 an hour, as well as unpaid work placements with private firms.

There is even talk of tax breaks for those businesses with the 'decency' to employ young people. The government's hopes of the private sector alone seeing us through the increasingly unstable financial crisis do not reflect the reality of an economy which has rapidly come to a halt over the last year.

When will the government acknowledge the worth of young people as workers with unique skills and experiences and not just another embarrassing statistic?



photo Suzanne Beishon

To really solve youth unemployment, Youth Fight for Jobs calls for:

- A massive government scheme to create socially useful jobs and apprenticeships which pay at least the minimum wage (with no youth exemptions) and offer guaranteed jobs at the end
- When private bosses claim they can't afford to maintain jobs, they must open their books so we can see where the money has gone
- An end to job losses. We need huge investment in public services and the nationalisation of companies threatening closure, under democratic control
- An end to all youth exemptions for benefits. Bills cost the same for young people so they need the same amount to live!
- Increase all benefits to reflect the real cost of living
- The immediate scrapping of the Work Programme. Invest the money in creating real jobs instead
- A massive building programme of environmentally sound, cheap publicly owned housing

Campaigners learn the ropes

Samantha Garratt
Leeds Trinity Students Against Cuts (LTSAC)

Leeds Trinity University College was named in some reports as the most likely university to close due to the hike in tuition fees. After the 10 November NUS demo and a local march in Leeds, a group of students from Trinity decided it was time we organised ourselves to fight back against the ridiculous proposals.

LTSAC started off with public meetings and countless leaflets in order to get other like-minded students involved. We then occupied one of the most visible rooms on campus. For most of us this was the first time we had participated in any kind of protest, so we asked for help from the Socialist Party who had sent a speaker to our first public meeting.

Socialist Party members helped link LTSAC with the likes of Leeds University Against Cuts, Youth Fight For Jobs and local press contacts. This not only helped us share ideas but also gave us more opportunities to spread the word about our activities.

The Socialist Party also helped us work out our demands by giving us examples from other occupations and campaigns. We won two of our demands - "no victimisation of staff or students involved in activity" and "permanent office space to run anti-cuts campaigns from".

LTSAC held the very first occupation, rally and political discussions in the history of Leeds Trinity University College.

Meetings within the occupation included the successful struggle against Thatcher's poll tax and how Liverpool City council successfully defended jobs and services in the 1980s by adopting a deficit budget and leading a mass campaign to win the extra money from the Tory government.

We have had vast press coverage including on local radio and a two page spread in the Independent newspaper which shows how far LTSAC has come with a helping hand from our friends at various unions, staff at Trinity and the Socialist Party.

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£10 (+ £2 p&p)
Available in sizes:
Men's S, M, L and women's M, L
Order online at
www.jarrowmarch11.com