



25. Leadership Change & Crazy Climate Ideas

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Future Sense is a podcast edited from the radio show of the same name, broadcast on BayFM in Byron Bay, Australia, at www.bayfm.org. Hosted by Nyck Jeanes and well-known international futurist, Steve McDonald, Future Sense provides a fresh, deep analysis of global trends and emerging technologies. How can we identify the layers of growth personally, socially and globally? What are the signs missed; the truths being denied? Political science, history, politics, psychology, ancient civilisations, alien contact, the new psychedelic revolution, cryptocurrency and other disruptive and distributed technologies, and much more.

This is Future Sense.

Nyck: Good morning to you all and good morning to my co-host, Steve McDonald.

Steve: Hey there, Nyck.

Nyck: Nice to see you this morning.

Steve: Good to be here again.

Nyck: And we have a special guest this morning, Ross Hill, a regular visitor from Melbourne, up here again for some business. We might even talk a bit about that later in the day. Welcome, Ross. Nice to see you again.

What are we on to today? We're going to be starting with a little bit of the local situation. There is an election coming up on Saturday.

Steve: There is, yes, so we'll have a look at some local and global current affairs from the perspective of collapse and emergence. There's a general theme of leadership and organisational structuring around new leadership that I think is running through a number of threads today.

Nyck: Yes, well, just on that, some people might have seen Bill Shorten on Q&A on the ABC a week or so ago. I watched that and I was actually very impressed with him for the first time, and I thought actually there's some potential for a bit of new leadership with this chap. I mean, I could be naive, I could be idealistic, but there you go. I did read something in his persona that made me feel intuitively that there was something quite real about this man, and it surprised me, actually, because I'd always thought he was a bit dull and boring; just another part of the establishment.

Steve: He's lifting his game, which is great, and it's encouraging to see that. We've also got to factor in that we're really dealing with a broken political system, as are most countries around the world at the moment. These are systems that were designed before the internet and designed with different motivations, when different values were common across societies. Society's changed, values have changed, and these systems are failing, unfortunately.

It's wonderful to get a positive, constructive leader but we still also have to deal with the fact that there's large-scale corporate capture of political systems right across the planet, and of course, we've got the precedent here in Australia of Kevin Rudd who came in, seemingly with a refreshing approach and some new ideas, and was very quickly shut down, largely due to money thrown at a campaign to get him out of power by the mining lobby here in Australia.

And, of course, going back in history to the last huge wave of change that came through in the 1960s, there's the story of JFK, which we can't forget either.

Nyck: Ross Hill is with us this week, our special guest, who's been a regular visitor when he's up here from Melbourne. The election this week—Steve, Ross—it's a big one, obviously, for everybody. Hard to make sense of many of the movements and the fake news, if you will, the propaganda, the angles, the stories, the controversies, that are threaded throughout or political discourse.

Steve: Very true. One good indicator is always to look at where the money is going, and if you look at the gambling around this election, then it's certainly favouring a Labor Party victory, that's for sure, and as you said, Bill Shorten is sounding refreshing and putting forward some new ideas. I'm sure that's his honest intention; the big question is, if he is elected as the next prime minister, will he be able to implement those things or will there be too many obstacles in the way of some of the more radical changes that they're proposing? That is the big question, and as I just pointed out during the break, I just pulled up an article from 2017.

Nyck: Yes, which is a long time ago, but very relevant, because where has this gone? It's disappeared.

Steve: Exactly. The headline of this article is: *Is Cambridge Analytica the Liberal Party's 2019 Trump Card?* (<https://independentaustralia.net/business/business-display/is-cambridge-analytica-the-liberal-partys-2019-trump-card,10187>) That's in relation to the Australian election that's happening next weekend, and of course, everybody listening probably knows that *Cambridge Analytica* was intimately involved in the social media campaign during the last American election.

Nyck: And Brexit also.

Steve: And also Brexit as well, and not long after, I think it was probably around the time, or just shortly before the time this article was written, the CEO of *Cambridge Analytica*, Alexander Nix, visited Australia to talk to our politicians out here. What's really interesting, though, I think, is that I haven't seen any recent media about the possibility of *Cambridge Analytica* or that style of marketing being involved in the current election and that's probably little concerning that it's gone quiet, actually. It makes me wonder what's happening behind the scenes.

Nyck: I remember it's been reported at some point, I think later than that—it might have been last year at some time, in 2018 when the whole *Cambridge Analytica* thing burst through—and at that point, there was some indication that this had happened, that the *Cambridge Analytica* representatives had been here in 2017, but I looked it up then and there was very, very little reporting on it anywhere then, let alone now, so it was kept quite right up front, I think. That's probably the likely scenario.

Steve: Yes, and the difficulty now is it's hard to know what's being done in terms of targeting social media.

Ross Hill: Yes, and on that note, you can look on the flip side. We see that *Cambridge Analytica*, the company, may have gone away and gone quiet, but the social networks are still the social networks—*Facebook* is *Facebook*, *Twitter* is *Twitter*—and seemingly every few weeks they apologise for another thing that's gone wrong and more data leaking out of their platforms or unintended consequences or trolling and abuse—there's heaps of stuff going on and that all sounds very familiar; I'd suggest that hasn't changed over the last few years.

There is obviously a bit of a broadening. A few years ago maybe, in Australia, we just talked about *Facebook* and *Twitter* and some of these more Western ones. This year, there's been a bit of a focus on *WeChat* as the leaders have joined that, and that's quite interesting because *WeChat* is from China, not from the United States and so it has a different regulatory environment and different everything that's tied up in a national system. So it will have types of censorship which are different to the censorship you might expect from *Facebook*—different controls, different things that you're allowed to say. It's pretty widely known that there's a lot of events or topics that you don't mention when you're in China and so you don't mention them on the social media as well, just as when you talk about certain topics on *Facebook*, you're going to get moderated away. All of that is still there and that obviously has an effect on the election as well. How do we know who to trust?

