

THIRD TIME AND COUNTING: REMEMBERING PAST RELOCATIONS AND DISCUSSING THE FUTURE IN KAKTOVIK, ALASKA

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ABSTRACT

In the late 1940s and early 1950s, the United States began to put defensive measures into place in Alaska to guard against attack by the Soviet Union. These measures included constructing airfields and a system of radar stations known as the Distant Early Warning (DEW) Line. Barter Island, home to the Iñupiat village of Kaktovik, was chosen for both an airfield and a DEW line installation, which resulted in three forced relocations between 1947 and 1964. Kaktovik is currently threatened by coastal erosion and may be forced to move again. Drawing from current perspectives and memories of the villagers, I explore how community members negotiated their relationships with the military and a changing physical environment and describe local perspectives on coastal erosion and relocation.

KEYWORDS: DEW line, Iñupiat, Alaska Native communities, erosion, relocation

Walking through the village of Kaktovik, Alaska, one constantly encounters reminders of a military past. Remnants of rusted oil drums litter the beach, Quonset huts stand beside modern housing, and the DEW line facility, now a part of the Alaska Radar System, stands in the background. This military past shaped the course of the history of this community, one that includes three forced relocations in less than two decades. One danger of looking at the state as a force of social change is the risk of viewing the actions as stemming from a unified entity. Michel Foucault ([1991] 2006) illustrates the idea of state involvement through the concept of “governmentality,” a composite formed by institutions, their actions, and calculations that allow for the exercise of governmental techniques with which to intervene within a population. The stability of the population is the end goal for this intervention, which in turn makes the population more governable. This composite, in his view, contains a whole host of “governmental apparatuses,” creating and using different kinds of knowledge that act upon society (Foucault [1991] 2006:142). I consider the situation that unfolded in Kaktovik in light of state authority,

conveyed by different institutions and actors. These actions were prompted by concerns of national security and, as such, were focused upon the stability of the greater population of the country as a whole. In any case, tensions at the international level brought state intervention—in the form of the U.S. Air Force—upon this community. The human element in state decision making is important to remember. Norman Long (2001) explains that research on development examines social change at the broader scope of institutions, structures, and trends on the one hand, and changes at the level of the actors themselves on the other. While social changes can certainly be caused by external forces, these forces have to enter the lived worlds of individuals and groups, who in turn negotiate and alter them. Changes to social order come about through the communications and struggles between different kinds of social actors, not only those who are directly interacting with each other, but also those who are not physically present and whose actions influence and alter the situation. The agency and power of particular institutions, then, is formed by networks of individuals (Long 2001).

This paper explores the Kaktovik relocations within the social and historical context in which they occurred in order to understand how members of the community negotiated their relationships with the military as an extension of the state. I draw upon current perspectives and memories of the villagers as they reflect upon their own history and how they feel the relocations and the presence of the military have shaped the community in which they live. Kaktovik also faces the threat of coastal erosion; therefore, this legacy of relocation may continue in the future. I also explore local perspectives on how another relocation of the village should take place if it does become necessary.

Going beyond a simplified view of forced relocation as an event in which the powerful state imposes its will upon a helpless population, I instead look at how villagers actively negotiated their changing physical environment and relationships with the state. Turton (2006) discusses what constitutes forced migration within the context of development-induced displacement. He advocates viewing a forced migrant as an ordinary person placed in a particular social, political, and historical context. By viewing migrants in this light, we avoid depersonalization and include individual agency in the picture (Turton 2006). Turton's ideas are echoed by Long (2001:13), who feels that social actors need to be recognized not simply as "passive recipients of intervention," but instead as individuals who actively process information and strategically engage with others at different levels. Long discusses the importance of exploring the ways in which people deal with difficult situations by their actions and choices, "turning the 'bad' into the 'less bad'" (2001:14). As I demonstrate below, past relocations at Kaktovik were forced in the strictest sense of the word, but individuals were active in dealing with the changes imposed upon them.

