

Mobster's confessions

**Double Cross by Sam and Chuck Giancana
(Macdonald, \$16.99)**

Starting out as a hitman for Al Capone, Sam Giancana was a ruthless mobster of limitless ambition who forged links with the CIA, the Kennedys and international world leaders to become one of the most powerful and dangerous men in America's history.

Sam "Mooney" Giancana grew up in Chicago during the violent years of Prohibition, where he had been a gang member from the age of 15.

He rose fast in the hierarchy by moving from brutal violence to the lucrative business of gambling. Gradually his enterprises stretched west from Chicago to Las Vegas, north to Detroit and Canada, and south to Miami and Texas.

Mooney's empire included a cast of famous Hollywood names. As he explained to Chuck: "Hollywood is full of guys waiting to be used... All anybody out there cares about is whether they're gonna be a star or not."

He maintains that in exchange for the Outfit's services in Cuba, the CIA allowed more than 100 million dollars a year in drugs to flow through Havana into the United States. The CIA kept 10 per cent of the take, to be stashed away in foreign accounts.

But Giancana's big ambition was to own the President completely, and through Joe Kennedy's long liaison with the Chicago Outfit, it was certain that his son, Jack, would need his help to win votes.

Mooney instructed his showbusiness contacts to

pull out all the stops to get him elected, and personally contributed two million dollars to the campaign. At the same time he set up electronic surveillance on Jack Kennedy to get enough dirt on "Mr All-American family man" to ruin him for life.

In spite of the collusion, John F Kennedy insisted on playing his own game once inside the White House. On the other hand, Mooney tells how he was sent copies of FBI memos through Judy Campbell Exner and later Marilyn Monroe, but then brother Robert was appointed attorney general.

Mooney conceded it was a brilliant move: Bobby would continue his war against organised crime, and thus wipe them out to cover the Kennedys' own involvement.

American's number one boss had been double crossed by the President.

Sam Giancana left for Mexico after Kennedy's assassination. In 1975 he was murdered before he was due to testify before the Select Committee.