

# Saipan's Airport Of Future

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SAIPAN -- They knew what they didn't want the terminal at Saipan's new Isley Field to be something with the look and feel, say, of a concrete bomb shelter. Or a "temporary" building that lasts 50 years.

"All along we were concerned that we might come up with a

small squat concrete structure on the site, left over from the Japanese, will be used as an airport tourist orientation center.

What the Ralph M. Parsons Co. of Honolulu has come up with, based on local input, may be "one of the showplace airports in the world," said Wright.

Still on the drawing boards,

connected by a covered bridge, its "backbone," the terminal was designed to reflect the uniquely Micronesian air befitting the new Saipan International Airport's projected stature as the gateway to Micronesia.

Design work is almost complete. The IT Public Works Department has now set April 1 as the target date for letting bids

massive building, the architects have produced three separate buildings connected by a covered arcade to achieve the open air feeling characteristic of Pacific island architecture.

The peaked-roof structures themselves -- the arrival and departure buildings and a shopping-waiting complex -- "just look like they should be in Micronesia," said Wright. This

For the roofs' cedar shake effect, the architects are considering the use of preformed metal shingles.

Most of the public spaces will be naturally ventilated, with the exception of shops and the restaurant, which may be air conditioned.

"In the tropics, landscaping is an especially important element of the design," said Wright. "We're trying to develop a plan that will reinforce the island setting."

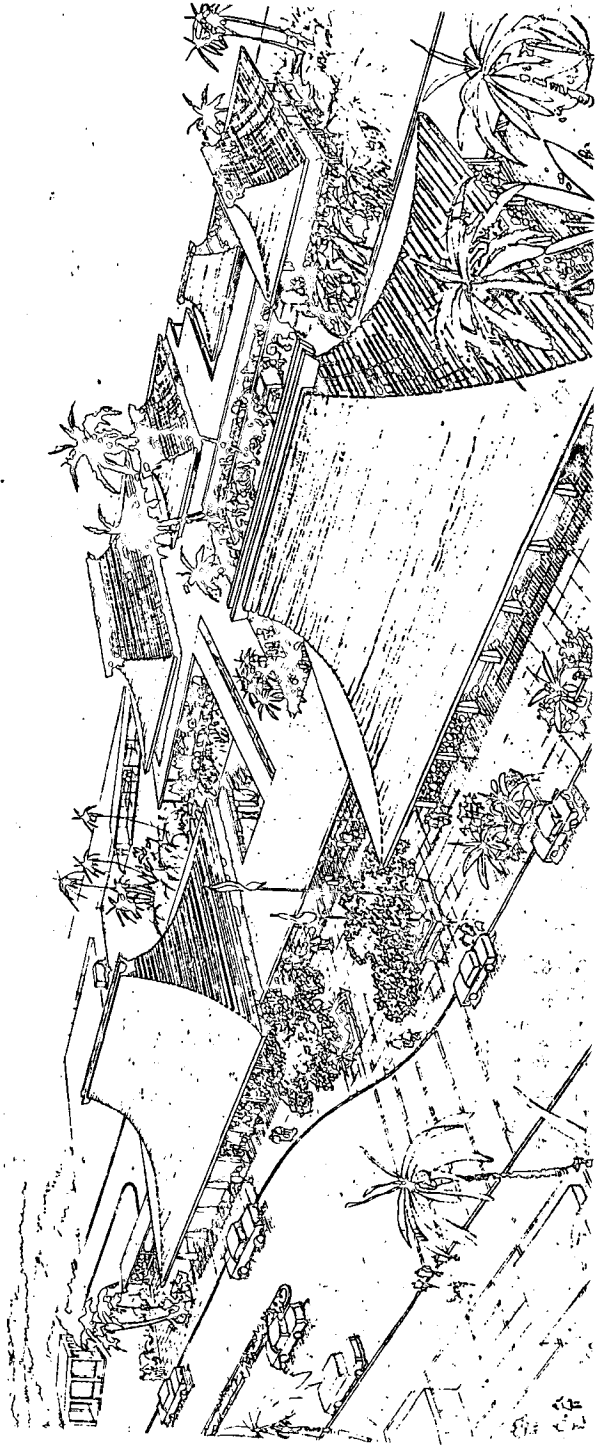
Chief among this are outdoor waiting areas and elevated observation decks overlooking the apron or field.

"We thought it was very important that people have a chance to see what's going on, so that the airport has a friendly feeling. This is especially necessary in this day of airport security measures."

"But also, on an island the airport particularly becomes a gathering place, a focal point of activity. People just naturally gravitate toward it. This is true all over the Pacific," said Wright.

Special consideration has also been given to tour groups, which the airport planners are estimating may eventually comprise 60 per cent of the traffic at Isley. There will be a special tour group area in the arrival building, so tours can be pulled away from other passengers to queue up for buses. Tour buses will have their own service road. Departing groups will have separate check-in facilities.

