



**Herbert
Launer**

Herbert Launer was born March 28, 1925 in Vienna, Austria, the only child in a middle class Jewish family. Herbert's father was a fur dealer and a highly decorated soldier of the Austrian army during World War I.

On November 9, 1938, Kristallnacht (the night of broken glass), Herbert and his family were severely beaten by four Nazi hoodlums who broke into their apartment, smashing furniture and forcing Herbert's father into the street to scrub the sidewalk with a toothbrush. The next day Herbert was kicked and nearly beaten to death by his closest non-Jewish friend, a teammate on his soccer team.

Due to the quota system in place at the time, Herbert was the only member of his family to qualify for immigration so to escape further persecution, Herbert's parents sent him alone to the United States at age fourteen. Herbert left Vienna on April 30, 1939 and arrived in New York on May 8.

At 17, Herb had moved into a Boys Home, was working full time and going to college at night. It took Herbert nearly a year to learn that his parents had escaped Vienna and had arrived in England on September 1, 1939, the start of World War II.

Two months after his 18th birthday, Herb joined the U.S. Army, though he was still not a citizen. Because of his military service, Herb's parents were finally able to receive the visas they needed to come to America. They arrived in New York on the day that the Army sent Herbert to the Pacific Ocean Theatre of War. At the end of the war, Herbert was finally reunited with his parents after 7 years apart.



*Herbert Launer in
the U.S. Army*