CONCLUSION

The issue of leadership in any movement is usually wrought with controversies. It is difficult to find history of a movement that goes unchallenged at the hands of its critics in terms of either the tactics of the movement or its leadership. The subject of the Black Leadership, therefore, is no exception to this phenomenon. The Black Americans have been profoundly concerned with these two pronged approaches; how to integrate and assimilate themselves into the mainstream of the whitemen, or in the absence of it, how to create their own racial exclusiveness that would evoke respect and integrity of their individual-selves. This, therefore, has but an age-old proposition for Blacks.

Hence, a query comes to our mind: when did Black leadership begin in the United States? Since it is not strictly within the purview of the present dissertation, it has been, however, touched in the introductory chapter. The defiance and militancy that existed among the American Blacks at the time of their slavery has been proved by several scholars in recent times. Due to a lack of organization and political inability to voice their grievances, these Blacks had to, for most of the time, remain subdued in their militant posture. But the fact of their militancy does not get obliterated in the
process. The times were difficult and their resources to oppose the prevailing system were extremely limited. Under the circumstances, the Black leadership of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries could not have been divorced of this syndrome.

Negro leaders should be viewed from the standpoints of the two castes and their interests. The white caste has an interest in supporting those Negro leaders who can transfer their influence upon the lower caste. The Negro caste has two interests: one, to express the Negro protest as far as it does not damage its immediate welfare; two, to get as much as possible from the whites. The partly contradictory interests of the Negro community can be taken care of by the same individual leaders or by several different leaders in a division of responsibility.

When viewed in this context the role of the Black leaders during the period, 1875-1920, in analyzing their respective roles in serving the cause of the Black masses remains noteworthy. When the institution of slavery came to an end, (in the form of the Thirteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution in 1863 effective in 1865) the issue of removing social, economic and political barriers of Blacks became the major concern of the Black Leaders-Chief among them being Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. DuBois.

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'It seems to me,' said Booker T., 'That all you folks have missed the boat who shout about the right to vote, And spend vain days and sleepless nights In uproar over civil rights. Just keep your mouths shut, do not grouse, But work, and save, and buy a house.' 'I don't agree,' said W.E.B. 'For what can property avail If dignity and justice fail? Unless you help to make the laws, They'll steal your house with trumped-up clause. A rope's as tight, a fire as hot, No matter how much cash you've got. Speak soft, and try your little plan, But as for me, I'll be a man.' 'It seems to me,' said Booker T.-- 'I don't agree,' Said W.E.B.

Booker T. Washington was the most important successor of Frederick Douglass. His broad theoretical understanding of the race problem was identical with that of his predecessor. Washington thought that the race problem would be solved by the elevation of the Negro if he assimilates himself within the White Society. He had a truly national perspective. During the 1890's, W.E.B. DuBois, who had not yet come into the lime-light believed that the Negro race could be served through its own self-development and through the goodwill of the Whites. But, he did not ask for complete assimilation or amalgamation. He was opposed to homogeneity and wanted to see social-cultural

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differences preserved. He refused to be, 'a stranger in mine own house.' He chose the "Veil as the symbol of racial barriers...."\textsuperscript{72}

Despite repeated invitations to move to the North, Washington realized that his work lay in the South, although the growing threat from Northern black critics forced him, in later years, to sharpen his condemnations of racial inequalities. In a period of worsening race relations, Washington continued to build up the reputation and resources of Tuskegee (and thereby his own reputation), and secured philanthropic funds for Southern black schools and colleges. Unable to prevent such developments as the loss of black voting rights, racial violence and economic exploitation, Washington attempted (both publicly and privately) to contain them. As Gunnar Myrdal noted perceptively, Washington, his critics to the contrary, was never a totally 'accommodating' race leader, and looked to complete equality as the 'ultimate goal' of black leadership:

It is a political axiom that Negroes can never, in any period, hope to attain more in the short term power bargain than the most benevolent white groups are prepared to give them. With shrewd insight, Washington took exactly as much off the Negro protest - and it had to be a big reduction - as was needed to get the maximum cooperation from the only

\textsuperscript{72}Ibid., p. 298.
two white groups in America who in this era of ideological reaction cared anything at all about the Negroes: the Northern humanitarians and philanthropists and the Southern upper class school of 'parallel civilization' .... Remembering the grim reaction of the period, it is difficult to study his various moves without increasingly feeling that he was a truly great politician .... For his time, and for the region where he worked and where the nine-tenths of all Negroes lived, his policy of abstaining from talk of rights and of 'casting down your buckets where you are' was entirely realistic.

