CONCLUSION

Gandhi was the most prolific personality of his time who made history and became the symbol of the national expression, ideology and way of life. People of divergent cultures, classes and opinions followed him in his fight for their emancipation from the colonial rulers. He became a great representative of Indian masses who identified himself with them and stood firmly as an unchallenged leader on the national scene for the long period of three decades.

As already stated, Gandhi's whole approach towards national freedom movement as well as for the establishment of egalitarian society in the free nation was based on his religio-philosophic vision. This implied the need of class co-operation rather than class conflict, non-violence instead of violence, the primacy of spiritual over material values. Being humanitarian, he believed in moral goodness of man and stressed for self-improvement of man through the application of Truth and Non-violence.

The capitalists, industrialists and zamindars were no exception to this approach. As already discussed in Chapter V that Gandhi's approach of going with the rich capitalists and giving them valuable place in his scheme of things brought the Communists at loggerheads with him. They came to attack his entire personality, ideology and politics. They have condemned him in strong terms.
recognised in him a bourgeois leader who strengthened the bourgeoisie interests. Sometimes they have accused him of standing between status-quo and revolution and consequently calling of the mass movements whenever they threatened to get out of hand. The use of Truth and Non-violence, Spirituality, they held "as a bourgeoisie device, at one side to contain the mass movement against the interest and privileges of the bourgeoisie and on the other to intimidate the Britishers by showing mass involvement in the struggle". He has often been accused by them as "an ascetic defender of private property" and "subtle apologist of the status-quo".

Communists have consistently underestimated the radical and revolutionary nature of Gandhi's life and his teachings. They have portrayed him as an apologist for capitalism and as a friend of the capitalist class.

But for a better understanding of Gandhi and his ideal and programmes one has to have a fresh look at his relationship with the capitalists and his endeavour to seek a permanent solution to the problems raised by capitalism. He was no defender of status-quo. For he was committed for the change of socio-economic system through the concept of trusteeship. Unfortunately his trusteeship concept was never fully understood and accepted by the capitalist class.

The dilemma of Gandhi consisted in the fact that he adopted such ideas and programmes that neither the communists nor the capitalists could appreciate and own them. He, therefore, became a victim of suspicion and criticism of both. While communists openly
blamed him for protecting the capitalists and consequent
development of capitalism in India, the capitalists, equally
feared him for his frequent attack on capitalism and his advocacy
of trusteeship and equating it with socialism.

There is no doubt that Gandhi had good relations with the
Indian capitalists. He gave dignified place to them. His Ashram
being the centre of all political and social activities needed
considerable finance which was met by the rich capitalists. So,
he wanted to utilize the rich people's contribution for the national
freedom movement and reconstruction of the Indian society. By
doing so, he also gave the capitalists, zamindars and industrialists
the chance to reform themselves and utilize their accumulated
experience of generations and talents for the nation's cause.

Once referring to his friendship with the capitalists
Gandhi said, "I do count moneyed men my friends. I know that
critics are not wanting who consider my association with moneyed
men a sign of weakness unworthy of a votary of truth and non-
violence. My many friends know well the motive for my association
with them. I receive money from them for my many constructive
activities. My mission is to convert capitalists not into mere
friends and patrons of the millions of unemployed but willing
shares of their goods with them".

As Gandhi was fully aware of his relationship with the
capitalist friends. But the moot point is whether the financial
help that he received from his capitalist friends made him modify
his objectives to help him.
It has been argued that to meet his political, constructive and Ashram expenditure he had to depend on the capitalist friends. Regular and absolute financial dependency, ostensibly creates silent debt towards the donor. This was the state of affairs between Gandhi and the capitalists. Perhaps this was one of the reasons according to one point of view that Gandhi could not afford to criticise the capitalists directly, though he repudiates capitalism in totality. This is also maintained by his critics that he, nevertheless, protected the capitalists under the cover of trusteeship. It is also argued that by giving one more chance under trusteeship the capitalism got favourable protection. Hence, according to them, Gandhi does not seem to be serious in his endeavours to abolish capitalism. These critics, thus held the view that in one or another way, Gandhi saved the capitalists with great astute and skill. The capitalist friends Bajaj and Birla under Gandhi's shadow flourished like anything.

But our study reveals that such an analysis lacks objectivity. The allegation of the critics that Gandhi gave a chance or protection to the rich capitalists under the cover of trusteeship doctrine holds no validity.

For, if trusteeship is analysed in proper perspective it shows obviously an advocacy of anti-capitalistic system. In his trusteeship draft Gandhi has clearly mentioned that, "It does not recognise any right of ownership except so far as it may be permitted by society for its own welfare". Hence it gives no right to the ownership of private property. Even no individual would be
allowed to use his wealth for his selfish satisfaction. Only a small percentage of his own wealth will be permitted for his personal use. To reduce the disparities of high and low, also Gandhi made it clear to fix a 'decent minimum and decent maximum' income for trustees. Thus Gandhian concept seems to be aimed at achieving the egalitarian idea of social justice more effectively.

It is now clear that under trusteeship concept Gandhi did not intend to protect anybody. Even during his life time he made no secret of his strong disapproval of all exploitation by zamindars and capitalists. He had made it clear that trustee will have to be disposed, because our non-violence does not mean toleration of an evil.

