



# **Friendly Fascism: The New Face of Power in America (Forbidden Bookshelf)**

*Bertram Gross*

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**A treatise by a White House insider on the root causes and inherent dangers of late twentieth-century American despotism written by a White House insider, with a new introduction by Chris Hedges**

In 1980, US capitalist politics wore a “nice-guy mask,” a troubling disguise to cover up a creeping despotism in which the ultra-rich and corporate overseers were merging with a centralized state power in order to manage the populace. This immanent corporate authoritarianism threatened to subvert constitutional democracy. But unlike the violent and sudden usurpations that led to fascism in the days of Hitler, Mussolini, and the Japanese empire builders, this new “smiling” American breed of fascism was gaining ground through gradual and silent infringements on the freedoms of the American people.

First published over three decades ago, *Friendly Fascism* is uncannily predictive of the threats and realities of current political and economic power trends. Author Bertram Gross, a presidential adviser during the New Deal era, traces the history and logic of declining democracy in First World countries and pinpoints capitalist transnational growth and inappropriate responses to global crises as the sources of late twentieth-century despotism in America. Gross issues ever-urgent warnings about what happens when big business and big government become bedfellows—chronic inflation, recurring recession, overt and hidden unemployment, the poisoning of the environment—and simultaneously proffers a practical shift of perspective that could help US citizens build a truer democracy. He imagines an America in which heroes are no longer needed and the leadership is a group of non-elitists who “recognize the ignorance of the wise as well as the wisdom of the ignorant.”

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