Much of the information presented here was obtained through fieldwork conducted in the village in May 2009. During my three-week stay, I formally interviewed fourteen current residents of Kaktovik and had informal conversations with a number of individuals. In order to inform the community of the goals of my research and the reason for my presence, I made a public presentation in the community center in conjunction with another researcher, Stacey Fritz. While the majority of interviews were taken in English, a few individuals spoke Iñupiaq, and these interviews were facilitated by Kaktovik resident Clarice Akootchook.

BACKGROUND

A large prehistoric village once existed on Barter Island, as noted by Canadian explorer and anthropologist Diamond Jenness (1991), who counted thirty to forty old house sites there in 1914. According to oral history accounts, these ruins were that of the Qagmaliks, or "people-from-farthest-away" (Libbey 1983:2), most likely a whaling group from Canada. The abandonment of this settlement may have been due to warfare with Iñupiat from Alaska. One legend states that this conflict was caused by the Qagmalik murder of an Iñupiaq couple's only son, whose body was fished out of the water with a seining net. This legend is said to have given Kaktovik (Qaaktugvik) its name, which translates as "seining place" (Jacobson and Wentworth 1982:3). A similar situation occurred in the mid-to-late 1930s, when a man named Pipsuk was reported to have drowned in the lagoon on the eastern side of the island. A seining net was used to pull his body to shore, and the name of the modern community of Kaktovik was adopted in memory of the event (Libbey 1983:3).

Before the 1920s there was no year-round settlement at Barter Island, and for centuries the region was an important location of trade between Canadian Inuit and Iñupiat from the Barrow region (Nielson 1977). The island was also used as a seasonal home for subsistence hunting and fishing and at the turn of the twentieth century, as a stop for commercial whalers in the region. The first year-round settlement came into being in the 1920s, when Andrew Akootchook and his family moved to Barter Island. Andrew was the brother-in-law of trader Tom Gordon, who was convinced to move his fur trading post to the island because of its good harbor and excellent hunting opportunities (Jacobson and Wentworth 1982:3). Because of the existence of a store on the island and easy access to hunting grounds in the mountains, people began to settle along the coast around Barter Island. Fur trapping was a large portion of the local economy, with furs serving as a form of currency with which to obtain store goods and supplies (Libbey 1983:16). Although a year-round settlement existed during the 1920s and 1930s, most of the inhabitants of the region continued to live a seminomadic lifestyle spread out along the coast, mainly gathering around the trading post during holidays and special events (Jacobson and Wentworth 1982). Contact with non-native settlers during this period was minimal, consisting of dealings with the local trader and occasional

visits from scientists, explorers, and missionaries (Nielson 1977). The economy in the region changed drastically when the price of fur declined in 1936, heralding the end of the trapping era. This, combined with the end of reindeer herding in the late 1930s, led several families to move to Herschel Island, Canada (Jacobson and Wentworth 1982:5). Isaac Akootchook, a resident of Kaktovik, recalled that after 1936 “people began scattering—moving out. A few stayed” (Libbey 1983:65). For those who did stay, the first military contact occurred in the 1940s, when Marvin “Muktuk” Marston came to the community to organize the Alaska Territorial Guard (ATG) during World War II (Nielson 1977). Unbeknownst to the inhabitants of Kaktovik, by 1946 the U.S. military had begun an investigation into building and updating existing radar stations in Alaska to protect against a northern attack by the Soviet Union. Worries about attacks from Soviet bombers coming over the pole prompted concerns over the fact that the only operational airfields in Alaska were in the Aleutians, Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Nome. The commander of the Alaskan Air Command began closing Aleutian bases in late 1946, and air power was subsequently moved closer to perceived enemy bomber routes in the North (Denfeld 1994).

