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SF CHRONICLE
**Hoover's
Quarrel With
Justice Dept.**

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Washington

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

Hoover said in an exclusive 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 Hoover's 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.

'WORSE'

"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.

TARDY

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

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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 bureau 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."

"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 that 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.

"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.