

## Glenn Gerstell

Former General Counsel, NSA and Senior Adviser, Center for Strategic & International Studies

### **The Challenges of the Digital Revolution for Our Way of Life**

We tend to think too conventionally and have difficulty imagining something completely new. But that is precisely what we must do in order to cope with extraordinary change that is about to sweep over us. The advent of the internet of things, 5G telephony, artificial intelligence, cloud computing and other products of the digital revolution will present major benefits for society but also extraordinary challenges that we have not addressed. It will change the way we think about business, the role of government, and personal interactions. Yet we will almost surely underestimate the implications of technology.

### **Coping with a Rising China that Wants to Displace America**

For the first time since the United States became a global power, we must confront another country that represents not merely a political or military threat, but also an existential economic one. China is an adversary and partner rolled into one, and there is no better example of how global technological development and trade produce complicated interdependencies. China's Belt and Road Initiative — their worldwide development plan integrating infrastructure, markets and political systems — aims at nothing less than using their technical and financial prowess to replace the United States as the global power.

### **National Security Challenges facing America across the Globe**

The next war could be won without a shot being fired but by an adversary's turning off our stock exchange, our electric grid, or our civilian air traffic control system. Prior challenges such the specter of atomic bombs in the Cold War or terrorist acts following 9/11 inspired greater fear, but in some ways those threats were more manageable than the complex challenges we now face. Dealing with China, Russia, Iran and North Korea are themselves daunting challenges. We also face the continuing threat of terrorism and new threats from cyberattacks and biological and chemical warfare.

### **Is the Fourth Amendment Ready for the Digital Revolution...and What does Privacy Really Mean Today Anyway?**

As more and more of our lives become digital, and we share more of our personal experiences online, what does privacy really mean anymore? The 4th Amendment, which limits unreasonable searches and seizures, didn't even apply to tapping telephones, telegraphs and radio signals until 1967. But since then, our courts have struggled to keep up with the digital revolution and Congress has tried to balance privacy and civil liberties with national security needs. At the NSA, we daily coped with the competing challenges of keeping our nation safe while adhering to the Constitution.