

BN-2024-00019

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April 12, 2024	

Meeting Note

Intergovernmental Affairs Secretariat

Virtual Meeting of Canada's Premiers

Friday, April 12, 2024 at 3:30 p.m. NL Time

31(1)(l)

Meeting ID:

Passcode:

Attendees:

- All Premiers, (see participants list in Annex A)

Purpose of Meeting:

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Introductory Remarks from the Chair / COF Summer Meeting

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- The Summer COF Meeting is scheduled to take place in Halifax on July 16-17, 2024. The annual meeting with Indigenous leaders is expected to take place the day prior, on July 15. These dates have not yet been made public.

Analysis

- Based on bilateral discussions with PTs, NS has prepared a draft agenda for the Summer meeting that includes the following topics:
- NS officials will confirm next steps; however,
- Further details about the Summer COF Meeting (e.g., logistics, events) will be provided to PTs during the Steering Committee meeting on
- As Chair, NS has received outreach from third parties inquiring about the dates of the COF meeting and organizing events on the margins of the meeting.

Potential Speaking Points

- It is a pleasure to welcome Premier Simpson to the COF table. I look forward to your contributions and insight at this table, particularly related to the unique circumstances facing the North.

- I look forward to seeing you all this summer in Halifax and am eager to learn more as planning for the Summer Meeting continues.

Upcoming Federal Budget

- The Federal Government has announced it will release Budget 2024 on April 16, 2024. In advance of the Budget, the Federal Government has made a variety of funding and policy announcements that PTs are tracking. To date, announcements have been made related to temporary residents, housing, annual alcohol excise tax, school lunch program, childcare, pharmacare, youth mental health, artificial intelligence (AI), defence and the mineral exploration tax credit. See Annex C for more information.

Analysis

29(1)(a), 34(1)(a)(i)

- Given many of the pre-budget announcements made to date are in areas of PT jurisdiction, several PTs have raised concern with the lack of engagement from the Federal Government prior to making these announcements. 29(1)(a), 34(1)(a)(i)

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Potential Speaking Points

- Newfoundland and Labrador is supportive of preparing a letter to the Prime Minister following Budget 2024.

29(1)(a), 34(1)(a)(i)

July 15 Meeting with Indigenous Leaders

- Since the first Summer COF Meeting in July 2004, a meeting of Premiers and leaders of the five National Indigenous Organizations (NIOs) has been held on the margins of the COF summer meeting. The five NIOs include: the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK), Métis National Council (MNC), Congress of Aboriginal Peoples (CAP), and Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC). 29(1)(a), 34(1)(a)(i)

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- The annual meeting between Canada's Premiers and Indigenous leaders is scheduled to be held on July 15, the day before the COF meeting as is past practice. Like the COF Meeting dates, this is not yet public information.

Analysis

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Potential Speaking Points

- Engaging with Indigenous leaders brings diverse perspectives, enriches decision-making, fosters cultural understanding, and promotes sustainable development. This relationship is important to COF.
- Ensuring this meeting is productive for all participants is critical to continuing to build an effective relationship with Indigenous communities.

Canada – U.S. Relations

- In January 2024, Prime Minister Trudeau announced the Team Canada engagement strategy for the U.S. that will be led by Minister Ng (Export Promotion, International Trade and Economic Development), Minister Champagne (Innovation, Science and Industry) and Ambassador Hillman (Canada's Ambassador to the U.S.).
- The Team Canada approach focuses diplomatic efforts to deliver the message that Canada offers the U.S. predictability, political stability, and the rule of law, ensuring both countries can continue to be prosperous.

Analysis

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- While PTs play a significant role in maintaining economic, trade, and cultural relationships with U.S. counterparts, the Federal Government's 2024 Team Canada engagement strategy does not currently propose a role for PTs.

- During a visit to Washington in March and a meeting with Ambassador Hillman, Premier Furey emphasized the need for PTs to have the opportunity to ensure awareness in the U.S. of PT assets and industrial offerings increasingly important to the United States. 29(1)(a), 34(1)(a)(i)

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Potential Speaking Points

- Provinces and territories work hard to build and strengthen our relationships with the United States. It is important that we have a cohesive, well-informed approach to managing the broader Canada-U.S. relationship.
- As the Federal Government focuses on a Team Canada approach, it is crucial that provinces and territories are involved in managing the Canada-U.S. relationship in the lead up to the November presidential election, as much of the relationship is built on provincial interaction with state counterparts.
- While in Washington, D.C. last month, I discussed with Ambassador Hillman the important role provinces and territories, and Premiers, have in advancing positive relationships with the U.S. We need to create awareness within the Federal Government and the U.S. about what provinces and territories offer the U.S., as well as a greater understanding of the jurisdictional responsibilities of Premiers. 29(1)(a), 34(1)(a)(i)

Agency Nurses

- PTs use agency nurses to fill critical staffing needs; however, the role of agency nursing in PT health systems varies according to the circumstances of each jurisdiction. The use of agency nurses has increased across Canada since the COVID-19 pandemic

Analysis

29(1)(a), 34(1)(a)(i)

- During the COF meeting in November 2023, Premiers discussed how PTs are working to educate, recruit, and retain nurses in an effort to reduce or eliminate dependency on agency nurses. In follow-up to this discussion, BC officials led the development of a jurisdictional scan (Annex F) to provide information about the approaches (e.g., float pools, system-wide limits, limits on individuals, use and cost monitoring) and mechanisms (e.g., policy, contracts, legislation, ministerial directive) PTs are applying to the current actions being taken to reduce the reliance on agency nurses where appropriate.
- HCS advises that the use of agency nurses in Newfoundland and Labrador covers many programs, including emergency, medicine, surgery, obstetrics, mental health and addictions, long-term care, Intensive Care Units, and others. Agency resources are being utilized in urban, rural and remote locations through approximately 10 agencies that currently have contracts with Newfoundland and Labrador Health Services, most serving all zones.

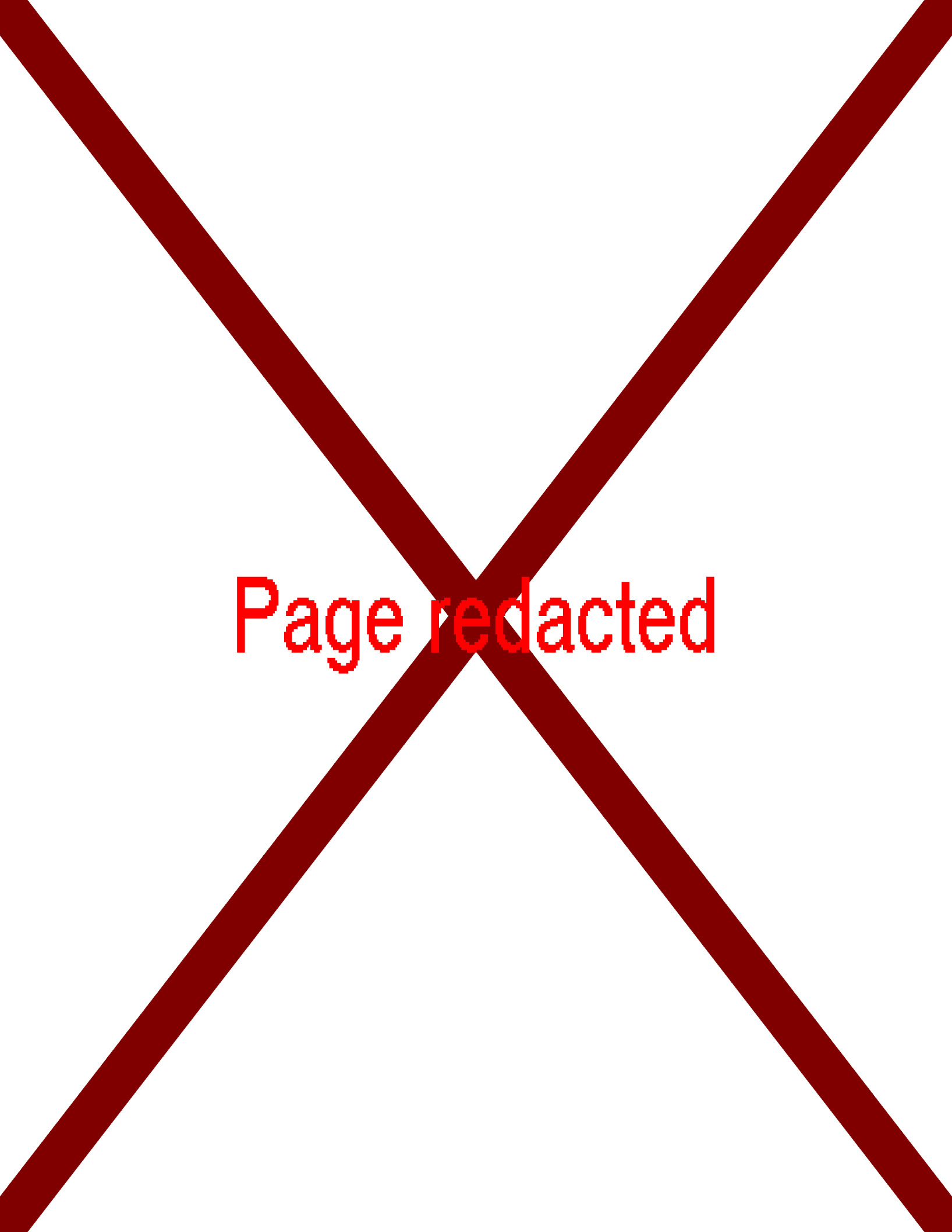
- It is anticipated that the success of provincial recruitment efforts will start to reduce agency RN utilization within the 2024-25 fiscal year. The arrival of Internationally Educated Nurses is expected to begin in early 2024 and new graduates will be onboarded in the spring with orientation spanning into the fall. The movement of staff is expected to increase once these groups are fully functioning in their units.
- The newly signed collective agreement with the Registered Nurses' Union of Newfoundland and Labrador includes a Letter of Understanding (LOU) for a temporary overtime rate of pay. Once all attempts to schedule unfilled shifts (as described in the LOU) have been exhausted, the remaining shifts will be offered at double the regular hourly rate for each hour worked. This language will be in effect for one year and it is anticipated that this measure will help foster scheduling stability prior to the use of agency nurse resources.
- It is also noted in the jurisdictional scan that Newfoundland and Labrador has established an RN Locum pilot to staff difficult-to-fill positions in remote areas historically filled with agency nurses. The Registered Nurses' Union Newfoundland and Labrador has responded positively to this program, noting in the media that it is a more cost-effective solution and gives nurses experience throughout the province, which contributes to retention.