Steve: Yes, exactly. There was an article in the *ABC* just recently about Chinese media mocking the current prime minister in *WeChat* posts, and you've got to wonder where that's been coming from also.

But in terms of the general paradigm shift that's going on globally, that is favouring a shift towards community thinking, and clearly, with the Labor Party having a socialist foundation, it generally favours that direction where people's thinking is looking. People are looking to towards the wisdom of crowds, looking towards rebalancing this society, which is so much out of balance in terms of the distribution of wealth and privilege, and the Liberal Party, of course, is well-regarded as representing that 1%, so it gives them a general disadvantage in terms of the current thinking.

Ross Hill: Yes, and of course, what it all boils down to is you go into the polling booth on the day—I actually pre-voted a few days ago, since I do a lot of travel—you get your bit of paper and you write down a few numbers on a page, right? You put it in the box and you hope for the best.

Steve: That's right, exactly.

Nyck: That's the end of your engagement with the democratic process.

Ross Hill: Well, have some discussions, soak up some media—we learn what we can. Some of it we go and find and research ourselves. Sometimes we just listen to what we normally listen to, which is great, but from my experience, it's like, you write your numbers on the paper ... you could say it's more difficult to engage. If you want to run for office or something, that is what it is, but at the same time, you can vote with a tweet, you can vote with every dollar that you spend in a shop and so we have a lot of

different ways of expressing our influence, and that sort of relates to advertising. If you look at *Cambridge Analytica*, its advertising and it's just saying, how do we get these messages out to the people, and do they listen to them and respond? To me, that feels very similar to every time you hear an ad about something or you see a mention. Does it change how you live your life and does it change how you spend your money? You know, it does.

Steve: There are layers and layers of problems within the system. The issue of corporate capture is one that we talk about a lot here and that reflects the mindset of the Modern Scientific-Industrial paradigm in that it will change the world to suit itself. It's very much driven by personal success, which often means financial success, and so over the years, the electoral boundaries have been changed to make it more likely for the government of the time to get back into power.

Nyck: Gerrymandering. Certainly that's the case in America, and I think in Queensland. This time, though, there's been a redistribution of electoral boundaries which favours Labor, interestingly.

Steve: Federally, you're saying?

Nyck: Yes, federally. There are three seats that are nominally now regarded as likely Labor rather than likely Liberal, so that's interesting, just changing demographics within different regions.

Steve: It is interesting, and essentially we're dealing with a binary system where even though we have a number of political parties, at the end of the day, there are two main parties and it's usually an either/or kind of a decision here, although Australia does have a reasonable history of using our Senate as a bit of a pressure release mechanism.

Nyck: Yes, "keeping the bastards honest".

Steve: Exactly. The vote of the minor parties to allow the Senate to veto any radically unfavourable legislation that might be otherwise pushed through by the government of the time.

Nyck: Or, of course, manipulate special interests—very small special interests—in order to get some of that legislation through, and that's a danger, I suppose, of the minor-

party structured Senate, but I think it's a good thing that we have that independence because it shows the diversity and a sort of equalisation of the field in some sense, doesn't it?

Steve: Yes, and again, with the paradigm shift, we're seeing a general fragmentation of everything. Things are being broken down and we are looking to this wisdom of crowds idea. You could also look at it as a kind of big data approach where you take in as much information as you can in order to make a decision, rather than allowing just a couple of people who are privileged to make the decisions for everybody.

Ross Hill: Indeed, which is often overwhelming, that big Senate voting paper.

Steve: Absolutely it is, and that's the challenge that the emerging paradigm faces, is that overwhelming amount of data. Everybody wants to have a say, everybody should have a say, according to that worldview, and you get flooded with information.

Nyck: That's a really important point. We refer to this notion quite often here, the idea of overwhelm and confusion, given the complexity of things and the amount of information that's available to any one individual who's plugged in anywhere in the world now. How do you resolve that? How do you move beyond—I know, big question; just simply for today—how do you move beyond that flood of stuff that comes towards us and make some sort of sense of it so you can actually live an engaged life and hopefully contribute to a better world, etc.?

Ross Hill: Embrace the flood.

Nyck: Maybe just that. Good answer, I like that.

Ross Hill: The flood is overwhelming but it's better than a little trickle of water. I mean, if you look back, you maybe watched a few TV shows or just 'The' News, which was a singular thing and now there's lots of news's that you can look at and you can listen to your friends and you can listen to the groups that you're part of.

Nyck: Is that a word: news's? The plural of news? I like that.

Ross Hill: The flood of news's.

Steve: One of the mechanisms that's built into this paradigm shift to deal with that is relocalisation, and so instead of trying to take in all of the information from the whole world, you come back to your local and immediate needs and interests and rebuilding local community, and at that scale, that all-inclusive process is manageable. That's one of the ways that in the short term this is going to work very, very well, and the refocus to local everything is going to make that process of inclusivity manageable initially.

Eventually, we know from all of the information that we have from all the research that's been done around this, that this emerging paradigm is going to be the shortest lived paradigm of them all so far—maybe only just a couple of decades—and the reason that it's going to be short lived is because of this issue of trying to include all of the information; trying to include everybody. Eventually it is going to get overwhelming and we're going to do the big pop and leap to Second Tier consciousness, driven by that tension.

Ross Hill: Yeah. It can be hard to let go, though.

Steve: Oh, totally. It won't be an easy process, we know that.

Nyck: And correct me, of course, if I'm not accurate here, but that leap into what we call Second Tier consciousness—it was called that by Clare W. Graves—we weren't going to mention Clare's name today, but then we did.

Steve: You have to put a jelly bean in the jar.

Nyck: I'll put a jelly bean in the jar. I love jelly beans.

The notion of moving into Second Tier, that from that place of so much going on—overwhelm, confusion, 'how do I make sense of everything?'—to all-of-a-sudden leap into a place where 'oh, this is my role and this is my role in this network here that I've established, and this is what I'm to do now'; that clearing away, the macheteing through the forest of your own confusion to find the path that is true for you, that seems to be what's going on; what needs to happen in order to move into a second way of being.

