

Soviets to Pay for Loss of Gear

The Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration announced recently that the Soviet Union has agreed to pay \$11,400 to the R&G Fisheries of Tiverton, R.I.

The payment will be made for loss of gear and financial hardship caused when Soviet trawlers destroyed the company's lobster traps while trawling through a well-marked area in October 1971.

The U.S.S.R. agreement to pay was reached during a meeting of the U.S.-U.S.S.R. Fisheries Claims Board which was established this year to hear claims submitted to it for damages caused by fishing vessels of either country.

Members of the board include Carmen J. Blondin, of NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service; Clinton J. Maguire, U.S. Coast Guard; and Y.A. Znamenskiy and A.G. Afanasyev of the Soviet Union.

R&G Fisheries alleged that on the morning of Oct. 9, 1971, their fishing vessel, Seven G's, found numerous Soviet trawlers towing through their lobster

traps in an area marked with flags, buoys, and radar reflectors.

The Seven G's removed as many undamaged lobster traps as possible and returned to port. On Oct. 27, the Seven G's returned to the area and found that the rest of the gear and traps were gone.

A total of 210 lobster traps and accompanying gear was lost. Owners of R&G Fisheries stated that they were forced to curtail offshore lobstering for the remainder of the season because of the incident.

The incident occurred approximately 70 miles off the northeast coast of the United States.