



1913 photo of Paterson silk strike leaders:  
L.R. Patrick Quinlan, Carlo Tresca, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, Adolph Lessig, and Haywood

**William Dudley Haywood** (February 4, 1869 – May 18, 1928), better known as "Big Bill" Haywood, was a founding member and leader of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), and a member of the Executive Committee of the Socialist Party of America. During the first two decades of the 20th century, he was involved in several important labor battles, including the Colorado Labor Wars, the Lawrence textile strike, and other textile strikes in Massachusetts and New Jersey.

Haywood believed that workers of all ethnicities should organize into the same union. According to Haywood, the IWW was "big enough to take in the black man, the white man; big enough to take in all nationalities – an organization that will be strong enough to obliterate state boundaries; to obliterate national boundaries."

In 1912, Haywood spoke at a convention for the Brotherhood of Timber Workers in Louisiana; at the time, interracial meetings in the state were illegal. Haywood insisted that the white workers invite the African American workers to their convention, declaring:

*You work in the same mills together. Sometimes a black man and a white man chop down the same tree together. You are meeting in a convention now to discuss the conditions under which you labor. Why not be sensible about this and call the Negroes into the Convention? If it is against the law, this is one time when the law should be broken.*

Ignoring the law against interracial meetings, the convention invited the African American workers. The convention would eventually vote to affiliate with the IWW.

Never one to shy from violent conflicts Haywood was frequently the target of prosecutors. His trial for the murder of Frank Steunenberg in 1907 (of which he was acquitted) drew national attention; in 1918, he was one of 101 IWW members convicted of violating the Espionage Act of 1917 during the First Red Scare. While out of prison during an appeal of his conviction, Haywood fled to the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, where he spent the remaining years of his life.

During the summer of 1916, the state of Minnesota took notice of the Socialist theater in northern Minnesota when Mr. Haywood chose the Opera House as the base for organizing the mining strike and the 1917 lumber strike. Mr. Haywood's organization, the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) or Wobblies, organized a large scale walk out of lumber jacks and saw mill hands in the 1917 strike. This event was directed against the operations of the Virginia, Rainy Lake and International Lumber companies of Beltrami, Itasca, Koochiching, and St. Louis counties. Over 3,000 jacks streamed out of the woods; some mills were closed for short periods. Like the earlier miners' strikes, the walkout was broken by

companies' use of hired strike breakers and law enforcement officials. Coupled with jailed strikers and their leaders, the IWW was temporality banished from northern Minnesota. But before they could reorganize, World War I began.

Notes:

During the mining strike of 1906, the Socialist Opera House in Virginia and other Finnish workers' halls in Hibbing and throughout the state were used as meeting places for organizing strikers and agitators. Virginia's Opera House's classical columns, fine statuary and other architectural niceties, provided a setting for worker organizations to flourish and keep alive a sense of solidarity. Red Finns constantly promoted the idea of unionism on the Range from this institution.

In 1910, the Red Finnish Socialists of Minnesota complained not enough effort was given to agitation and organization - too much energy was being put into drama, brass bands and dancing by the White Finns. In fact, when the Finnish Socialists of Minnesota met two years later in 1912, there were 17 agitation / union organizing committees, compared to 53 dramatic groups and literature committees - along with several choruses and an occasional brass band.