

**BALTIMORE CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT**

The Police Commissioner of Baltimore City informed us by telephone on October 24, 1950, that he was preparing to revise the record keeping procedures of his Department and to establish a central files division. As part of this program he wished to photocopy certain records and destroy the originals. When we visited the Department we learned that two series, Records of Arrest, 1917-1950, and Violators' Record Cards, 1942-1950, were to be copied by dextrigraph. Both of these records were kept on 5x8 cards. The purpose of the photocopying was to reduce the size of the cards to 3x5 so that they might be interfiled with the 3x5 cards on which the records would be kept when the central files division was established. The other record series under consideration were to be microfilmed as follows:

- Detective Case Files, 1901-1946.
- Missing Persons Reports, 1940-1944.
- Missing Persons (Miscellaneous), 1941-1944.
- Court Dispositions, 1916-1945.
- General Correspondence, 1914-1926.
- Accident Reports, 1942-1945.
- Detective Index Cards, 1901-1926.

It was evident that the program had been carefully planned and would be carried out competently, so we approved it.

**MOTOR VEHICLES DEPARTMENT**

On August 1, 1950, at the request of the Comptroller's Office, we examined the records of the Department of Motor Vehicles in order to evaluate the merits of a proposal for microfilming its Title Applications File which had been submitted by private company. We learned that the titling of motor vehicles had begun in 1921 and that since then over five million titles had been issued. However, it has been the practice of the Department to withdraw and destroy periodically the papers relating to vehicles which have been junked or otherwise de-activated. As the average life of an automobile is about ten years, a large percentage of the file, perhaps fifty percent or more, had been destroyed. It was obvious, therefore, that the title papers had no administrative value once the vehicle had ceased to be used as such. Had the file been complete, there might have been some justification in filming it for historical purposes; but under the exist-