THE FIRST MOVE, 1947

Before 1947, those who remained in Kaktovik were concentrated on a spit on the eastern side of the island. In July of 1947, the Air Force arrived on Barter Island in order to build a 5,000-foot runway and hangar. While the unexpected arrival of the military must have been unsettling, the situation worsened when the village was informed that this airstrip would be built on the very site where they were currently living. This action was presumably covered under Public Land Order (PLO) 82 of 1943, which allowed for the withdrawal of lands for the purposes of the war, but no specific withdrawal order had been made in the case of Kaktovik. The forced relocation of the village was to happen immediately, and villagers had little time to gather their possessions. Few of the villagers spoke English, and many did not understand why they were being moved (Nielson 1977). Mary Ann Warden, a resident of Kaktovik who was five years old at the time of the first relocation, explained this event as a kind of “invasion.” She remembered being terrified of the military men who came into the village and recalled the startling effect of the loud noises that accompanied the big ships offloading

their supplies. She was stopped with her cousin by two military men who wanted to ask them a question:

We were just walking along, and all at once we stopped by these two guys, those guys in uniform, and we just stand there and... had no idea what to say because we didn't understand English back then, this was before they started teaching us English. We're just standing there, and you know we're very cultural, we have to stand, and with our heads down, if the elders are talking to us, we have to stand and you don't move if the elder is talking to you... you have to stand and keep your head down and listen. And then if they stop, then you take off while they stopped talking. And we took off! [laughs] We couldn't... understand them anyhow! And we go into the house where everybody was, and we ran in there and they said, “What did they say? What did they say?” And we were all talking in Iñupiaq (Warden 2009).

The village at this time consisted mostly of sod houses, driftwood structures, and a few frame buildings, the fragments of which were hauled about a mile away from the original site by bulldozers. In addition to the destruction of homes, this abrupt movement led to the loss of personal possessions and valuable ice cellars, which prompted an angry response from inhabitants (Chance 1990). Daniel Akootchook (2009), a resident of Kaktovik, explained that the villagers had to take all of their possessions out of their sod homes and carry them to the new village site on foot and that the food stored in the ice cellars was lost during the move. Another resident, Ben Linn, described the amount of labor that went into constructing ice cellars by hand:

when that pick gets dull, get a camp stove, heat up the pick end and start banging it back into a point, and then just keep at it again. Keep at it and keep at it. Yep, that's all we used: pick and shovel. But there was my father, Adam, me, Isaac, Dorothy, about five of us, six of us, just go down there and work for a couple hours, and chip at it. Take us about eight months or so, or somewhere around there (Ben Linn 2009).

Left without housing, community members proceeded to build new homes and dig new ice cellars, mostly with the aid of cast-off DEW-line lumber either given to them by the station personnel or found in the dump located at the end of the spit (Chance 1990). Daniel Akootchook (2009) remembered finding lumber floating in the lagoon that had either fallen off or been cast aside by a Navy ship. He explained that he went out in his boat and collected

the lumber from the water and took it back to the village to use to construct a home.

During interviews, several individuals pointed out that none of the military personnel helped them during the building process. The organization of the community itself was left to the discretion of the inhabitants, and Norman Chance, who was in the village in the late 1950s, noted that the houses were arranged in a manner that allowed close relatives to live next to each other and were built with the help of extended family members. While at first glance the layout may have appeared disorganized, with the houses facing a number of different directions and unbounded by roads, this arrangement allowed for close kin to share the same power generators for electricity (Chance 1990). Construction activities extended to other community buildings as well. Norajane Burns (2009) remembered her grandmother telling her about how Harold Kaveolook organized the construction of the village's first school out of DEW-line material and packing crates, piecing it together with the help of the community out of what they could salvage from the dump. The construction of the school began in 1950, the same year the U.S. census counted forty-six people living in Kaktovik (Jacobson and Wentworth 1982:5). The presence of the DEW line and the school would have profound effects on the village in the future.

