

**Praises Mitchell as 'Very Human'**

8 wk  
11/7/70

# FBI's Hoover Scores Ramsey Clark, RFK

By Ken W. Clawson  
Washington Post Staff Writer

J. Edgar Hoover yesterday called former Attorney General Ramsey Clark a "jellyfish" and the worst Attorney General he has encountered in 45 years as director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Hoover said in an interview that Clark was "like a jellyfish . . . a softie," unlike his father, former Attorney General and Supreme Court Justice Tom Clark, whom Hoover described as a "good, strong man."

The FBI director said he would accept the judgment of the elder Clark on his stewardship of the FBI, but that Ramsey Clark was even a worse Attorney General than the late Robert F. Kennedy. Hoover said Kennedy was the first Attorney General with whom he had troublesome relations. In the last six months of Kennedy's tenure, Hoover said, he did not speak to Kennedy.

"If ever there was a worse Attorney General it was Ramsey Clark," he said. "You never knew which way he was going to flop on an issue."

"He was worse than Bobby (Kennedy). At least Kennedy stuck by his guns, even when he was wrong."

Hoover added, however, that "until Bobby Kennedy came along" he had never had trouble with Attorneys General.

He called Attorney General John N. Mitchell an "honest, sincere and very human man" and added, "There has

never been an Attorney General for whom I've had higher regard."

The director's criticism of Clark was prompted by the former Attorney General's book, "Crime in America," being published this week. In it Clark charges that Hoover's "self-centered concern for his own reputation" led the FBI into glory-seeking rather than effective crime control.

Clark charged that the FBI was tardy in moving against organized crime and that a conflict resulted between Hoover and Kennedy, who Clark said was the first Attorney General to have a "commitment to control of organized crime."

Clark could not be reached for comment on Hoover's remarks.

In the interview, Hoover said there was never any trouble with Kennedy on the organized crime issue. He pointed out that the FBI did not have the federal laws to fight organized crime that have been passed in recent years.

"But there was trouble," Hoover said. "The trouble was that Kennedy wanted to loosen up our standards and qualifications; to discard the requirement that agents hold degrees in law or accounting. He even wanted to discard the bachelor's degree as a requirement."

"In short, he wanted more Negro agents."

Hoover said he refused, and that Kennedy brought up the subject "half a dozen times."

See HOOVER, A7, Col. 1



United Press International

**FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover on his refusal to lower standards for agents: "President (Johnson) said, 'stand by your guns.' I didn't speak to Bobby Kennedy the last six months he was in office."**



## HOOVER, From A1

"I told him, 'Now Bobby, I have no prejudices. The FBI has Negro agents, Indian agents, Chinese agents and all kinds of other agents. Any one who can meet the qualifications can have a job, and I'll have it no other way.'"

Hoover said he told Kennedy that if he didn't like his position, "Why don't you get another director? You may not know it, but I can retire at full salary. Now, I give half of my salary in taxes, so it's costing me money out of pocket to continue."

The director said that "right afterwards" he went to the White House and told President Johnson about the confrontation.

### "Stand By Your Guns"

"The President said, 'Stand by your guns.' I didn't speak to Bobby Kennedy the last six months he was in office." That was in 1964.

The FBI has a total strength of 18,000, and will get an additional 1,000 agents under provisions of the 1970 Omnibus Crime Control Act. It has been widely believed that these additional agents will be used on college campuses, where the Bureau now has jurisdiction over bombings and arson to most buildings.

Hoover called this concept "absolutely untrue." He said the extra agents would be scattered through the Bureau for a variety of duties created by expanding federal jurisdiction in bombings of federally financed buildings as well as making certain types of gambling a federal offense inside a state's borders.

He said he recently wrote former Justice Abe Fortas a letter following a speech in which Fortas criticized using undercover FBI agents on campuses. Hoover said there are no undercover FBI agents on campuses, and that agents will only go on campus to investigate actual bombings.

Threats of bombings or arson, he said, would be turned over to campus police and local police to investigate.

Hoover blamed college ad-

ministrators and faculty as much as a small group of students for the wave of campus disruptions.

"Some faculty are worse than the hippies," he said. "Ninety per cent of the students want an education and they are prevented by hippies who are encouraged by some of the faculty."

