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An invitation to all persons and groups to help in the reconditioning of the Japanese American cemetery on N. E. 50th avenue at 1 P. M. Saturday has been issued by the Rev. J. W. Reed, president of the Portland Fellowship of Reconciliation.

Rev. Mr. Reed noted that the grass needs cutting, the weeds are high, and the shrubbery needs trimming. Work will begin at any time through the afternoon or early evening, he said.

"In all probability, Negroes and whites, Jews, Catholics, Protestants and Americans of Chinese descent will be working side by side on this project," said Rev. Mr. Reed.

At 6:15 P. M. a potluck supper will be served. It will be followed by a discussion of racial and interfaith matters with the emphasis being given to Portland's special problems. Five youth representatives of various racial and religious groups will lead the discussion.

Sunday at 4:30 P. M. the cemetery will be the scene of the celebration of the Japanese "bon-matsuri" or memorial festival in honor of the deceased.

### Japanese-American Aid

No Japanese can be present on August 15 due to wartime restrictions, but the Minidoka Japanese-Americans from Portland are sending money for flowers with which to decorate the graves.

Dean G. A. Odgers of Multnomah college, who has been a missionary in the orient and has witnessed the "bon-matsuri" several times, will be the speaker on this occasion.

"It is felt this gesture of friendliness to members of a group unable to be present will not be amiss in a world too often characterized by hatred and bloodshed," continued the printed sheet issued by Rev. Mr. Reed.

A scroll will be kept of those participating in the two days' activities, and will be sent to the Japanese-Americans in the Minidoka relocation center at Hunt, Idaho.

"The memory of our act of helpfulness will strengthen and encourage them as they pick up their few belongings and undertake the making of new homes further east," was the hope expressed by Rev. Mr. Reed.

## Jap Memorial Plan Blocked

(Pictures on Wirephoto Page)

Blocked by American Legionnaires and other persons, a small group of members of the Portland Fellowship of Reconciliation Saturday afternoon was prevented from reconditioning the Japanese cemetery at N. E. 50th avenue, near Fremont street.

Fearing that more serious trouble might develop, Sheriff Martin T. Pratt ordered the members of the pacifistic organization to desist in efforts to enter upon the burial ground, threatening arrests if they did not comply.

### President Calls Off Plans

As a result, plans to clean up the cemetery and on Sunday decorate the graves "as a gesture of friendliness to members of a group unable to be present" on the Japanese holiday, "bon matsuri," were dropped Saturday night.

"We are not going to make trouble," said Rev. J. W. Reed, president of the fellowship. "We won't try to have anything. The Sunday program has been dropped."

Sheriff Pratt, at the cemetery, told Howard Willits, a secretary for the national Y. M. C. A. and a leader of the fellowship group, that plans to clean up the cemetery and celebrate Japanese memorial day might lead to a riot. He then ordered all persons, including the legionnaires, to disperse. They complied.

Additional details on page 17.

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### Legionnaires Smash

However, so nearly 20 city and county law enforcement officers were on hand at the cemetery at 1 P. M., the hour the clean-up campaign was scheduled to begin. Also present at that time were ranking county and city legion officials.

First of the clean-up group to arrive were a woman and boy who left quickly when they were advised of the situation. Willits arrived about 1:30 P. M. and argued with City Commissioner Fred L. Peterson,

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## Sheriff Checks Group Pacifists Seeking Honor Japanese Dead

(Story on Page 1, Also)

Authorities who prevented members of the Portland Fellowship of Reconciliation from cleaning the Japanese cemetery on N. E. 50th avenue near Fremont street Saturday acted to avert possibility of a riot. Sheriff Pratt, Portland police Multnomah County District Attorney James R. Bain began to receive calls of protest from group leaders, lodge officials and other individuals Saturday. Appearance of a story in Oregonian telling of plans for the Fellowship of Reconciliation to recondition the Japanese cemetery, hold a potluck dinner and discuss inter-faith questions at the graveyard Saturday and hold a "bon matsuri" celebration in honor of the Japanese dead Sunday.

### Legionnaires on Hand

Fearing trouble might ensue, Sheriff Pratt and Bain contacted and attempted to dissuade the group from following through on the program. Willits insisted his group had a constitutional right to proceed.

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Sheriff Pratt, Captain of Detectives J. J. Keegan and the legionnaires for more than an hour.

Joe DeBoest, commander of Portland legion post No. 1, flatly told Willits, who was chairman of the clean-up campaign, that "the American Legion won't stand for this monkey business." Captain Keegan commented: "That's the stand, commander."