The first encounter with the military was clearly a forced relocation. The politically charged climate of the Cold War and its accompanying international tensions brought sweeping changes to the community of Kaktovik. The Air Force, with authority granted by the federal government, bulldozed the original village site in order to make way for a military installation. Those living in the community were put in a difficult and painful situation as they watched their homes and possessions being destroyed by individuals with whom they were largely unable to communicate. Despite this disadvantageous position, community members were active in negotiating the changes imposed upon them. As Long (2001) and Turton (2006) remind us, forced migrants are social actors who are operating in a particular social, political, economic, and historical context. Even in the most difficult of situations, they actively work for their own interests. In Kaktovik, community members picked up the pieces after the destruction of their village and rebuilt their homes with what materials were available to them. Although they did not choose the new location of their village, they chose where their homes were built and worked together to recreate their community.

GROWING MILITARY PRESENCE AND THE SECOND MOVE, 1948–1963

The construction of the airstrip was the first step in the creation of a much larger arctic radar system. By 1949, the United States had already planned to construct a 400-mile experimental line from Kaktovik to Barrow, a plan that was cemented in the summer of 1952 when the concept for the DEW line emerged (Nielson 1977). In preparation for construction of a larger facility in the village, Kaktovik had been withdrawn as a military reserve in 1951 by PLO 715. This order allowed the Air Force to assume control over 4,500 acres of land, including nearly the entire island. While some provisions were made with respect to subsistence activities and rights of possession, the order stated that all withdrawn lands would be returned to the Department of the Interior when they were no longer needed for the purposes of the military installation (Chapman 1951). Air Force contractors began construction of the DEW-line station in August 1952 (Nielson 1977). Despite the growing presence of the military and outside contractors, there was some level of control at the village level. Mary Ann Warden (2009) explained that her grandfather would not allow any military presence in the village during the wintertime unless the individual coming in was a commissioned officer, a rule that lasted until his death in 1951. After that time, she explained that the leadership of the village was taken over by other prominent community members. Work on the DEW line continued, and in 1953 the village was forced to move again to accommodate changes to the layout of the installation and to facilitate new road construction. This move does not seem to have been done at as large a scale as the previous relocation, moving the village site a little to the west and farther back from the beach (Nielson 1977). No one I spoke with remembered any specifics about this move. It seems possible that only a few buildings were shifted, as the village remained very close to the original site on the bluff. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers cultural resource report on the region does not count this second relocation as a separate site of the village for this reason (Grover 2004). It may have had less of an impact on the memories of residents because the buildings in the village at this time were constructed out of lumber and could be moved with less damage than the sod houses and driftwood structures at the original site. This second move may also be less notable than the first because the community was undergoing so many other changes during this tumultuous period.

At the same time that the Air Force was expanding operations, the community of Kaktovik was growing. Schooling had begun in late 1940s when an Air Force sergeant began teaching the children. Daniel Akootchook (2009) began work as a caretaker for the school when it opened and related a humorous story about the original teacher having to be woken up by the children of the village when it was time to attend school. Harold Kaveolook, an Iñupiat from Barrow, took over educational efforts in August 1951 when he opened a Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) school (Jacobson and Wentworth 1982). Also during this time, several men from the village began working for the Air Force as laborers and construction workers (Nielson 1977). It was the creation of this school and the availability of jobs in connection with the DEW line that prompted a population boom in Kaktovik. From 1950–1953, the population of the village grew from 46 to 145 people (Jacobson and Wentworth 1982:5).

After the initial move of the village, relations between Iñupiat and military personnel, although not without tension, began to improve. A possible turning point was related by Norajane Burns (2009), who heard this story from her grandfather:

I guess that one time, he said that when they went to work, they had this...guy that was very prejudiced and he didn't like the natives, I guess. And they had this real bad blizzard, and he was going to go from the one, right across, he was going to just walk from just one train to the other train, and he got lost in between there. And they were looking for him. They somehow, they went and got the guys that were working at the DEW line, and then they, those guys, went looking for him and they found him and brought him back. And he changed his mind about...After the Natives found him, because he came pretty close to freezing out there and they found him, and it sort of got better.

