

**THEFT OF A REFUGE** By John Martin Copyright 1976

(piano intro)

**Verse 1**

G Bm/F# Em G/D  
 It was Christmas time, folks was feelin' fine, had no ideas of future power lines.  
 C D  
 Thoughts fixed on New Year's, while in Allamakee.  
 G Bm/F# Em  
 There appeared in print a minor public hint: "Please respond in 30 days, by  
 G/D C D  
 January five, or local opposition to the project ain't alive. Thank you — Merry Christmas."  
 G Bm/F# Em G/D  
 And the people plugged in their plastic trees and paid their bills to the power companies,  
 C /B Am D G Bm/F#  
 and didn't respond, 'cept ol' Bob. He said, "Wait a minute here now, I know what ya' did!  
 Em G/D C  
 You tried to sneak this by, I'm gonna pull off the lid. I'll let the public decide."  
 Am Am/G D  
 And a nearby man, his color turned red, faced the north power lines, kinda hollered and said:

**Chorus:**

G D C  
 "You ain't gonna string no power lines 'cross that river!  
 G D C  
 There's another line that crosses just northa here, anyway.  
 G D  
 Well if you think you're gonna string your power lines  
 C  
 through the oldest bird refuge on the Mississippi River,  
 G D C  
 well I'll meet you on the shore with a shotgun comes that day,  
 G D Em  
 well I'll meet you on the shore with a shotgun comes that day."

instrumental: G D C G D C

**Verse 2**

G D C  
 The company plan was to sign private land quite quickly.  
 G D C  
 They talked to the locals, expecting a final okay.  
 G D C  
 But the locals didn't sign, had that view on their mind, from Mount Hosmer. . .  
 G D  
 And young Tom said, "Why are you runnin' a power line through the middle of  
 C C /B Am /G D  
 our duck flyway?" As the talks went on in semi-secrecy, a woodpecker stood carvin' in a tree. It read:

**Chorus**

instrumental: G D C G D C G...

### Verse 3

G Bm/F#  
And Mr. B. Wheel came to town one day.  
Em G/D  
Well his spokes was loose, but he kept rollin' anyway,  
C /B Am D  
said "You got a crummy town — tear that ugly bridge down!"  
G Bm/F#  
Now there always comes a day when Mr. Power gets his way.  
Em G/D  
He said, "We'll keep your river pretty, paint your poles red, green or gray."  
C /B Am D  
He was a company man. His brain was quite out of hand.  
G Bm/F#  
But I'll tell you Mr. Wheel, how the folks at Sweeney's feel,  
Em G/D  
where they sip a coolin' beer, and look out at those green hills:  
C C /B Am /G  
they don't want your ugly poles! And around here, if they see that ugly wood,  
D  
some say they'll be a-buzzin' chainsaws for the good.

### Chorus

instrumental: G D C G D C G...

### Verse 4 (chords same as verse 3)

And the company line became the dollar sign,  
they said "We'll save your people money with our new power line."  
But the local City Council checked their pockets and responded in dismay.  
"You see the view from the hill, and the annual duck kill,  
keep the hunters' money flowin', right into the local till."  
They said, "We gotta survive!"  
And as the issue boiled down to balance sheets,  
10,000 ducks descended in the streets, singing:

### Chorus

(harmony parts on last chorus)

1: B A G (X3) G F# E  
2: G F# E (X3) E D C

ENDING (instrumental):

G D C G D C D Em