

# Principal Suspect

## The True Story of Dr. Jay Smith and the Main Line Murders

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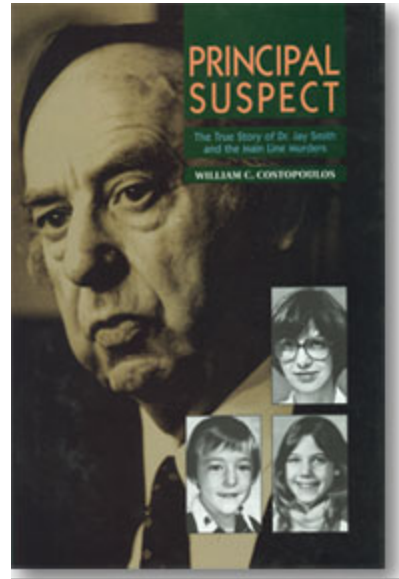
### *PROLOGUE*

I represented Dr. Jay Smith, a former principal of Upper Merion High School near Philadelphia, who was convicted and sentenced to death for the brutal murders of a fellow schoolteacher and her two young children. I tried the murder case which I have written about. It is a true story about a seven-year investigation by the FBI and the Pennsylvania State Police—the most massive homicide investigation in American history—that resulted in convictions and an unsolved crime. The children have never been found.

Many people believe that Jay Smith not only killed an innocent woman, disgracing her in her death, but that he also caused those two children to mysteriously vanish from this earth. Those same people also believe that Dr. Smith is responsible for the disappearance of his own daughter and son-in-law.

Jay Smith was a nocturnal creature, an eccentric by all accounts, and the strangest person I have ever come to know. I got to know the "Prince of Darkness," as he was dubbed by the law enforcement community, on a personal level. His eeriness cannot be denied, but I believe he was an innocent man sentenced to die for three murders that he had nothing to do with.

Yet my belief in his guilt or innocence is not relevant. Indeed, some would say my belief is self-serving and suspect. This book is not an effort on my part to prove his guilt or innocence. Readers will come to their own



conclusions. Few life scenarios afford the suspense, the danger, the excitement, and the opportunity for the exercise of pure power (both personal and institutional) of a first-degree murder trial. Too often the adversaries place themselves above the law and lose sight of the fact that their welfare is not what is at stake. What is at stake, in any criminal trial, is the integrity of the system and the fate of the accused.

The story to follow is about crossing the line, fixing cases, zealous prosecutions, rigging testimony, planting evidence, and the making and breaking of reputations in the courtroom. This true story is about a fight for the truth, an illusive concept in the courtrooms of America.