Lillian Akootchook (2009) also mentioned that this particular station chief did not allow local residents to purchase anything from the station, which at this time was the only store on the island. Her husband, Daniel, was a part of the rescue party, and he explained that after the incident the station chief had a much friendlier attitude and allowed residents to shop at the DEW-line store (D. Akootchook 2009).

Based on the memories of the people I spoke with, it appears that over time the community and DEW-line personnel came into closer contact, although the time frame is unclear. Medical care was offered at the station and several of the people I spoke to remembered being seen by a doctor

or dentist there. Shared social events became more common, including gatherings at the station for major holidays, dances, sporting events, and movies. The opening of the Barter Island Social Club, a bar at the station, also allowed for mingling of non-Native and Iñupiat DEW-line workers and other members of the community. Norman Chance noted that relations between Iñupiat and white DEW-line workers seemed friendly and they engaged in recreational activities together. He did, however, note that the policy of the village council was to continue to limit admittance of non-community members to specific times (Chance 1990). According to several of the people I spoke to, non-Native DEW liners occasionally accompanied men of the village when they went out to hunt. Personal relationships between outsiders and local women also occurred. Carla Kayotuk (2009), a village resident, explained how her father and mother became a couple in the early 1960s:

I do remember that it was, there was no contact for many years between the DEW line and the village. There wasn't supposed to be socializing between the two, I think. But my mom and dad ended up together anyway. I was actually telling you the other the day, when they started going out... they had to hide him in the house when they came looking for him. And, so... for him to move into the village or marry my mom, the tribe had to adopt him. So he was adopted by the Native Village of Kaktovik, and then so, he was able to move into the village that way. And then, I don't know if they changed the rules after that or what.

Carla's parents were not alone in their experience; at least four other marriages occurred between local women and DEW liners. Although social relationships between DEW-line personnel and members of the village appear limited at first, these interactions increased over time.

The time period following the installation of the runway up until the early 1960s was one of intense military activity on Barter Island, as the Air Force and its contractors ramped up building activities and expanded the DEW-line station. The federal government chose to make Barter Island a military reservation, in effect taking control of the very ground on which the village stood and expanding state control over the entire island. Although the second relocation may have had less of an effect upon the physical layout of the village than the first, the increased presence of the military led to more employment opportunities and the creation of the school. These changes brought new residents to Kaktovik and altered the social dynamic of the village.

THE FINAL MOVE, 1964

In 1962, the Air Force again ordered a move in order to expand its facility (Nielson 1977). Missionary John Chambers noted in his memoirs that both the Air Force and Federal Electric Company employees had approached the village about a move earlier, with a suggested location three miles west along the bluff. The community opposed this move because it would place them farther away from the freshwater lake, beach facilities, and the airport. According to Chambers, the village council was successfully persuaded to move by a sanitation officer following an issue with sewage runoff and trash accumulation. According to Chambers, the negotiation was a complicated process. The location favored by the village was nearly a mile away from the present site, closer to the freshwater lake and not far from the airport. The Air Force commanding officer explained at the time that while informal permission could be granted, the community would hold no official rights to the land. Chambers (1970:150) recounted that he wrote a letter to the Alaska congressional delegation, signed by the head of the village council, seeking assistance for the release of the lands. He added his own correspondence, pointing out that no provisions were made for the community when Barter Island was originally chosen as a DEW-line site. In Chambers' opinion, the fact that Barter Island had been reserved for military usage when it was already occupied land embarrassed the Air Force when it was brought to the attention of the federal government. Due to this embarrassment the Air Force was more willing to work with the community in order to avoid negative publicity. Less than a week after receiving the letters, officials in Washington, D.C., had already set up meetings with Air Force officials (Chambers 1970:50). This time, Kaktovik was given the opportunity to participate in the relocation process. The president of the village council, Herman Rexford, sat down to discuss the matter with several government agencies, including the Air Force, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the BIA, the U.S. Public Health Service, and the Alaska State Division of Lands. The reasons for this relocation were enumerated by the area director of BLM, and included inadequate housing facilities at the present site, the community was in direct line with the runway, the new site allowed for expansion, and erosion of the coastline at the present site posed a threat to the village (Nielson 1977:6). Ben Linn (2009) remembered that the main reason for the relocation stemmed from worries over possible