One would certainly agree with Howard Brotz when he writes that, "...Washington was more than fifty years ahead of his time. Today, as the last vestiges of Legal inequality are being cleared away, it is becoming a common view that the fundamental problems of the Negro are 'beyond civil rights.'"\(^4\)

Washington very rightly understood the problems that Slavery had created for the Black, and the solution lay in him to 'work'. He did not want to confuse work and the attainment of rights. He could understand the legacy of Slavery very correctly.

Intellectually superior to Washington, DuBois through all his ideological shifts and turns, attempted

\(^3\)Myrdal, n.1,p.741.

to resolve what he regarded (and personally experienced) as being the fundamental dilemma of the Afro-American: "One ever feels his two-ness". Unlike Washington, DuBois always felt himself to be apart from the mass of Negroes and for long periods of his life was defiantly out of step with orthodox black responses to such issues as segregation, socialism, Marxism and Pan-Africanism. An inferior (and disinterested administrator, DuBois, as editor of Crisis, was the outstanding agitator and propagandist of the Negro protest movement who arose in opposition to Washington's power and policies.

Where Washington wanted to make Negroes entrepreneurs and captains of industry in accordance with the American economic dream, DuBois stressed the role of the college educated elite... and later developed a vision of a world largely dominated by the coloured races which combine with the white workers in overthrowing the domination of white capital and thus secure social justice under socialism.  

To Washington, the economic dependence of the Black on the whites was a political danger to himself. His stand was a mixture of toughness in order to maintain a level of friendship of the stronger for the weaker. As a practical man, Washington looked forward and not backward, whereas, DuBois was an academic man. He

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injected among his followers a spirit of resentment due to which he broke with the N.A.A.C.P. His work as an editor of the Crisis was in defiance of the Negro's rights. Shortly after the turn of the century, DuBois became a conciliationist, and pleaded for the good-will of the whites. He held whites responsible for the Negro problems. He never wanted to become a social action leader. His editorials not only antagonized, but attracted attention. His goal of a world organization of Negroes was a formidable one to achieve in the 1920's.  

Besides, one has made merely an attempt in displaying the interplay of social forces that determined the fate of Blacks in the latter part of the nineteenth century as well as early part of the twentieth century. The racial discrimination and segregation and several such other legal tactics on the part of the white majority against Blacks, assumed new dimensions. Hence, both of the Black leaders, Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. DuBois took their respective positions in deterring the racial bias from the minds of white people.

However, both, had their limitations in fulfilling their goals. Booker T. Washington served the Black cause

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at a time when the rigidity of Southern Whites as well as the racial bias of the white, in general, was uppermost. The period between 1876-1900 witnessed the worst of racial segregation in the form of lynchings, social boycotts, Jim Crow Laws, KuKluxKlan and several other laws. Whatever may be the viewpoints and whatever the critical evaluation of these two personalities at the hands of others, one cannot gloss over the fact that they, both, served their people with an untiring zeal. The tactics and approaches differed but so differed the times in which both the leaders carried out their respective missions. The Blacks were subjected to a deep down racial hatred by the White Society, hence to bring them out of such a racial acrimony was not an easy task. Washington was faced with this dilemma. His contributions, therefore, have to be viewed against these odds. One must say that to the extent it was possible and to the degree it was feasible, he made a deep impact on the minds of Whitemen in upgrading the Black race. And it was not a mean achievement.

To DuBois, belong the credit of creating a great racial pride and his revival of a rich past heritage of the Black people. He was the first man who militantly opposed any intellectual or racial inferiority attributed to his race. DuBois believed that a Black man
need not be defensive of his racial background in a White American Society. A Black man can, instead, forthrightly attack any such notion—no matter what be the price involved in the process. DuBois also underwent his ideological transformation from early period to the latter, as pointed out earlier. He nevertheless, remained committed to the cause of socially and economically deprived people of the United States—majority of whom were the Black people. To that extent, one must give full credit to his notable contributions in reaping a rich harvest of his mission in serving his community. DuBois, certainly made some impressive contributions. He was a pioneer in Negro research. He was an important booster of Negro morale.

Thus the two personalities Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. DuBois were, both, ideological as well as practical in their formations. They were both extraordinarily reflective men. The final solution as one would say lay in the ultimate standard that Blacks would acquire to attain a perfect social and political life for themselves.

The outcry in this context still persists. The dimensions of race-relations between Whites and Blacks are still a recurring phenomenon. The ethnographers continue to write on this social anathema and the World continues to witness its ugly face from society to
societies. Nevertheless, the men of extraordinary zeal and ability project their profiles to diminish such diabolic developments. Both, Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. DuBois were two such magnificent personalities who did their best to salvage their race from the evils of the day. Hence, they must be paid tributes for what they did and not for what they missed.