



Arthur G. Will

Date in office: Dec. 12, 1970 - Sept. 3, 1974

Arthur G. Will was appointed by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors to the position of chief administrative officer (CAO) on December 12, 1970. He represented the third generation of his family in the field of public administration.

By the age of 45, Will was a 22-year veteran of public service who had earned a reputation as an expert in bringing modern management techniques into the field of local government.

In taking over the reins of the top administrative office in the largest county government in the world, Will followed in the footsteps of his father, the late Arthur J. Will, who served as the county's CAO from 1951 until 1957. His grandfather, Arthur P. Will, was a constitutional lawyer, a representative of the United States Attorney's Office, and the first legislative counsel for the State of California. He later served as a referee on the Los Angeles County Superior Court bench.

Will, who served as director of the Los Angeles County Department of Real Estate Management, succeeded Lindon S. Hollinger as chief administrative officer, who had assumed the duties upon the retirement of Will's father.

Born on November 13, 1925 in Los Angeles, Will was the second of three sons and was a second-generation Californian. His brothers were Dr. Drake Will, a pathologist in Honolulu, and Robert Will, an attorney who served as the legal counsel in Washington for the Metropolitan Water District.

Will's first home was in Burbank, later in Altadena, and, when his father became superintendent of Olive View Sanitarium in the County Department of Charities in 1936, the Will family moved to Olive View to live on the grounds - a job obligation of the superintendent at that time. Then, when the senior Will was promoted to superintendent of charities in 1941, the family moved to Los Angeles.

Will graduated from Los Angeles High School in June 1943 and enrolled at the University of Southern California. He also enlisted in the Army, and served in the Army's Specialized Training Program before being reassigned to the 86th Infantry Division. In 1944, he served with the division at the crossing of the Rhine River and final conquest of Germany. After the war in Europe ended, Will's unit was redeployed to the Philippines. He was released from service in April of 1946.

Will returned to USC to pursue studies in engineering, and at the same time became interested in public administration. He went to work with the County Civil Service Commission in 1948. Will became one of the first full-time public administration interns, thus pioneering a new well-established training program operated by the county government in cooperation with colleges and universities offering degrees in public administration.

When he graduated from USC in 1950, Will accepted a position as senior personnel aide with the County Civil Service Commission, and, after a brief stint there, decided to broaden his experience in local government by accepting a position with the City of Long Beach as assistant personnel director.

While at Long Beach, Will participated extensively in the city's move to modernize management procedures. His personal contributions included conducting the city's first salary survey for municipal employees, as well as budget and research procedures. He was later promoted to assistant to the city manager and was assigned to legislative responsibilities in Sacramento. During this period, Will registered with the state government as a legislative advocate for Long Beach when the new state law went into effect requiring registration of all legislative representatives.

In 1956, Will left Long Beach to renew a career with county government, this time on the staff of the Air Pollution Control District. It was during this time that the Air Pollution Control District and the Board of Supervisors were advocating the ban on incinerator burning on a countywide basis, and Will was given the responsibility of being liaison with the cities of the county.

His next county assignment came in 1958 when he placed first on an open-competitive Civil Service examination for the position of county-city coordinator in the Chief Administrative Office to serve as a coordinator for the county-city contract services program. After a brief period on this assignment, Will's staff responsibilities were expanded to that of chief of the special services division of the Chief Administrative Office, one of the five division chiefs who served at that time under Hollinger.

Will remained in that capacity in Hollinger's office until 1962 when he became acting director of the Department of Small Craft Harbor at Marina del Rey, during which time he undertook and completed a reorganization of the department. While retaining his position at the Department of Small Craft Harbor, Will became acting director of the County Department of Real Estate Management. In 1965, the Board of Supervisors consolidated the two departments and placed the new and larger department under Will's leadership.

After leaving County services in 1974, Will went on to serve as CAO for the County of Contra Costa County, where he helped to resolve a major controversy regarding construction of a new county jail. He retired from Contra Costa County in 1979 and became a private consultant.

In October 1984, Will died. He was survived by his wife, Jeanne, and their three children -- Caroline Todd, Donald and Richard.