In addition, plans call for restoring the old concrete



IN PRELIMINARY sketch of Isley Field terminal, the arrival building is at left, the departure portion at right. Shops and restaurant are in rear, overlooking the aircraft area. (TT Photos)

year 2000 airfield... and a 1906 terminal," said architect Charles Wright, the Trust Territory's Isley project manager who also shares a love of aviation with those other flying Wrights.

The design for the Isley terminal definitely does not look like the shed at Kitty Hawk - or a bunker, although a

the Isley terminal is due to replace Saipan's present Kobler Field (whose receiving buildings are reminiscent of a bomb shelter) in early 1975, when both the terminal and reconstruction work on the old B29 bomber field are due for completion. Basically three buildings

three buildings

## Nixon Pens \$10M For TT

SAIPAN, (MNS) - Word has been received that President Nixon at the western White House in San Clemente, California has signed into law a supplemental appropriation bill for fiscal 1974 that includes more than \$10 million for the Trust Territory.

TT Government officials are now taking all of the necessary preliminary steps so that when the apportionment of these funds is actually received, they can be obligated as quickly as possible, according to William D. Oylet, program and budget officer.

Included in the bill is money for a number of important capital improvement projects, including the Ponsape hospital, Jaluit High School, and Palau Bridge, as well as funding for a Micronesian constitutional convention, education for self-government and a stepped-up program of surveying of public land.

TT and Congress of Micronesia officials travelled to Washington in November to testify in support of the bill. The President's action marked the successful conclusion of an effort that began when the capital improvement money that was originally included in the Trust Territory's appropriation for fiscal 1974 was removed by congressional action.

on the roughly \$3 million terminal.

"It was a challenge to achieve an island feeling for this medium-sized island airport," said Wright, "to make it a place where you want to be. But I think we've been successful."

Still to be resolved are major threshold questions such as who will manage the airport, who will fund the terminal and, very likely, where will the fuel come from to build it.

In the meantime, the design itself is proving sufficient inspiration to spur some thoughtful searches for answers to these questions.

"The response has been about as positive as we could have hoped for," Wright noted, "including the unanimous endorsement for the design from the airlines who will be using the terminal. This came after over a year of working with the district and the airlines in developing a terminal concept that had the desired airline operating features as well as the desired passenger service features," he said.

"As our neighbor, we had the Guam airport as an example of what to look for, both the good and the bad. Let me stress, however, that there was no conscious effort to one-up Guam - only an effort not to repeat Guam's mistakes," Wright added.

The heart of the design's appropriateness to Saipan lies in the choice of scale and materials. Rather than one

is so despite the fact that they are not replicas or mirror images of buildings indigenous to any one of Micronesia's districts. Instead, they merely capture the essence of island architecture through the use of a series of columns spanned by beams, high roofs allowing hot air to rise and overhangs for shade and protection from the rain.

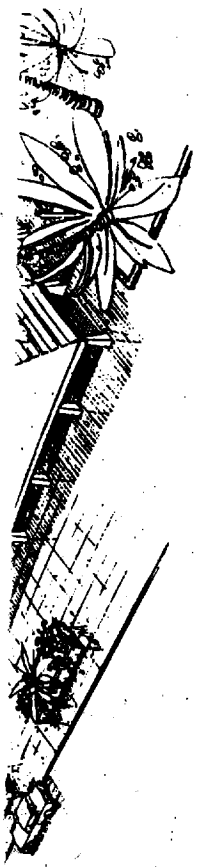
Plans call for a pre-cast concrete structural system. Dark volcanic rock, some taken from Saipan's Kagman area, will be used for wall surface treatment and also for retaining walls, planters and seats.

In addition, plans call for restoring the old concrete structure that once housed Japanese airport operations for use as a mini-museum on Micronesia and a visitors orientation center, appropriately utilizing this link with Saipan's Japanese past.

There will be parking for about 228 cars. The terminal roadway is a smart-free, one-way loop that expands from three to five lanes in front of the arrival building.

In the departure building at curbside, about 32,000 square feet of space has been allowed for lease to four airlines. These would include Air Micronesia and Air Pacific, which now fly into Saipan, Japan Air Lines, which plans to, and Pan American, which hopes to on a regular basis. Along with their ticket counters and baggage check-in facilities, the airlines would have offices here. A mezzanine, Wright explained, could supplement the airlines' ground-floor office space or be

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the plane is out there waiting. Transit passengers will have easy access to the shops. "The more they are able to buy, the more money will come in to offset the operating expenses of the airport," noted Wright.

A ramp down to grade level will get passengers to and from either of the two gates initially planned at Isley.

"You'll notice that there are no stairs here," added Wright. "It's all done with ramps."

Wright calls the main ramp connecting the curbside buildings with the upper level area "the backbone of the whole terminal operation." A two-way bridge over the maintenance operations below, it is designed to carry a peak load potential of 400,000 with no delays.

And this potential for growth, Wright believes, "is one of the most important features we've strived for. We don't feel that we've locked ourselves in."

