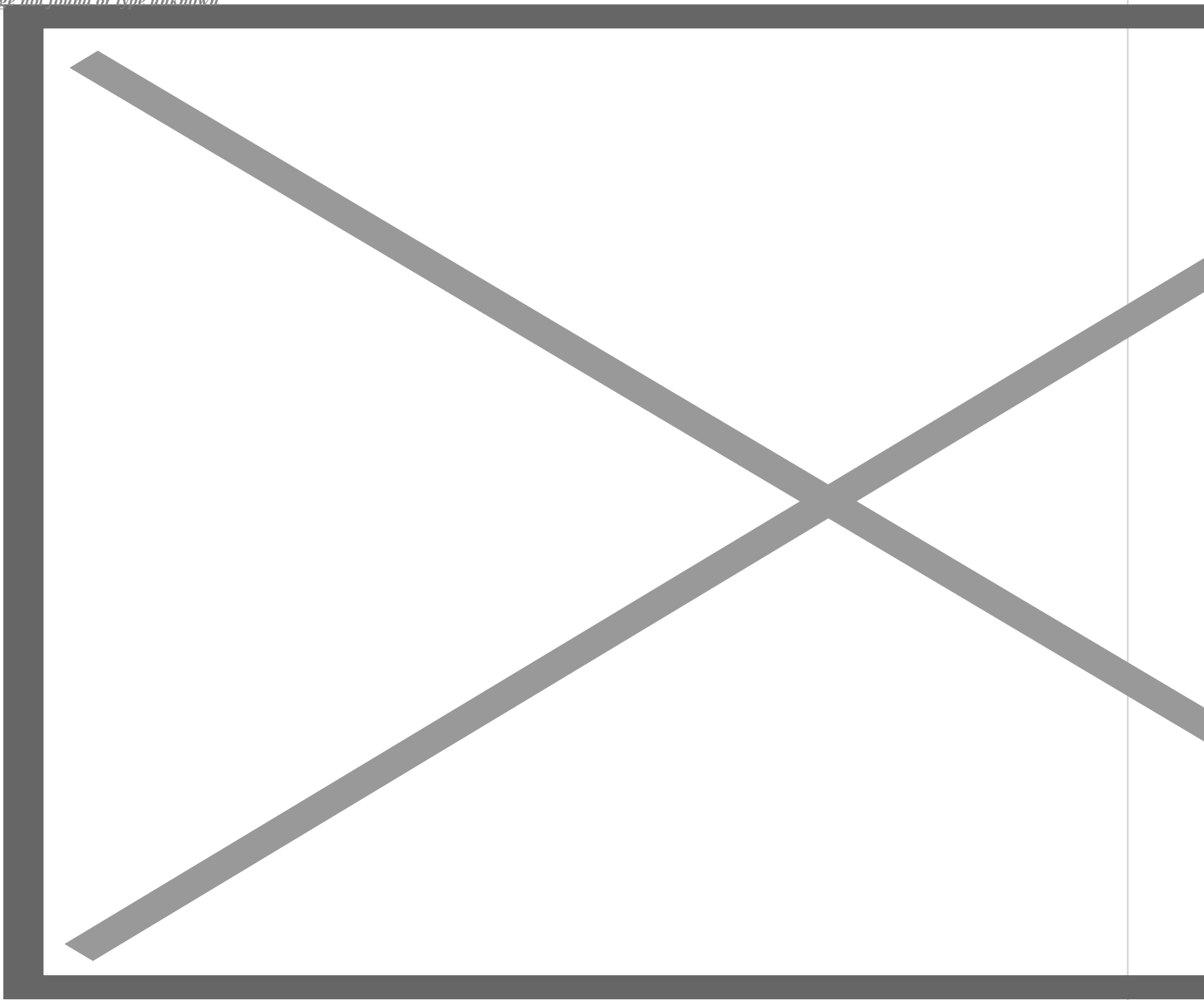


Tens of thousands protest cost of living crisis in London

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London, June 19 (RHC)-- Thousands of people came from across the UK over the weekend to protest outside the parliament. Trade union leaders have joined frontline workers and community organizations to call for higher wages and support.

The government says there is just so much it can do though, blaming the situation on a global energy crisis and the conflict in Ukraine. In a long winded address the Chancellor of the Exchequer promised a payout to ease energy bills, but it's too little too late.

The cost of living crisis in the UK is real. Everything from food, fuel and rent has gone up in price and everyone across the country is tightening their belts. This in turn means fewer donations to food banks and mental health challenges.

Food banks say the number of people turning up has increased massively, and the kind of people turning up has most definitely changed: people in full time work and key workers. Even with both adults working, households are struggling to make ends meet.

The government says it cannot completely mitigate the effects of the crisis for people. The Trades Union Congress, however, says while real wages across the economy are down by £68 a month compared to a year ago, bonuses for the City executives have risen exponentially. So money is not reaching those who need it most, and until quite recently were hailed as heroes.

Although these are hard times, people at today's protest slammed the Tory government's immigration policies as well. Energy bills have gone up 45 percent in recent months and more hikes are around the corner. The government has offered an energy bill rebate of 150 pounds a household that will hardly make a dent in rising costs.

The price hikes are the worst in half a century. Many Britons, 15 percent of whom were already food insecure, are now having to choose between heating their homes and eating.

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