### Willits Defends Group

Willits asserted that "we're here in a peaceful way and want no trouble for anyone." Reminded that America is at war with Japan, Willits answered: "These are not the same Japs as the ones we are fighting. These are dead. Many of them were American citizens. Their families are not here to care for their graves, so we propose to."

As several legionnaires charged that the Fellowship of Reconciliation was "boosting Buddhism" by observing the Japanese festival, Willits avowed that "99 per cent of our members are active in Christian churches."

After the city, county and legion officials present had advised him to "go home and forget about this business," Willits plodded up to the cemetery gate, entered, took off his coat and began to pull weeds. At that time he was the only member of the fellowship present and he was not disturbed in his work.

### Legion Man Interferes

Soon, however, J. J. Handsaker, long connected with Portland religious and pacifist work, arrived and attempted to enter the burial ground. He was met by Legionnaire Bob Smith, post No. 1 service officer; Warren Forman, Multnomah county council commander, and others who barred his way. Another argument ensued and the legionnaires told the elderly Handsaker he could not enter the cemetery. They told Willits the same thing when he came out to talk to his cohort.

Sheriff Pratt by that time had returned to his office and

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Sheriff Pratt, Portland police and Multnomah County District Attorney James R. Bain began to receive calls of protest from veterans' leaders, lodge officials and other individuals Saturday after appearance of a story in The Oregonian telling of plans of the Fellowship of Reconciliation to recondition the Japanese cemetery, hold a potluck dinner and discuss inter-faith questions at the graveyard Saturday and to hold a "bon matsuri" celebration in honor of the Japanese dead Sunday.

### Officials on Hand

Realizing trouble might ensue, Pratt and Bain contacted Willits and attempted to dissuade him from following through on the program. Willits insisted his group had a constitutional right to proceed, however, so nearly 20 city and county law enforcement officers were on hand at the cemetery at 1 P. M., the hour the clean-up campaign was scheduled to begin. Also present at that time were ranking county and city legion officials.

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Sheriff Pratt by that time had returned to his office and Deputy Edgar Miller radioed to his chief for instructions when the crowd became larger, the argument waxed hotter and one legionnaire began pushing at Willits.

Miller returned from his car and advised Willits and Handsaker that Pratt had ordered their arrest if they attempted to enter the cemetery against his wishes of the crowd. Denied the use of the sheriff's radio, the two then began to search for a telephone by which they could talk to Pratt personally.

#### Dozen Appear at Scene

As they entered one establishment after another, D. M. Penny of 4346 N. E. Skidmore street would step in front of the telephones and order them away. Willits' only comment would be: "Thank you, brother; probably you are right; probably you always are right." Penny, who described himself as "an American patriot," heckled Handsaker and Willits for ten blocks or so before they finally were able to use a telephone. By that time Pratt had returned to the scene.

The number of members of the Fellowship of Reconciliation at the cemetery grew to approximately a dozen. They were kept at bay by a few remaining legionnaires, deputy sheriffs and a small knot of passers-by. When Willits and Handsaker returned to the cemetery entrance, they were told by Pratt that they could not enter the graveyard. "I feel that by permitting you to go in there would incite a riot," he told them.

Pratt advised Willits that "you have recourse in the courts if you want to tap me." Willits indicated he would investigate such procedure.

#### Pratt Backs Up Order

Asked if his order was effective only for Saturday or would hold true Sunday when the memorial ceremony was scheduled, Pratt asserted: "This rule applies now and forever as far as this group is concerned."

At one time during the day Willits challenged deputy sheriffs to seek and prosecute the culprits who previously had tipped over nearly half of the markers in the 500-grave cemetery which has been in existence 35 years.

The fellowship group had received \$30 for flowers from Japanese internees at the Minidoka relocation center at Hunt, Idaho, and had intended to lay wreaths in the Japanese cemetery and also in Lone Fir and Lincoln Memorial cemeteries where other Portland Japanese are buried. The Japanese graveyard is not connected with the nearby Rose City cemetery.

#### Elks' Ruler Protests

The Portland Fellowship of Reconciliation had planned the two-day event as a "gesture of friendliness to members of a group unable to be present" and, according to advance publicity, hoped the actions "will not be amiss in a world too often characterized by hatred and bloodshed."

The sympathies of the law enforcement officers at the scene Saturday were obviously with the legionnaires and they made no effort to halt the heckling.

Lew Wallace, exalted ruler of the Elks lodge here, issued a statement protesting reconditioning of the Japanese burial ground. He said he considered such an activity at the present time an insult to American war dead.