

CRM 499

Introduction to Courtelaney Pass Transcript

Setting: The anchor is sitting at the news desk doing the news report.

News Anchor:

Good evening. Welcome to Courtelaney Pass News Network. Our local community has recently been rocked to its foundation with instances of greed, corruption, violence, negligence, racial distrust, and gross incompetence. Things have gotten so bad that within the past month, our previous chief of police has been forced to resign and the governor has had to step in and assign an interim chief of police as well as a special prosecutor to evaluate all of the civil and criminal issues. Additionally, the interim chief has installed a captain of investigations to lead and participate in the inquiries into all of the issues this municipality is dealing with.

The eyes of the country are all watching what is happening here and how we move forward. Now let's go out to our reporters on the street to find out more.

Setting: News reporter standing next to a Welcome to Courtelaney Pass sign.

News Reporter:

Courtelaney Pass is a mid-sized municipality in the southeastern United States. It has 80,000 residents, with 55% of the population being white, 38% black, and 7% Hispanic. It's primarily a "blue collar" city with agriculture and manufacturing as its primary industries, an unemployment rate of 8.7%, and a median household income of \$38,000. The school system is troubled with a high drop-out rate and the middle and high schools having perpetual "D" ratings on state assessments.

There is a great deal of "southern pride" evident in this community as confederate flags are frequently flown and unfortunately, the fledgling local KKK is attempting to revitalize itself. Two out of the five city council members are considered "good old boys" that are satisfied with the status quo and are apathetic towards the civil unrest that has been percolating in the black community.

Back to you Ted...

Setting: News reporter standing next to the road.

News Reporter:

Enforcement of traffic laws has been one of the major causes of trouble here in Courtelaney Pass. There are eight major intersections with the municipality and each is equipped with intersection cameras. Last year, 2.1 million dollars in revenue was raised from the fines assessed for traffic infractions recorded by the cameras. Public support for these cameras are low and their constitutionality is being hotly debated – to the point that a local "action group" is suing for their removal. Part of the lawsuit filed alludes to the

fact that a study of the violations indicates CP is generating significantly more revenue per capita off these devices than other similar cities and ticketing blacks twice as often as whites.

Additionally, CP is listed by AAA as the “Biggest Speed Trap in the South.” Particularly, on a major roadway passing through the town, the speed limit reduces from 55 mph to 35 mph during a 50-yard stretch of road and consistently has a concealed police officer running radar at the 35 mph speed sign. Comments made to this reporter off the record indicate that officers were required by the previous chief to issue at least 12 citations per shift, and that 87% of the speeding tickets issued were to blacks and out-of-town travelers.

We continue to investigate this issue and will report anything further that we uncover. Back to you, Ted.

Setting: News reporter standing in front of a group of minorities protesting.

News Reporter:

Courtlaney Pass has recently seen its violent crime rate soar by 35% and the CP-PD believes this is due to a proliferation of street drugs being sold in open air, drive up drug markets on the southern edge of the city where much of the population is comprised of minority groups. Previously, the CP-PD Narcotics Unit conducted regular and aggressive enforcement actions in that zone of town, including crack cocaine search warrants and reverse sales operations.

However, during one of these operations, a shooting occurred where a known dealer shot at an undercover officer. The officer returned fire and killed the dealer. When the internal affairs report on the matter was released to the public, clearing the officer in the incident, a riot erupted throughout the minority community. The ensuing internal affairs investigation cleared the officer and the day that this report was made public, rioting erupted in the minority community. The riots and looting spilled over into the downtown area and 13 businesses were badly damaged, 8 officers injured, and 112 rioters and looters were arrested. Law enforcement was called in from the surrounding areas to help and a tense peace exists at the moment, but the minority community has warned that if relations do not immediately improve with the CP-PD, then more unrest is certain. Adding to the unrest is that the CP-PD suspended all narcotics operations in the area, pending further review.

Setting: News reporter standing in front of some run down shacks.

News Reporter:

The latest count on the Hispanic population in Courtlaney Pass indicated that there are approximately 5,600 Hispanic residents. However, this figure only counts those who responded to the census or were property owners. It is estimated that an additional 5,000+ undocumented immigrants also call Courtlaney Pass home. The majority of this hidden population works in the immense strawberry fields and orange groves and are paid \$5.00 per hour in cash (off the books).

Unfortunately, it is very common for these migrants to be the victims of home invasion robberies on pay day. Local drug dealers and MS13 gangsters kick in the doors to their homes, take their hard-earned cash, and occasionally rape the women. The CP-PD reports that this population is considered easy prey

as they will not report these crimes to the police for fear of being deported. Following a recent city council meeting on this topic, one of the white city council members was overheard in the parking lot saying, "I couldn't care less what happens to those people.... they don't vote!!!"

Setting: News reporter standing on the banks of a cypress swamp.

News Reporter:

Racial tensions in Courtelaney Pass began to erupt four years ago when Kayla Williams, a 9-year-old African American child, disappeared from her bedroom as she slept. Her mother discovered she was missing when she discovered Kayla's bed empty in the morning in their non-air-conditioned home. The CP-PD's initial response to the incident was questionable as the responding officer downplayed the family's fears and told them that Kayla probably ran away but to call back the following day if she hadn't returned. Feeling that they were "the wrong color", family and friends of Kayla began searching for the little girl.

Unfortunately, her body was discovered two days later in a cypress swamp bordering Lake Diemer. Kayla was wearing her night shirt, no panties, and there were no visible signs of trauma or injury. The CP-PD was summoned to the scene and two officers responded. Upon viewing her body, which laid on its back almost in a peaceful sleeping position, the officers notified the forensics unit and one technician came to the scene. The body was photographed and the area was searched for any sign of evidence. Numerous footprints, large and small, were detected in the immediate area, which is a favorite fishing spot, and most of the footprints were photographed, but plaster casts were not made. Kayla's ripped panties were discovered on the leaf covered trail that leads to the water's edge. The medical examiner responded to the scene and removed the body.

Minimal investigation occurred and the medical examiner stated that Kayla's official cause of death was snake venom poisoning. This was not the first time that a young minority girl was found dead in CP from suspicious circumstances. In fact, during the past seven years, three other pre-teens, two Hispanic, one black, had been discovered "missing" from their bedrooms and later their bodies were discovered in wooded areas. Reportedly, none had obvious signs of trauma and all were deemed "Death by Non-Homicide" by the medical examiner's office. The black community was outraged at what it deemed an insufficient investigation due to the fact that Kayla and her family was poor and black. Word on the street indicates that an ex CP-PD officer may have been involved with these unfortunate events.

Setting: News reporter standing in front of the Courtelaney Pass Police Department.

News Reporter:

As a result of continued racial tensions and allegations of corruption, the CP-PD chief of police was forced to resign last month. Governor Neely installed an interim Chief of Police to help heal the community; examine and evaluate policy, practices, and procedures; and restore the faith and trust of the people. He also appointed a special prosecutor to examine all things of legal relevance to the issues in this community. The special prosecutor has been tasked with evaluating civil and criminal issues pertaining to the governance of Courtelaney Pass and utilizing the power of the position to issue

subpoenas, search/arrest warrants, and other orders as necessary. Finally, the interim chief has brought in a special investigator who will hold the rank of captain of investigations. This individual will evaluate, examine, lead, and investigate all issues pertaining to criminal acts that have occurred during these troubling times.