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"EMERAECH" LAUNCHED

Koror, Palau, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, June 4 - - Palau's 75-foot tuna boat, christened "Emeraech," eased into the water at the Palau Boatyard this morning before a crowd of several hundred, including Trust Territory's new Acting High Commissioner William R. Norwood and Mrs. Norwood, who were making their first visit to Palau.

The ceremonial launching of the "Emeraech," ("Morning Star") signals the beginning of a new period of advancement of commercial fishing in Micronesia. It is the first truly Hawaiian-style tuna boat to fish in the Western Pacific, according to Trust Territory fisheries officials. Having a larger bait and catch capacity than traditional Okinawan-style boats and requiring half as many crew, the "Emeraech" was designed by Kyoshi Matsumoto, a Hawaiian boat builder with many years experience in commercial fishing boat construction.

Mr. Matsumoto came to Palau two years ago on the request of Peter Wilson, Fisheries Management Biologist, to supervise the Palau boat-building program. "The success of the entire Palau shipyard operation is largely due to the skill and perseverance of Mr. Matsumoto," he said.

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Mr. Wilson also persuaded Captain Richard Kinney, a 20-year tuna fisherman from Hawaii, to pilot the "Emeraech," with an all-Micronesian crew, specially trained in Hawaii. Captain Kinney led Hawaiian tuna crews for 11 years, bringing in catches of well over one million pounds a year. He is confident that the new vessel will compare well with the boats "back home" in Hawaii.

"I am just waiting to get out there and show the people what the 'Emeraech' can do; it's a beautiful boat," Captain Kinney said in a radio interview before the 8 a.m. launching. He invited the public to come aboard and inspect the vessel.

Acting High Commissioner Norwood commented, during the ceremonies, on "the deep significance" of the "Emeraech" to the economic future of Micronesia.

Mrs. Norwood broke the champagne on the bow as the boat rolled down the ramp to the music of the new Palau Community Band.

The presence of Mr. and Mrs. Norwood at the event heightened its Hawaiian flavor, since he was Administrative Director for the State of Hawaii immediately before coming to the Trust Territory.

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