Steve: Absolutely, but, you know, I wouldn't say that's limited to Second Tier. You can do that—finding your own path and finding your place in the world in any of the layers of consciousness; it's not just a Second Tier thing. I think the thing that really makes the difference when we do transition to Second Tier is we get access to new information that we don't have access to previously, and in that we start to be able to interpret consciousness and, I guess, see people more deeply than we've ever seen them before.

That opens up far more sensemaking tools that solve a lot of the complexity that we have at the moment.

If you just think about the fake news issue as an example at the moment, all of this information coming at us through social media, how do we know what to listen to and what not to listen to? From a Second Tier perspective, a way to cut through that noise is actually to use the capacity to analyse levels of consciousness—and you can do it through the analysis of written language or spoken word—then you can actually identify the more complex and capable sources of information and simply pay attention to those, so that's a way of sorting through this diversity that's very, very efficient and effective, but that's not available until the transition into Second Tier.

Nyck: Yes, we just played the opening minute or so of *Dirty Power* from *Greenpeace* (<https://actinstapage.greenpeace.org.au/dirtypower>). Powerful little piece; it's only 15 minutes long, and I would certainly suggest, folks, that you have a look at that if you're interested. It certainly made a big difference to how I looked at the serious complexity of the coal and other mining interests in this country.

Steve: Yes, and it just goes to show how deep it runs as well. It's thoroughly captured the whole system—the political system, in other words—by these big money interests within Australia. It just happens to be the coal or the fossil fuel lobby—the mining lobby in general, not just fossil fuels.

Nyck: And we talked about at breakfast here, the fact that this 15 minute video talks about Coalition members, and it's a very fine piece of journalism, detailing the connections between many members of the Coalition—the current Coalition government and past Coalition governments—the mining industry, particularly the coal industry, and the lobby groups associated with, and the revolving door between, all those three back and forth. It doesn't mention one Labor Party operative or member in this particular video.

Steve: No, it's clearly biased in that respect, we should be clear about that. Even so, it's a valid observation of what is, from that particular perspective—and as I mentioned earlier, we should remember that there was a lot of money from the mining industry that got poured into media to promote or perhaps trigger the removal of Kevin Rudd as prime minister, and then that was really the trigger of this cascade of revolving prime ministers that we've had since then.

Nyck: Five prime ministers since 2007. We're worse than Italy.

Ross Hill: Of course, Kevin Rudd also was Kevin 07, and he was really the first Australian ...

Nyck: To use his name to rhyme as a slogan!

Ross Hill: Haha, not first for that, but he did use social media very heavily and made a big deal of it, which worked in his favour to a degree, but it is interesting that those sort of networks are growing and continuing to grow. Obviously all the current candidates are on social media, so it's not a big deal anymore, but it's interesting to look at how big are these networks and at what stage do they overtake some of the previous most powerful networks? So lobbying is sort of taken for granted. Kevin was probably hopeful that his social media following would overpower that, but it undid him in the end, and so at what stage does that new form of network start to bring more power with it?

Nyck: Interesting.

Steve: Yes, absolutely. The other interesting connection with Kevin, of course, was his connection to China. He's a Chinese speaker, a Mandarin speaker, of course.

Ross Hill: He would have been on *WeChat*.

Steve: Absolutely, and it makes me think back to Whitlam's removal in 1975. There was actually a movie made about the alleged CIA involvement in the removal of Whitlam, who, of course, was a socialist.

Nyck: Oh, yes, a comrade.

Steve: And so you've got to factor those influences in as well. The relationship between Australia and the USA is a long one and a very powerful one, and any significant move towards a threat to that relationship would be drawing the attention of all of those who are involved.

Nyck: And it's very interesting because I mentioned a *Netflix* show that I've just watched a little bit of in the last few days called *Pine Gap*. I think it's an Australian-American production. It's essentially Australian, though, which looks at exactly that—of this relationship between America, Australia and China, and how Australia is in the centre of

that right now in all sorts of ways. Biggest trading partner on one hand, and yet our major military and cultural alliances are with the United States, and there's a growing schism, potentially, in that relationship. *Pine Gap* is worth having a look at folks, on *Netflix*. I don't know how it ends up, but it's actually surprisingly quite decent. I thought it was a bit of trash, but actually it was quite good.

Ross Hill: Of course, the place itself has a big fence around it so it's hard to physically go and look at it, but it is an American-Australian production.

Nyck: Exactly. I do remember someone told me back in the 80s when Bob Hawke was elected prime minister—this is an anecdote that I was told that I always remember—where he was taken to Pine Gap and was taken down underneath into these very secretive parts as the new Australian prime minister, and when he came out, Bob Hawke, who we knew as being pretty feisty—a big, expressive character—he came out sort of ashen-faced. The interpretation was he'd been shown and told things that 'that was that! You are now the prime minister of this minor country and we, the Americans are in control here and this is what we're doing, and thanks very much, you can toe the line'.

Steve: One of my contacts, who I will leave nameless at this stage, who was a very, very senior defence officer here in Australia, said to me once that he'd just been on a tour of the *NSA* in the US, and he shook his head and he said, 'if you saw what I saw there, you'd never touch a computer again.'

Nyck: There you go. Oh my god. You're tuned to *Future Sense* here with myself, Nyck Jeanes, Steve McDonald, and our guest, Ross Hill.

Nyck: You're tuned to *Future Sense*, 99.9 here, with myself, Nyck Jeanes, Steve McDonald, and our special guest, Ross Hill. You can text in, and thanks for a couple of texts here, on 0437 341119. We've just been raving a little bit—raging, raising, raving, raging, roving, roaming—across the field of Australian politics, but we're going to go a little bit wider now here. Steve.

Steve: Yes, just a few current affairs issues from around the world on the topic of emergence.

Elon Musk is about to launch some satellites, Ross.

