

DENVER AND THE WEST

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ABC producer spared DNC charges

The Denver city attorney's office drops the case against a journalist who was arrested during the DNC.

By Howard Pankratz The Denver Post

Article Last Updated: 10/17/2008 06:24:51 AM MDT

The Denver city attorney's office Thursday dismissed charges against ABC News producer Asa Eslocker, who was arrested in front of the Brown Palace Hotel on Aug. 27 while covering the Democratic National Convention.

Eslocker's lawyer, Dan Recht, praised the attorney's office for the action.

"However, we continue to be outraged at the conduct of the individual officers in the incident," Recht said. "Their harassment of Mr. Eslocker is captured on the videotape."

"They (the ABC crew) were just doing their jobs, and they were doing it politely," Recht said.

Recht said Eslocker and the ABC crew were standing on a public sidewalk near the Brown Palace entrance — where they had a right to be — covering an event of public significance.

He said Eslocker and the crew asked police, who were trying to force them off the sidewalk, where they could stand. After being told to move across the street, Eslocker was arrested in a "violent and thuggish manner," Recht said.

"The police conduct has drawn appropriate criticism from international press and civil-rights organizations," said the veteran Denver lawyer.

Recht said the public should be outraged.

Eslocker acted courteously and tried repeatedly to determine where he and his crew could report on a national event, an event about which the public has a right to be informed, Recht said.

"In essence, the police on the scene tried to censor the information that Mr. Eslocker and his crew sought to disseminate to the public."

Recht said that despite their concern, Eslocker and ABC have decided not to take legal action.

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