Potential Speaking Points:

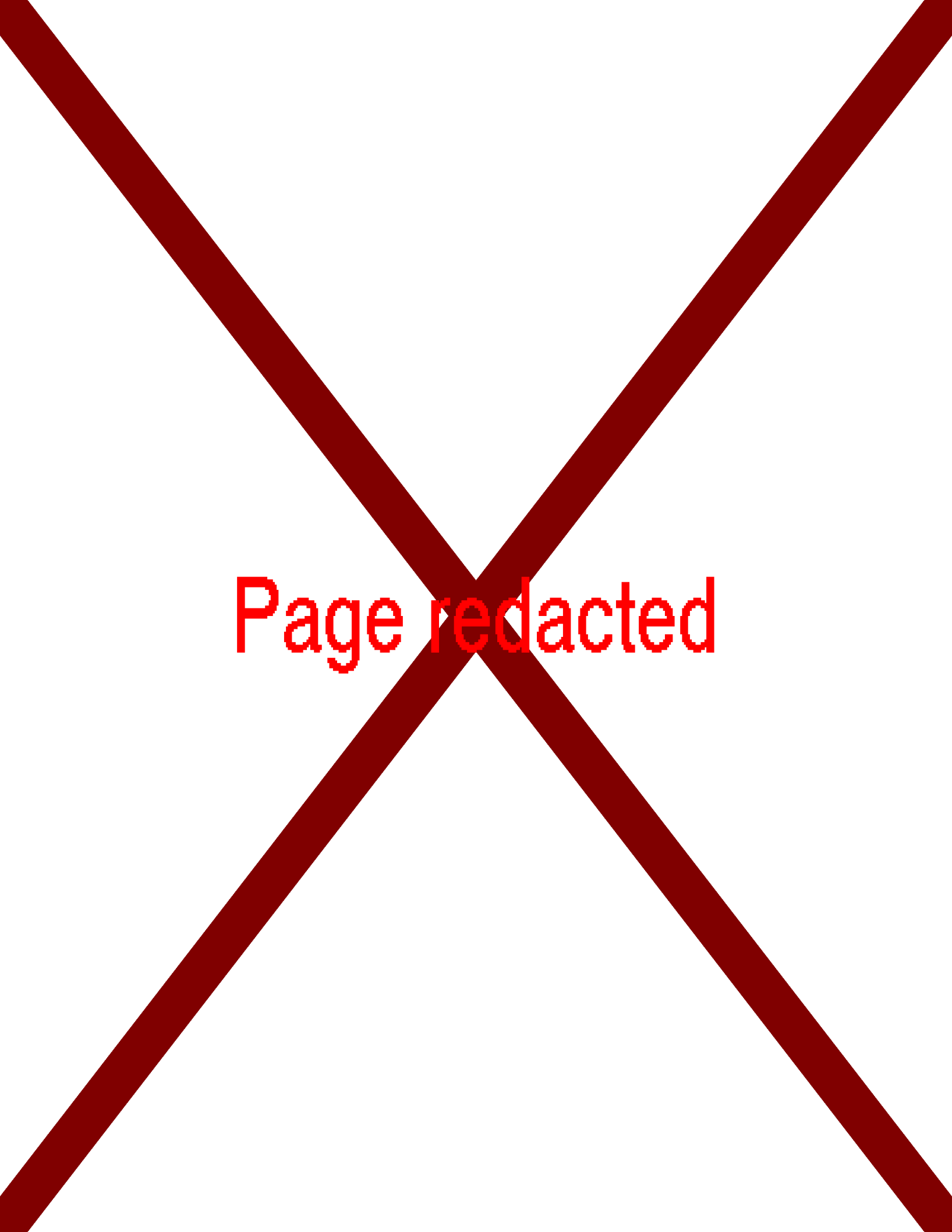
- Newfoundland and Labrador is taking action to reduce the use of agency nurses across the province, but recognizes it may take time given current labour needs, especially in rural and remote communities.

Prepared/Reviewed By: A. Ledwell/ D. Macmillan, ADM
Reviewed by: J. Butt/G. Skinner, Cabinet Secretariat
Approved By: P. Hearn, DM