Ross Hill: He is. Most people are probably aware that he's been working on launching rockets and satellites into orbit, and the cool trick is that they can land the rockets and re-use them again, which is obviously sustainable—more sustainable because you're not throwing the rockets out, which was the previous model—but it also means it's a lot cheaper to launch the rockets because you just have to fill up the tank and give it a polish and up it goes again. So what they've been quietly working on in the background for the last four or so years is a satellite internet company. They've traditionally launched their own rockets but with other people's satellites, and so what they're doing now is preparing to launch their own satellites to give us an international broadband network.

The real shift is that if you look at satellite internet at the moment, such as the NBN, the NBN has two satellites. They're huge, 6-and-a-bit tonne monoliths, and they have to hover over the same place of the Earth as the Earth spins around. That means they're hanging out at around 35,000 kilometres away, and every time you load a picture on *Instagram*, it has to go 35,000 kilometres and back. That's why it's traditionally quite slow. The big shift here is that they want to launch their satellites at an altitude of about 350 kilometres high, some of them 1,000 kilometres, which is a lot different to 30,000 kilometres, and so what that means is they're really, really fast.

Nyck: And they're tiny, aren't they? The satellites themselves are pretty small.

Ross Hill: Yes. Because they're closer to the Earth, they don't last as long because they're going to eventually burn up in a couple of years' time, and so the real trick here is that they launch heaps of them—so this launch this week should have about 60 satellites; not one, but 60—and you throw them out and they spin around the Earth in this low orbit for a couple of years, giving us internet access, and then they burn up naturally. The plan is not just to launch one or two satellites like the NBN have done, but to launch, within the next 6 to 9 years, about 10,000 satellites. This launch was 60, but they will need to average 50 or 60 new satellites in orbit every month, continuously, to keep it up there.

Nyck: Every month! That's a lot of space junk ... or do they burn up completely? What happens to the burnt-out satellites? Do they burn up completely? No, there must be some issues up there.

Ross Hill: No, no, the idea is they're designed purposely to burn up in a planned fashion over time, in a couple of years once they're done. So even if they break on launch, gravity will pull them down and they go away. That's why they depend on re-launching new ones; then it becomes this permanent thing. If they pull it off, we will have, potentially, super, super fast internet around the whole planet and that would be really

cool. They're not doing it alone. There's also and one of the other companies who are working on similar things.

Steve: Yes, an absolute game-changer, really. Do you know how that technology is going to work? Will devices be able to talk directly to the satellites? Will there be intermediate ground stations?

Ross Hill: They're still working on that at the moment, but the general idea is that you have a box on your roof, just like the current satellite ones, but instead of having to point the dish somewhere and the issues that that has with it, it'll be a lot smaller—something a little bit like a pizza box with probably a solar panel and an antenna—and that would give you wi-fi into your house. The upside is, and the real opportunity is, that's all you need is this box. You can put a solar panel on it and so you can be in the middle of nowhere with your little box and get really, really fast internet.

Steve: And how are they monetising this? I mean, how are they going to pay for it?

Ross Hill: That's a good question. I assume they're going to charge us a lot of money.

Steve: Yes, interesting.

Nyck: So it's fast internet for everybody who can afford it.

Ross Hill: Yes. They haven't really announced what they're going to do and what the plan is for monetising it at the moment, but just as they're shifting the model and launching it—and it is a lot cheaper to launch these satellites than the traditional model—I imagine if it's too expensive, we're not going to buy it, right? It's going to have a lot more reach than the traditional satellite internet, but it won't replace your mobile phone.

Steve: That's interesting because we're looking at a time now where some high schools are actually sending rockets into space, aren't they? Which is pretty amazing in itself.

Nyck: And other high schools are banning mobile phones in classrooms and at school, so we've got things happening on both sides.

Steve: I know, isn't that interesting?

In other news, the city of Denver has just voted by referendum to decriminalise magic mushrooms, which is very, very interesting. As has been the case, Colorado seems to be leading the way in the rollout of psychedelic medicines. I was talking recently to a venture capital fund manager who's interested in these sorts of progressive things and he was predicting that the whole state of Colorado will fully legalise magic mushrooms in the not too distant future, which is very, very interesting. He sees them going down a very similar road to medical cannabis.

Nyck: On the topic of cannabis, a report a couple of days ago from the *Drug Enforcement Administration*, the DEA in America, not a particularly avid backer of the cultivation, legalisation of marijuana, however, "in a new Federal Register filing set to soon be published, the anti-drug agency is gearing up to increase the total amount of cannabis that can be legally grown in the US for research purposes. The increase is rumoured to be more than five times the amount of what is allowed at the current date, which is approximately 1,000 pounds and will increase to roughly 5,400 pounds next year. Meanwhile, the DEA is also planning to lessen the amount of certain opioid drugs such as oxycodone, hydrocodone, morphine, fentanyl and others that are manufactured in the United States"

(<https://www.sciencetimes.com/articles/21556/20190510/the-dea-wants-more-marijuana-and-less-opioids.htm>). So basically, they're waking up a little bit to the potential for cannabis to replace the use of opioids to some degree.

Steve: Very interesting, and there's an awful lot of tension around this so I'm sure much of it is not getting into the media, but the large pharmaceutical companies are standing to lose a terrible amount of money from the sale of these opioid-based pharmaceuticals as medical cannabis comes onto the market, unless, of course, they re-orient themselves to take advantage of the medical cannabis growth.

Nyck: At the end of this article, it says: "It's time that Congress looked at the 28,000 plus peer-reviewed studies currently hosted on the National Institute of Health's online database, and reform federal law by removing marijuana from the Controlled Substances Act altogether", which would certainly be a good thing. The time has come for these medicines to start to really come online around the world, and that's an exciting change for the future for sure.

Steve: It is exciting, yes. Another exciting change is that the crypto market looks like it's starting to move again.

Ross Hill: It is. It's showing signs of life. In the past week, *Bitcoin*, the original cryptocurrency, peaked over AU\$10,000, and *Ethereum*, which is the second biggest one at the moment, is around \$280, so it was a big spike because that's going up about 15-20% in a single day.

Steve: If you look at the all-time *Bitcoin* price chart, then it's very, very clearly ticking up—I'm just holding it up for the other fellas to see there.

