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Dear America,

Happy Birthday! Your founding 250 years ago did not promise success or wealth to your people. But you did promise that we all had the chance to try. Now two and a half centuries in, you are still the most audacious and impactful startup ever launched.

As an entrepreneur of a woman-owned business, the promise of opportunity was the only promise I ever needed. I built my career on this same ideal. That my ideas and my voice could matter. America didn't give me a guarantee. She gave me a shot. That's always been enough.

As a 4th generation entrepreneur, I grew up in a family-owned business. I learned first-hand that our family's ability to survive and thrive was totally dependent on our daily efforts. That lesson never left me.

The truth is, the Entrepreneurial Spirit IS the American Spirit personified. We are not given anything. We earn our success each day. This has been my truth throughout my entire career. Every client served. Every stage I have stood on. Every idea I have had the courage to share.

Entrepreneurs don't wait for permission. The Founders of America did not wait for permission either. They fought for what they could envision. When I started my own management consulting business, I was betting on an unproven idea, just as my great-grandfather, grandfather, and father did before me. That fearless willingness to try is among the most patriotic acts any of us in business will ever take. Our Founders understood this. They were consultants too. They were just focused on nation-building.

I have spent my career in rooms where people were stuck. Stuck in old models, old thinking, old fears. What ultimately moved them was never a technology platform or a strategic framework. It was the moment they gave themselves permission to think differently. Then they acted. That is innovation. It is the willingness to face the fear and do what needs to be done. And in 250 years of American history, she has never waited for perfect conditions.

And failure? Well, that is part of America's design too. We have tried, failed, succeeded, and failed again. It is an endless cycle of resilience and reinvention. This is not optional for America. It is the foundation of our national operating system. It is not a bug in the American story. It is a feature.

I have worked with countless businesses and organizations across our great nation. They were not weak. They were not failures. They were stalled and unable to identify the next iteration of their enterprise. The ones who moved forward were willing to release what no longer served them. That is adaptation. And that is how America, and every great enterprise, moves forward.

America's greatest strength has always been her ability to bring diverse people together from around the world. My ancestors were a part of this too. They left small villages in Europe for a world of uncertainty, prepared to risk everything to provide a better legacy for their children and those of us who came later. My ancestors risked it all to get here. I am not going to waste the opportunity they gave me.

I am an expert genealogist and have studied the journey of my ancestors. Their deep faith in themselves and the possibility of a better tomorrow fueled them, even in the dark days when nothing was certain. When I walked the streets of Sweden, Slovenia, Poland, France, Austria, and Germany more than 100 years after my ancestors left those countries to come to America, I truly understood that their sacrifices made everything possible for me.

America still works the same way. Over the last 250 years, the beacon of her promise has attracted people from across the world. Millions arrived with nothing but courage and the will to work hard. They built lives. They built a nation.

The American Experiment is not over. It is just entering the next iteration. My call to all of you, and especially to those of you with entrepreneurial ambitions: take the risk, show up, and then reach your hand back to help someone else do the same. Imagine what people 250 years from now will write about us. Whatever we become as a nation rests on what you invest in her today.

With love, respect, gratitude, and pride,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jill J. Johnson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jill" and last name "Johnson" clearly legible.

Jill J. Johnson, MBA, President & Founder
Johnson Consulting Services

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