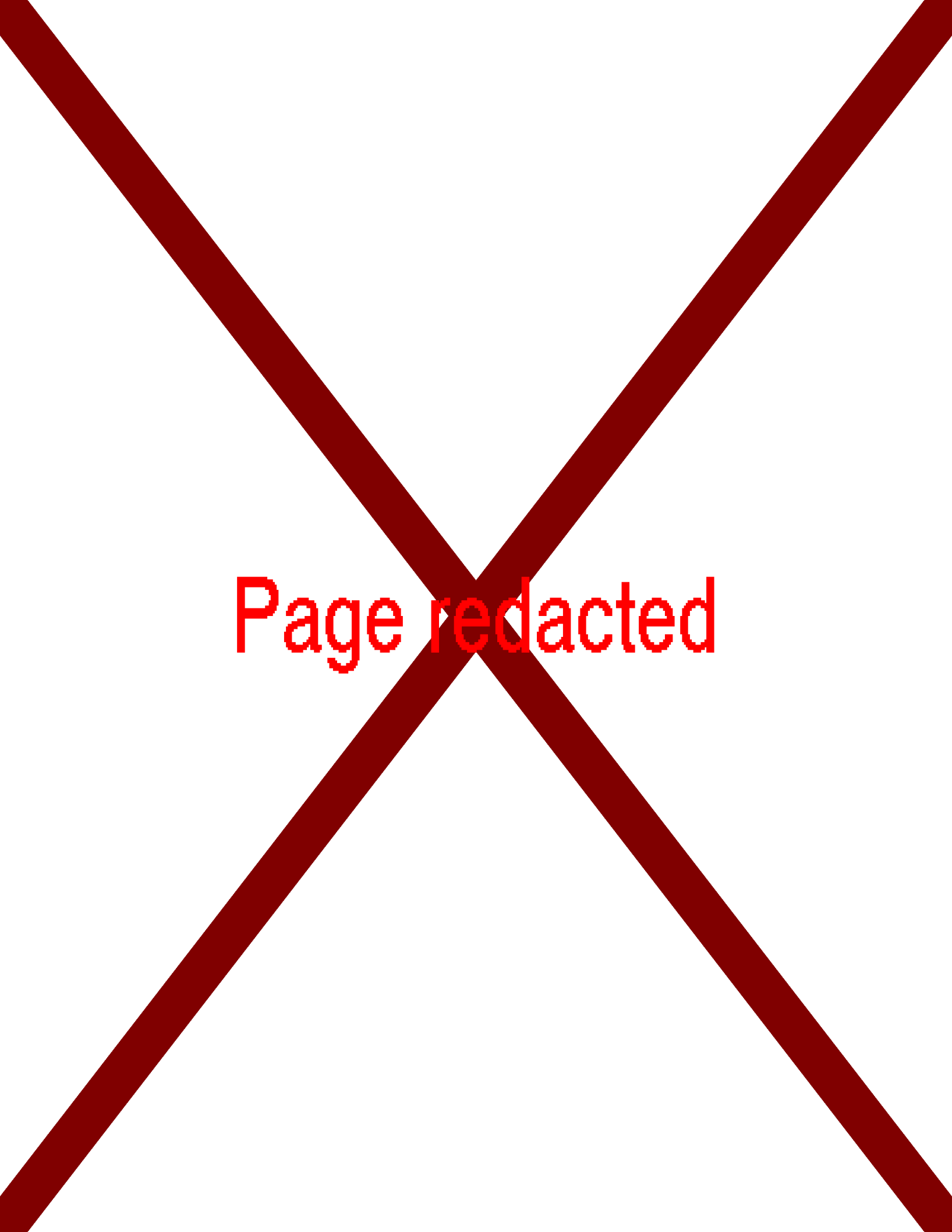
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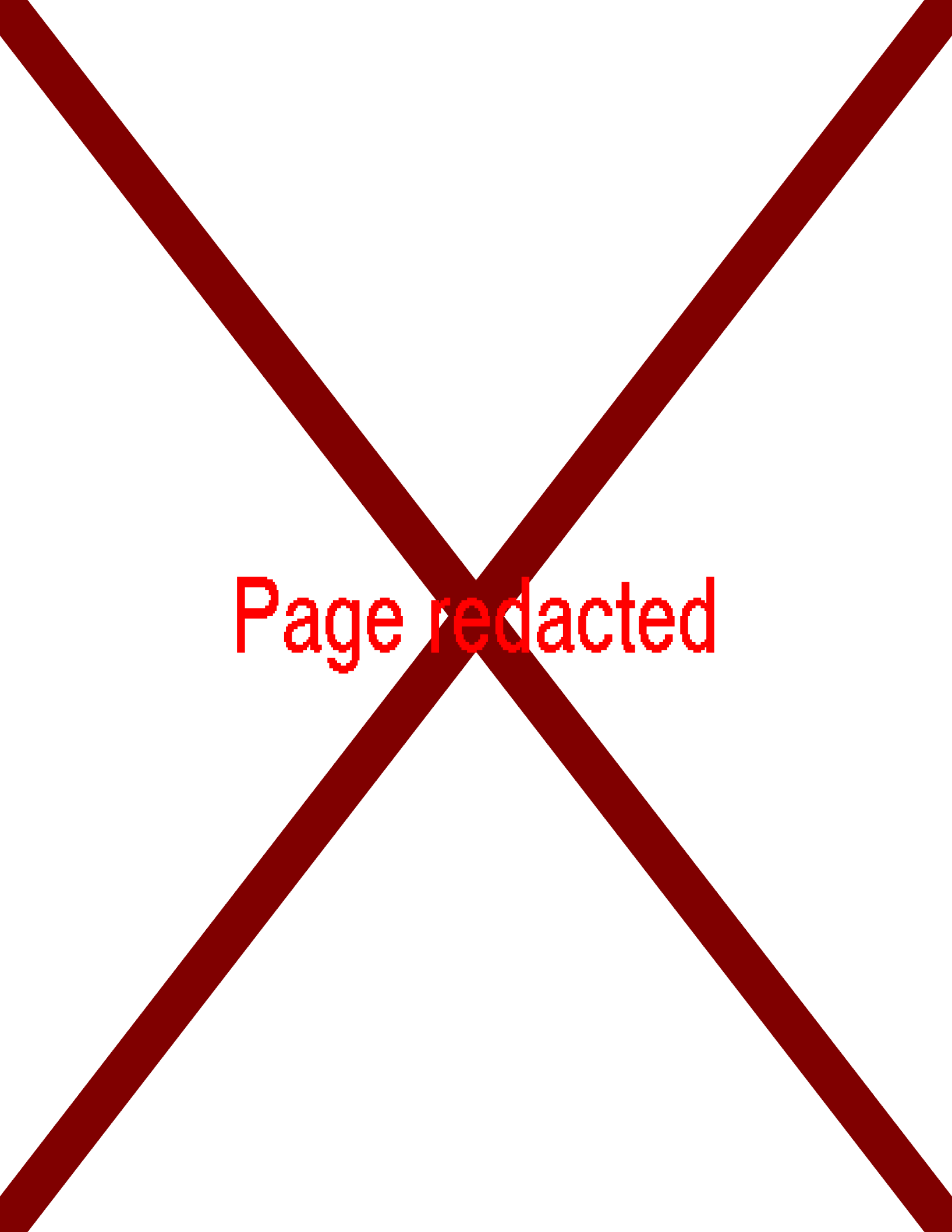
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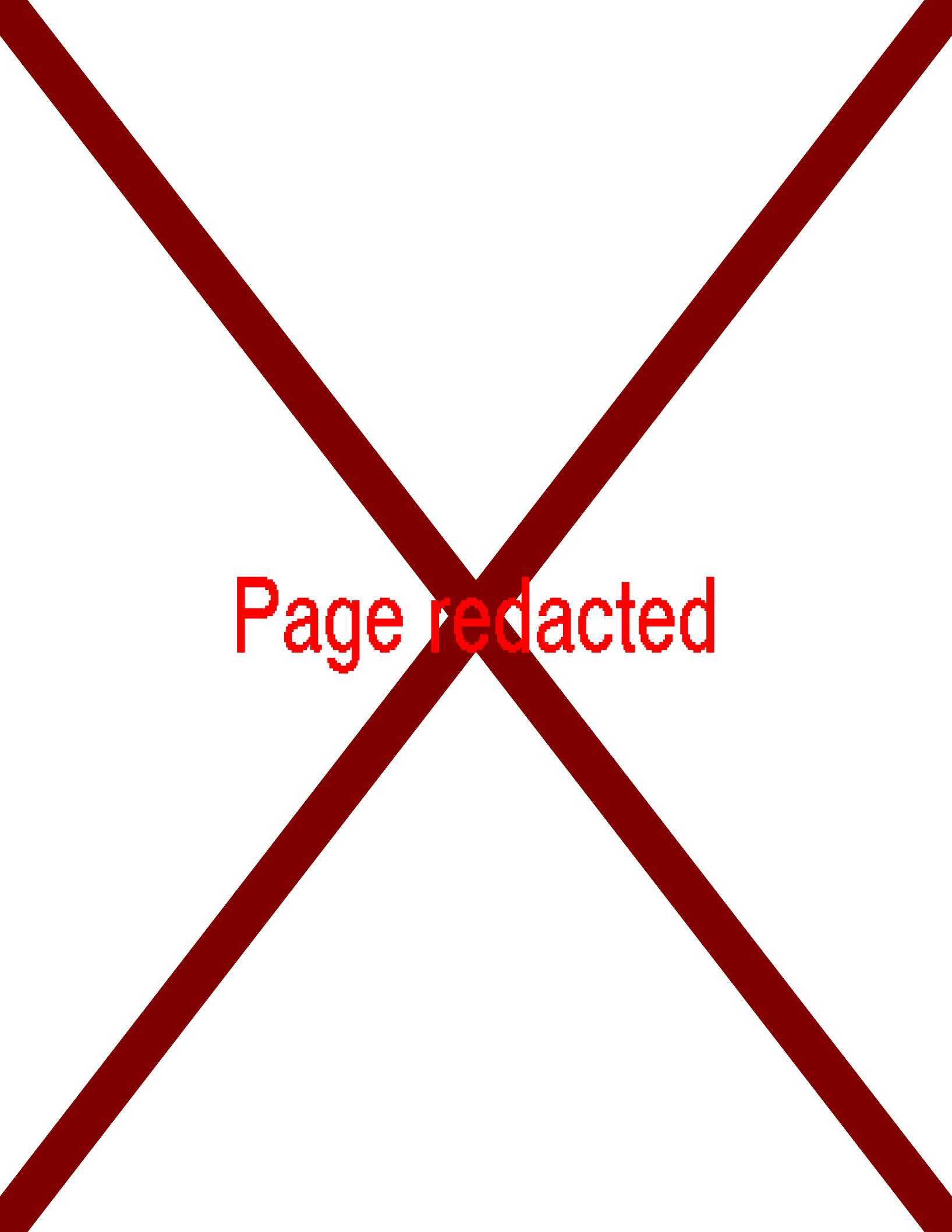
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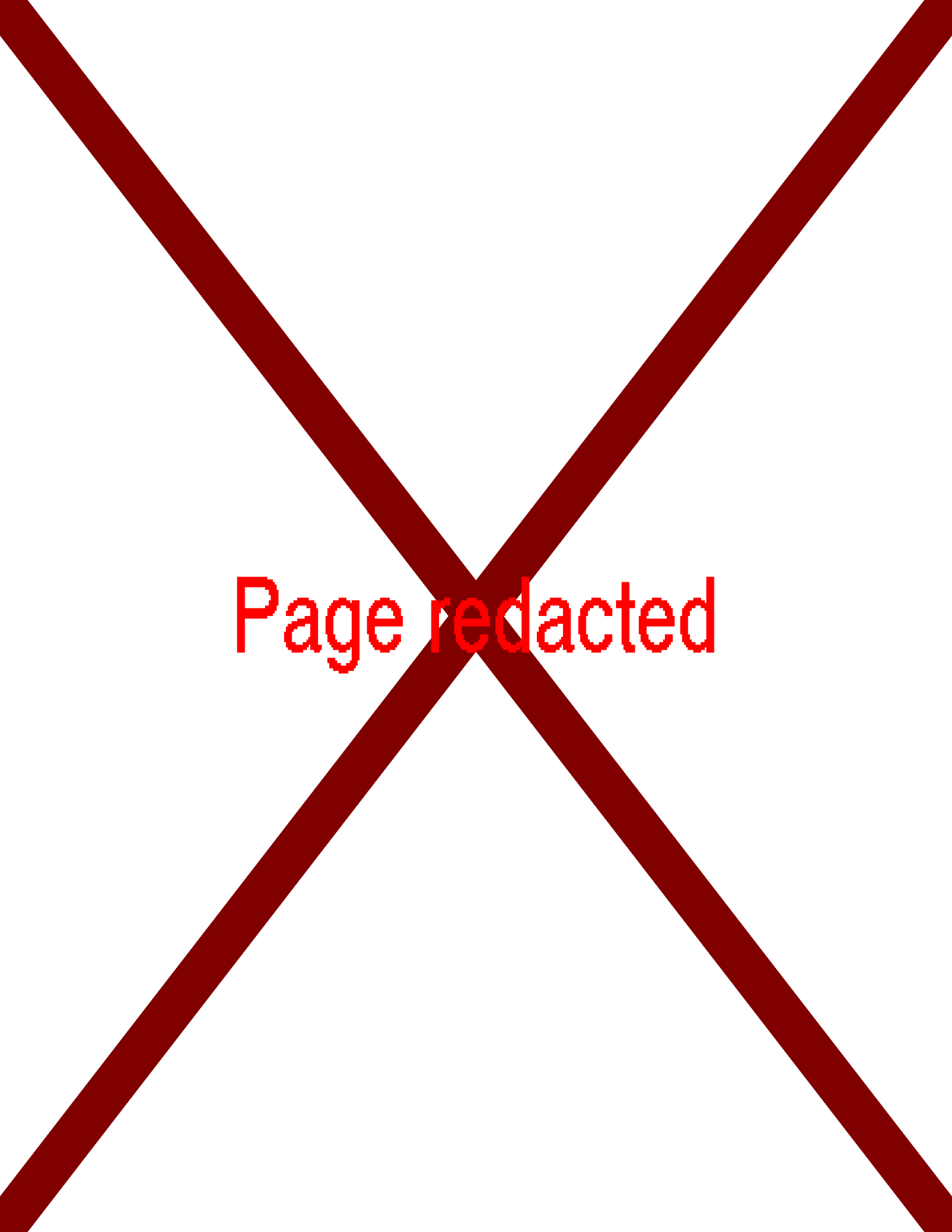