Ross Hill: Definitely ticking up.

Nyck: Have a look at that, folks. Look at that graph.

Ross Hill: But it could go anywhere from here, right?

Steve: It could, but look at the trade volume on there, which is really interesting. On this graph that I'm looking at, which is current as of today, the 13th of May, it looks like there's been a spike in 24-hour volume that exceeds any previous level, according to this graph on <https://coinmarketcap.com>.

Ross Hill: That's quite interesting because the price has been relatively stable for *Bitcoin* and cryptocurrency, but the volume is definitely picking up. People are having another look at what's happening, and what's changed since the last big peak is there's tens of thousands of different projects and currencies and assets and tokens and people are putting real estate into cryptocurrency tokens so you can trade it differently, people are representing fashion now—there's different couture app that are being sold—lots of different projects. Nike just put a patent out registering—I've forgotten the name right now, but it's something like crypto shoes—so you can try these different styles as well. There's a lot of movement happening but effectively, when cryptocurrency first came out, it was saying, here's *Bitcoin*, it's a bit like digital gold and some people love gold and they got excited by that, but your everyday person is probably not as interested in gold, but now it's seeping into everything, so whether it's shoes or real estate, it's representing these different forms of value in a digital form, and that means we can send it and we can trade it and we can value it in much different ways.

Nyck: These applied uses that are extending and expanding in all sorts of directions in our lives, how's that facing off against the difference in government regulations around the world and tax? Because not all countries seem to be on the same page.

Ross Hill: There not. Just as with anything, there's different tax situations and legal situations in each country, And of course, that makes it interesting when you're working via internet, because you can look at the internet from every country.

There's been a bit of movement in places like Malta—Malta treat cryptocurrency a little bit differently. In the same way that the Cayman Islands are associated with certain types of privacy, Malta is becoming a bit of a crypto hub; Singapore as well. That's because they're loosening some of the restrictions or they just don't have the restrictions.

So that is interesting and companies will move around. One of the top exchanges called *Binance*, started in China, moved to Malta. Unfortunately, this week they lost \$40 million of *Bitcoin* in a hack. So that also happened—the hacks haven't gone away; keeps things interesting.

Nyck: Because originally, and I think we've talked about this before, a year or so ago, the notion of hacking these cryptocurrencies is not an easy thing to do and yet it is possible. So it is a risk, isn't it? It does happen.

Ross Hill: It does happen—happens all the time. Just like if you look at the history of banking, there were gold robbers who literally robbed the bank—you'd go in, you'd take the stuff and you've got it—and cryptocurrency is quite similar. If you have the private key of the asset, then you can run off with it.

Nyck: You just don't need a getaway car.

Ross Hill: Well, but you leave bigger footprints, right? Everything's on the blockchain and so it's not as automatic as just taking the stuff because you can follow where it's going. So there are new systems coming up, different ways of protecting wallets and making use of network effects, so there are some where if you do lose your key, you can go and recover it through a group system, or if you're on an exchange, the exchange will help you with that and charge you a fee for it.

There are these new things evolving. It's not a finished, perfect system, but it's very, very interesting and I don't think many people would claim that it's going away. It's definitely not going away. We still buy stuff, we still pay for stuff, and we do want to do it more internationally and faster and cheaper and in new ways.

Steve: As we've been mentioning on recent episodes, there has been a lot of talk of a potential liquidity crisis, a global liquidity crisis this month, and I guess we're nearly halfway through the month now. It hasn't shown up yet so whether it's going to happen

or not, we don't know, but if it does, it'll be very interesting to see how that impacts the crypto market. It could go either way, I think.

Ross Hill: Yeah, one of the big differences in the current market and liquidity is that a couple of years ago, you had to trade everything through *Bitcoin*, so you would spend your Aussie dollars on *Bitcoin*, then you would trade it for something else. Now, there's so many more exchanges popping up around the world and they're much more flexible, so you can buy the actual thing you want to buy much more directly, so that does change the system.

Steve: It does for sure, yes.

In other news, I guess this is more in the collapse file than the emergence file—a bit of climate news. There's an article here from about a week ago talking about farmers in the Midwest of the USA who've been waiting a very long time for floodwaters to recede (<https://www.npr.org/2019/05/03/720043317/the-mississippi-river-has-been-flooding-for-41-days-now>). Of course, there was some extraordinary cold weather during the North American Winter this year, which dropped an awful lot of snow and all of that has melted and is running down the rivers. Right at the moment, according to this article, which is about a week old, the Mississippi River has been at major flood stage for 41 days in a row and there's more rain coming as well. They're warning that the major flooding may extend into June, and that means that many farmers will not be able to plant crops at all this year. So we're looking at fewer crops and less food, of course, which usually means rising food prices, and in the longer-term forecast, particularly from *Armstrong Economics*, this is going to be an increasingly significant issue. I think his computer algorithm has been talking about 2024 as a significant year for crop losses impacting food prices and general food shortages (<https://www.armstrongeconomics.com>), and as we controversially do mention on the show sometimes, there is some scientific evidence that's pointing to the emergence of a mini ice age instead of actually global warming. We understand that is very controversial so we're generally quite mindful about how we talk about it, but if that is true, then that will mean major, major crop losses, and in the work of mathematician and astrophysicist Dr. Valentina Zharkova, which has involved study of solar dynamics and solar weather and how it impacts the planet, she has said that from 2028 through 2032, the entire world will be facing serious, serious crop losses from climate related issues, particularly cold weather, and all of the consequences like this example from Mississippi where the all of that cold weather produces snow and ice which melts and then floods and then farmers can't plant their crops. Valentina Zharkova has said very, very specifically that according to her research, this is going to be so significant that unless governments plan in advance, there are going to be major, major problems with people not being able to get access to food.