plane crashes, and explained that they held a town meeting with the BIA. Norajane Burns (2009), who was a child at the time of the final relocation, remembered the adults in the community attending many meetings to discuss the upcoming move. The village created a proposal favoring a new village site, but it was made clear that the final decision rested with the Air Force alone (Nielson 1977). John Chambers noted that the proposal was granted in what he considered to be record time, taking only three months from submission to acceptance. The original town plot layout presented to the community by outside officials was not accepted, because it prevented people from living close enough to each other (Chambers 1970:151). Eventually, an agreement was reached and the process moved forward. Norajane Burns (2009) explained that the council had tried to choose an area with the highest, driest ground available and many of the families were excited about the new location. She also recalled that the community worked together to build a new church and school before the move, while individual families staked out the locations where their homes would rest in the new village site. In 1963, the community filed a request for a town site survey with BLM, which was conducted in April of 1964. With Air Force approval, Kaktovik was granted the plot upon which the relocated village would rest. The actual move of the community occurred under the supervision of the BIA and with the use of Air Force equipment (Nielson 1977). Ben Linn (2009) remembered the houses being hauled over to the new village site with tractors, which put stress on the older structures. Several individuals that I interviewed explained that while the equipment used for the move was provided by the Air Force, it was operated by men of the village who worked at the DEW line. Mary Ann Warden (2009) recalled Vincent Nageak, a former resident of Kaktovik who had moved to Barrow, weighing in on the matter: "He said, 'don't you dare try to move yourselves. Let the military move you.' But we didn't want anybody else to touch our stuff." When the move was completed, Kaktovik rested on ground owned by the community itself for the first time since 1947.

The final relocation was a complex interplay of different social actors representing diverse interests. While the Air Force clearly had the last word on whether this relocation was carried out, local social actors, whether residents of the community or missionaries, influenced the way in which it took place. Air Force and Federal Electric contractors had attempted to have the community move earlier to a location that was unsatisfactory to

them, and villagers successfully refused. Circumstances such as sanitation and the proximity of the runway were the catalysts for the residents to pursue relocation. It is unclear whether a direct order was in place prior to the negotiation for the relocation, but letters to federal government and military officials written by missionaries and local community members brought pressure on local Air Force personnel. This pressure may have led to the community being granted a more active role in choosing the new site and working out the details of community layout with government agencies. The village layout reflects a grid system of house placement, perhaps an attempt to bring the physical structure of the community more in line with state norms. Despite being given a more active role, however, the labor for this move was provided by Kaktovik residents. Individual families chose their house plots, the community as a whole worked to construct the church and the school, and residents of the village who worked at the DEW line operated the equipment to move the structures to the new site. While the military ordered the move and state agencies shaped the way it took place, the community actively negotiated its new location and did the majority of the work themselves.

