

## PRELIMINARY HEARING

On June 1, 1982, I was taken to City Hall for the first time for a preliminary hearing. I was taken to a dirty, sweaty, and smoky holding cell. I went before Judge Charles J. Margiotti, Jr. Once I entered the court room I saw my family; we spoke as much as we could and they sent their love, assuring me everything would be alright. I wanted to assure them things would be alright, also. The Laws family was in the court room as well, a few rows behind me. Chester Laws, Sr. would gaze at the back of my head in a menacing way. I will quote Marguerite Del from the Philadelphia Enquirer date June 13, 1982. **“Tiger Laws sat several rows away, his eyes boring into the back of Woods’ skull like laser beams”**.

The Judge only wanted to review the evidence and hear the witness to see if this case could be held for trial. The only evidence was the Commonwealth’s alleged witness, Homer Lane, who stated that he watched me jump from some bushes and that I was three (3) or four (4) feet behind Laws, Jr., when I shot him in the head.

The District Attorney was Guy Sciolla who later became one of the best trial lawyers in Philly. Now, he was against me and he asked Lane why he had not told police what he knew until several days had passed. Lane answered, “I didn’t want to get involved”. He told Laws father, he would testify after he had been shot at by the defendant and by one of the defendant’s companion’s, Michael Jones. Lane said he went to the police the next day, after he had started taking matters in his own hand, by going to get his gun and shoot at those whom shot at him. Now his alleged reasoning for me shooting at him was because “I saw him see me when he alleged I shot Laws, Jr”.

My lawyer, Ronald Morrison, asked Homer Lane some questions such as “They shot at you and you were going to shoot at them?” and Lane confirmed this. I did not understand this line of questioning because I told Ronald Morrison I had nothing to do with this case. Ronald Morrison would go on to tell the Judge and D.A. that he would produce thirty (30) to fifty (50) alibi witnesses. At the preliminary hearing, Ronald Morrison argued that a reasonable bail be set so that his client could be free while he awaited trial. But Sciolla opposed it, saying that Woods had been arrested and judged delinquent numerous times as a juvenile on charges ranging from theft, robbery, and possession of a weapon. Sciolla said, Woods had outstanding charges against him as an adult - one related to burglary and another to drugs. Judge Charles J. Margiotti, Jr., ruled that I remain locked up and scheduled a formal arraignment for June 12, 1982.

This hearing was a disaster and I was sent back to jail; not realizing this was my first encounter of misrepresentation by my trial lawyer, who did no research on any police reports, or even tried to interview Homer Lane or his mother prior to this hearing. Initially, I had a level of trust for this lawyer considering my uncle knew him. However, I was also very ignorant to the law, and now, I look back and see just how much. I was more confused going back to the Philadelphia Detention Center than I was when I left to go to court.

Sometime in August or September 1982, Ronald Morrison brought Adam Green an eye witness (friend of Homer Lane) to another hearing before Judge Ribner stating that he will testify at trial, that Homer Lane was with him at Fawn Street in North Philadelphia at