

## Statement on the Colonization of Washington (June 21, 1897)

The first thing we would go after getting control would be to call a special session of the legislature.<sup>1</sup> Then we would call a convention to revise the constitution and get all the rot out of it. We will have control of the taxing power and can tax syndicates and land sharks out of the state. Persons shall be taxed according to their means and shall have according to needs. We will have trusts, nothing but trusts, in our state, but we will all be in the trust.

The operatives will not work 12 or 14 hours a day, but four or five. We will be in the field in 1900 with a new party. These men who represent the new life are going to unite as if by magic for the overthrow of commercialism and the establishment of the cooperative commonwealth, by which the brotherhood of man will become a fact.

I do not know whether this question will be solved peaceably or otherwise. I hope peaceably. But I am one of those who believe in getting ready for any solution that may be necessary.

*Mr. Debs said that in settling up the cooperative commonwealth in Washington the colonists might be running against the Supreme Court. He would consult good lawyers and learn just what were the rights of the colonists.*

We want to know our rights and make them rebels. If they send the military to invade our rights, then there will be an army of 300,000 patriots on the state line to meet them on that issue.

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<sup>1</sup> This statement to the press was made in Chicago following the close of the founding convention of the Social Democracy of America.