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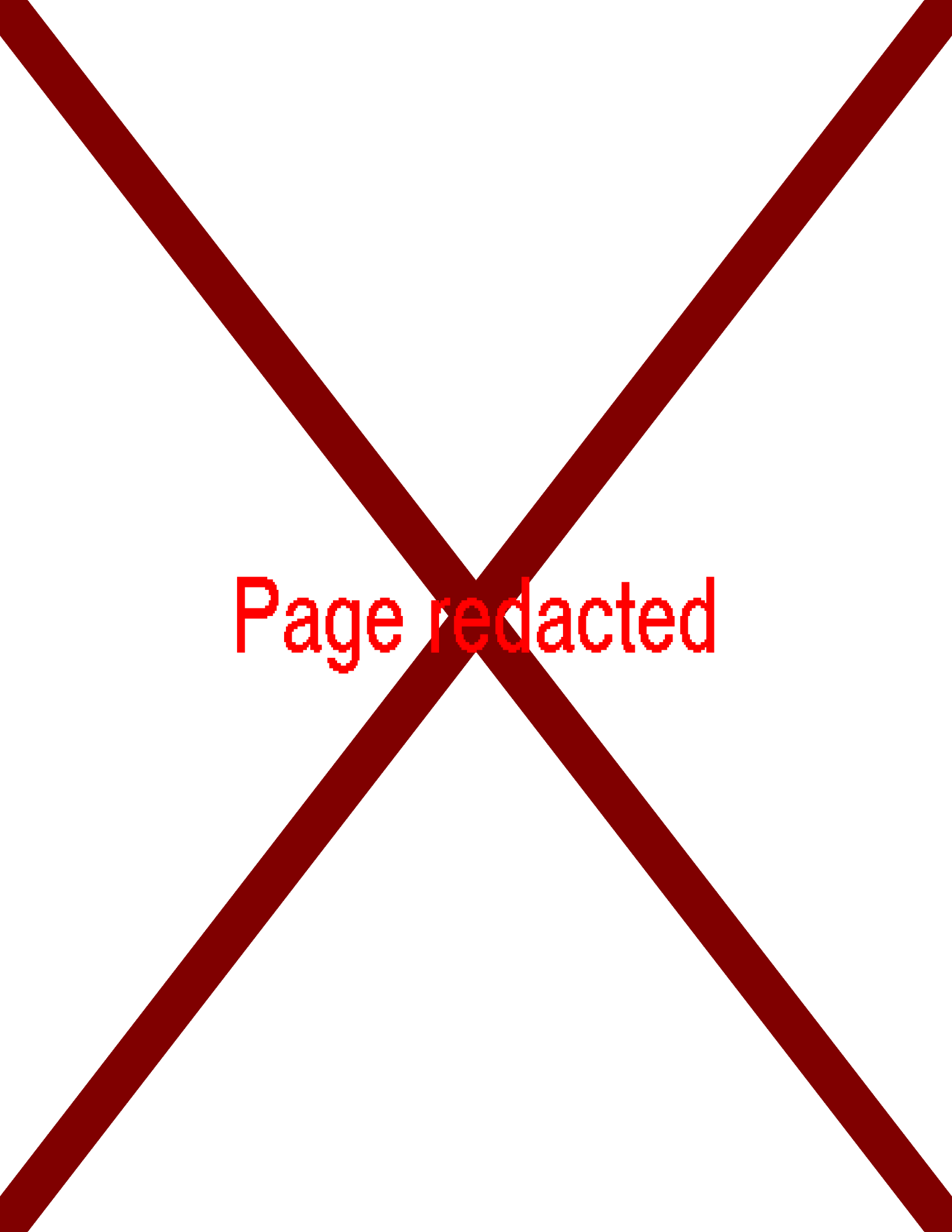
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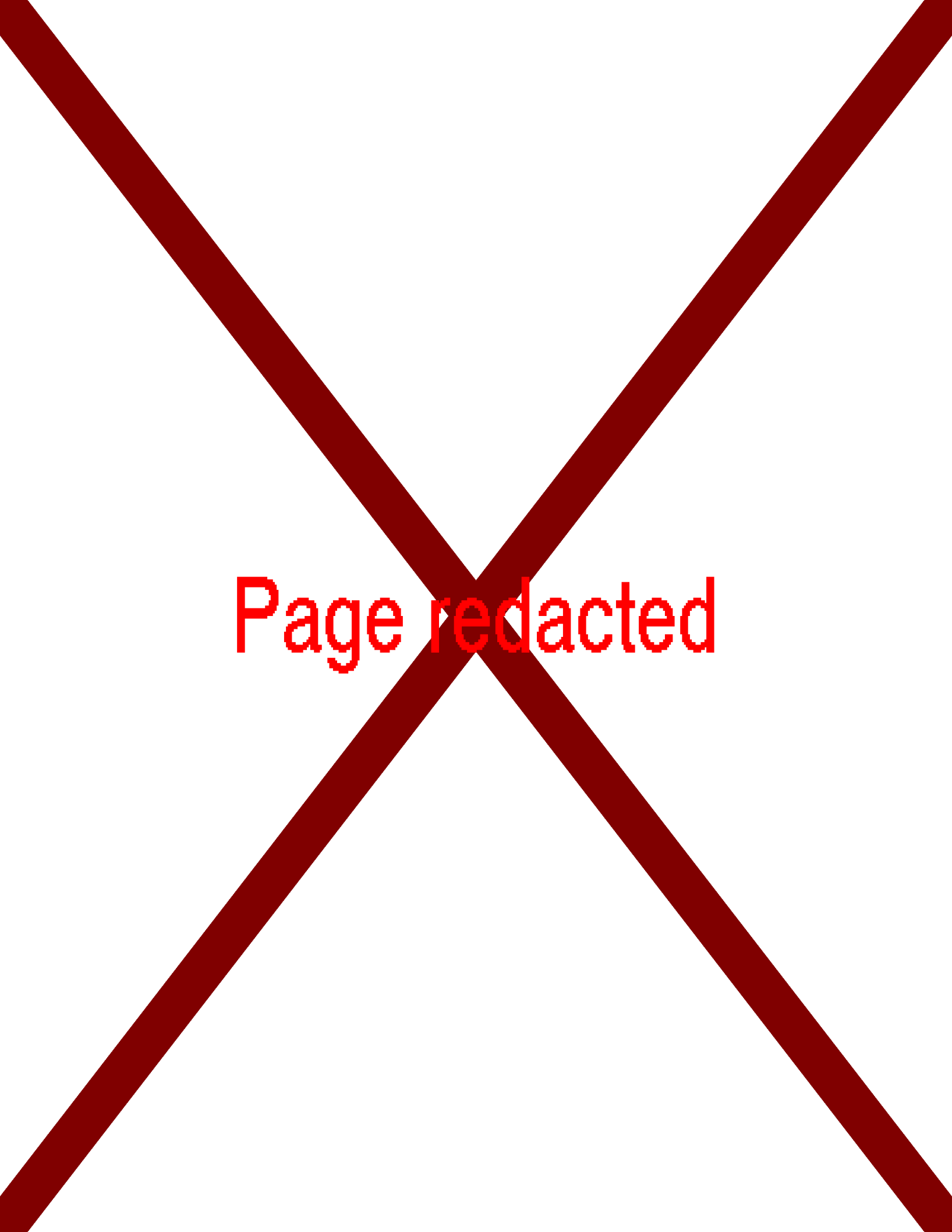
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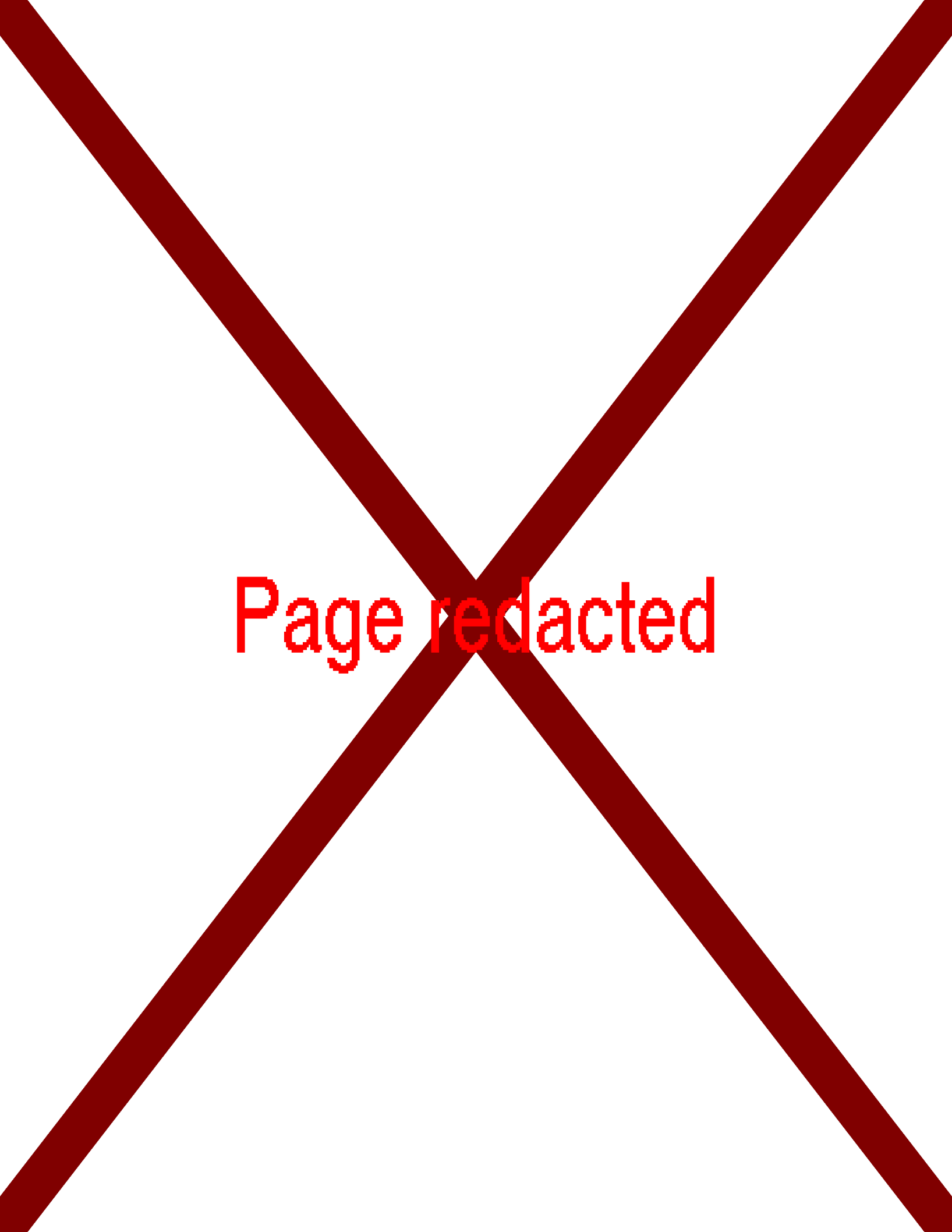
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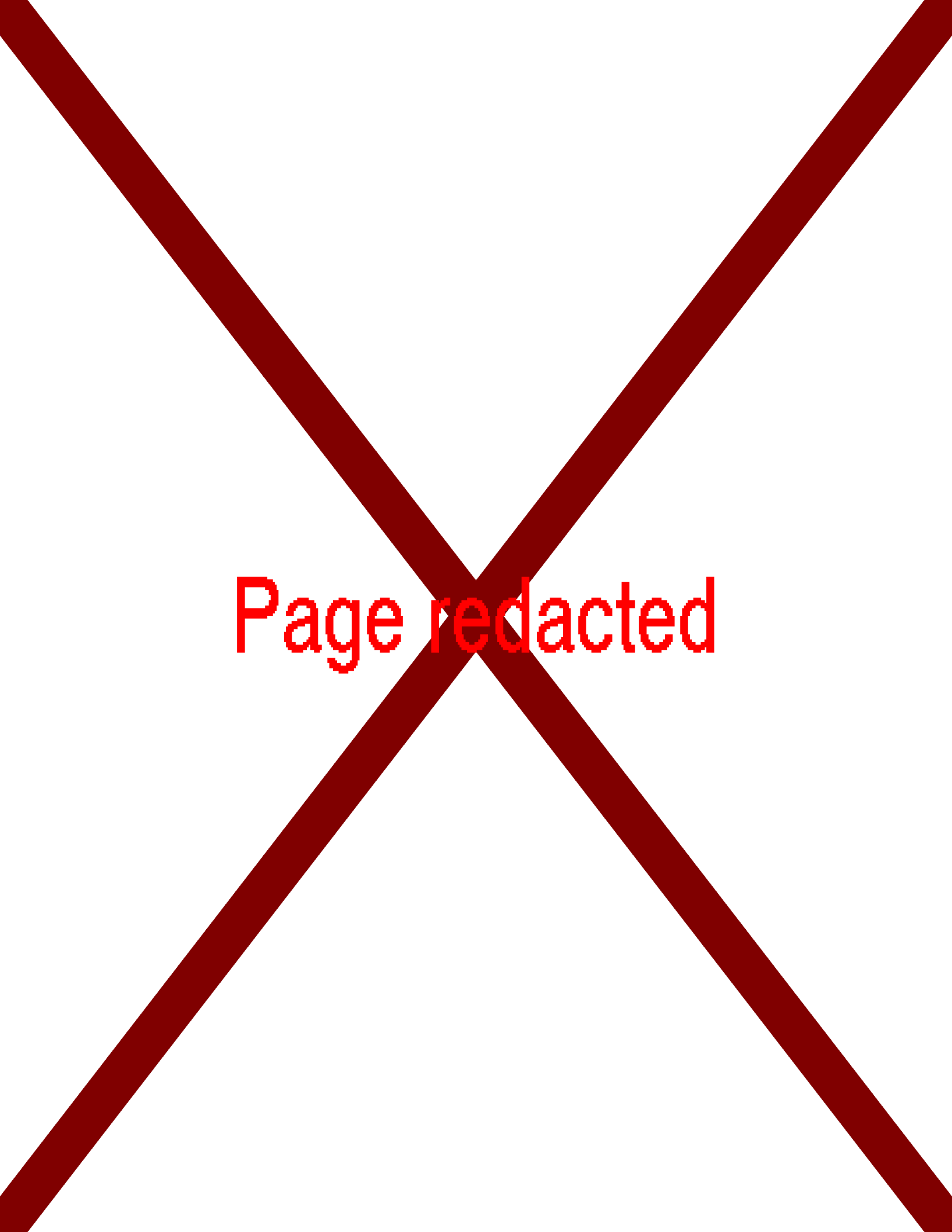
