

March 31, 1978.

Fishermen catching groundfish (except fresh fish for export) have been receiving deficiency payments of two cents per pound for first quality fish. Now, large trawlers over 90 feet will receive no more payments for any trip begun after March 31, 1978.

Payments also stop entirely for all groundfish vessels in British Columbia, where incomes for groundfish fishermen are higher than average. For the remaining groundfish fishermen in Canada, the two cent payments continue until October 1st, 1978.

When the Special Assistance Program began in 1974, the Canadian fishing industry faced the worst crisis it has known. In the Atlantic groundfish industry, unusually high costs (stemming partly from the energy crisis of 1973), scarce fish, and poor markets had produced heavy losses and forced producers toward bankruptcy. Other sectors of the fishing industry also faced grave problems.

To prevent collapse of communities and wide-spread dislocation, the federal government authorized emergency aid to the groundfish and other sectors of the fishing industry. After a thorough inquiry into the Canadian fishing industry, the government approved in 1975 a new and activist fisheries policy, outlined in the public document "Policy for Canada's Commercial Fisheries". The aim was to build a stronger, more stable industry and provide better, more responsive management, with the needs of society and especially of fishermen uppermost.