

Washington (AP) - Rep. Mark Andrews, R-ND, said today he had asked the General Accounting Office (GAO) to investigate a request by the builder of the Safeguard Antiballistic Missile Sites in North Dakota for more money. The GAO is the investigating arm of the Congress.

"For the second time in less than three years, the builders of the Safeguard ABM system in North Dakota have decided they cannot do their job for the agreed price," Andrews said from his Washington office.

"This time its Morrison-Knudsen Co., and their associates who've asked for another \$109 million on top of a \$138 million contract they bid on and were awarded in April 1970."

Andrews said he has asked the Controller General of the United States to withhold final payment on the project until the situation can be investigated by the GAO.

Andrews said the contract calls for the construction of nuclear resistant buildings to house radar systems and missile silos. M-K's bid was \$138 million and was the low of three bids, the Republican congressman said.

"For the contractor to come in now and ask for an 80 percent override is the kind of post-bid negotiation that tends to discredit the entire bidding system of the federal government," Andrews said.

He said it is now apparent that "We'll always have some unscrupulous contractors who will bid low, confident they can poor mouth Uncle Sam into raising the price once the job has started. This is particularly true on defense contracts where every job is usually done on a priority basis."

Andrews said neither the credibility of the government nor the federal budget can stand this strain. "I know the North Dakota Association of General Contractors as well as the national AGC are opposed to this kind of post-bid shopping."