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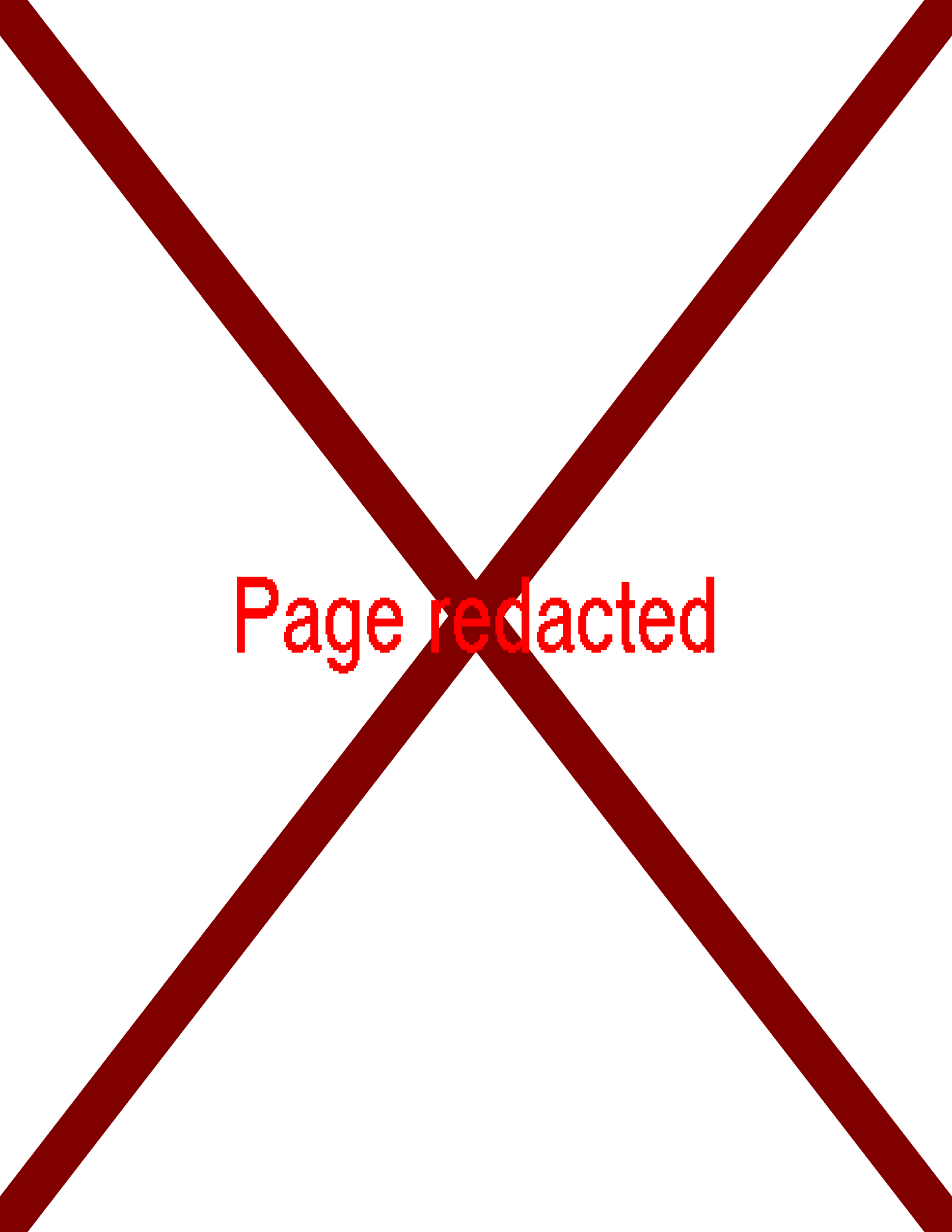
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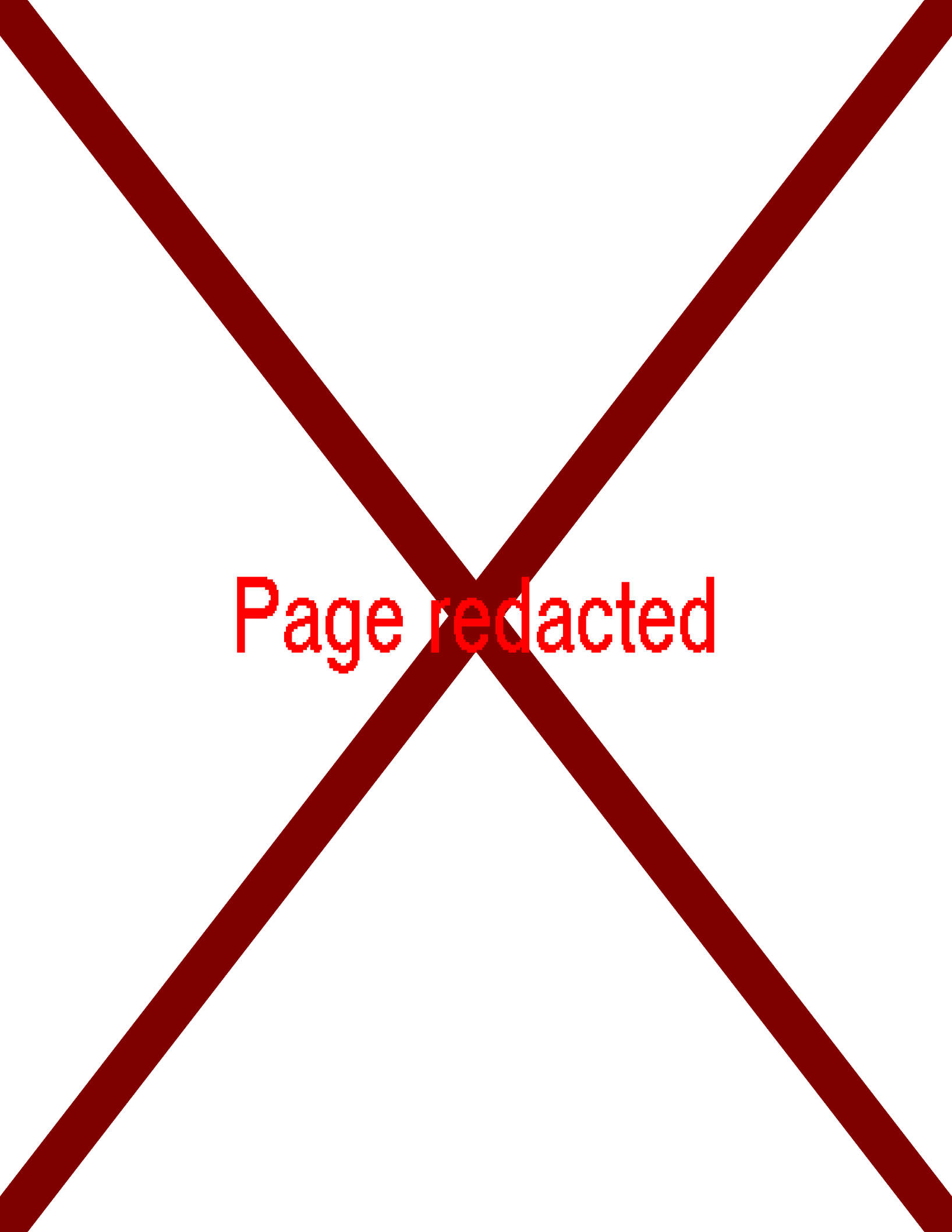
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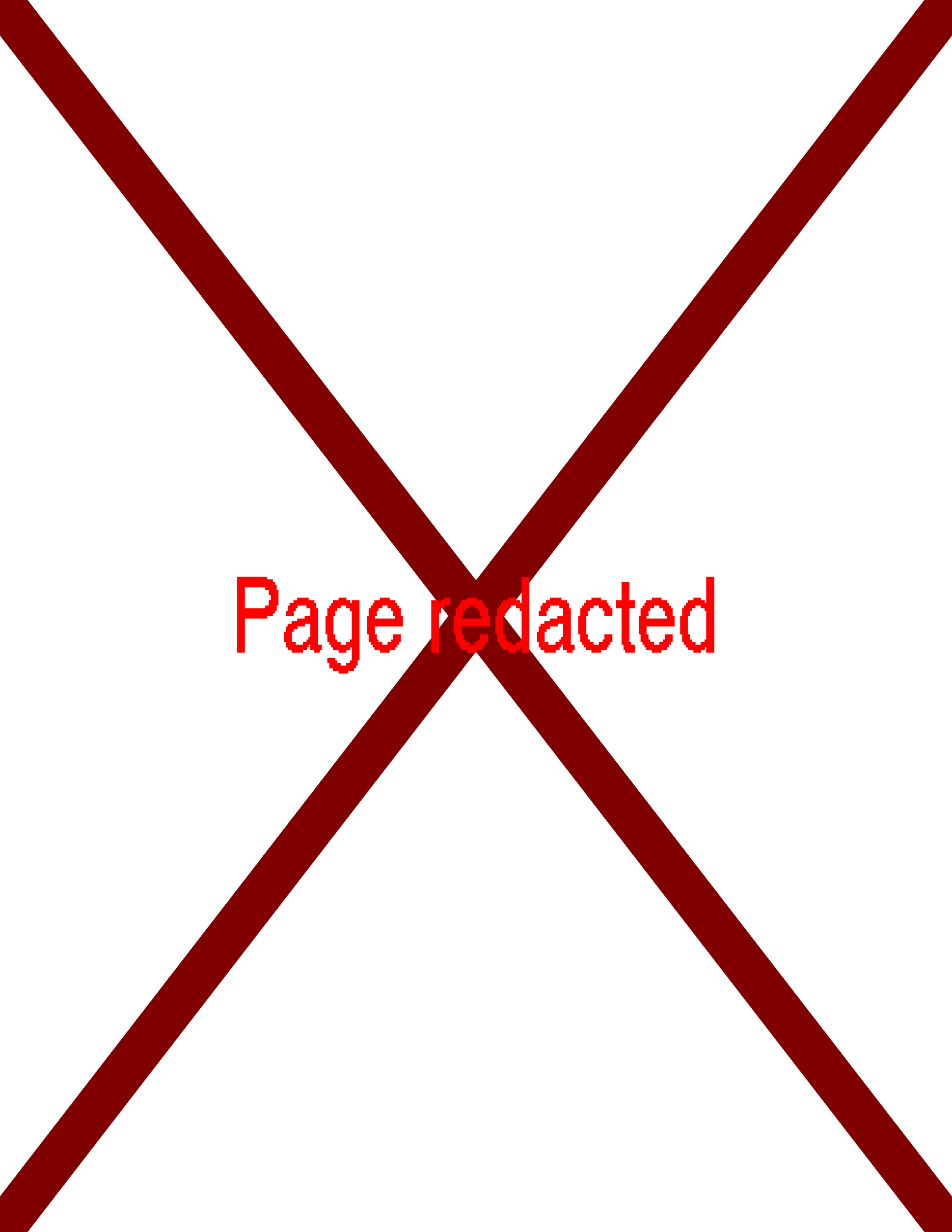
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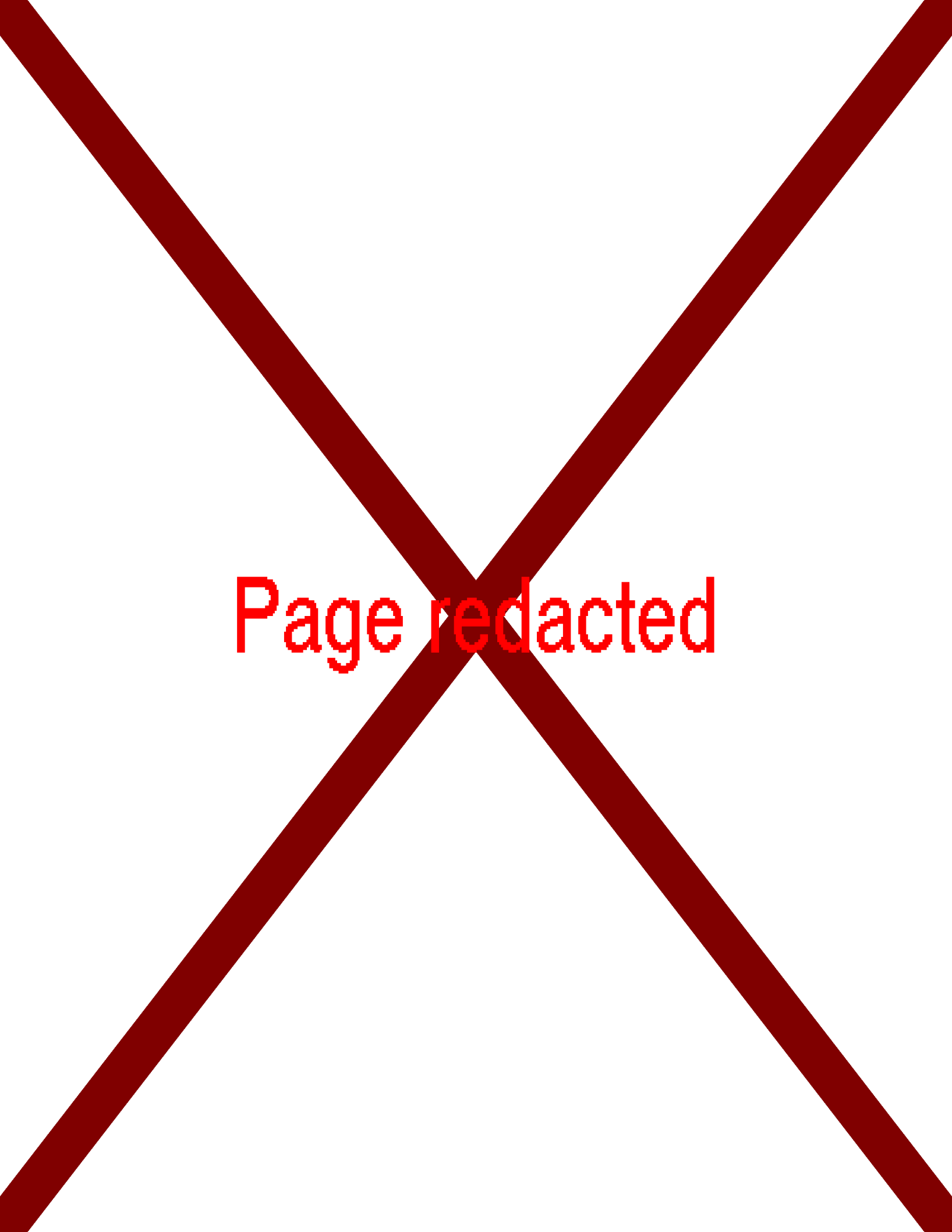