Ross Hill: This is one of the things, too, that's also being tracked from orbit. We've always had this—well, not always—but there's a lot of people taking photos of the planet, and there's a lot more different databases of imagery that are becoming available, some that are updated as much as twice a day. One interesting capability that gives us is that you can go back in time through pictures of the planet and you can see the shift—like, there was a forest here this week, it's not the next week; these crops are looking good, these crops looking bad; here's the state of this flood over there. Of course, that's a lot of stuff and it's quite overwhelming, so there's a bunch of different organisations. There's a new one, as well, called *WattTime*, and they're looking at using AI to crunch all of this imagery and, I think optimistically, they're claiming they might be able to track the carbon emissions of coal power plants (<https://www.watttime.org>). I think that's a bit of a stretch perhaps at the moment. You can track visible smoke quite easily, and what we're going to see over time is that we'll be able to track more and more stuff. Some of these companies are claiming they can count how many trees are on the planet, and so some of this that's a very, very powerful, some others like carbon dioxide molecules, I'm not sure of.

Nyck: That's interesting. *WattTime* is as a non-profit artificial intelligence firm and it claims, whatever the quality and the depth of knowledge that they are able to ascertain from this satellite imagery crunched in this way, they are saying that it will be not just available to regulators and politicians, but the public as well. So that's a good thing.

Why do you think it's going to be difficult to really articulate good numbers of what is being emitted from a coal-fired power station, for example? Don't they do that already? I thought that's how they measured things. No? Obviously not.

Ross Hill: How do they measure these things? I'm not a scientist, but when you start with imagery, once you look at satellite maps a little bit, there's a lot of stuff that's very visible that you don't think about when you're on the ground. So if you've got a coal mine, an open-cut coal mine next to a coal plant, you can see how much coal is being dug out. That's going through the system; emissions are coming out of that. Hedge funds have done the same thing for a long time with those big oil tanks. From the ground, they look like this big round oil tank; from the top they have this floating roof in a lot of them. And you can see by the shadow of the sun on the side of the tank how full the oil tank is. There's all sorts of stuff that you get a different perspective of in the world, literally from being above. You can spot a lot of stuff.

Nyck: The overview effect.

Ross Hill: Yes, and that in combination with this big cloud computing and AI-type systems of machine learning, they can crunch a lot more numbers than we can

ourselves rationally, and so that's super cool. We've got a bigger calculator, but we still need direction on double-checking, like, does this really make sense? Can we really measure that stuff?

Steve: That's right, and you know, what sort of modelling systems are these figures that we're collecting being fed into?

Ross Hill: Yes.

Steve: That has a big impact on it.

In other news, the UN chief has come out and warned of "total disaster", quote unquote, if global warming is not stopped. According to this report from *The Globe and Mail*, he's saying that "the world must dramatically change the way it fuels factories, vehicles and homes to limit future warming to level scientists call nearly impossible" (<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/world/article-un-chief-warns-total-disaster-if-warming-not-stopped/>). There's a perfect storm brewing here. If you take that angle, the global warming angle, and the calls to, in some respects, shut down industrialised civilisation versus the possibility that we don't actually have all the science sorted out—and as we've said before on the show, a lot of the global warming movement seems to blindly repeat mantras rather than actually looking at the evidence; and the emerging paradigm at the moment, this Relativistic network-centric, humanistic way of being human that's emerging, has a tendency to collapse hierarchies and in doing so, often it can lose cause-and-effect relationships, lose sight of them completely.

Ross Hill: And also get fixated on simple numbers. One number to rule them all.

Steve: Yes, that's right, and what I think is really important at this stage in our history is to keep an open mind and look at all the evidence and not discard evidence because 'it's wrong'—and there's a general opinion out there at the moment that it's wrong if you don't support the global warming crowd.

Nyck: Are you with us or against us?

Steve: I would argue what's actually wrong is to be closed-minded and we should be open to all of the scientific evidence that is coming in, keep monitoring it all, not just one hypothesis, otherwise we're going to get caught out seriously. I think what's happening in Mississippi right now is a wonderful small-scale example of what could turn into a global disaster. If we focus on this idea that it's going to get hotter and we

end up with a world that's got a whole mix of both hot and cold temperatures and some extremes in both directions, then we won't be prepared for that.

Nyck: I think it's interesting, too, as you said earlier today, you can really read a lot, of course, into language, and the language that's been used around this issue has been the term 'global warming' for a long time, predominantly. That's shifted a lot in my perception to the term 'climate change', and now, to me, the phrase 'climate instability' seems to be rising and that seems to be a much more accurate and sophisticated interpretation of what's going on. It is unstable, for all sorts of reasons, yes, but we do not yet know, perhaps, exactly which direction it's going to. That's a contentious thing to say and it shouldn't be, because we do need to be more intelligent about the way that we approach the data out there.

Steve: Yes, remaining curious is the key, and in the crazy ideas basket, there's a couple of interesting stories here. One is very recent from the 10th of May, and it's an idea by a chap called Sir David King—which suggests that he must be from the U.K. probably—oh, here we go, he's a *University of Cambridge* professor and he's come up with a radical new centre for climate repair to repair the damage humans are doing to the environment. One of the proposals he's floated is the idea of working to refreeze the polar regions (<https://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-48069663>). I think his idea is something to do with generating cloud cover that would cool the poles down and allow them to refreeze. It made me look back in history a little bit to the 1970s. And I found an article back there where some scientists were considering pouring soot over the Arctic in the 1970s to help melt the ice in order to prevent another ice age.

Nyck: Yes, this was 1975 in *Newsweek* (<https://iseethics.files.wordpress.com/2012/06/the-cooling-world-newsweek-april-28-1975.pdf>). There's quite an extensive piece on this, and I vaguely remember this era where there was talk of an ice age back then at some point.

Steve: Yes, it certainly was on the cover of *Time* magazine and other big magazines for sure. It was the general feeling back then, and people were coming up with some crazy ideas about how to change the Earth's climate also.

Ross Hill: It's a human thing, too, I think, to say 'the climate is changing, let's change the climate'. Of course we can change ourselves as well, right?

