

RECEDING ICECAP IN GREENLAND SOON TO EXPOSE TOP-SECRET

COLD WAR US NUCLEAR PROJECT



THE U.S. TOLD THE HOST COUNTRY THEY WERE BUILDING AN ARCTIC RESEARCH FACILITY
BUT BUILT A MISSILE SITE AIMED AT RUSSIA

THE UNTOLD STORY OF CAMP CENTURY & PROJECT ICEWORM

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INTRODUCTION

Project Iceworm was the code name for a top-secret United States Army program during the Cold War to build a network of mobile nuclear missile launch sites under the Greenland ice sheet.

It was an ambitious - though some might say, madcap - plan to construct a secret missile base beneath the ice layer that covers most of Greenland. The nuclear weapons inside would, of course, be aimed at Soviet Russia. And so, to test the feasibility of the idea, an underground base called Camp Century was built in 1960. This was abandoned in 1966, however, when the shifting ice made the operation impracticable. Greenland was part of Denmark at the time, but the Iceworm plans were sneakily concealed from the Danish government.



Camp Century - part of Project Iceworm - is an underground Cold War network that was thought to have been buried forever. Camp Century was an Arctic United States military scientific research base in Greenland. It is situated 240 km east of Thule Air Base. It was part of Project Iceworm to install sites for launching nuclear missiles in Greenland.

Powered by a nuclear reactor, the camp operated from 1959 until 1967. The base consisted of 21 tunnels **with a complete length of 3000 miles.**

Construction on the camp and the sub-glacial nuclear reactor began without explicit permission from the government of Denmark, leading to a political dilemma for Prime Minister H. C. Hansen.

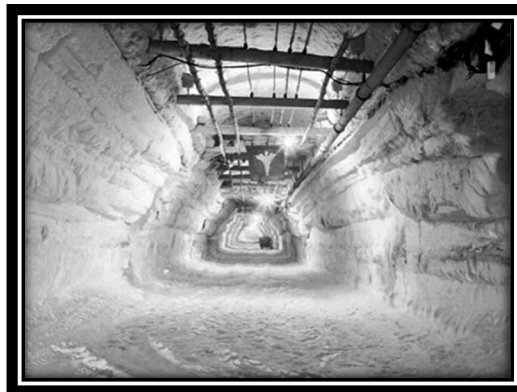
A top-secret US military project from the Cold War and the toxic waste it conceals, thought to have been buried forever beneath the Greenland icecap, is likely to be uncovered by rising temperatures within decades, scientists have said.

The US Army Engineering Corps excavated Camp Century in 1959 around 200km (124 miles) from the coast of Greenland, which was then a county of Denmark.



The main trench to the permanent camp at Century Camp, Greenland

Powered, remarkably, **by the world's first mobile nuclear generator** and known as “the city under the ice”, the camp’s three-kilometer network of tunnels, eight meters beneath the ice, housed laboratories, a shop, a hospital, a cinema, a chapel and accommodation for as many as 200 soldiers.



One of many Tunnels

WORSE THAN THOUGHT

Its personnel were officially stationed there to test Arctic construction methods and carry out research. Scientists based at the camp did, indeed, **drill the first ice core samples ever used to study the earth's climate, obtaining data still cited today**, according to William Colgan, a climate and glacier scientist from the Lassonde School of Engineering at Toronto's York University, and the lead author of the study.

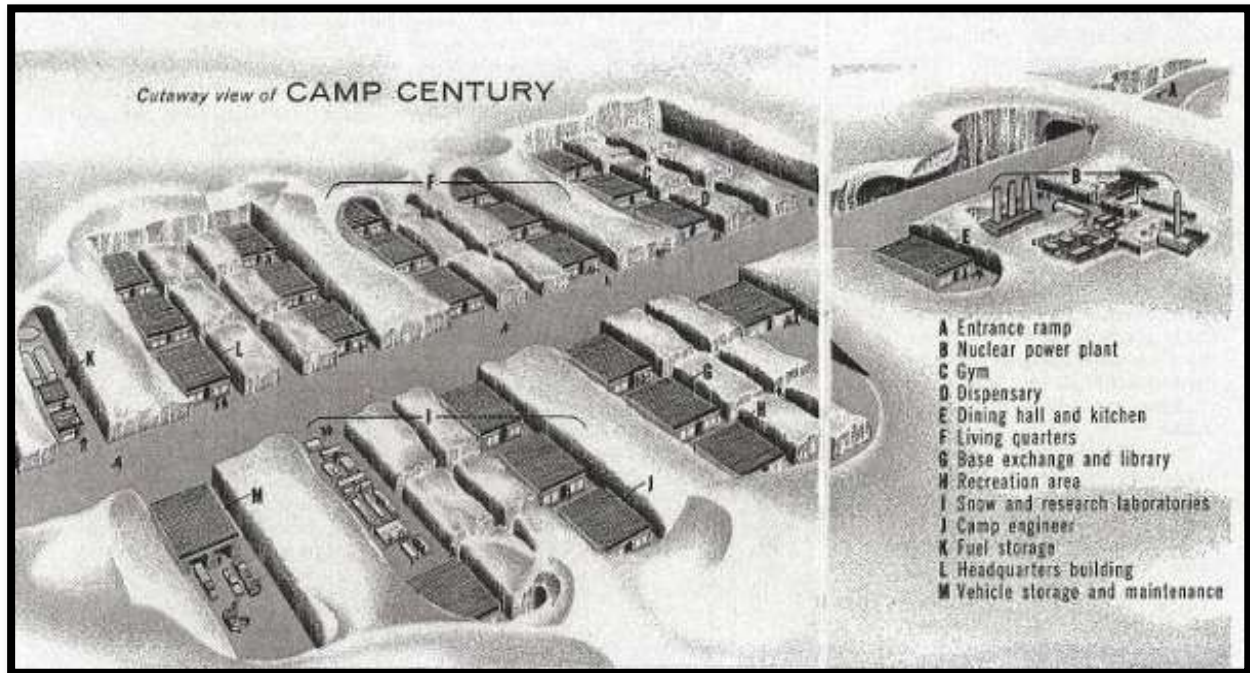
In reality, the camp served as cover for something altogether different - a project so immense and so secret that not even the Danish government was informed of its existence.

