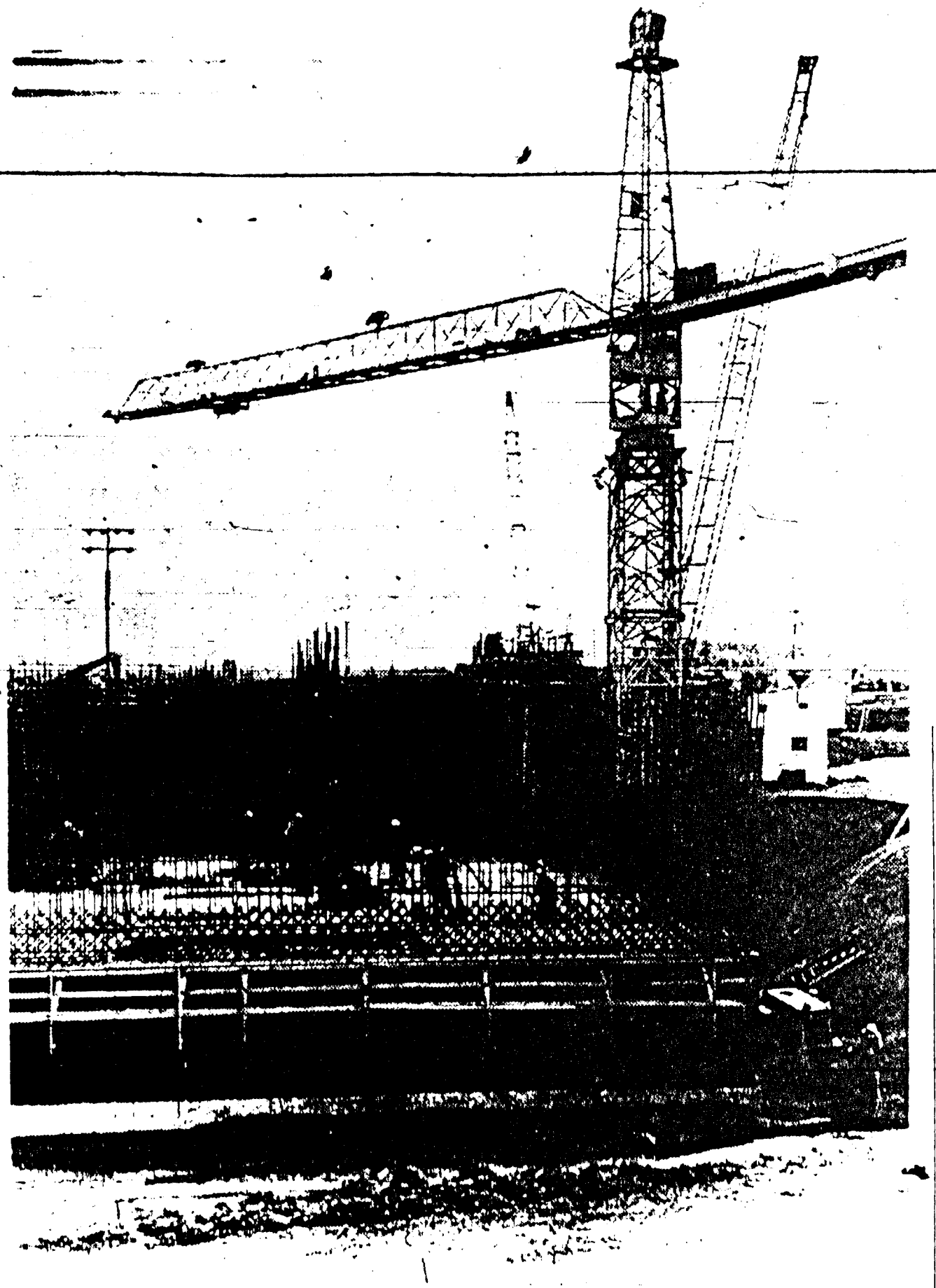

**A GIANT POWER** crane looms over the construction scene at Nekoma where one of the biggest buildings under construction is the Missile Site Control Building. The area is "home" for the Missile Site Radar system and all of its associated support units—plus the missile field which is the nesting ground for Spartan and Sprint Missiles. (Herald Photo by Art Raymond)

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Most State Towns Could Move In: ABM FACILITIES MASSIVE - GFH 9-28-70 P 10

By Art Raymond

Nekoma, ND - The buildings are massive.

Bill Hughes, project manager at the ABM site here for Napolean Steel, said, "most of the towns in North Dakota could move right in and have room to spare."

Or put another way, another person said, "If these buildings were declared obsolete and turned back to the farmers, they could put 95 percent of the state's grain crop in storage here."

Both statements may be, or may not be over-statements. However, they point out the massiveness of the job going on here at the Missile Site Radar (MSR) and associated missile fields and at the Perimeter Acquisition Radar (PAR) site near Concrete, ND.

The buildings here each approach or surpass one acre in size - one cubic acre. That would hold a lot of grain.

Napolean Steel, subcontractor, has furnished somewhere around 25,000 tons of the steel in various sizes - including some of the largest steel rebars manufactured by American industry.

Everywhere the eye scans the site here, there is a bustle of activity. And everywhere the eye focuses on is seeing a first in construction.

Morrison-Knudsen, prime contractor for the giant construction job here, perfected a new art in how to lower the tubes which encase the deadly missiles. It had never before been done.

Walls of the Missile Site Control Building are concrete faced by steel "wall paper," as they call it. The question faced by M-K planners before bidding started was: Would it be better to pour the concrete walls first and then come back and "wallpaper" those walls with Steel? Or - would it be better to use the steel lining as part of the concrete forms and pour the concrete into that wall paneling? After much study, thought and testing they chose the latter course - thus saving themselves an extra project.

The steel used in forms where concrete is poured is shaped or bent by a pre-set computer brain. The shearing is still a mechanical process but the bending has become a part of the computer world.

Other modern-day advances are being made. Time was when crane operators were directed by hand signal. Today M-K crane operators are synchronized by walkie-talkie two-way radio.

Computers, too, crank out the payroll and keep track of the mammoth supplies, equipment, ordering, job process.

Gigantic power cranes loom over the construction scene. Bill Gilfillan, project manager for M-K and thus over-all boss, said jokingly, "You've got to be crazy to be a power crane operator."

They loom high above the scene, moving tons of heavy equipment and materials with ease. Operators sit in an enclosed "crows nest" and move the long arm of the crane down and up or around in circles.

The workers themselves, seemingly are impervious to the moise, and the bustle, and the hurry and scurry - each doing his assigned task in an orderly way.

Foremen and various project managers come and look, speak a few words, talk into their radios and listen as the box squawks back to them. Taking in the situation at a glance, they speak a few words, or make a slight gesture - and the job moves ahead.

There is an aura of excitement here. But it is subdued. The men are too busy to show that excitement.