

So long and in such places as this rule is law, it is proper to say, as one Code does, "the lawyer should not purchase any interest in the subject matter of the litigation which he is conducting"—but that there is a general ethical rule I deny.

Contingent or conditional fees are in the same category.¹⁰

These are some of the reasons which, to my mind, make it inadvisable to formulate a Code of Ethics.¹¹

My opinion in short is that a Code of Legal Ethics, if sufficiently general, is unnecessary—if specific is dangerous.

WILLIAM RENWICK RIDDELL.

NOTES.

Note 1.

The following is the correspondence.

156 Yonge St., Toronto,
1st May, 1919.

THE HON. MR. JUSTICE RIDDELL,
Osgoode Hall, Toronto.

Re Professional Ethics.

DEAR JUDGE RIDDELL:—

At the annual meeting in Montreal, a committee was appointed on Professional Ethics. Mr. Angus MacMurchy, K.C., was named as convener. The committee was instructed to take the code of Legal Ethics prepared by the American Bar Association as a basis for a Canadian Code, and to report thereon. At the Council meeting on Monday, it was decided to ask yourself and Mr. Justice Mignault of the Supreme Court to prepare an address on professional ethics, to be delivered to the Association at its annual meeting in Winnipeg, during the last week in August. I trust that you and Judge Mignault will be able to help us on this important subject. Possibly some co-operation might lessen the work. In the meantime, I am enclosing a copy of the American Code.

Yours faithfully,

R. J. MACLENNAN,
Secretary.

OSGOODE HALL,
Toronto, 2nd May, 1919.

R. J. MACLENNAN, Esq.,
Secretary Canadian Bar Association,
156 Yonge Street, Toronto, Ont.

MY DEAR SIR,—

Your letter of yesterday is at hand. I shall, if physically able, prepare something on professional ethics for the meeting in Winnipeg. I should, however, say that I am wholly opposed to anything in the way of a written code of ethics for the profession, and if I write I shall write in that sense. Perhaps after this expression of opinion, which has been formed after long and careful consideration, your Association would not care to have anything from me.

Yours very truly,

WILLIAM RENWICK RIDDELL.

Government House,
Winnipeg, 3rd May, 1919.

THE HON. W. R. RIDDELL,
Supreme Court of Ontario, Toronto.

MY DEAR MR. JUSTICE RIDDELL,—

At the last meeting of the Council of the Canadian Bar Association, held on Monday, it was unanimously decided that you and Mr. Justice