“They thought it would never be exposed,” said Colgan. “Back then, in the 60s, the term global warming had not even been coined. But the climate is changing, and the question now is whether what’s down there is going to stay down there.”

The study suggests it is not.

Project Iceworm, presented to the US chiefs of staff in 1960, aimed to use Camp Century's frozen tunnels to test the feasibility of a huge launch site under the ice, close enough to fire nuclear missiles directly at the Soviet Union.

At the height of the Cold War, as the US and the USSR were engaged in a terrifying standoff over the deployment of Soviet missiles in Cuba, the US army was considering the construction of a vast subterranean extension of Camp Century.



Camp Century Layout



A system of about 4,000 kilometers of icy underground tunnels and chambers extending over an area around three times the size of Denmark was to have housed 600 ballistic missiles in a cluster six kilometers apart, trained on Moscow and its satellites.

Eventually, the engineers realized Iceworm would not work. The constantly moving ice was too unstable and would have deformed and perhaps even collapsed the tunnels. This realization came after the cost of the Portable Nuclear Power Plant @ \$5,700,000 and the cost of Construction: \$7,920,000.

From 1964 Camp Century was used only intermittently, and three years later it was abandoned altogether, the departing soldiers taking the reaction chamber of the nuclear generator with them.

An Army team revisited Camp Century during the summer of 1969. Severe damage to the underground city was documented at this time. Observed were buckling metal arches, torn and twisted steel beams, snapped supporting timbers, and the still-furnished buildings and other equipment being slowly crushed under the extreme pressure of the encroaching snow.

Today, it is likely that most of Camp Century has been reclaimed by the ice. Its twisted wreckage is a permanently frozen memorial to Man's desire to explore even the most hostile places on Earth.



The lid of Camp Century's unsealed nuclear fuel vessel, pictured in 1962.



They left the rest of the camp's infrastructure - and its biological, chemical, and radioactive waste - where it was, on the assumption it would be "preserved for eternity" by the perpetually accumulating snow and ice.

Thus far their assumption has proven correct. Up to 12 meters deep at the time it was abandoned, the ice covering Camp Century has since thickened to around 35 meters and will continue to deepen for a while yet.

The Geological Survey of Denmark and Greenland (GEUS), an independent research institution under the Danish Ministry of Energy, Utilities and Climate has been monitoring the Greenland ice sheet for years and is now tracking the Camp Century site specifically. In the summer of 2017, Christiansen said, a weather station was installed there, and scientists used radar last year to map what is locked up under the ice

Climate change, however, looks certain to reverse that process. Colgan and his six-strong team from Canadian, US, and European universities said in their report, which was published last month in *Geophysical Research Letters*. Greenland's temperatures broke new records this spring and summer, hitting 24C (75F) in the capital, Nuuk, in June - a figure that shocked meteorologists so much they had to recheck their measurements.

Between 2003 and 2010, the ice that covers much of the island melted twice as fast as during the whole of the 20th century. This year it began melting a month earlier than usual.

The researchers studied US Army documents and drawings to work out how deep the camp and its waste - estimated to include **200,000 liters of diesel fuel, similar quantities of wastewater, and unknown amounts of radioactive coolant and toxic organic pollutants such as PCBs**— were buried.



Nuclear Waste Tanks

Then they ran regional and global climate change simulations to work out how much longer they would remain interred. Based on the “business as usual” climate change scenario, Colgan said, snowfall would continue to be greater than ice melt for a few more decades. “But after that, melt will be greater than snow. Every year, another layer of ice will be removed. **We estimate that by 2090, the exposure will be irreversible.** It could happen sooner if the magnitude of climate change accelerates.

Once that starts to happen, the question of who is responsible for the clear-up - already the subject of discussion - will become more pressing, the report said, presenting “an entirely new form of a political dispute resulting from climate change”.



With no established agreement on the question, the report says the “multinational, multi-generational” problem posed by Camp Century and its waste could become a source of tension between the US, Greenland, and Denmark.

Denmark allowed the US to build Camp Century and other bases on Greenland in a 1951 agreement, but it is not clear how much it was told about the work being done there or the waste left behind. Complicating matters further, Greenland became largely self-governing in 1979.

Vittus Qujaukitsoq, Greenland’s foreign minister, said he was concerned about the camp’s future and determined to establish responsibility. His Danish counterpart, Kristian Jensen, has said the issue was being examined in close contact with Greenland.

The Pentagon has said it “acknowledges the reality of climate change and the risk it poses” for Greenland, adding that the US government has pledged to “work with the Danish government and the Greenland authorities to settle questions of mutual security”.

Meanwhile, Camp Century is melting out. “If something is coming to the surface, you would like to know when this will happen,” Christiansen told me. Scientists are working on that part. Now it’s up to governments to come up with a plan.

Detailed videos... with much more information are available at:

(Cut and paste the link into your browser to view)

US Army Story of Camp Century and Project Iceworm

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v-K61DC0uhc>



Exterior View of Camp Century, Home Of Project Iceworm



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