

The Atlanta Inquirer  
7-5-69

## First Black EOA Head

# 'Will Stress Community Development,' Says Allison

By ERNEST M. PHARR

William W. (Bill) Allison, who will on July 15, become the first black Executive Administrator of Economic Opportunity (EOA) whose programs administer primarily to black people, told the Inquirer this week he "will stress greater development and use of community resources to assist EOA in this job of fighting poverty."

Allison, who came to EOA in 1965 as Director of Planning, is moving up from the number two position as Deputy Director because present head T. M. (Jim) Parham is accepting a position with the Institute of Government at the University of Georgia.

Parham, who will be a specialist in the field of social welfare, discussed his tenure as EOA head this week with the Inquirer, noting, "I feel real good about my term at EOA. We've made some organizational progress and some key staff members have developed very nicely and are ready to step in."

Of Allison, he said, "I think we couldn't have found a better man to take over. He's been an important part of improved organizational gains. He's demonstrated his ability to work with every level of the community and the staff has confidence in him."

Allison, a 1950 graduate of Booker T. Washington High School here, earned his undergraduate degree from DePauw University in Greencastle, Indiana in 1954. He spent two years with the U.S. Army Medical Corps in Europe and in 1956 attended



WILLIAM ALLISON

Northwestern Law School. A holder of the M.A. degree in Public Administration from the University of Pittsburgh, he spent 1957 in the Middle East on a pilgrimage towards the center of the Baha' faith.

From 1958 to 1963, he was a research associate with the Council on Economic and Cultural Affairs, funded by John D. Rockefeller, III. He did research on poverty in the Phillipines. Before coming to EOA, he was Director of the Merit Employment Program for American Friends Service Committee in High Point, N.C.

Asked if anticipated any problems as a black administrator of EOA, Allison said, "I anticipate that Atlanta will confer upon me the same honor and respect as bestowed upon my predecessors." (C. O. Emerich and Parham)

One sidelight to the Allison appointment comes from Mrs. Nernona Clayton, columnist, TV personality and Model Cities staffer, who remarked that "somebody ought to give Bill an honor."

A Negro woman, Mrs. Clayton said, reacted with, "I don't see why nobody should honor him. He ain't hired no Negroes yet. He ain't gonna give no Negroes jobs. Same difference." (Allison doesn't assume his new duties until July 15).

Speaking of Parham, Allison said, "I think this is a loss for EOA. He's been a good director, but I have a lot of interest in this program and look to direct a large program such as EOA with a considerable degree of enthusiasm."

Allison, who will supervise 14 neighborhood service centers, some 38 different programs and an annual budget of \$11 million, said, "I will be trying to stress greater development and use of community resources to assist EOA in this job of fighting poverty."