

**The Quads**  
**www.time.com**  
**Jul. 19, 1963**

Quintuplets were expected, quadruplets appeared. That was the story in London last week when government and colonial leaders signed the birth certificate of a new British Commonwealth nation. It was the Federation of Malaysia, which was to be composed of independent Malaya, self-governing Singapore, and the three British territories of Sarawak, Brunei and North Borneo. But at the last moment, the oil-sodden sultanate of Brunei pulled out of the agreement in a fit of pique over the final terms of federation.

Macy's v. Gimbels. Brunei's sudden defection came after weeks of cliffhanging negotiations between Malaya's shrewd Prime Minister Tunku (Prince) Abdul Rahman, father of the federation scheme, and Singapore's brilliant, mercurial Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew. Though the Tunku had demanded that Singapore kick in 55% of its revenues to the federal treasury, Lee managed to whittle the figure down to 40%. But overplaying his hand, he then held out for 39%. So infuriated was the Tunku at this Macy's v. Gimbels tactic that he delivered an ultimatum to Singapore to get in the federation or stay out and refused to go to London for the final bargaining sessions.

In London Lee demanded that the British compensate Singapore for continued use of the island's naval and military facilities. Britain came through with an offshore island and an officers' club golf course, which Lee promised to turn into a botanical garden. But when the negotiations turned to such basic matters as Singapore's continued status as a free port and its financial contribution to the underdeveloped Borneo territories, the discussions bogged down.

As the impasse continued, Commonwealth Secretary Duncan Sandys took over as arbitrator. Sandys' "absolute dedication and zeal," said Lee, "equaled that of any dedicated Communist I've ever had the misfortune to meet." Goading, guiding, persuading, cajoling, Sandys kept the negotiators up to the small hours of the morning for four consecutive nights. "On every occasion, we passed the time when Cinderella crumbled," said Lee. "On two occasions, we greeted the dawn."

Sulking Sultan. When a breakthrough seemed near, Abdul Rahman flew to London, sat in his hotel suite waiting for the signing ceremony. When a last obstacle appeared, Sandys persuaded Lee to iron it out privately with the Tunku. The final agreement compromised on financial issues. Singapore will loan money to the Borneo territories rather than give it outright, and a federation common market will gradually replace Singapore's freeport status.

Brunei's withdrawal only slightly jeopardizes this arrangement. Brunei's rich, reactionary Sultan is mainly sulking over Abdul Rahman's apathy toward his ambition to play a big ceremonial role in the new Malaysia. But both the Sultan and the Tunku privately admit their readiness to renew negotiations. Optimistically, the Tunku announced: "This family has been nicely settled. There is going to be a happy Malaysia."

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