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## **A Brief Review of the Historical Causes of Afghanistan's Ongoing Backwardness:**

Introduction: This historical backdrop illuminates a pattern of systemic challenges that have plagued Afghanistan's socio-political landscape. The geographical centrality of Afghanistan has made it a coveted territory for competing global powers throughout history, leading to frequent invasions and interventions that disrupted local governance and stability.

Resolving the persistent historical impediments in Afghanistan hinges on a deep understanding of past challenges and a clear-eyed appraisal of its history. Addressing these challenges not only clears the path for immediate peace but also lays a foundation for sustained development and progress.

Unfortunately, many of our people tend to view phenomena in stark black-and-white terms, without seeking a balanced perspective. When confronted with opposing viewpoints, they often react negatively or aggressively, adopting a unilateral stance in their judgment. This approach leads them to overlook positive qualities and valuable peculiarities, overshadowed by their negative and hostile perceptions. Consequently, they dismiss the desirable features of individuals, systems, and governments, focusing instead on perceived faults and expressing their disdain with harsh words.

An unbiased, careful, and deep examination reveals that Afghanistan faces a multitude of complex issues.

The problems are inherited from the past and are rooted in various social, economic, and cultural factors. These include the people's ignorance and illiteracy, the historical involvement of colonial powers, and the unique geographical location. Additionally, regional rivalries, imported rulers, and selfish, unplanned leaders contribute to these issues. There has been a lack of national interest and feeling in the leadership hierarchy of Afghanistan. The leaders were selfish, greedy for power, full of pride, and arrogant. They were not

prepared to listen to the voices of the people and wise counsellors. They intentionally kept people ignorant and illiterate to eliminate any possible resistance to challenge their power. This provides a clear cause-and-effect relationship between the leaders' behaviors and the country's problems.

These factors are closely intertwined. *Without understanding the past, we cannot plan our future path wisely.*

Several major factors contributing to Afghanistan's backwardness include the instrumental use of ideology and religious beliefs, and the blind application of imported theology without considering the country's social and cultural conditions. Additionally, the lack of universal application of the law has been a significant issue, with leaders and chiefs often positioning themselves above it. The cultivation of a personality cult through false titles such as "Toolwak" (having full authority), unmatched leader, genius of the East, world's second think tank, Ghazi, Baba ("Papa"), mujahid(1) and mujtahid (2), has further entrenched this backwardness. These titles and the associated reverence have played a critical role in impeding progress. Therefore, Afghanistan's problems, deeply rooted in its distant past, are numerous and complex, and they do not need to be reiterated.

Most leaders in Afghanistan have lacked wisdom, leaving the country and future generations without tangible achievements due to their dependence on either the East, the West, or regional countries. A full description and explanation of the chronic historical problems causing Afghanistan's backwardness are beyond the scope of this brief analysis. However, it is worth highlighting the following points:

1. Throughout Afghanistan's history, conflicts and wars for fame, wealth, lust, and power have been prevalent, particularly among the Pashtuns, who have remained in power for over two and half a century with foreign support. Representatives of other ethnic groups within the power structure often served merely as subordinates, performing menial tasks for those in power. Leaders, often installed by foreign entities, customarily imprisoned, blinded, and destroyed their opponents and dependents to maintain their dominance. This claim is substantiated by reliable historical evidence and documents. Vendettas, ethnic conflicts, and enmity have been common, with wars erupting between brothers, father and son, uncle and nephew, religious leaders and disciples, mullahs and Talibs (religious leaders and students), teachers and students, comrades, friends, biological and illegitimate brothers, both legal and illegal. This pattern of internal strife has been a persistent feature in Afghanistan's history.

2. Many Afghan people have lived in poverty, experiencing the violence of competition and rivalry, chronic inferiority complexes, deprivations, and enmities within their communities, among relatives, and friends since childhood. As a result, a significant portion of the population suffers from mental health issues. Their speech, actions, and behavior often reveal self-conscious reactions, indicative of the chronic effects of a life marked by poverty and deprivation.

Over the past half-century, and especially in the last two decades under American and NATO occupation, the country has faced unstable conditions. The economy and infrastructure were destroyed, villages and towns bombarded, and agriculture, irrigation, and livestock were paralyzed. Education and training in 80 percent of the country have either stagnated or been entirely disrupted. Billions of dollars poured into the country were only used by corrupt government officials and spent on luxurious mansions.

3. In such a situation, the limited number of people with patriotic feelings, whether affiliated with left or right-wing parties, could not effect meaningful or fundamental change.
4. The affiliation of political parties with foreign countries, combined with harsh, ineffective, and illusory reforms that lacked popular participation, has contributed to the ongoing crisis and instability. The ruthless elimination of opponents and the promotion of unconventional slogans, contrary to the popular spirit and accepted norms, further exacerbated these issues.

The irrational incitement of party members and the suppression of opposition became useful tactics for domestic opponents and their foreign supporters. Notably, Pakistan, the United States, and the United Kingdom used these tactics in their competition with Russia, Iran, India, and China. This dynamic has perpetuated an ongoing intelligence and competition war in the region.

Additionally, corruption and the misuse of foreign aid have been rampant. Self-serving leaders have appointed incompetent individuals, spies, traitors, and foreign agents to key positions.

In conclusion, Afghanistan's journey towards stability and development hinges on confronting its historical burdens and forging a collective vision for a unified and resilient nation. Only through concerted efforts to address both internal governance shortcomings and external pressures can Afghanistan overcome its turbulent past and realize its full potential in the global community. Understanding and addressing Afghanistan's historical

challenges not only clears the path for immediate peace but also lays a foundation for sustained development and progress. This analysis serves as a catalyst for continued research and innovation, driving progress and shaping the future of Afghanistan and its people. It is possible to embark together on a journey of exploration and discovery, armed with the knowledge and motivation to make a lasting difference in the country.

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- (1) In Islamic terms, a "Mujahid" (plural: "Mujahideen") is someone who engages in Jihad, which means striving or struggling in the way of Allah. This can refer to a range of efforts, from personal spiritual growth to, in some contexts, armed struggle.
- (2) A "Mujtahid" is a scholar who is qualified to perform Ijtihad, which is the process of making a reasoned interpretation of Islamic law. A Mujtahid must possess extensive knowledge of the Quran, Hadith, and other Islamic sciences to derive legal rulings for new issues not explicitly addressed in primary texts.