Even though the last move occurred in 1964, the community's struggle with the military and state continued. Although the village was granted the rights to the land on which it rested, it was still surrounded by military holdings into the late 1970s. With the advent of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) in 1971, the Air Force relinquished a 360-foot-wide strip of land bordering the western edge of the village by the passage of PLO 5448 in 1974 and released a further 3,609 acres to the public domain and federal jurisdiction by the passage of PLO 5565 in 1975 (Horton 1974; Hughes 1975). In 1977, however, the old village cemetery and land needed for further expansion was still in the hands of the Air Force. The village made its needs known to the North Slope Bureau Planning Department in 1976 in a report by Jonathan Nielson (1977), who reported that the North Slope Borough had attempted to work out an informal agreement with military representatives over issues of community development on this particular tract of land, but was met with delays, indifference, and a lack of action. The particulars of negotiation during the intervening years are uncertain; however, the land was formally transferred

with PLO 6615 in 1986, which partially revoked prior public land orders. These revocations allowed for the selection of land by the Kaktovik Inupiat Corporation and the Arctic Slope Regional Corporation (Griles 1986). The negotiation process was a complex one, with representatives of both Kaktovik and the North Slope Borough working for the best interests of the village despite initial difficulties with military officials.

PERSPECTIVES ON THE PAST AND LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE

Many residents of Kaktovik reflected that the most helpful effect of the DEW line on the community was the creation of jobs that allowed families to supplement subsistence hunting with cash. Others commented that access to health care was of benefit to the community. One detrimental effect mentioned by nearly every individual I spoke to was the introduction of alcohol into the village. One resident summed up this issue:

Yeah it started a whole, I guess it got our generation starting to drink, you know. When we were young, 'cause they had a bar there, they'd bring booze in. Everybody said, "Yeah, let's go have a happy time!" Yeah, uh-huh, that would have been the first thing that I would have banned from this village, alcohol. It just ruined the livelihood of a whole generation (Anonymous 2009a).¹

Several people mentioned that the village was unable to obtain an adequate location during the selection process of a new site in 1964 because the DEW line was already occupying the highest, driest land on the island. (Flooding occurs in the lower-lying areas of the village every year during the spring melt.) Opinions vary as to whether the community deserves reparations from the Air Force for its ordeal. With a sense of resignation, one individual said "What good is compensation? It's all done and gone with" (Anonymous 2009b).² Several other individuals felt that Kaktovik deserves compensation, citing a number of factors, including the stress undergone by the community and the loss of artifacts in the initial move. Norajane Burns (2009) stated:

For the elders. The ones that are left of our elders and maybe their descendants, you know. 'Cause they are the ones that suffered lots from losing a house and their cash, or their ice cellar, and all that food that they caught.

1. Due to the sensitive nature of alcohol-related issues, the author elected not to identify the interviewed individual in this case.

2. The interviewed individual in this case chose to remain anonymous in any material I might publish utilizing portions of this interview.

Issues of land and compensation are echoed in discussions of the future of the village. The Army Corps of Engineers has identified Kaktovik as one of the communities threatened by coastal erosion, although a detailed assessment has not been completed (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 2007). The airstrip, located on a spit on the eastern side of the island, is threatened by erosion from annual summer and fall storms. The runway has been repeatedly flooded and the North Slope Borough has attempted mitigation on the northern side by installing geo-grid material. Despite this, erosion continues and the airstrip floods approximately every two years (Stankiewicz 2005). Flooding apparently also occurred in the past. Daniel Akootchook (2009) remembered working on a crew to reinforce the runway, using old Air Force fuel drums filled with sand.

Two recent storms have highlighted the serious nature of flooding: one in 1986 completely submerged the airstrip and the other, in 2000, covered over half of the runway with water (Stankiewicz 2005). The Federal Aviation Administration (2009) found that it was necessary to relocate the airport on Barter Island; however, the Army Corps of Engineers determined that the erosion situation on Barter Island will not immediately impact the village. The Corps estimates that it will be over a century before the situation becomes detrimental to the future of the community (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 2006). Presently, Kaktovik is on a list of sixty-nine communities being monitored for continued erosion (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 2009). When asked about the possibility of a future relocation because of environmental factors, several of the residents of the village felt they would indeed have to move sometime in the future. Carla Kayotuk (2009) said:

Well, what I think would be nice, because I think eventually we're going to have to be relocated, maybe not in my lifetime, but definitely in the future we're going to have to relocate. What the community right now, what we're fighting for is our new airport to be relocated on the mainland, and the FAA and the borough are fighting to have it on the island. But, we're thinking further down in the future, we're gonna have to relocate to the mainland. Put the, the runway on the mainland, where we want it now, so you save your money in the future.

