Mayor's wife speaks out

Mrs. Lopez shares the blame in domestic dispute

Author: Bill McBean; Denver Post Staff Writer

Article Text:

While residents of this Douglas County community sign petitions to recall Mayor Greg Lopez, his wife has issued an emotional public admission of her part in the couple's Aug. 6 domestic-violence incident.

Residents began circulating recall petitions against Lopez last week and claim to have gathered about 500 signatures so far. About 750 are needed to get the issue before the electorate.

A copy of the petition says the incident represents "willful misconduct" on the part of Lopez that "will detract for the conduct of town affairs." Lopez, 29, was elected to his post in April 1992.

But Lopez's wife, Lisa, 28, who is about seven months' pregnant, said in a recent letter to local newspapers that it's unfair to blame her husband for the violence, because it started when she hit her husband on the head.

Police said Lopez reacted by pushing his wife to the floor, kick-ing her and dragging her by her hair.

"Let's not forget that I did make the first move!" Lisa Lopez's letter said. "Is that morally or ethically acceptable because I'm the `weaker' sex? I think not!!

"Don't get me wrong," she continued. "I am in no way condoning nor denying Greg's nor my fault in this. I am only asking that we be allowed to stand together in this and not be criticized for doing so." Mrs. Lopez said she "over-reacted" by calling 911.

"In light of all the publicity and mudslinging," she wrote, "I now regret my actions. You see, I am not a victim of my husband, I am a victim of the press and those who don't know us well enough to recognize that we simply made a terrible mistake."

Mrs. Lopez also said she thinks that Parker police were right in declining to jail the couple. Mayor Lopez was given a ticket for third-degree assault, and his wife was charged with harassment.

"Had the police officers strictly followed procedure and not used their discretion, which is available to them, both Greg and I would have been taken to jail and our 21/2-year-old son would have been turned over to social services for almost three days."
"That begs the question, who would they have been protecting and serving? The young pregnant woman? The family unit? Or the helpless scared young child?"

Mrs. Lopez said she's been emotionally damaged. "I also want to state that I am deeply hurt by the fact that those who have chosen to make an issue of this have not cared in the least about my health, that of my unborn child, or our very impressionable son. For that, I will never forgive those individuals.

"In closing," Mrs. Lopez said, "I want to make it clear that Greg's and my only judge and jury is the Lord Himself. I know He has forgiven us because we have forgiven ourselves and each other."

Copyright 1993 The Denver Post Corp.
Record Number: DNVR138949