



### **GALLERY OF DISTINGUISHED CITIZENS INDUCTEE 1979**

**S. VINCENT TOWNSEND** chose journalism as his career. He worked at The Birmingham News for more than 50 years as a reporter, editor, director of sales, vice president and assistant publisher.

The civil rights demonstrations of the 1960's and his love for Birmingham led Mr. Townsend to take an aggressive role in changing community attitudes and practices. He was instrumental in forming Operation New Birmingham (ONB) and its bi-racial Community Affairs Committee, which initiated weekly breakfast meetings to discuss and work out mutual community problems and goals. Its success earned Birmingham the name "All American City."

Mr. Townsend was one of our city's best-known civic and business leaders. He served on numerous boards, agencies and committees dedicated to the growth of Birmingham and a better quality of life for all its citizens. He initiated a "Design for Progress" for the economic stability of Birmingham's Central Business District and diligently pursued the building of the Regional Postal Facility, University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB), Civic Center Complex, Birmingham Green, Elton B. Stephens Expressway, Southeastern Payment Center for Social Security, Birmingham Zoo and Alabama State Fair Authority.

To many, Mr. Townsend was regarded as the "power behind the scenes" and was called "Mr. Birmingham" and "Coach," because he taught our citizens much about life and how to get things done.

He passed away in 1978.