Other members of the community echoed her sentiments, although the FAA has already decided to relocate the airstrip on the island, approximately one mile southeast of the community (FAA 2009). There does seem to be a clear consensus that the nearby mainland represents the best site, should a relocation become necessary. The general

feeling was that the community should choose the future village site, with the help of surveyors, and the federal government should be responsible for logistical and financial support. Several individuals mentioned that the state and the military should participate financially, especially in light of past forced relocations.

CONCLUSIONS

Overt state action prompted the forced relocations at Kaktovik, which were brought about by international tensions arising from the Cold War. The military exercised the authority that led to the relocation of the village on three separate occasions in order to build and expand a radar station. Although concerns for the inhabitants of Kaktovik were secondary to national security, the strategic location of Barter Island brought state intervention to bear on this isolated community. In each case of relocation, the process of negotiation between state and local actors varied. In the first instance, the community of Kaktovik was forced to react to the sudden destruction of the original village. Although it would be easy to view this situation through the lens of a powerful state acting upon a helpless population, individual agency of residents is clearly visible as they recreated their community under their own manpower and organized the construction of individual homes and public structures in the ways they saw fit. The second case of relocation, on the other hand, appears to have been less extensive, and possibly less traumatic, as illustrated by the lack of ethnographic data.

The time frame between the first and final relocations was a time of social change in the community as schooling and employment attracted many new residents to the area, nearly tripling the population of Kaktovik. Likewise, increased presence of military and contract personnel altered the social dynamic of the village. These factors were the product of the decision of the Air Force to build a military installation on Barter Island. However, villagers were active in negotiating this changing social dynamic, especially with outside DEW line personnel. While socialization between DEW liners and the community appears to have increased over time, residents of the village controlled these interactions, at times limiting them.

The discussion of the last relocation illustrates a greater level of negotiation than the preceding cases, involving the military, a multitude of government agencies, and regional actors, including residents and missionaries, some of whom apparently contacted congressional representatives

at the national level. These representatives in turn contacted national military officials, who brought pressure on local military personnel in Kaktovik. Once the process of relocation was initiated, a number of state agencies worked with community representatives and shaped the way in which the move took place. Representatives of these different governmental institutions intervened in different ways, including persuading the community to relocate, surveying a town site, planning organizational meetings with residents, designing the layout of the community, and supervising the actual move of the village. While these institutions had large parts to play in the overall relocation effort, the inhabitants of Kaktovik were also active in negotiating the future of their community. They worked to choose the location of their village, initially refusing an undesirable site. They requested changes to the proposed layout of the community, which they had determined was unacceptable for the needs of the village. Individual families chose the locations for their homes, residents worked to build the school and church prior to the move, and the manpower for the relocation came from the community. While the level and character of state intervention varied in each case, the inhabitants of the community were active participants. Although they had little choice in the changes imposed upon them, they re-created their community through multiple moves and negotiated with the military and state agencies.

Coastal erosion may be the impetus for yet another relocation in the years to come. Although this cause is environmental, rather than governmental, Kaktovik residents will have to negotiate with the state if significant erosion occurs. Discussions with residents point to a clear consensus to move the village to a location chosen by the community on the nearby mainland with the logistical support of government agencies. Some Kaktovik residents feel that the military and perhaps federal agencies should be financially responsible for a future relocation. While interviews with a portion of the inhabitants of the village cannot be taken as representative of the community as a whole, it appears that if a relocation becomes necessary, the residents of Kaktovik are prepared to once again negotiate with the state and actively participate in planning the future of their community in the face of forces beyond their control.

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