

# Nazi 'Gift' to Kissinger-

(Editor's note: Henry A. Kissinger knew early the mass hate and personal displacement that marks a major part of this century. The following, second in a four-part series on the life of the President's national security affairs adviser, looks at his childhood and youth.)

By GAYLORD SHAW  
Associated Press Writer

For the Jews it was a time of terror.

An Austrian named Adolf Hitler was gathering power and his antisemitic harangues were echoing across Germany.

The Nazi hysteria reached even to Fuerth, a smoke-stained Bavarian factory city with a centuries-old tradition of religious tolerance.

Jewish children, when they ventured onto the streets or playgrounds, would be cornered and beaten by Hitler youth.

Among the children getting this early, bloody lesson in politics was Heinz Kissinger.

**TODAY, MORE** than three decades later, Henry A. Kissinger is assistant for national security affairs to the President of the United States.

As Richard M. Nixon's premier foreign affairs adviser, he sometimes is called the second most powerful man in the world. Kissinger was closest to Nixon on the recent trip to China and will be next to him on the presidential visit to Moscow later this month.

But in the 1930s, in the streets of Fuerth, he was powerless and too slow a runner to escape the beatings.

He remembers well the early humiliation, but won't talk about it except to insist it did not shape his life.

**HE TOLD** a German newspaper, "my life in Fuerth passed without leaving any lasting impressions. I can't



**Kissinger and children**

Henry A. Kissinger, the President's national security affairs adviser, sits with his son, David, 10, left, and daughter, Elizabeth, 12, at San Clemente, Calif., last year. (Copyright 1971 Parade Magazine via AP Wirephoto.)

remember any interesting or amusing incidents."

Kissinger's father, Louis, a teacher at the local high school, was 35 in 1922 when he married Paula Stern, 21, a product of a middle-class German-Jewish family.

They moved into a third-floor flat on a cobbled street where, about dawn on a spring morning a year later, their first son was born.

His name was listed as Alfred Heinz Kissinger in the flourishing German script on his birth certificate. But he was called Heinz and would be until he later changed his name to Henry Alfred Kissinger.

**THE FOLLOWING** year, 1924, Louis and Paula Kissinger had their second son, Walter Bernhard.

Now a millionaire business executive of a Long Island electronics firm, Walter Kis-

singer turns aside most requests of newsmen to talk about his older brother.

But in one discussion with a newsman this year, he said: "I'm sure as children we had the normal amount of sibling rivalry, but there was never an element of great competitiveness in our relationship."

**FROM ALL** accounts, the Kissinger family was a happy, close-knit one.

Mrs. Kissinger is remembered as a superb cook of Jewish delicacies and as the family disciplinarian. Pappa is recalled as a gentle, quiet soul.

The brothers grew up in a five-room apartment, now a doctor's office. Then the walls were lined with books. A maid kept things tidy. There was a piano for music lessons.

But the Kissinger brothers were more interested in play-

ing sandlot soccer than in practicing the piano. Years later, Henry would describe himself as "a fanatical fan" of Fuerth's hometown soccer team.

**THE NAZIS** rise to power in 1933 signaled an end of the pleasant life for the Kissinger family and Germany's half-million other Jews.

Louis Kissinger was branded a full Jew and stripped of his teaching credentials. Young Heinz and his brother were expelled from public schools and forced to attend Jewish institutions. Whenever they played soccer, there was always a scuffle with their schoolmate.

Some who were in Germany at the time cringe at memories of the outrages suffered by the Jews. But according to Kissinger, "I was not con-

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sciously unhappy. I was not so acutely aware of what was going on."

**WHATEVER** impact the rise of the Nazis had on development of young Heinz' character, it caused a crisis for the Kissinger family. Louis Kissinger, fired from his teaching job, was unable to find satisfactory employment.

Fuerth has a tradition of religious toleration dating to the 15th century and, according to the city's official history, "the economic, political and cultural picture . . . was essentially shaped by the Jewish population."

"A shocking fate brought an end to the Jewish life of Fuerth," the history adds. The city's two synagogues were razed and the cemetery ravaged by the Nazis. Jewish institutions such as the cultural center and the hospital were dissolved.

The Jews began fleeing.

**IN 1938** just as the suffering of Fuerth's Jewish community began in earnest, the Kissinger family was able to obtain visas. They first went to London and the home of Paula Kissinger's aunt. From there they sailed for New York and a new life.

The Kissingers found an apartment in the Fort George Hill area of Manhattan's upper west side. Most of the neighborhood's five-and six-story apartment buildings were then, and still are, well kept and quiet.

Henry enrolled in September 1938 as a junior in nearby George Washington High School. School records list him as having a "foreign language handicap."

Within a year, he switched to night classes. He had found a job in a Manhattan shaving brush factory, first working at squeezing acid out of brush bristles and later being promoted to delivery boy. He worked eight to ten hours a day, but school records showed he managed to be a

straight-A student.

**HIS HIGH SCHOOL** book-keeping and math scores were as good as his social studies marks—all were 90. When he took state exams his intermediate algebra and trigonometry scores—96 and 98—topped his history score—88.

Kissinger was such a whiz in math that he decided to become an accountant—"as a refugee, it was the easiest profession for me to get into." So he enrolled in tuition-free City college of New York and began studying accounting.

But then in 1943, he got greetings from his draft board and trudged off to the Army. He didn't know it, but he was hurrying toward a turning point in his life.

**Next: The Kissinger intellect surfaces.**