

Inciting hostility crosses a line

BY DIVERSITY THUNDER BAY

A CANADIAN comedy troupe that has been profiled by the Canadian Anti-Hate Network for their ties to white nationalism and for their anti-Semitic, transphobic, homophobic and misogynistic content is scheduled to perform in Thunder Bay.

Their act has also included offensive material referring to residential schools and unmarked graves.

Most recently, they were selling a T-shirt depicting a crude caricature of serial killer Robert Pickton — murderer of dozens of women, many of whom were Indigenous.

While there are some that would defend this type of 'shock humour' under the guise of freedom of speech, we ask you to consider this statement from the United Nations High Commissioner



ONE CITY, MANY VOICES

for Human Rights, Volker Turk: "Human rights law is clear — freedom of expression stops at hatred that incites discrimination, hostility or violence."

Diversity Thunder Bay believes that an event such as this will greatly hinder reconciliation and cause harm in our city by inflaming and reinforcing anti-Indigenous racism and by impacting the sense of belonging and even the safety of Indigenous people.

Normalizing this type of humour only serves to perpetuate the dehumanization of Indigenous people and the

violence towards them.

Due to our grave concern over its potential negative impacts, we are calling for the immediate cancellation of these shows.

Thunder Bay will only move forward with reconciliation through concerted collective action.

We must all stand up together against racism, discrimination and hate in all its forms to make Thunder Bay a welcoming and safe place for all.

This column is from Diversity Thunder Bay's executive members. Email DiversityThunderBay@gmail.com for further information. Diversity Thunder Bay works towards an inclusive, equitable community free of racism and discrimination of any kind. The views and opinions expressed in this column are those of the authors.