



POINT DIRECTOR DAVE TILLEY
On Suit 'Absolutely Absurd'

Judge Robinson To Rule On STRAIGHT Suit

By DONNA ESPY
Staff Writer

Judge Dorothy A. Robinson was to preside at a hearing this morning in Cobb Superior Court to determine if five local teenagers are being held against their will at a Cobb drug rehabilitation center.

The suit, filed by the American Civil Liberties Union, concerns practices at STRAIGHT, a drug rehabilitation center at 2221 Austell Road. It involves writs of habeas corpus — "orders to produce the bodies" — on behalf of Travis [redacted] of Dunwoody, 18; Bill [redacted] no address given, 18; Allen [redacted] and Kathy [redacted]

both of Marietta and both 17; and Janice [redacted] of Spartanburg, S.C., 17.

Dave Tilley, director of STRAIGHT, has refused to comment on the suit except to term the allegations "absolutely absurd."

The program also has been the target of allegations concerning physical abuse of clients.

Tilley, a former principal at J.J. Daniell Middle School in northeast Cobb and administrative assistant in local administration and personnel supervisor for the Cobb school system, said the program's staff often uses "cautious restraint" if an individual is causing trouble.

STRAIGHT opened in Cobb in August 1981 in a remodeled grocery store building. There are about 140 clients, ages 13-24, in the program, which is similar to the Alcoholics Anonymous concept of rehabilitation, according to Tilley.

Tilley said Wednesday the state Department of Human Resources was to visit STRAIGHT today in an attempt to complete licensing of the facility. He said the state agency has admitted they made a mistake in not licensing the program sooner.

Addressing the Cobb Ministerial Association Wednesday, Tilley did not discuss the court hearing today but

told the 20-clergy members gathered that drug use is a "terminal disease." He said he recently heard the Cobb medical examiner say at least 25 percent of the deaths of adolescents in Cobb County "were due directly to drug use."

Two young people involved in STRAIGHT accompanied Tilley to the luncheon meeting and spoke on their past experiences with drugs and their treatment in STRAIGHT.

Asked how she felt about the charges against STRAIGHT, 23-year-old "Christy" (not her real name) said, "I think it's a lot of B.S. I

sincerely believe in (STRAIGHT) and I'd stick up for it anytime."

She said she did not see any physical abuse during her 13 months of rehabilitation and added she knows of no one held against his will. "Christy" said she believes the suit was instigated by "someone who used to be in the program who has just copped out on themselves."

STRAIGHT's rehabilitation format calls for young people to undergo intense counseling and self-help sessions from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. seven days a week. Tilley said, with parents meeting at the center twice a week to discuss the problems.