# Camp Century: Secret US Nuclear Base in Greenland

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In May 2025, a team of NASA scientists re-discovered a secret US nuclear base buried under the ice of Greenland since the Cold War. During a research flight over the Arctic Circle, researchers identified a network of tunnels and structures buried under the ice, which turned out to be the remains of a secret military base called **Camp Century**.

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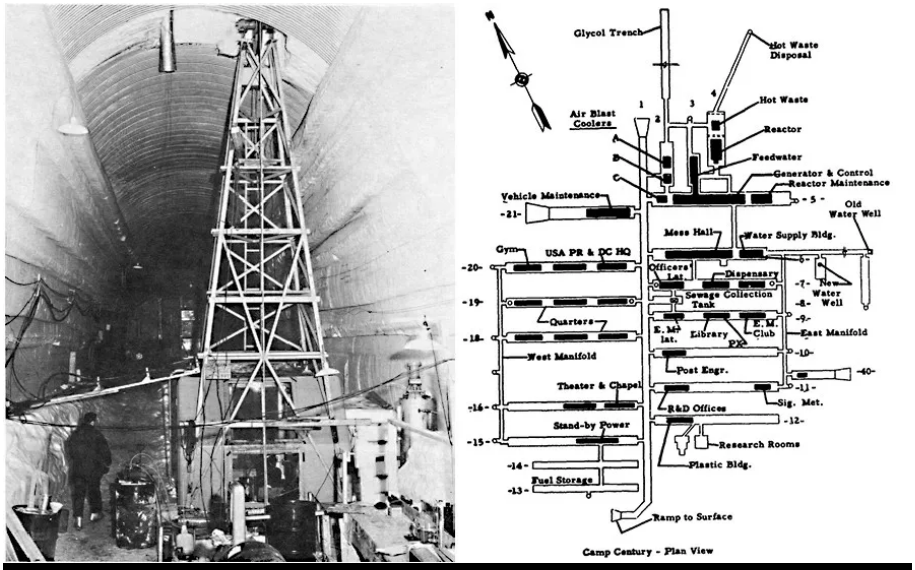
## The Secret of Project Iceworm

The base, built in 1960, was part of a top-secret US project called *Project Iceworm*, aimed at creating nuclear missile launch sites under the ice of Greenland. The idea was to dig about 4,000 kilometers of tunnels to store and launch 600 nuclear missiles, directly targeting the Soviet Union. Greenland, due to its proximity to Russia, seemed the ideal site for this project, although its construction was extremely risky.

To keep the project secret, the US Army disguised the activities with the construction of **Camp Century**, an “officially approved research center” by Denmark, which administered Greenland. Although the base was presented as a scientific facility, it actually served as a cover for excavations and constructions under the ice, necessary to install the nuclear missiles.

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Camp Century was not just a military research site. During its operation, the camp was equipped with a range of facilities for the well-being of its occupants, including a chapel, a theater, and a hobby shop. People lived and worked there year-round in a system of interconnected tunnels similar to an ant colony. The base was powered by a mobile nuclear reactor, the first in the world, assembled elsewhere and then placed in the deepest recesses of the snow.

Researchers also used the base for scientific purposes, studying the climate and germs preserved in the water melting from the glaciers. Additionally, they dug into the ice to study thousands of years of climate history, making remarkable scientific discoveries. Despite its primary military purpose, Camp Century was also used for research purposes that contribute to the understanding of climate change.

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## The Abandonment and Future of Camp Century

Unfortunately, Camp Century was destined for a short life. Due to the rapid movements of the ice, which were not anticipated, the base became unusable after only seven years of operation. In 1967, it was abandoned and left intact. The US Army thought that the snow and ice would protect it forever, but the accelerated melting of the glaciers caused by global warming led to the rediscovery of the base in 2016, with the warning that the structure could be exposed during the century, if not sooner.

**The future exposure of Camp Century could lead to serious ecological consequences. If the base resurfaces, it would bring to light radioactive waste and other hazardous materials, which could contaminate the surrounding ecosystem**. This risk represents a side effect of *Project Iceworm*, a top-secret project that had unforeseen environmental consequences.

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## Geopolitics of Greenland

The rediscovery of Camp Century is not just a step in military history, but also reignites the debate on Greenland and its strategic position. The island, rich in natural resources, has become a subject of international interest, with the United States attempting to acquire it during Donald Trump's presidency. Its position in the Arctic Circle, the growing militarization of the Arctic by Russia and China, and the mineral resources make Greenland a crucial node in global geopolitics.

**Vice President JD Vance, during a visit to Greenland in March 2025, emphasized the importance of greater US engagement in the protection of Greenland.** The increasing presence of Russia and China in the region has raised concerns about security and access to natural resources. Despite objections from the Danish and Greenlandic governments, the issue of the island's sovereignty remains central.

The rediscovery of **Camp Century** and *Project Iceworm* is a reminder of the depths of Cold War secret operations and the ongoing relevance of Greenland in modern geopolitical dynamics. While the discovery of the buried base highlights the ecological challenges related to climate change, it also leads to reflections on the international competition for control of Arctic resources and the implications for global security.

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**News link:** https://www.newsweek.com/map-us-nuclear-base-cold-war-greenland-2072612