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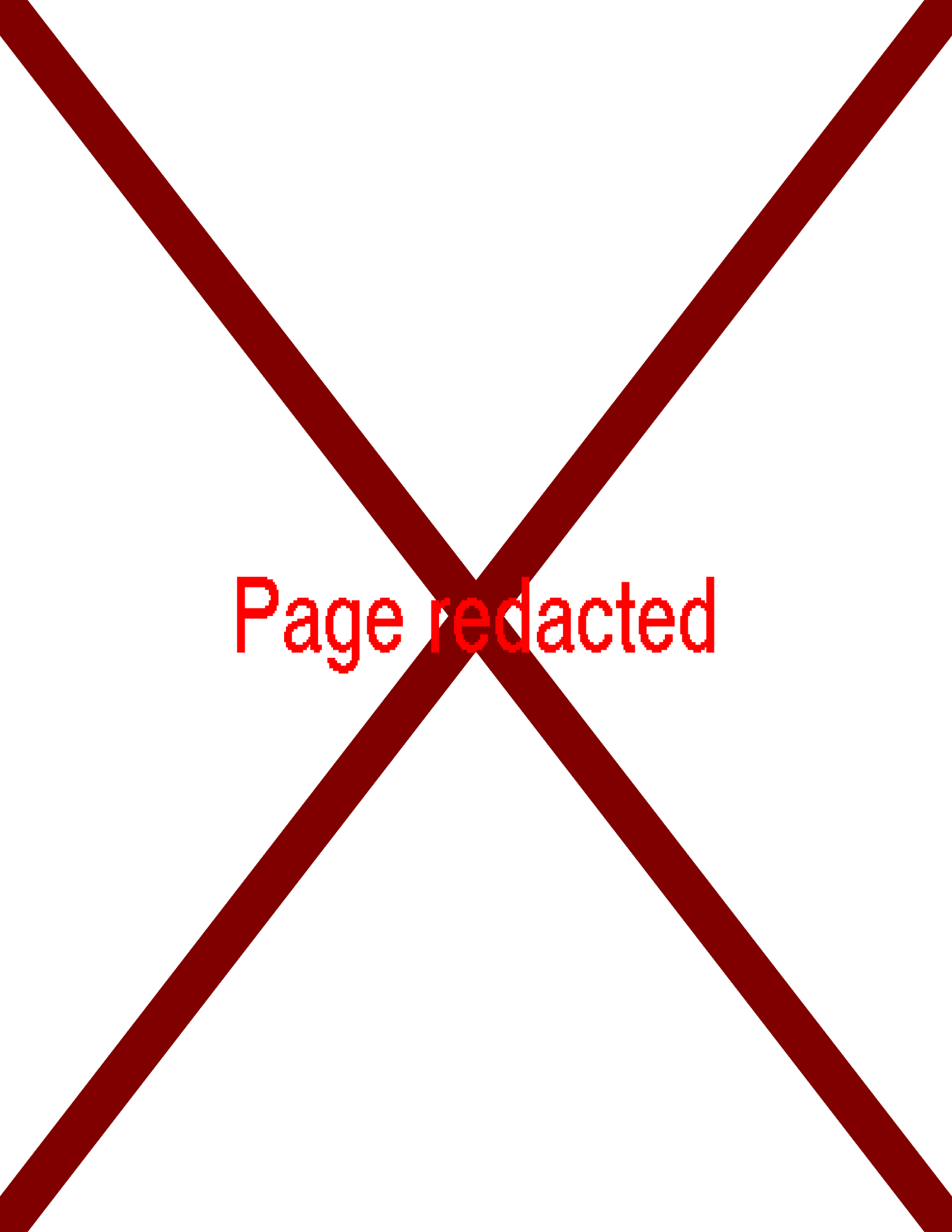
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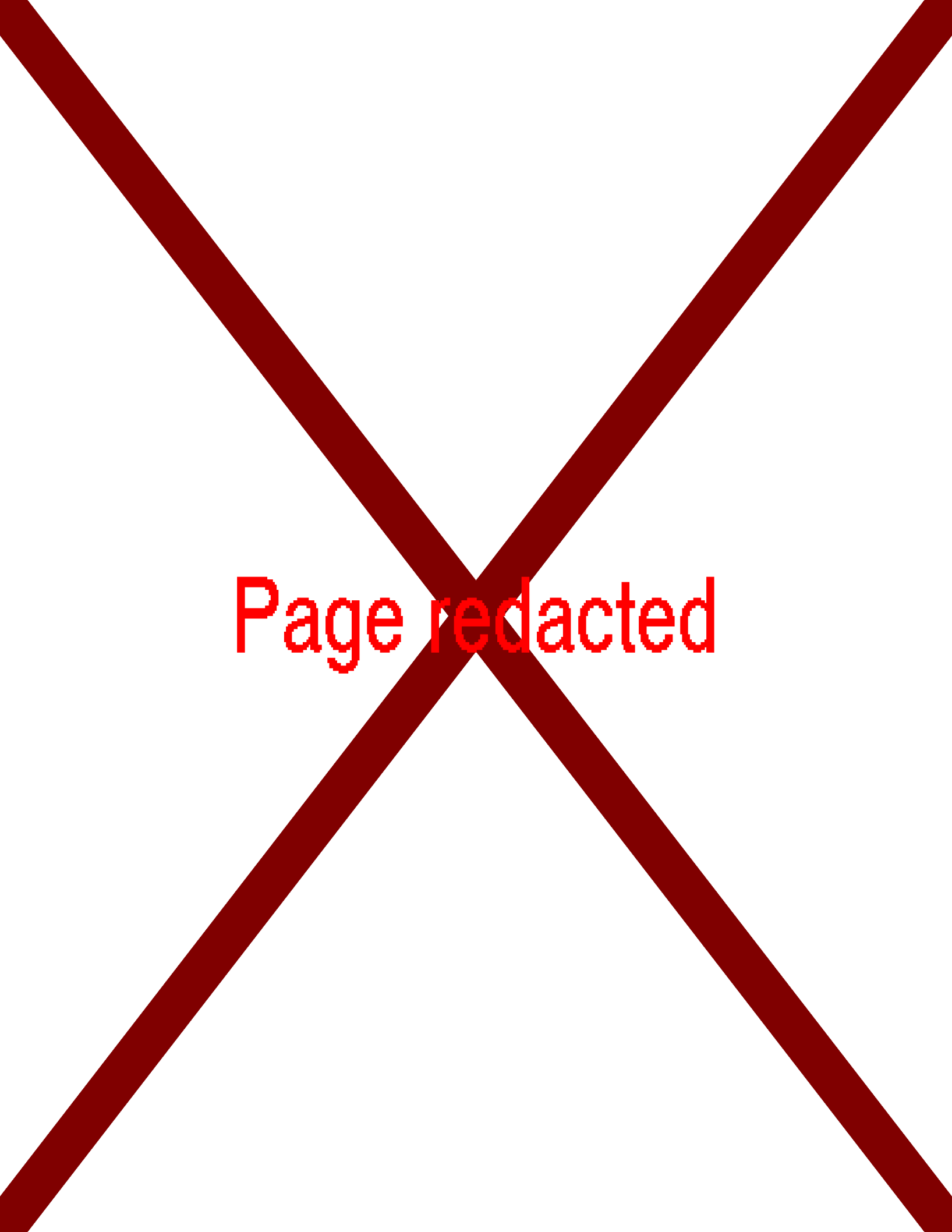
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Transparent and Respectful Indigenous Involvement in Intergovernmental Work