Steve: Absolutely. One of the concerns that was too much one of the concerns now, though, is that back in the 1970s, there were these crazy ideas, but we didn't necessarily

have the technology—the capacity to carry them out. But now with the technology and the understandings that we have, it's a bit scary because somebody has just got to throw enough money at one of these crazy ideas. And we may have some large-scale uninformed geoengineering that happens, which could actually make things worse.

Nyck: Some people claim there's been geoengineering since the Second World War, though.

Steve: I'm sure there has. There's no doubt that there has been at certain scales—how widespread it is, is anybody's guess—but even here in Tasmania, we have climate engineering going on, whereby they seed clouds down there to fill up dams and that kind of thing.

Ross Hill: And famously throughout Indonesia each year, there's a period of burning and burning down forests, often for planting palm oil. If you travel to somewhere else like Singapore during that time, it's really, really smoky, and so we're starting to see the flow on effects of this.

Steve: Yes, that's right.

Nyck: Oh, yes, you're here on *BayFM* on *Future Sense*. You can check all of our edited podcasts out via the website www.future sense.it, and they are usually available within 24, maybe 48 hours at the most, after the show each week. You can go there and hear past shows of this, edited with all of the sponsorships and also the music removed, unfortunately, because the music's good, but the content is right there, so check it out.

So Steve, we're going to talk a little bit about leadership in the last bit, because you guys have got to rush off soon, I know, because you've got an appointment. We'll come to that.

Steve: We do, yes. Ross and I are scooting up to Queensland to run a strategic planning workshop for an organisation who is one of the major donors to our charitable foundation, which has been created to support this global paradigm shift and the emergence of human consciousness (<https://www.aadii.org>). Some of the things we will be talking to them about are how organisational structures are changing and how leadership is changing within the workplace. Some of the central themes here are the collapse of hierarchies—so moving away from this highly structured system that we've had during the Modern Scientific-Industrial era with top-down systems where it's top-

down directed, and in the process of collapsing, that tapping into the wisdom of the crowd. That obviously changes the leadership dynamic within an organisation and it asks people to step up and exercise personal leadership, so for everybody to become more involved in the decision-making process.

Nyck: When you say that, I immediately think about an individual's personal evolution—their regard, their awareness of, their conscious application to evolving, so to speak—developing themselves. Is that necessary for that? I guess it's all tangled up together, but it would seem that sometimes it's a very personal thing to actually make that movement towards more awareness and more consciousness about the planet; about what's going on.

Ross Hill: It is, and it works both ways. As an individual is learning more and trying new tricks and changing the way they live and the way they work, so is the organisation they're a part of—or organisations. Then, as the organisation changes, maybe they get a new tool or they purchase a new company or something different happens at work and demands more of the individual as well. So there is this pendulum from what is the individual doing and how they impact in the organisation, and then at the same time, how is the organisation changing and impacting the person? We've seen a lot of this through technology in the last couple of decades where, for example, there was a time when no organisation had a telephone, then telephones came out and we could organise things across towns really quickly.

Nyck: It was so funny watching *The Sting* with Paul Newman and Robert Redford yesterday from 1973—most people would be familiar with it—and the old dial telephones and how slow it was to communicate, and how easy it made things to be crooked and to be distorted; to deceive people because people didn't know what was going on half the time.

Steve: That's right, and of course that slowness of communication was central to the sting itself—the sting being set-up where they were conning this guy out of his money. They were relying on the fact that when a horse race was run, the results of the horse race would have to be typed into a telex machine and then would come out on a stream of paper, which they called the wire—it would come down the wire and they'd be read out by the local announcer at the betting agency, wherever they were. Of course, what they had was a back-end communication channel where they would hear directly from the horse's mouth, so to speak, who won the race, and before it came through on the wire, they would know who to bet on.

Nyck: Yes, it was great, but amazingly of its time, when you think that it's only 45 years ago—45 years is not that long, but it is also a long time ago—but how much has changed in 45 years? My goodness.

Ross Hill: So now it's mobile phones, then we've brought the mobile phones to work; we have social networks, we bring the social networks to work; we have chat rooms everywhere at work, and it just keeps on moving, obviously. Each time, it's increasing the possibility of how quickly we can speak within the organisation, and outside the organisation with our customers and suppliers and everyone else, and so each time we're constantly challenged. What do we do with the speed, and is speed necessarily better, and how do we cope with all of this extra information that's coming from inside the organisation and outside the organisation?

Nyck: That networking, though, certainly enables, partly, the breakdown of the hierarchy—just that—just the fact that everybody knows much more about what's going on everywhere.

Steve: It does. When I was in the military, I had some early access to these kinds of practices, and I'm thinking now it must have been back in the late 1980s. In some of the jobs that I had, I used to work with members of the SAS regiment—*Special Air Service* regiment—who were very well resourced and often on the leading edge of whatever's new and whatever's most effective in terms of procedures. They were practising in their small group patrols—and it could be, say, a group of just five people—this collapsing of hierarchy process. Within the group of five, you might have one officer and some NCOs and some soldiers, and each of them would have a particular special skill, so one of them might have special skills in being a medic, one of them might be a signaller, etc. Often, on the job, they would actually collapse the hierarchy so instead of the most senior person in the patrol making a decision, the decision would defer to whoever had the most expertise in that particular area. At the time, I thought that was very, very interesting, and now in hindsight, I can see it was the early emergence of this next paradigm of how organisations function—this idea of collapsing hierarchy, deferring to expertise instead—but that also demands that the person with the expertise is prepared to step up and take on that leadership responsibility and share their expertise with the team.

Nyck: Very paradoxical at this time, isn't it? This whole idea of levelling the field—everybody gets a voice, let's all sit in a circle, everybody gets an equal time to say what they feel about something—but that often, of course, doesn't get much done. Too much talk, and so at some point, as you're saying, the person with the expertise in the moment over the issue at hand needs to be able to step up and say, 'well, I'm going to

lead this particular project right now. It does mean I'm the leader in a hierarchical sense, it's just that this is the most appropriate at the moment.'

