Special Committee

The proximity of a Board enterprise to a university campus marks the beginning. (No further relation may develop as with the Arctic Station near Macdonald College). Often however, the university has actively forwarded the project, perhaps by a gift of land etc., in the belief that academic strength will be gained. This is sometimes done by the administration without prior approval of the faculty. The faculty may then reject any effective collaboration, perhaps on the grounds that the point of view of an applied group is unsuitable for the academic world. Thus the earliest causes of the partnership death are still-birth and strangling in infancy.

Usually matters are more favourable and an active joint effort begins. The university is interested in extending the range of its scientific offerings and increasing its staff at the research level. Some Board people are looking for the stimulation provided by graduate students with a bias towards aquatic science, and to the enlargement of scholarly contacts, and others offer lip-service. There is every appearance of a viable bargain from which both parties might derive continuing benefit.

The serpent can enter this Eden in various guises. A penurious president may block the normal university staff development because of the strength provided by the outsiders. The government lab may bid for the best of a scarcity of graduate students. Faculty members may, with increased strength feel there is no longer need for the mundane partner or that departmental control, prestige and prerogatives are being compromised by developments outside its control. The Board people have usually been paid more and often seem to give low priority to formal teaching obligations while the full-time faculty are bowed down during term time with elementary teaching. As government complacency is matched by faculty irritation the resentments grow.

Typically at this stage one of the principals who shook hands at the outset, leaves. His successor, if on the government side, may feel that his people are wasting their time with teaching, or even with academic contacts, which introduce more new ideas than there is time for him to deal