

COMMENT

Jimmy Hahn

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ERNIE MENDOZA

Jimmy taught me the rudiments of news agency work when I joined Reuters as a junior sub-editor in Singapore in 1958. And a better teacher there could not have been. He knew all aspects of the Singapore operation, even showing me how to read the holes on ticker tape so I could transmit my own stories. He taught me how to use an antiquated telex machine to send the latest rubber market prices to subscribers in Malaysia. I was puzzled at first when he asked me to “tell London to go to Hell.” What he meant was to tell Reuters London to switch from radioteletype to Hellschreiber communications. The latter, though messier, was more reliable when atmospheric conditions were bad. As to newswriting he used to say: “It’s all a formula.” When I was a correspondent in Rome in 1969 he dropped by to see me on his way back from London to Singapore after his falling out with **Brian Horton**. He said he would rather resign than move to London. It was the same attitude held by the late **John Earle**, my first bureau chief in Rome. ■