

Officials leave for London to fetch Soering

By Leslie Postal
Staff writer

All systems finally seemed ready to go in Jen Soering's long-delayed extradition as Sheriff Carl H. Wells flew to London Monday to retrieve Bedford's most-wanted murder suspect.

Wells and U.S. Marshall Wayne Beaman left Roanoke Regional Airport on a 4 p.m. flight Monday and after switching plans in Charlotte, N.C. were due to arrive in Great Britain this morning. They planned to return to Virginia with the 23-year-old Soering at the end of the week.

Mark Pearson, a spokesman for Britain's Home Secretary, said he expected Soering would arrive in Virginia on Friday.

Soering, charged with the 1985 murders of his girlfriend's parents in Boonsboro, fought Britain's decision to extradite him to Virginia for more than three years before deciding last week that he would not pursue further legal appeals.

The next day, the U.S. Marshall's office in Roanoke made arrangements to return him to this country. The former University of Virginia student faces two charges of first-degree murder in the stabbing deaths of Derek and Nancy Haysom.

Though the extradition proceedings last week seemed concrete, authorities said that until Soering was in their custody, the plans were still tentative.

Wells joked that he wasn't going to back until Monday morning, remembering that in 1988 plans to retrieve Soering were cancelled at the last minute when he appealed his case to the European Court of Human Rights.

Once Wells and Beaman arrive in London they will go to the American Embassy to prepare a "letter of transport," Beaman said. The letter will allow Soering to enter United States since he's not traveling on a valid passport."

British authorities already know who is coming to take custody of Soering, who has been in a London prison since 1986, and "not under any circumstances will they turn him over to anyone else," Beaman said.

As far as British officials are concerned, Soering's extradition is now just a matter of waiting for the Americans to arrive.

"It's relatively simple," Pearson said. There are no legal processes. They simply have to collect Mr. Soering."

British officials approved Soering's extradition in August but then postponed it when his attorneys filed additional appeals.

Because embassy officials will handle the bulk of the remaining paperwork, Beaman said he and Wells might have some time to sightsee before they fly home.

"It's not all work and no play," he said. Soering, a West German national, and

Soering

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the Haysom's daughter Elizabeth, also a former UVA student, were arrested in Great Britain in 1986 on unrelated charges of credit card fraud. They had dropped out of school about six months earlier, some seven months after the killings, and had gone abroad.

While in custody in London, the pair confessed to killing her parents. Haysom, now 25, did not fight extradition, and in Bedford she plead guilty to being an accessory to her parent's murders. She is now serving 90-year sentence in the Virginia Correctional Center for Women in Goochland.

Beaman said it will cost the state an estimated \$2,500 to \$3,000 to bring Soering back to Virginia.

Until last summer, Soering faced a capital murder charge in Bedford and that was the basis for most of his appeals. In August, however, Britain agreed to extradite only on the first-degree charges since the European court ruled that spending time on Virginia's "death row" could violate Soering's human rights.

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WAYNE DEEL/Staff

Headed overseas

U.S. Marshal Wayne Beaman (left) and Bedford County Sheriff Carl Wells leave Roanoke Monday for London to pick up Jens Soering, who faces murder charges.

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Pair Flies To Pick Up Soering

BEDFORD (AP) — After an extradition battle that lasted more than three years, Bedford County authorities have gone to London to bring back Jens Soering for the 1985 murders of a Boonsboro couple.

Bedford Sheriff Carl H. Wells and U.S. Marshal Wayne Beaman flew out of Roanoke Regional Airport late Monday afternoon. They planned to arrive in London today and return with Soering by the end of the week.

"It's relatively simple," said Mark Pearson, spokesman for Britain's home secretary. "There are no legal processes. They simply have to collect Mr. Soering."

Soering, a 23-year-old former honors student at the University of Virginia, faces two charges of first-degree murder in the stabbing deaths of Derek and Nancy Haysom.

Soering and Elizabeth Haysom, daughter of the slain couple, were arrested in Great Britain in 1986 on unrelated charges of credit card fraud. They had dropped out of school about six months earlier, some seven months after the killings, and had gone abroad.

While in custody in London, the pair confessed to killing her parents. Miss Haysom, now 25, did not fight extradition, and upon her return to Bedford pleaded guilty to being an accessory to her parent's murders. She is now serving 90-year prison term.

Soering originally was charged with capital murder, and used that as the basis for most of his appeals. In August, Great Britain agreed to extradite only on first-degree murder charges, since the European Court of Human Rights had ruled that spending time on Virginia's death row could violate Soering's human rights.

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