

## CONFESSIONS OF A GODFATHER

# Kennedys suffer the Mob's final revenge

CHICAGO Godfather Sam Mooney Giancana may only rate a footnote in history. But he helped change the course of world affairs because of his part in the plot to kill President John F Kennedy in 1963. His Mob were influential in securing JFK's 1960 victory in Illinois, but to Mooney's fury the Kennedys recognised no obligation. Both JFK and Bobby were to pay a heavy price.

Before his death Giancana confided his secrets to his younger brother Chuck, who wrote this chilling account with his son Sam Jr.

IT WAS Sam Mooney Giancana's chilling boast that the assassination of President Kennedy, which the Mafia had helped organise, was little different from the plot to kill Castro — or any of the dozens of other military/CIA-sponsored coups throughout the world.

"The government of this country was overthrown by a handful of guys who did their job so damned well... not one American ever knew it happened. But I know. I've guaranteed the Outfit's (Chicago name for Mafia) future. It's time for me to move on to greener pastures. Spreadin' the Outfit's power and makin' a fortune in deals overseas are two of the best reasons I can think of to leave the country," he told his brother Chuck in 1966.

Mooney had spent a year in jail for contempt when he refused to testify before a grand jury and left shortly after his release for Mexico.

With his interpreter Richard Cain, a Chicago cop turned gangster, Mooney set up gambling junkets in Latin American coastal countries, and pursued highly lucrative narcotics and munitions smuggling and money-laundering schemes.

The CIA profited as well, discovering through Mooney's bribe-friendly

contacts, new avenues for diverting their own dirty money funds.

For Chuck that year saw one disaster follow another. He had now branched out on his own into property development with a bank loan.

His shopping plaza at Rosemount was progressing well when one morning helicopters loaded with cameramen circled above it. Chuck learned later that the FBI had suggested to Chicago reporters that perhaps Sam Giancana might still be investing in construction through his brother.

The next day the bank

phoned Chuck and said they were calling in his \$200,000 loan.

So Chuck sent a message to Mooney in Mexico. He needed his brother's help. Back came the reply: "No way. Unload the joint."

TWO days before foreclosure Chuck sold his shopping plaza. Years later he would pass the shopping centre and point to it with disgust: "It's worth three million today. I lost it all because of the FBI. They wanted Mooney and nothing would stand in their way — even ruin-

ing me financially. But he hadn't done a damn thing for me in years."

The publicity exacted a terrible toll on Chuck and his family. His elder son Chuckie, 17, dropped out of school, and even 12-year-old Sam Jr was hounded into solitude.

Chuck went to work as a film projectionist. As he watched the movies, he saw more clearly how Mooney had left his lasting, destructive mark on every aspect of his life.

When he thought about his brother's terrible political secrets the word 'omerta' rang in his ears.

DEATH DEALING: The gun used to kill Senator Robert Kennedy



STOOGES: Sirhan took the rap



THE BOSS... Sam Giancana and wife Ange

The Mafia code of silence.

From Mexico Mooney wielded his power like a sword. He never lost his hold over his Chicago empire. Chuck stayed in touch with his brother's goings-on through Mooney's henchman and Outfit enforcer Chuckie Nicoletti.

In April 1969 Chuck met Nicoletti by chance. What he had to say about Mooney captured Chuck's attention completely.

"One more Kennedy out of the way, huh?" said Nicoletti smiling broadly. "So Mooney did it again. Goddam, your brother's a genius. And settin' up that



# ELIMINATED . . . Robert Kennedy shot down

guy Sirhan to take the rap, hell, didn't it work like a charm.

"You know," Nicoletti whispered, "Oswald didn't really fire a shot. At least Sirhan did that much. But even if he couldn't hit a barn it didn't matter, cos Mooney had another guy to do the job on Bobby."

"Mooney must like to nail those Kennedy bastards in front of God and everybody."

**A**NOTHER mobster Tommy Payne would later tell Chuck that the Chicago Outfit had controlled everything at the Los Angeles hotel where the hit on Bobby Kennedy had occurred and that the other gunman, an Outfit man, was a last-minute replacement for a security guard.

Chuck felt the chill of another of his brother's secrets. He knew too much. Too much about Mooney, too much about

the CIA and the politicians who would sell their souls for power. He'd never be safe again.

Chuck vowed to renounce forever Mooney and the Outfit. On May 23 1969 his family legally changed their last name. Chuck didn't care whether he ever saw Mooney again.

What he didn't know was that he never would.

On June 19 1975 members of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence arrived in Chicago — where Mooney was sequestered since his deportation from Mexico — to arrange his safe transport to Washington DC for his testimony before Senator Frank Church.

Church was specifically interested in his connection with the CIA's assassination plot on Castro.

But Sam would not live to sit before the committee.



# Enforcing the code of silence

ON THE very evening that Senate staffers went to Chicago, Mooney was killed. It was a beautiful night for a murder. The air was thick and hot and still.

The killer made his way along one side of the bungalow in the quiet Oak Park suburb where Mooney lived and went down the concrete steps to the basement below. He felt the .22 target pistol against his waist, hidden beneath his belt.

But he had nothing to fear, nothing to hide. He and his intended victims were friends. The familiar smell of cigar smoke mingled with sausage and garlic hit him as he opened the heavy steel door. Mooney showed not the slightest inkling of fear as he fried some fat Italian sausages.

The killer stepped up behind his friend. He pulled the gun — a six-inch silencer over its nose — from its hiding place. Pressing it against Mooney's skull he pulled the trigger.

A sharp crack rang out and his victim lurched forward, then back again, falling face up on the floor. The killer stood over Moo-



REVELATIONS . . . Chuck and wife Anne-Marie

ney, a man he'd known for 30 years and watched as he fought for air, gurgling in his own blood. And then he placed the gun into the gaping, blue-lipped mouth and fired again. He shoved the gun under Mooney's chin and lodged five more bullets into what was left of a brain.

His job accomplished, the killer walked calmly out of the door into the summer night air. And vanished.

Two days later Chuck attended his brother's wake. Hundreds of reporters, curious

onlookers and cops attended, lending a carnival atmosphere to an otherwise sombre affair. "Where's the respect?" muttered Chuck angrily.

Chuck took a deep breath, stepped up to the casket and looked down at the waxen face — heavily reconstructed. It hadn't been the Outfit that wanted his brother dead, but some far more powerful ally that would have feared his testimony before the Senate Committee.

Chuck believed his brother would have met this new inquiry

as he'd met hearings before: by saying nothing of consequence.

Mooney would never have revealed his vast knowledge of covert CIA operations, or any of the thousands of skeletons buried in the Outfit closet. The code of Omerta ran too strongly through his Sicilian veins. It was his code of honour.

But to those unaware of his ethic, the spectre of Giancana testifying was a threat of monstrous proportions.

Most of those involved in the 1963 assassination of President Kennedy have been murdered. Some have committed suicide or spent their final days in prison, others still linger behind bars.

There are some men, however, if we are to believe Mooney's tales, who've prospered and remained free. Amassing power from careers deeply rooted in the CIA, these men have reached America's loftiest positions.

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