If a limited number of capitalists remained associated with the Indian National Congress, they were motivated by their economic interests consciously or unconsciously. Though majority of the capitalists could not be described as active anti-imperialist during the struggle. Even among his trusteed capitalist friends, we find only in Jamnalal Bajaj, completeness or harmony of Gandhian values who adopted Gandhi's advice on economic matters and tried to run his industries on Gandhian pattern. For that quality, he has been designated as 'Gandhian Capitalist'. Also Gandhi came to recognise him who came near his trusteeship but the fact is that he remained an exception and other capitalists did not adopt Gandhi's advice on economic matters.

G.D. Birla saw in Gandhi the best political leader and religious man whose ideas and conduct impressed him and brought him
closer to Gandhi. Like Bajaj, we do not find in Birla complete integration of Gandhian values. As a man, Birla puts in Gandhi such a blind faith that even for his personal and minute problems Gandhi's consultation was felt necessary. But as an industrialist, Birla considers Gandhi's views insignificant and never liked his interference. This goes essentially against Gandhi's concept of personal integration. Hence, the two stood at different planes.

To Gandhi, life was a single whole and could not be compartmentalised into religious, political and economic activities. While to Birla, religious activity could be separated from economic and political activity and he looked to Gandhi for his religious satisfaction and the money that he donated to his constructive programmes has religious motivation. It is doubtful that he consciously tried to make use of Gandhi for his economic ends.

Possibly, as a result of their close relationship they were in a position to interfere each other's economic and political ideas and programmes. For instance, we find Birla trying to persuade the Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry not to oppose boycott of foreign cloth and Gandhi.

Gandhi's fears about the role of the capitalists as a class in the freedom movement to some extent were justified. They supported the national movement to some extent as it advanced their commercial and capitalist ends. Commenting on the political strategy of the capitalists Bipan Chandra said, "The two-fold relationship of the capitalist class to imperialism i.e. long-term antagonism and short term accommodation and dependence led it to
work for a non-revolutionary pattern of anti-imperialist struggle. The struggle was, however, to be always kept within safe and acceptable limits. In no case would the capitalist class encourage prolonged mass political activity, even of the non-violent variety. A prolonged struggle and mass unrest would also dampen the current economic growth and opportunities."

One cannot fight too many enemies at a time. Strategy needs to be chalked out on the basis of preferences. Gandhi was lucid in his preferential approach. In such a stage when he needed rich people in his fight against Britishers, he never risked to lose the landlords and capitalists. For he never wanted to create another front against the freedom movement. While the interests of moneyed men was with the stability of British rule, yet it was subtle leadership of Gandhi, who brought rich people under his umbrella. Actually his immediate problem was not to fight the ideological issues such as capitalism or socialism. The real goal was to attain the national liberation and hence he did not raise any economic issue i.e. rich v/s poor. According to R.R. Divakar, "Gandhi concentrated on fighting the British rather fighting on ideological differences", Taking into confidence, Gandhi tolerated them (capitalists and zamindars) on pragmatic criterion of his political acumen and thus have been successful in getting their support by means of men, money and material. Though major financial amount came from the rich capitalists, he also collected money from the poor including women. As such, he not only received money from the individuals and rich peoples but also appealed to all, especially to women to given money and jewellery. For his
convincing capacity and art of appealing, he was called as the 'biggest fund raiser'. His life was an open book and whatever donation he received from anyone, he properly maintained a record for the public knowledge which were used to be published in his journals.

The allegation that Gandhi consciously or unconsciously protected the capitalistic class is not supported by facts so far as our study is concerned. In fact he never allowed anyone to take advantage of his or her relationship with him. Even his own sons and other family members could not do so.

In fact, in Gandhi's view of life there was no place for hatred for any person or a group. In his scheme of things the rich capitalists, industrialists and landlords could be made to work for the good of society. He could even appreciate equally the character and work of Englishmen while struggled to end the British empire. To Gandhi, nobody was untouchable, neither Birlas, nor a communist, nor a Harijan nor an imperialist.

Despite being surrounded by the capitalist friends, he never abandoned his life's mission. He continuously worked hard for the upliftment of peasants, labourers, depressed and downtrodden dumb millions. He made his position clear in August 1931 while commenting of the resolution of Congress Working Committee for preventing the penalization or victimization of labour in the Textile Mills, "The Congress lives for the labourer, and for the capitalist in so far as the latter subserves the former's purpose".
It is correct that businessmen flourished during the period of their association with Gandhi. But this was not due to Gandhi's relations with the capitalist friends. Gandhi or the Congress at that time had no hand in enforcing any economic policy. All capitalists flourished, whether they were close to Gandhi or not. For the growth and development of capitalist activities under the colonial period Gandhi could never be held responsible, as he had no control over the economic mechanism of the concerned period.

Soon after India got freedom, Gandhi died. Even after the attainment of freedom when the responsible and free national government was formed, Gandhi is not answerable for its policies. For the increasing capitalism and the growing big capitalist houses, the economic mechanism should be held responsible that was freely operating, and not Gandhi, who had condemned that system much earlier. The most vociferous charge of the communists against Gandhi is based on their pre-conceived notions and also of others considering him in isolation without knowing his real motives. We find no gap in his theory and practice.