

Poem by Joshua Newton

Joshua Newton

1970

Yesterday we were in your station.
it was not what we had in mind,
that morning—to be pulled over at gunpoint
& shoved up against the car / motherfucker.
surrounded
by five or six cars
with pigs jumping
out of each pigcar
like clowns at the circus do &
their cars too were gaudy with
ads from their sponsors
i remember / your riot guns
the fat-old pig, pacing
squinting, popping juicy-fruit &
waving his sawed-off twelve-gauge
as though that were all
he knew how to do: cheap
drugstore yellows spitting sparks
like sweat in the sun
with badge and gun
he said buncha squirrely motherfuckers
to his pigfriend, waving his
death-tube at us
to clarify himself.
we were just going out for some
target-practice—that's right
just exercising our rights within the laws
when you ripped us off, as you know now and knew
then / why did you rip us off
are you afraid because you know
that each banana-clip of an M-1 carbine
holds enough criticism
for thirty of you
because you found 34 sticks of dynamite
in your ladies' john? because some

Of you have already been snuffed &
the rest of you are sure that some-
body wants you too?
or are you afraid
just because the people you see
on the streets as you drive by
must shop at the neighborhood stores
that charge 72 cents for a half gallon of milk
& know that if they were to
demand
that the price be lowered
YOU WOULD BE RIGHT THERE
to protect the store-owner
& they know that never, within
their lifetimes will you protect
them, from that store-owner.

//
YOU ARE FOOLS
to
think that the people
you fuck-over, everyday
need any outside agitator commie-punks
to tell them about YOU
you got it all wrong, guys
it is we who have learned from them
learned from the oppressed people
all over the world
to hate you.
PROTECT
is a word
seen on any number of pigcars
in Detroit, all over amerikkka &
it is a joke at which we do not laugh.
how
do you propose
to protect THE PEOPLE
from the dogs you work for
and from your very selves
Uncontrollably yours,
Joshua Newton

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