

FBI'S HOOVER, RAMSEY CLARK TRADE BARBS

By MARK BROWN

WASHINGTON (AP) — FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover and former Atty. Gen. Ramsey Clark, apparently uneasy bed-fellows in law enforcement for two years, have publicly divorced themselves with verbal blasts at each other.

Clark, Hoover's boss from 1967 to 1969, fired the first shot. The 76-year-old director's "self-centered concern for his own reputation," said Clark in a new book, led to the FBI's sacrifice of "effective crime control."

Hoover, in turn, told a Washington Post reporter that Clark was "a jellyfish," the worst attorney general in the 45 years Hoover has headed the elite federal law enforcement agency.

While a 1964 confrontation over standards for FBI agents resulted in Hoover's refusal to speak to the late Robert F. Kennedy in the last six months of his tenure as attorney general, the director told the Washington Post in an in-



ROBERT F. KENNEDY
Strained relations

terview:

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

"He was worse than Bobby (Kennedy)," the newspaper's editions yesterday quoted Hoover as saying. "At least Kennedy stuck by his guns, even when he was wrong."

Clark could not be reached immediately for comment.

Hoover termed Atty. Gen. John N. Mitchell, his current boss, an "honest, sincere and very human man."

"There has never been an attorney general for whom I've had higher regard," the Post quoted him as saying.

In his book, "Crime in America," Clark charged "the FBI has so coveted personal credit that it will sacrifice every effective crime control before it will share the glory of its exploits."

"This has been a petty and costly characteristic caused by the excessive domination of a single person, J. Edgar Hoover, and his self-centered concern for his reputation and that of the FBI."

Advance publicity on the book stirred Hoover to mo-



J. EDGAR HOOVER
Target of book

mentarily lower a barrier between himself and newsmen that had existed for three years.

Post reporter Ken W. Clawson wrote that Hoover said Clark was "like a jellyfish

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... a softie" who failed to match up to his father, the former attorney general and Supreme Court Justice Tom Clark.

Judging by past public statements of both men, Hoover and Clark were poles apart in their philosophical approach to law enforcement.

Clark displayed a tendency to search for the social and economic causes of crime; Hoover is less willing to forgive. Clark supported the Supreme Court decisions expanding rights of the accused; to Hoover they are "handcuffs" on the police.

Clark, considered a potential dark horse for the 1972 Democratic presidential nomination, said in his book a rift developed between Kennedy and Hoover over pursuit of organized crime.

The FBI Clark said, continued to dramatize the peril of the Communist Party "long after there was any risk to national security from that source."



RAMSEY CLARK
Levels charges

When Kennedy began pushing the fight against organized crime in 1961, Clark said, the FBI hung back.

"The conflict between Atty. Gen. Kennedy and the FBI arose from the unwillingness of the bureau to participate on an equal basis with other crime control agencies," Clark said.

Hoover, however, gave other reasons for his rift with Kennedy.

"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." Hoover was quoted as saying.

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

The Post said Hoover told Kennedy he could retire at full pay, and then "right afterwards" filled in President Lyndon B. Johnson about the confrontation, the Post said.

"The President said 'stand by your guns.' I didn't speak to Bobby Kennedy the last six months he was in office," Hoover told the Post.

Commenting on campus unrest, Hoover repeated to the Post his criticism of permissive college administrators and said reports that 1,000 new FBI agents, authorized by the 1970 Omnibus Crime Control Act, would be assigned to campuses were "absolutely untrue."

He also was described as denying that the FBI had reached any conclusions about the death of four students in a confrontation with Ohio National Guardsmen last May at

Kent State University. Any conclusions, he said, were made by the Justice Department from an objective FBI report.

The Post story also included these points:

—Hoover said he opposes proposals to give the FBI investigative jurisdiction in deaths of policemen. In most cases, he explained, the crime is swiftly solved by local authorities.

—The FBI director said his agency is now operating about 40 wiretaps in so-called national security cases, the only category for which advance court permission is not required.

The FBI he added, has a standing order never to tap the telephone of a senator, congressman or newsman. Checking an allegation by the late columnist Drew Pearson that the FBI was tapping his phone, Hoover said he found the tap had been put on by another agency.

—Often at odds with decisions of the Supreme Court, Hoover said President Nixon's choice of Warren E. Burger as chief justice was a "wise decision" and that another Nixon appointee, Justice Harry A. Blackmun is "a very able judge."