Steve: Yes, and there are lots and lots of complicators that can get in the way of this working effectively, one of them being, as you said, overcommunication and under-action. It really demands the dropping away of competitive dynamics within the group. While you've got those power-based dynamics happening, it really undercuts the effectiveness of this kind of process, so that's a big part of making it work.

Ross Hill: And as people are bringing this new network technology into the workplace, it is very tempting—people spent a lot of time on some of these chat tools and they're just chatting a lot. While we can look at them as a way to reduce the friction involved with communicating with each other, it actually demands that we reinforce some of the hierarchy around decision-making and action. We can sit around chatting about a new issue all day and getting everyone up to speed, but we can't do that about everything the organisation does.

Traditionally, that's where you have the hierarchy, and the boss or the CEO or whoever it is, is the tie-breaker. They used to be the tie-breaker for the action decision as well as the communication because of the way communication worked. It would flow through a centralised hub of the leader or the department head or the CEO, and then back down the other side. Once we flatten the communication, we still need people to push along that action and so there is this kind of decoupling of the communication which could be separate from some of the decision-making. So while we're empowering the people, maybe at the edges of the network, who might have the best skills or be the most well-informed on particular things, and the executives can do a lot to empower those people and let them step up, it does definitely works both ways.

Steve: It does, yes. There's a book which came out in 2014 by Frederick Laloux called *Reinventing Organizations*, which looks at the emergence of these new ways of organising and communicating and managing within companies, etc. It's actually a very, very good book. He's used some of the *Spiral Dynamics* stuff, which is based on Clare Graves and also Ken Wilbur's *Integral Theory*, and he talks about 'teal' organisations which are not exactly Second Tier, but they're very, very close to it. So we're talking about high functioning Layer 6, which is the emerging paradigm—very high functioning is what he's describing.

He's given a couple of the examples in the book of existing organisations that are making this process work. Generally they tend to be organisations that already have fairly well-established workflow processes and so people are part of an active process that's connected to other parts of the organisation. That tends to compensate for any tendency for people to talk too much and not do enough work, because they have to fit

in with the workflow process and they know that some other group is relying on them to have an output within a certain amount of time. I think that's fairly essential. You've got to have that kind of structure.

I think the potential downfall of trying out this new way of working is to think that it doesn't need any structure or leadership at all. I've seen things go wrong, particularly in community organisations, where people make the assumption that 'oh, no, let's collapse the hierarchy, we don't need a leader', but we actually do need people to step up and show leadership where their expertise applies. We also need to have a structure so that we know there's going to be an output and not just a big discussion.

Ross Hill: A lot of time, once you collapse some of these hierarchies, you almost revert to schoolyard bullying—it's the person with the loudest voice, not necessarily the best.

Steve: Exactly, as is the case with all of the First Tier layers of consciousness. When people are operating out of one of these layers, they often make the assumption that everybody else is, too, and I think there's certainly an element of that in some of the literature around this new way of working—an assumption that everybody's going to be espousing the same values at work—and that's simply not the case. We do know that often, some of the consciousness layers which have a tendency to have power over, or manipulate others, they have a field day in these sort of free-flowing structures where there aren't too many boundaries and stuff because it's just like open season for them.

Nyck: It's interesting, from the book you talked about, *Reinventing Organizations* by Frederic Laloux, one of the quotes relates to what you're saying here, I think: "The most exciting breakthroughs of the 21st century", he says, "will not occur because of technology, but because of an expanding concept of what it means to be human." And that's really the key, isn't it? It's really the change in people that's going to actually facilitate the deeper change in organisations.

Steve: Yes, we're tapping into this emerging new way of being human, which is more capable, and it's more capable essentially because of the use of network dynamics and the sharing of information and action.

Nyck: Awesome.

You guys are going to have to run off shortly, aren't you?

Steve: We are going to have to, very soon.

Nyck: But you've got a couple of things to finish off with, I can tell.

Steve: Before we finish on this topic, I was just going to mention the book *The Wisdom of Crowds*, which was published in 2004 by James Surowiecki. He gave three things which are essential for the wisdom of crowds to work. The first one was "independence of decision". That's really important because if you've got people going along with everyone else's decision rather than exercising their own decision-making process, then that undercuts the wisdom because basically you end up with a kind of a cult rather than a diversity of input.

The second thing that he raised was that "diversity of information", and once again, if you've got something like, and I'll use the example of global warming where it's become like 'if you don't go along with the global warming thing, then you're just out, we're not even going to listen to you, and in fact, you should be censored'. What that does is it undercuts this idea of diversity of information, and it means that you are not getting access to information, which could be and probably is useful and important to your process. So it's really important to preserve that, and that's why I'm always saying stay curious, let's be open to everything, let's account for and assess everything rather than excluding stuff.

The third thing that he mentioned that was critical to the wisdom of crowds is the decentralisation of organisation, which is exactly what we're talking about here—this collapsing of the hierarchical structure, but the remaining importance of leadership, and also discipline within the group as well, and fairness and balance.

Ross Hill: And it really is the action that brings us back to that focus. We can chat, we can chat, but there's a deadline, or there's a meeting, or something's happening—we've got to open the shop. It's very easy to get stuck in these loops of romanticising: 'we've got a network, we can include everyone ... Oh, hang on, did we do that thing? It's overdue.'

Steve: Exactly and if there's one single common flaw that I see in organisations, whether they be community committees or profit-making organisations who try this stuff, then that's the most common flaw, is that there's too much communication and not enough action.

Ross Hill: And are we overlooking the obvious stuff? My friend Simon Terry likes to say about his *Future of Work* work: 'One of the biggest differences, as quoted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, is that people entering the workforce are, on average, eight centimetres taller than those retiring.' So larger doorways for everyone.

Nyck: That's really funny. That's really good. That's a good note to leave on, I think.

Steve: Yeah, we've got to cut and run.

Nyck: You guys cut and run and I'll play some music and say a few other things here in the next half hour. Maybe I'll just shut up and play music. Whatever. Thanks to Steve McDonald, my regular co-host—he'll be back next week, of course—and to our guest, Ross Hill, who no doubt will be back again in the future. Thanks, guys.

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