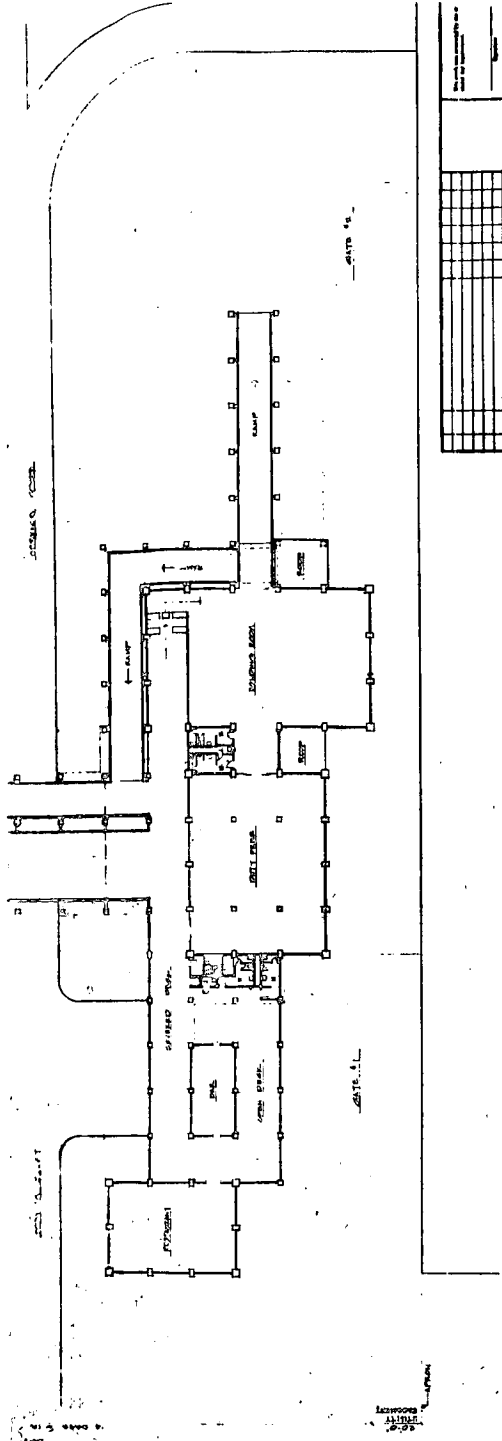
"The aircraft industry is expanding so fast," he said, "that it's hard to design as fast as it changes."

Beginning with a projected first-year traffic of 125,000 passengers, the designers have allowed for four-fold growth in both the terminal and the field. The apron will initially be able to handle one Boeing 747 jet and another four-engine jet, plus any overflow or delayed planes.

The ultimate projected expansion would be to eight gates, with the terminal expanding in balance as necessary.

"We expect to be able to meet Saipan's aviation needs for the next 25 years," said Wright, which would, in short, make Isley's field and terminal both facilities fit for the Year 2000. If.

If money is made available soon. If not, the airport planners may proceed with the funds they do have to build initially just one of the master



FLOOR PLAN of the upper levels of public areas at Isley shows big areas planned for traffic needs. The plan is tentative and subject to change.

# Military Taking Steps On Tinian Base Plan

TINIAN (MNS) — A team of specialists will begin work this month on the beginnings of an environmental impact study and other work that will be the forerunner of establishing a long talked about U.S. military installation on Tinian.

The studies are being carried out in accordance with an agreement between the U.S. negotiating team on future status and the Marianas Political Status Commission, whereby certain preliminary impact studies could be undertaken by the U.S.-related to the military base plans, even though final agreement in the status negotiations has not been reached.

Currently on Tinian is a team of eight personnel from the University of Guam headed by Dr. Robert Jones, director of the marine laboratory at the school. This team, which travelled to Tinian aboard a chartered vessel from Guam and is staying aboard the boat for the duration of their study is conducting the marine survey portion of the environmental impact study.

A second team of researchers, which arrived last weekend on Saipan and will travel to Tinian later this week following meetings with government officials on Saipan, is to conduct a socio-economic study on the island. The team is headed by Manuel Emiliano, a civil engineer with Pacific Air Force Headquarters at Hickam Air Base in

Hawaii. It includes a number of staff personnel and graduate research assistants from the University of Hawaii's School of Social Work and the research corporation of the University of Hawaii. They are expected to remain on Tinian until about the middle of January.

Meanwhile, a three-person team of medical specialists from the Pacific Air Force will conduct a one-day health survey of Tinian this month. It is tentatively scheduled for Jan. 11. The team includes a physician, a veterinarian and a nurse.

The U.S. government has publicly declared its intention to put a major joint-use military installation on Tinian, an island which was the scene of substantial U.S. military activity in the years during and immediately following World War II. Exact details of the base, including how much land on the island will be occupied by the military, remain a subject of negotiations in the Marianas status talks which are continuing. No final agreement on the Marianas status requirements in the Marianas has been reached, although the Marianas Status Commission has indicated a general agreement to accommodate those requirements.

The military has asked for two-thirds of Tinian — relocating the lone village of San Jose. A 50-year lease has been offered.