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# Palau Group Wants Own Ship

Special to the Daily News

PALAU—Businessmen in Palau have formed a corporation to purchase and operate a ship between Koror and Guam in the wake of increasing complaints against TransPacific Lines.

A committee of seven men will leave for Guam on Feb. 5 to look into the feasibility of purchasing a ship.

The group foresees legal problems. According to Benna Sakuma of the Micronesian Legal Services Corp. and owner of the newly opened Micronesian Divers, the contract between the Trust Territory government and the shipping line promises TransPac a monopoly in operating above 10,000 tons.

"We plan to hire a law firm to look into the contract between the TT and TransPac," Sakuma said. "In the meantime, we will determine if it is possible to operate within 10,000 tons. We

might just have to get a big ship to survive and worry about legal form later. After all, it is our island and who's going to tell us not to come in?"

The decision to purchase the ship was made following meetings among the businessmen to discuss new charges leveled by TransPacific Lines. They feel that it would be cheaper to operate their own vessel than to continue paying present fees.

After a 12 per cent increase in prices, said to be a fuel charge which is paid to the consigner, Sakuma said, TransPac suddenly slapped on a \$20 "terminus charge" without any explanation.

"This mysterious charge was even levied on stock which had already left the point of origin before the charges were put into effects," Sakuma said, though he could not cite the exact date the charges became effective.

Sakuma reported that the businessmen are preparing to file a suit against TransPac "to force them to explain the terminus charges."