

safekeeping of records which would be housed and cared for by personnel over whom they held no direct personal authority. It is hoped that these issues will be resolved and the depository become a reality in the coming fiscal year.

While the survey of the Baltimore City Courthouse was in progress, we were also cooperating with the State Purchasing Bureau on plans for new office and records areas for the Clerk of Court and the Register of Wills in Washington County. An annex to the courthouse had been constructed for the use of other county agencies, thus releasing additional space to the Clerk and the Register.

Plans for new offices or re-assignment of space usually involve working with both county and State officials. The county is responsible for providing room in the courthouse for the offices of the Clerk of Court and the Register of Wills, and for the improvements needed to protect their records. Since the Clerk and the Register must account to the State Comptroller for the fees they collect and must deposit those not required for the operation of their offices in the State Treasury, the State must authorize their use of funds for the purchasing of furniture and records equipment. Sometimes this dual responsibility results in misunderstandings. For example, the original plans prepared by the county for the renovation of the areas assigned to the Clerk and the Register in Washington County failed to provide for adequate protection of records against fire or theft. Considerable time and persuasion were required before the changes recommended were finally adopted. As a rule, however, the counties willingly cooperate in improving these offices.

During the year we also worked with a committee of the Clerks of Court appointed to study their new duties under the Uniform Commercial Code. The Code, which had been enacted by eighteen other states, was adopted by the Maryland General Assembly of 1963 and became effective on February 1, 1964. The purpose of the Code is "to simplify, change, and modernize the law governing commercial transactions and to make the law uniform among the various jurisdictions." It deals with personal property and mentions realty primarily where personalty is also affected. It is of interest to the Clerks of Court because it affects any transaction (regardless of form—chattel, conditional sale, etc.) which is intended to create a security interest in personal