

F.B.I. HEAD SCORED BY RAMSEY CLARK

Hoover Held Ideological—
Justice Committee Formed

By FRANCIS X. CLINES

Former United States Attorney General Ramsey Clark charged yesterday that the Federal Bureau of Investigation had failed to maintain itself as a "disenthralled seeker of truth" and had become intolerant of diversity within its own ranks.

"The F.B.I., for reasons I find unfortunate, became ideological sometime back and this put a scale over its eyes," Mr. Clark said. "It had an end before it and sought facts to fit that end."

The criticism was made by Mr. Clark in response to questions at a news conference at the Overseas Press Club that was held to announce the formation of the Committee for Public Justice, an organization of prominent private citizens concerned that the nation has entered what was called a "period of political repression."

A wide range of protests, many directed at the Nixon Administration, was offered by Mr. Clark and other members of the new group. But questioning focused on Mr. Clark's views on the F.B.I. because of a statement by J. Edgar Hoover, the F.B.I. director, that Mr. Clark had been a "jellyfish" and the worst Attorney General he had ever worked under.

"He's entitled to his opinion," Mr. Clark replied. "He never said it while I was there."

Mr. Hoover criticized Mr. Clark in an interview published yesterday in *The Washington Post*. The F.B.I. chief was reported as responding to a criticism in Mr. Clark's new book "Crime in America," that Mr. Hoover led the F.B.I. astray with a "self-centered concern for his own reputation."

At yesterday's news conference, Mr. Clark said that "major contributions" had been made by Mr. Hoover, such as showing that "a big bureaucracy can be effective."

Since boyhood, he continued, he had admired F.B.I. agents as "some of the best men I know." But, he added, the agency currently suffered "two great shortcomings"—a lack of objectivity in pursuing facts, and an intolerance of internal criticism.

"Mr. Hoover has never been very tolerant of criticism," the former Attorney General declared, asserting that the director had an "ideology of a different time," and that new leadership was needed.

Pursuit of Reds 'Wasteful'

The Federal agency's pursuit of the Communist party was a "terribly wasteful use of very valuable resources," Mr. Clark asserted. He asked why the F.B.I. found it "so difficult to begin civil rights investigations" and inquiries into "unlawful police conduct."

He dismissed as "absurd" Mr. Hoover's description of the Black Panthers as the most dangerous group in America. "The F.B.I. outnumbers the Black Panthers seven to one," Mr. Clark declared. "And if they can't handle it, they should have stayed in bed."

There was no immediate comment from either Mr. Hoover or the F.B.I.

Before answering questions, Mr. Clark denounced the District of Columbia crime-control bill as based on the theory that "force, violence, stealth and cunning can protect America."

Other members of the committee for Public Justice, led by the chairman, Roger W. Wilkins, warned of an "alarming pattern" in American life.

"The President, the Vice President and the Attorney General have helped to create a political climate," the committee contended in a statement, "in which Congress has drastically prejudiced constitutional rights and in which police and other officials have been arbitrary in the execution of their responsibilities. At the same time, many judges have condoned or failed to alleviate these excesses."

Mr. Wilkins, an executive of the Ford Foundation, said that the committee would speak out from time to time on specific issues after these had been researched by law-school students under the guidance of Luis Sanjurjo, a lawyer who is the committee's executive director.

The alleged abuses cited in the committee statement included preventive detention, "no-knock" police authority, "the failure of the Administration to grant the constitutional rights of black children to desegregated education in the South," wiretapping, a Federal "blacklist" of scientists, "anti-riot" statutes that infringe free speech, the "unleashing" of National Guard troops and policemen on campuses, "police repression" of the Panthers and others, and "intimidation" of the mass media.

In addition to Mr. Clark and Mr. Wilkins, the committee's executive council includes Blair Clark, journalist; Dr. Robert Coles, psychiatrist, Norman Dorsen, general counsel of the American Civil Liberties Union; Lillian Hellman, writer; Burke Marshall, former assistant United States Attorney General; Robert B. Silvers, editor of the *New York Review of Books*; Telford Taylor of the Columbia University Law School; Jerome Weisner, scientist, and Harold Willens, businessman and national co-chairman of the Business Executives Move for Vietnam Peace.