

MISSILE PERSONNEL ARRIVING

GFH 3-27-74 P 1

The first of about 380 Army and civilian personnel to operate the nation's only antiballistic missile defense tactical site have begun arriving at Nekoma, ND.

Among the first to arrive was Col. John M. House, who has been designated commander of the US Army Safeguard Command. His prior assignment was as director of combat development in the office of the deputy chief of staff for plans and combat development at Army Air Defense Command headquarters at Colorado Springs, CO.

In his new position, Col. House will command air defense personnel assigned to the Air Defense Artillery element of the Grand Forks Tactical Site at Nekoma.

Col. Matthew W. Hoey, commander of the Grand Forks Tactical Site, said the site is nearing readiness and is expected to be turned over to operating personnel in a few months. At that time an estimated 351 military personnel and 29 civilian employees of the Army will be stationed at the site.

In addition, the government will have a force of about 100 people on site to administer support contractor activities.

Construction of the site began in April, 1970. Recently concentration has been on installation and testing of weapon system components, according to Col. Hoey. He said the site will achieve full operational capability in early 1975.

Col. House attended high school in Little Rock, Arkansas, and Auburn University in Auburn, Alabama. He also has received a master of political science degree from Auburn.

He has been in the Army since 1948 and has had overseas duty tours in Europe, Vietnam, Okinawa and the Far East. He also is a former operations staff officer for the Army element of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington.