

# Pardons for 'Little Guys'

Grand Forks, N.D.

A Grand Forks county judge, saying he was acting in response to the pardon of former President Richard Nixon, yesterday freed two prisoners he had sentenced to jail.

"In response to the pardon given Richard Nixon by Gerald Ford, this court is determined to present an act of clemency to any and all prisoners serving jail sentences for convictions in this court for the commission of any criminal offenses," Judge Kirk Smith said in open court.

"It is the intention of this court to commute any unserved jail time and unpaid fines in the above cases and

they are therefore set free."

Judge Smith freed John L. Smith, 29 of Manvel, from Grand Forks county jail with 50 days remaining in a 75-day sentence for driving under the influence of alcohol and failing to appear in court. He also dismissed a \$225 fine.

The judge also released John M. Kleinsasser, 20, of Grand Forks, from jail. He was serving 15 days for a traffic charge and had three more days left.

Smith said he took the action as his personal response to the Ford action.

"I did it for the sake of prisoners who were sitting up in the jail wondering why



**JUDGE KIRK SMITH**  
He released two men

they were there," the judge said.

Kleinsasser said he felt "real good." Smith said "it's lucky for us there's good old President Ford."

Smith, 44, has been on the Grand Forks county bench for 11 years.

*Associated Press*