

Domino dancing

When those who run the Western world were trying to crush “economic nationalism” of newly independent colonies in the 1950s and 60s, they created and invoked the spectre of the “Domino Theory”. If one country of brown or yellow people decided **not** to continue as a source of very cheap raw materials and/or even cheaper labour, then this bad example would- they warned- inevitably spread. The fall of one domino (Vietnam, for instance) would inevitably push another (the Philippines, Thailand) over.

Those who thought that installing and supporting evil dictators was maybe not the best way to ensure the spread of freedom and democracy thought that the Domino Theory was a new excuse for old forms of control.

History judged inconclusively, as she so often does. Those who supported the theory say that although Vietnam fell and the Philippines/Thailand didn't, this simply means that Western Resolve was displayed and the dominoes halted. Those who rubbish the theory say “look, *it didn't happen* you blood-thirsty numpties.”

All very well, but what's this got to do with climate change?

Well, I've been wondering if the frequently invoked spectre of “feedback loops” performs the same function for climate change activists as the “domino theory” did for macho anti-“red” warheads all those years ago...

That is to say, as the ultimate rhetorical Trump Card ; a warning of runaway unstoppable and unpleasant political/ecological change unless We Take a Stand.

In neither case does social justice get much of a look in. The old Cold Warriors didn't because they didn't **want** social justice- they wanted the status quo of white wealth and hierarchy. The environmentalists don't bring up social justice so much because, well, frankly, they don't think it's going to convince the target audiences. This isn't 1968 any more, after all...

The only difference that I can see between the two is that while you can haggle over the Domino Theory all you like, the environmentalists are almost certainly correct...

coming soon: the comfort of nuclear war...

references

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Domino_theory

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clathrate_gun_hypothesis