Background and Context

The federal government has clearly stated that its relationship with Indigenous peoples is an important priority. The federal government places a priority on the involvement of representative Indigenous organizations in intergovernmental fora, fora that have previously been the exclusive domain of Canada's two senior orders of government.

All provinces and territories (PTs) have unique and valued relationships with regional and local Indigenous partners. Along with these relationships, PTs have, for several years, whether in respect of the annual Premiers' meeting with National Indigenous Organization (NIO) leaders, in FPT and PT intergovernmental processes, or otherwise, been increasingly engaging with NIOs.

Provincial and territorial involvement with NIOs and NIO leaders has resulted in a number of important outcomes – from the creation of the Aboriginal Affairs Working Group (now the Federal, Provincial, Territorial, Indigenous Forum, or FPTIF), and its efforts to improve Indigenous student achievement, housing and economic development, to the two National Roundtables on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and the creation of a socio-economic action plan for Aboriginal women.

In July 2016, Premiers committed to continue meeting each summer with the five NIO leaders. Premiers also directed senior officials to further develop principles on Indigenous involvement, which are provided in this note.

A Way Forward

The following principles are intended to guide transparent and respectful involvement of representative Indigenous organizations in intergovernmental work, while noting the importance of respecting intergovernmental fora as the main avenue for interaction between both orders of government at the multilateral level.

- 1. Recognition of – as well as respect for – the role and structure of FPT intergovernmental fora:**
 - a. Federal, provincial and territorial ministerial fora (often called "ministerial tables" or "sector tables") are FPT entities created by federal, provincial and territorial governments.
 - b. Each FPT government has a seat at the table.
 - c. These entities are not controlled by any one government. They are consensus-based entities usually co-chaired by two governments. Consensus requires that all FPT governments be comfortable with a course of action and be supportive before it proceeds.
- 2. NIO leader involvement will be determined by FPT governments:**
 - a. FPT governments should avoid unilateral or surprise decisions in meetings and work planning for FPT meetings.

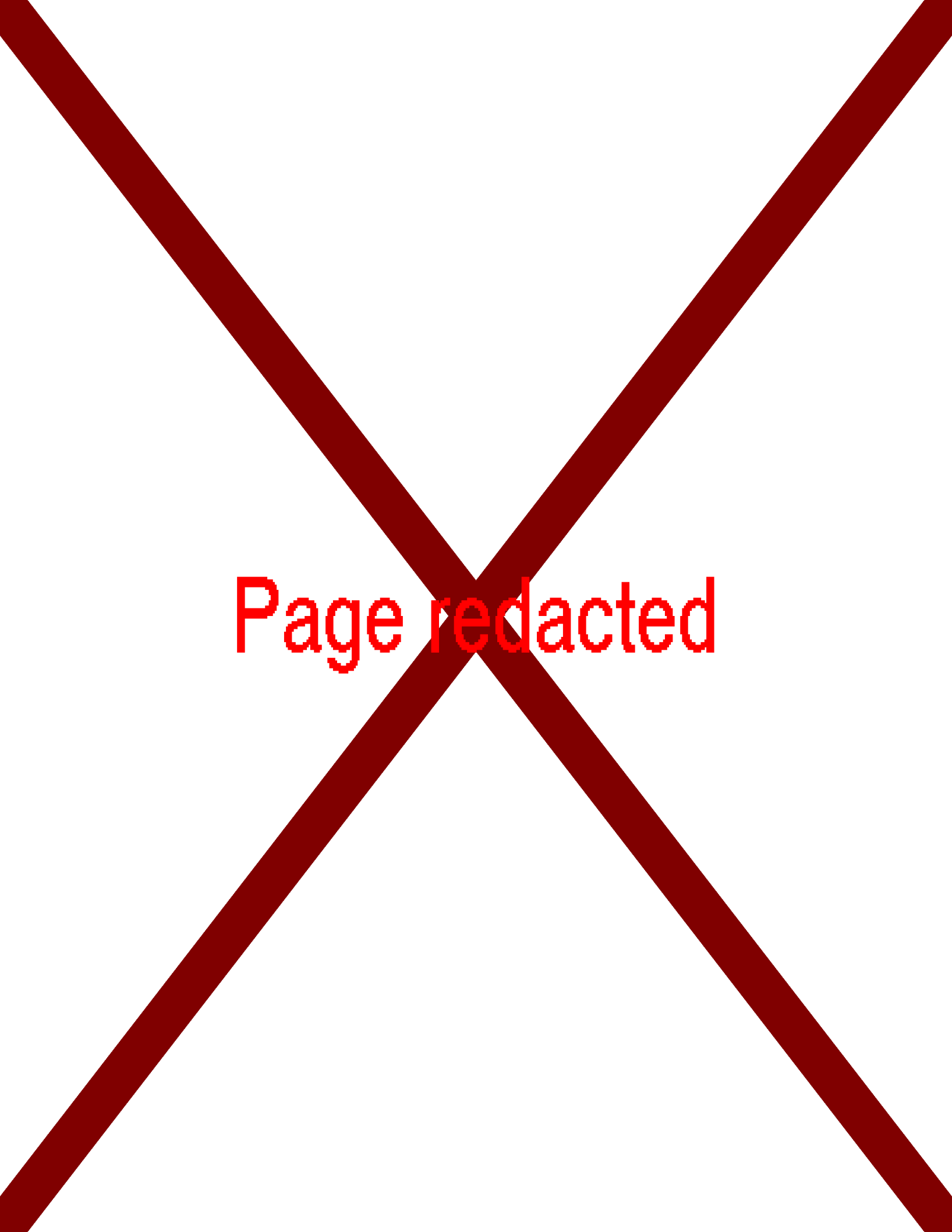
March 1, 2017

- b. Open and transparent communications should guide the meeting planning process.
 - c. Agenda planning and the determination of meeting participants should respect the need for the federal government and PTs to hold meetings involving only the two orders of government given their respective or shared jurisdiction and responsibilities.
 - d. As appropriate, consideration can be given to the inclusion of representative Indigenous leaders and organizations outside of the formal setting of FPT meetings (e.g., pre-meeting events).
 - e. The sharing of FPT documents with NIOs should only occur with the explicit consent of all FPT parties.
 - f. Public communications (news releases, communiqués, news conferences, etc.) emanating from FPT meetings should involve only FPT governments, except in instances where there is consensus that some form of tripartite communications is appropriate.
3. **Inclusivity of involvement:** When NIO involvement is desired, Premiers have clearly stated a preference for engaging at their annual summer meeting with all five NIOs (i.e. AFN, ITK, MNC, NWAC and CAP). (It should be noted that the five NIOs do not represent all Indigenous organizations or Indigenous governments in Canada.)
4. **Strategic value of the new FPTI Forum:** This forum has the potential to facilitate interactions between FPTs and NIOs and provide a mechanism for collaboration. Other FPT fora that deal with issues that directly affect Indigenous peoples' interests may stand to benefit from collaboration with the FPTI Forum on those issues.
5. **Respect for existing relationships:**
- a. Each PT has existing relationships with Indigenous peoples in its jurisdiction, including Indigenous leadership, governments, organizations and communities.
 - b. PTs and the federal government should have flexibility on how and when to engage Indigenous perspectives and priorities, while respecting principles one and two. In this regard, it is worth noting that the federal government has established a new process with regularized meetings with some NIOs.
 - c. Different communities have different needs, values, cultures, governance, economy, strengths and challenges. Research and existing best and promising practices demonstrate that culturally appropriate approaches that respect and respond to unique, local situations are most effective.

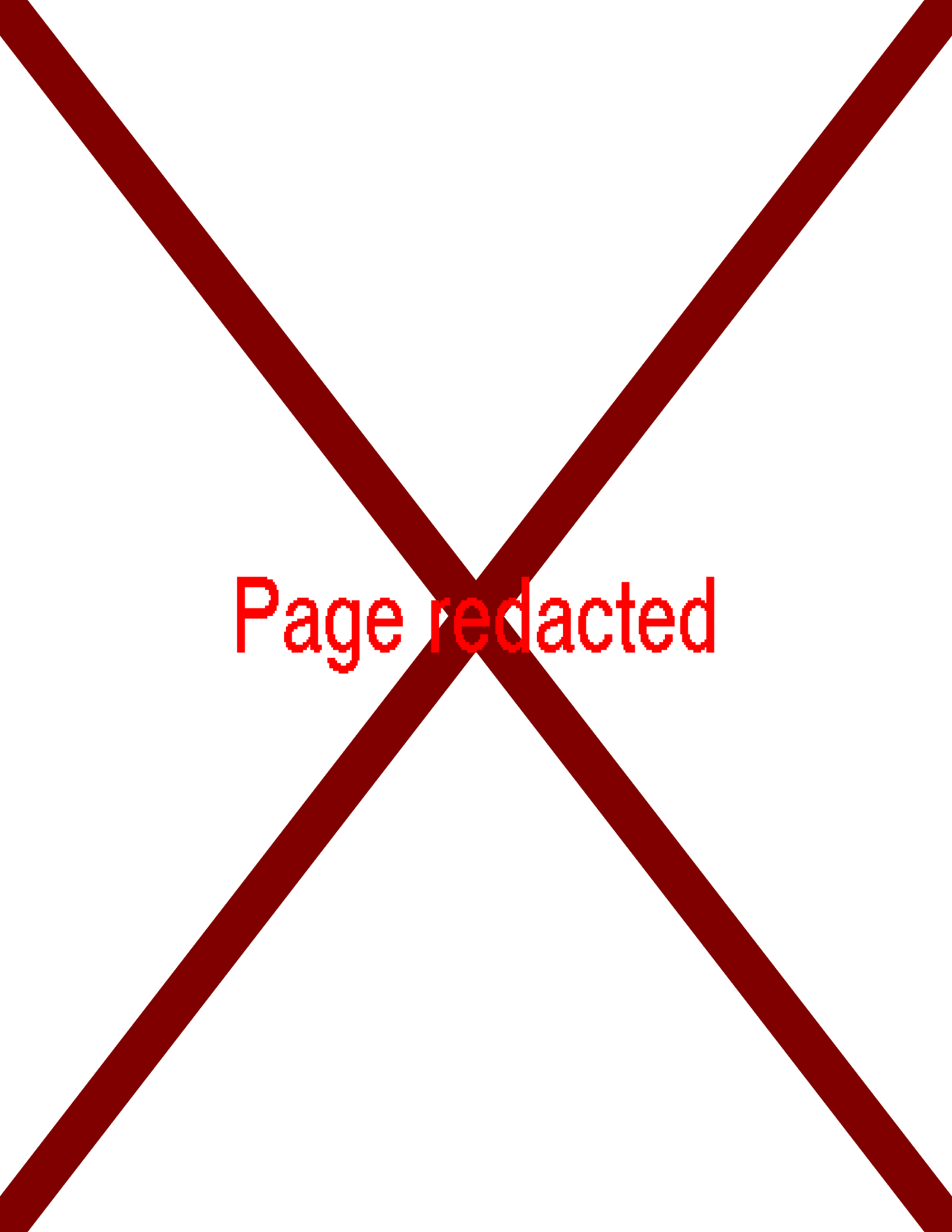
Recommendation

Based on these principles and precedents (e.g., COF, FMM), it is recommended that where appropriate FPT ministerial fora involve¹ NIOs through the use of a **separate pre-meeting** with NIOs in advance of the ministerial meeting. This allows all important views to be fully discussed while respecting the integrity of the intergovernmental forum.