Campus disruptions would stop, he said, "if college presidents had the courage and guts to expel and make it stick." He praised S.I. Hayakawa for his handling of disruptions at San Francisco State College.

Most college administrators, Hoover said, are soft. "They come up through the academic process, and there is nothing worse than an intolerant intellectual. They're soft, and they never want to accept responsibility."

### No Conclusions on Kent

He added that the "people shouting the most are a minority that do not believe in tolerance."

It is true, he said, that students often haven't been able to make their views known to college administrators, trustees and other governing bodies. He said these lines of communication should be opened, and that students should work vigorously to make their

views known, but without disruption and intolerance.

The director said he was disappointed to read in various publications that the FBI concluded various things about last spring's shootings at Kent State University in Ohio. "The FBI never makes recommendations or draws conclusions," he said. "We are a fact-finding agency."

It was the Justice Department, he said, that concluded that National Guardsmen fired into students in panic during a confrontation. But Hoover said he was glad the Defense Department will intensify National Guard training.

Professionalism under fire is insisted upon by the director. FBI agents are instructed, he said, not to be promiscuous with firearms, but to shoot to kill when they are threatened by an

assailant with the means to kill. "A man never knows about himself until he is tested by battle," he said.

Hoover recalled that during the 1930s he "always hated to sit behind a mahogany desk" when his men were in action in the field.

He said that on one raid, he noticed an agent who answered the command to advance by going in the opposite direction, panicking. "He was not yellow," Hoover said. "He was just not made of the stuff for an FBI agent. Of course, I got rid of him immediately."

Hoover, who will be 76 in January, was relaxed and hearty during a rare interview in his office that lasted about two hours. In referring to his age, he said that he no longer bothers to deny that he may retire. But he pointed out that like all agents he has undergone an annual physical examination since 1938.

"I was in better shape at my August, 1970, examination than I was in 1938," he said.

But admitted that he has a tendency to put on weight and is constantly on a diet. At his favorite luncheon spot in the Mayflower Hotel, the director has been reduced to a grapefruit salad with cottage cheese and black coffee.

### Arrest Ratio High

But Hoover seems to thrive on this kind of discipline. He repeated several times that law enforcement officials must adhere to strict standards, personally and professionally, to carry out their assignments.

And while he considers all law officials members of a close fraternity and is concerned with the increasing danger to their safety, he is opposed to a proposed bill making the killing of a policeman a federal offense.

Such a move would give the FBI jurisdiction in these cases.

He said the bill comes too close to making the FBI a national police force, something he said he has opposed since 1924 when he became the director.

In addition, FBI records show that in 96 per cent of police murders, arrests have followed within 30 days, usually by the police force to which the victim belonged.

"It's a matter of pride, too," Hoover said. "The FBI goes all out when an agent is killed; so do local or state police."

He said more policemen



have been killed in the last two years than at any other time, with many deaths attributed to senseless, sniper slayings.

General crime, he said, has never been greater than now. "It has reached an apex." Hoover then listed three areas of combatting crime and made these observations:

- Law enforcement—Better training and higher salaries have increased the professionalism of police on all levels and they are doing a better job than most people recognize.

- Courts—On the federal level alone, 1,200 cases, some of them as old as two years, are still awaiting a judgment. Courts are uneven in their justice, often giving inadequate sentences and probation when they shouldn't. In the District of Columbia, one bank robber was released on his own recognition and committed another bank robbery.

Sometimes, Hoover said, the criminal justice system just makes a mistake.

He said a classic example of this came during the early 1960s in a District Court trial Teamsters leader James R. Hoffa was charged with trying to bribe a staff member of Sen. John McClellan (D-Ark.), who was then investigating labor racketeering.

Hoover said that at the trial Hoffa was identified as the man who gave the staff member money. It occurred in a taxi driven by an undercover FBI agent.

"In the middle of the trial," Hoover said, "Joe Louis, the former heavyweight champion, came into the courtroom and embraced Hoffa. The jury found him innocent."

Hoover said that McClellan's investigation and subsequent FBI work that eventually put Hoffa in the federal prison at Lewisburg, Pa., led to the suspicion that there was great corruption in the American trade union movement.

