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From the Desk of...

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Keeping Up With Jones of GE

Readers might get the impression from your Sept. 17 page-one article in the "Life at the Top" series that GE's Reg Jones was merely a caretaker. Wrong!

During his eight years as GE's CEO, among other accomplishments this "reserved, gentlemanly accountant" more than doubled the size of the company (from \$12B to \$27B); reorganized it; corrected its major operating flaw, an excessively short-term outlook at the department general manager level; and introduced it to strategic planning and long-term funding of new ventures.

Jones also executed flawlessly the largest corporate merger of all time (GE and Utah International) and made numerous significant divestitures, all on highly favorable terms, including GE's half-hearted run at the computer business. In a 1981 Fortune poll, 164 CEO's voted Jones the best.

He also found time, through the Business Roundtable, to speak for the social responsibility of business with an eloquence and effect not seen before or since. He is arguably the only CEO of GE to deserve to stand in Valhalla alongside her legendary engineers and scientists.

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Summit, N.J.

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