

Legal Illegal  
Ewan MacColl

Ewan MacColl & Peggy Seeger - Legal Illegal

**E** **B** **E**  
Every time you pick up a newspaper  
**A** **E** **B7**  
Every time you turn on the TV  
**A** **E** **A** **E**  
You can bet your old boots that at some point you ll see  
**B** **A** **B7**  
A high ranking copper or else an MP  
**E** **B** **A** **E**  
Calling on all who are British and free  
**B7** **E**  
To stand up and defend law and order

It s illegal to rip off a payroll  
It s illegal to hold up a train  
But it s legal to rip off a million or two  
That comes from the labour that other folks do  
To plunder the many on behalf of the few  
Is a thing that is perfectly legal

It s illegal to kill off a landlord  
Or to trespass upon his estate  
But to charge a high rent for a slum is OK  
To condemn 2 adults and 3 children to stay  
In a hovel that s rotten with damp and decay  
Is a thing that is perfectly legal

If your job turns you into a zombie  
Then it s legal to feel some despair  
But don t be aggressive that is if you re smart  
And for Christ s sake don t upset the old apple cart  
Remember the boss has your interests at heart  
And it grieves him to see you unhappy

If you fashion a bomb in your kitchen  
You're guilty of breaking the law  
But a bloody great nuclear plant is OK  
Though plutonium processing hastens the day  
When this tiny little isle may be blasted away  
Nonetheless it is perfectly legal

It s illegal if you are a Gypsy  
To camp by the side of the road

But it s proper and right for the rich and the great  
To live in a mansion or own an estate  
That was got from the people by pillage and rape  
That s what they call a tradition

It s illegal to carve up your missus  
Or put poison in your old man s tea  
But poison the rivers, the seas and the skies  
And poison the mind of a nation with lies  
If it s done in the interest of free enterprise  
Then it s proper and perfectly legal

It s legal to join a trade union  
And to picket is one of your rights  
But don t be offensive when scabs cross the line  
Be nice to the coppers and keep this in mind  
To picket effectively that is a crime  
Worse than if you had murdered your mother

**E**                    **B**                    **E**  
It s legal to sing on the telly  
**A**                    **E**                    **B7**  
But they make bloody sure that you don t  
**A**                    **E**                    **A**                    **E**  
If you sing about racists and fascists and creeps  
**B**                    **A**                    **B7**  
And thieves in high places that live off the weak  
**E**                    **B**                    **A**                    **E**  
And those who are selling us right up the creek  
**E**  
The twisters, the takers, the conmen, the fakers  
**B7**                    **E**  
The whole bloody gang of exploiters!