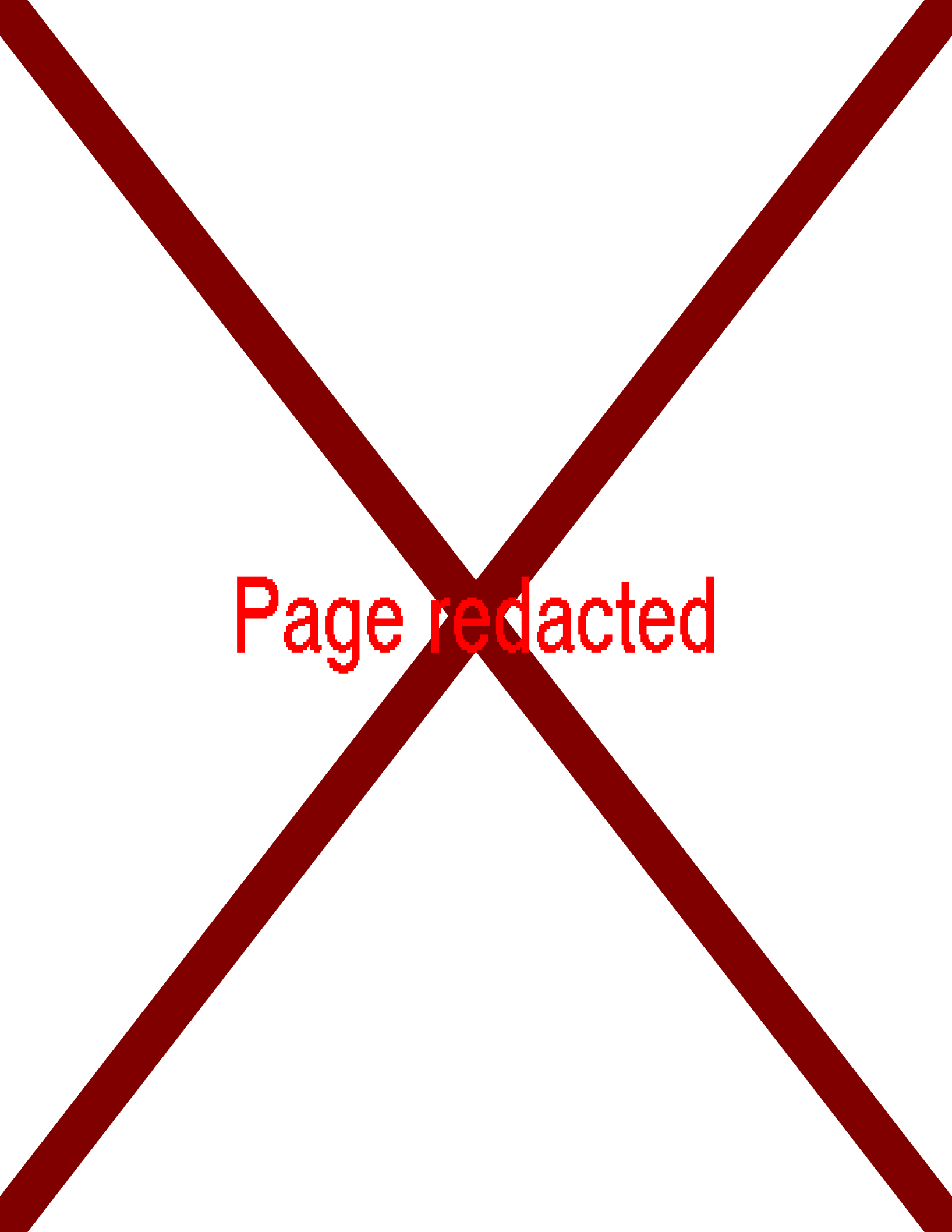
¹ Costs associated with NIO participation are the financial responsibility of the NIO and/or the federal government, not PT governments.



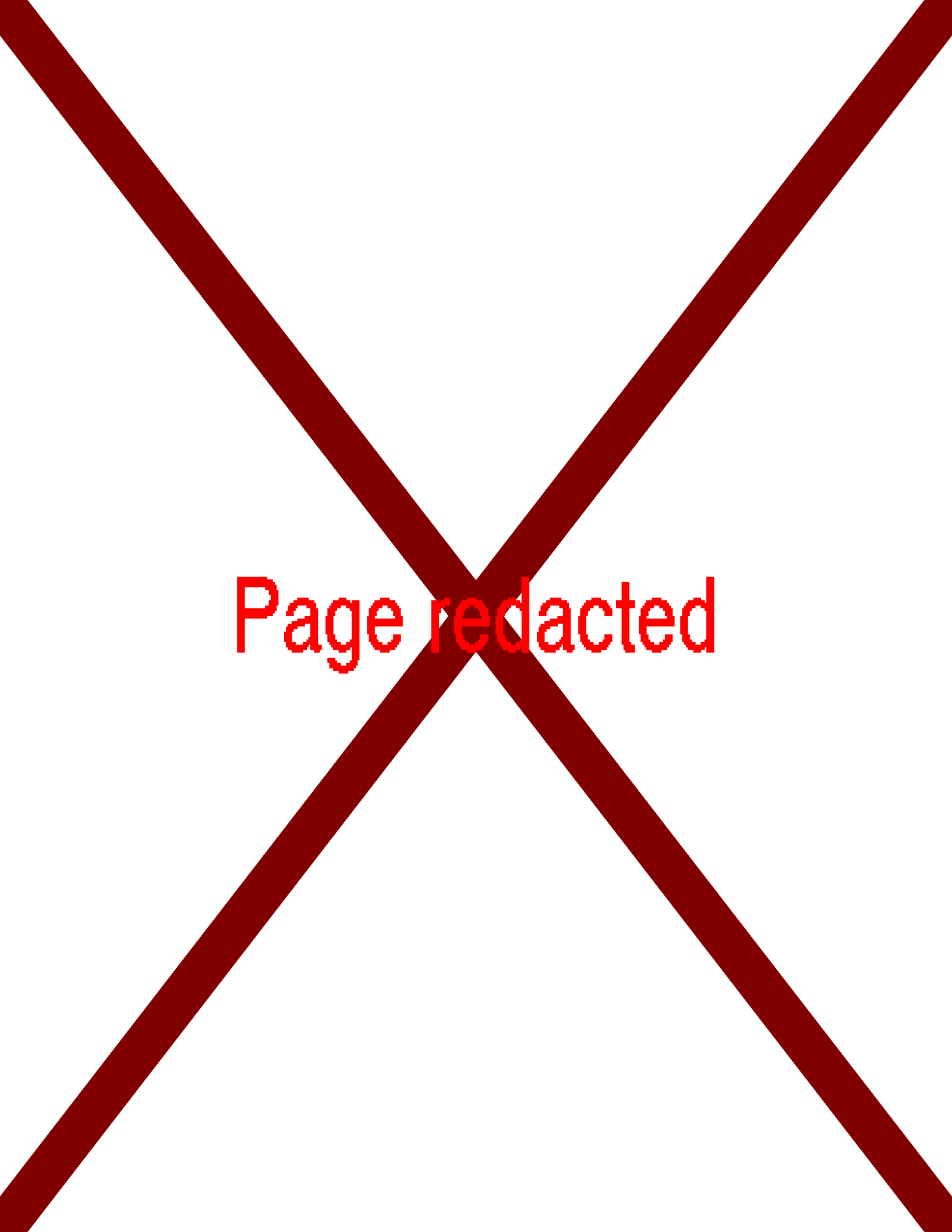
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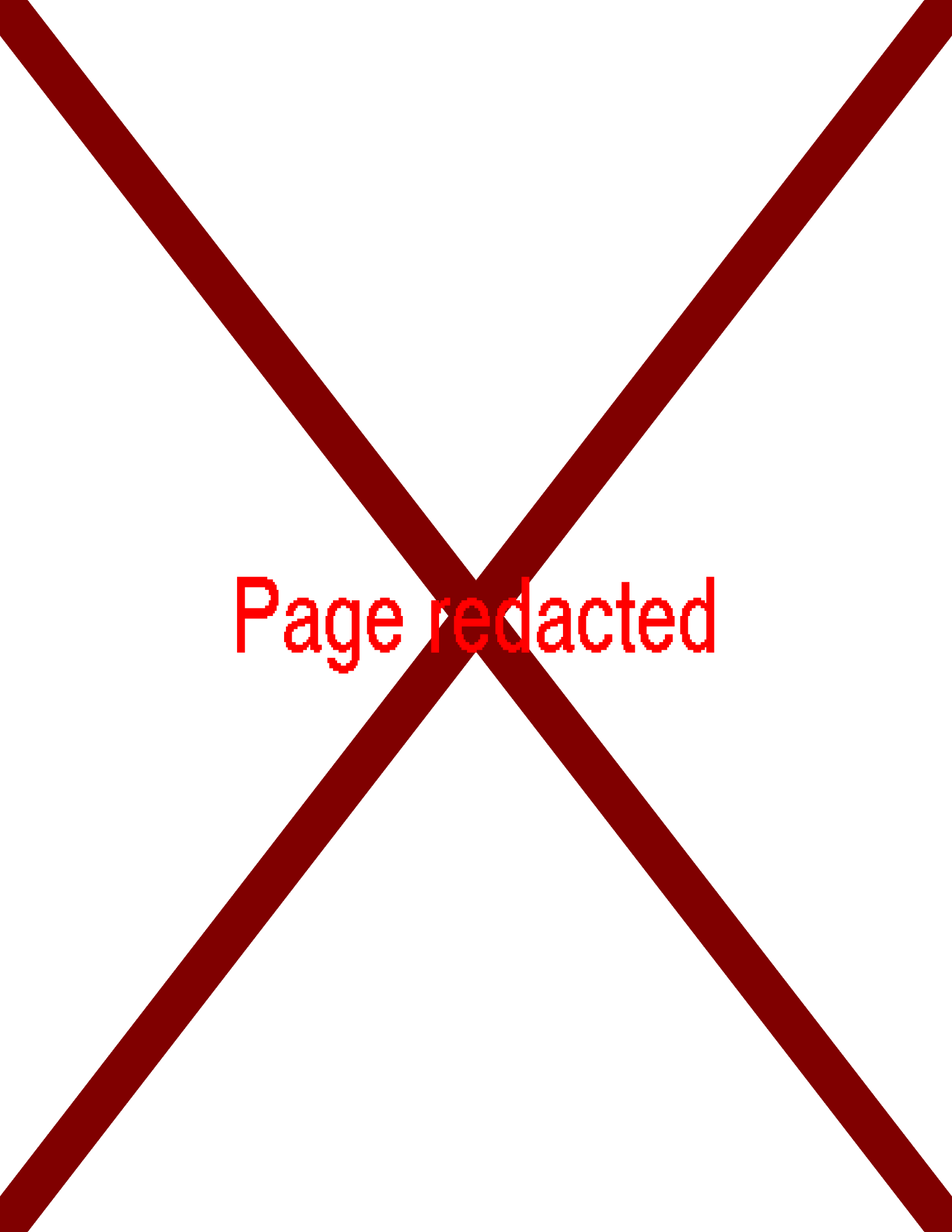
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