

hands of the public as souvenirs or for other purposes. Apparently, we shall be forced to have legislation defining the terms "disposal" and "destroy".

August 8, 1963

Hon. Thomas B. Finan, Attorney General

Dear Mr. Finan:

From time to time I am asked by clerks of court whether it is possible to dispose of the records of their court which are not in book or paper form. Primarily, these records consist of exhibits in court cases. For example, in the clerk's record space at the courthouse in La Plata, there are shotguns, revolvers, rifles and other firearms, in addition to animal and fish traps, tongs and rakes. Every clerk considers these exhibits as true records and feels therefore that he must keep them permanently.

Do you think that these are records in the true sense of the statutes governing record-keeping in the offices of the clerks of court? Would it be possible for them to be put on schedule by the Hall of Records Commission, to be destroyed after a certain length of time? If this is not possible, do you think that this situation might be remedied by legislation?

Surely there must be some way to avoid the use of valuable storage space in the courthouses for exhibits of this kind, which are never used after the first trial. Even then, I am advised that most of these items are never brought into court but their existence is stipulated by the opposing attorneys.

With best wishes—

Sincerely yours,

Morris L. Radoff

September 20, 1963

Dr. Morris L. Radoff

Dear Dr. Radoff:

Your letter of August 8, 1963, addressed to the Honorable Thomas B. Finan, has been referred to me for answer.