Hoover called Hoffa's later convictions and imprisonment "good riddance to bad rubbish" but he said it was not representative of union groups.

"George Meany, for example, is one of the finest men I know. There are no Communists in the AFL-CIO and he doesn't tolerate corrup-

tion.

"He's a fine man and the AFL-CIO is a fine organization."

- Prisons—They are the last place of concern for those who finance the criminal justice system. Rehabilitation services are negligible and should be greatly improved.

Hoover said he seemed always to be involved in controversy with "bleeding hearts" who accuse him of being opposed to parole and probation.

He said he has only been opposed to abuses of parole and probation. People just don't understand, he said, that on the state level, a life sentence means 21 years, with the prisoner eligible for parole in seven years. On the federal level, he said life is 45 years, with eligibility for parole in 15 years.

"I still believe that punishment is a deterrent. Where a serious crime has been committed, a substantial sentence should be imposed."

He said his contacts with prison inmates led him to believe the death penalty is also a deterrent and should be imposed in a few serious cases such as premeditated murder and kidnapping where the victim is harmed.

In Hoover's time, major crimes have shifted in style and type from the kidnappings of the 1930s through bank robberies, organized crime and radical political crimes.

Hoover said that despite the widespread belief that the FBI constantly wiretaps, there are now only about 40 wiretaps authorized by the Attorney General for national security cases. All other wiretaps are court-authorized and being used effectively, especially in gambling cases.

#### Asked Wiretap Curb

Hoover recalled that during the 1940s he was the only intelligence official in Washington who didn't have the authority to wiretap. He said he urged Tom Clark, who was then Attorney General, to ask President Truman to curtail wiretapping

except upon approval of the Attorney General.

During this period, Hoover said the late columnist Drew Pearson accused him of tapping his telephone. Hoover, who said he did not personally like Pearson, denied the allegation but checked on it after Pearson left his office.

"I found that another agency indeed had tapped his telephone," Hoover said.

He added that it was a standing rule in the FBI not to tap the telephone of any newsman, senator or congressman.

Hoover has often been at odds with the Supreme Court, although he now sees some improvement with the addition of President Nixon's two court appointees.

He described Chief Justice Warren Burger as an "excellent chief justice" and said the appointment represented a "wise decision by the President."

Hoover said he didn't know Justice Harry Blackmun, but that he considered him a "very able judge."

After nearly a half-century of dealing with criminals, Hoover said that John Dillinger, Alvin Karpis and other notorious gangsters were really less dangerous than the current crop of new, less experienced criminals.

And the style of the gangster of the 1930s has also disappeared, he said.

He recalled that Karpis, who was on the FBI's Ten Most Wanted List, used to send him letters and postcards from around the nation threatening to kill him, challenging him to a personal duel and mocking efforts to catch him.

Hoover said that in early May, 1936, he was testifying before a congressional committee when agents located Karpis in New Orleans.

The director ordered a stakeout and flew to New Orleans to personally arrest Karpis.

Karpis was getting into a car with an accomplice when Hoover stuck a pistol in his ribs. The gangster turned and mildly said, "Well, you got me."

He had recognized Hoover from a newspaper photograph taken the year before when the director caught a sailfish off the Florida coast.

Hoover said he got into the back seat of a police car with Karpis, while an agent from Oklahoma drove and Karpis' mistress sat in the front. They were taking the prisoners to FBI headquarters in New Orleans for questioning when Hoover noticed they seemed to be traveling in circles.

"I discovered," said Hoover, "that neither I nor the agent—who was there just for the Karpis raid—knew

where our office was. At that point, Karpis spoke up and asked us if it were in the old Post Office or the new one."

Hoover said he first told Karpis to keep quiet as befitted a prisoner, but then identified the old Post Office as the site.

"Karpis then guided us to our office. He said he had been planning to rob the old Post Office and knew its location."

Later, Hoover was escort-

ing Karpis to Minneapolis to stand trial for kidnaping. When the plane landed in Kansas City to refuel, Hoover purchased a newspaper whose headline read, "Karpis robs Detroit bank."

Amused, Hoover got on the plane and showed the paper to Karpis, who smiled and said "This time I have a good alibi."

"He had a sense of humor, a good sense of humor," Hoover said.