

# Attorneys wrangle during Soering court appearance

Judge rules to allow cameras in the courtroom

By Leslie Postal  
Staff writer

BEDFORD — A court clerk called the case of "Commonwealth v. Jens Soering" for the first time Tuesday beginning a judicial process that has been almost four years in the making.

Soering, charged with the 1985 stabbing deaths of his girlfriend's parents, sat motionless between his attorneys during the hearing, held to handle routine matters pertaining to his March trial.

Reporters, courthouse employees and a dozen or so spectators learned little Tuesday of what will emerge during the trial but that the opposing attorneys will likely argue quite frequently.

Commonwealth's Attorney James W. Updike Jr. and Soering's primary attorney, Richard Neaton of Detroit, disagreed on almost every issue men-

tioned during the hour-long hearing, from when to schedule the trial to what to do with a now irrelevant capital murder indictment.

At one point, Updike said, "I'm not a turnip that bounced off a truck this morning on my way to work." Half-laughing, he added that Neaton's suggestion for a trial date was "crazy, I can't do that."

Judge William W. Sweeney scheduled the trial for March 8, but since Neaton said that might not give him enough time to prepare, the judge agreed to also keep open June 1.

Over Neaton's objections, Sweeney ruled that television and newspaper photographers will be allowed in the courtroom during the trial. Under a General Assembly pilot project cameras are allowed in three of the state's circuit courtrooms, including

Please see SOERING, Page B-2

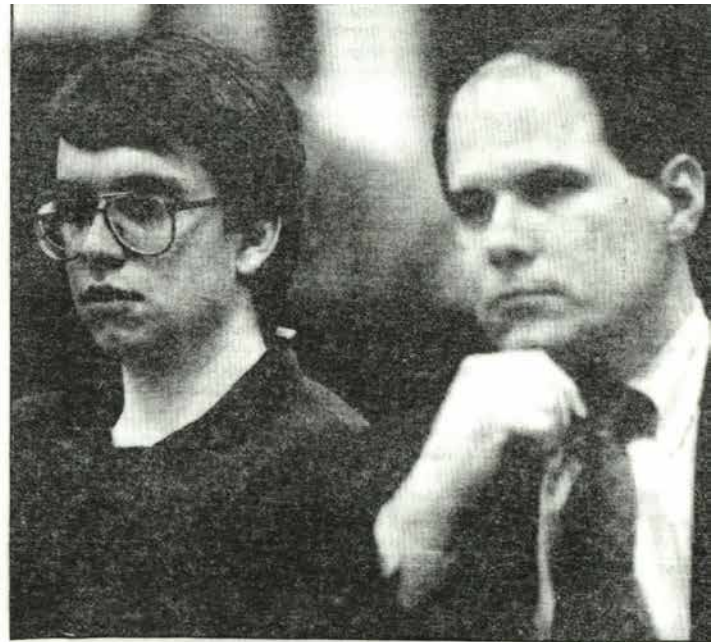


Photo by Bill Hoy

Jens Soering, left, sits with his attorney Richard Neaton. Tuesday, Soering made his first appearance in Bedford County Circuit Court.

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