

Ex-Panther becomes presidential candidate

By ROBIN ADAMS
Chronicle Staff Writer

Although he is a candidate for president, Mel Mason does not expect to change his address to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. Instead, he simply wants to use the election as an opportunity to tell people about his party -- the Socialist Workers Party.

"Our campaign is based on education," said Mason in an interview from the Militant Bookstore in Greensboro recently week. "The task of the revolutionist in this point and time is to educate and the election provides us with a fairly large forum to tell people to join the movement and to join the struggle."

Though Mason, a former city councilman from Seaside, Calif., is realistic about his chances of becoming the United States' next chief executive, he stresses that his campaign is as serious as the next candidate's.

"We are running a dead serious campaign," said Mason. Mason resigned from his

lected position in February and has been traveling around the nation asking people who are disenchanted with the Democratic and Republican parties to give his party a chance. Unlike the major political campaigns, Mason and his running mate, Andrea Gonzalez, have a campaign budget of only \$94,000.

His party advocates an end to all racism and sexism, a call for tougher affirmative action laws, including quotas for education and employment; support of the ERA, desegregation of the schools, using busing if necessary; abortion and contraception rights; bilingual-bicultural education, workers' on strike, an end to government spying and harassment, abolition of the war budget, unilateral United States nuclear disarmament, independence for Puerto Rico and a shorter workweek with no cut in pay. In short, Mason's party supports almost every issue to the far left.

Many of those issues, said

40-year-old Mason, are concerns the other two parties refuse to address but are issues that concern the working class.

But because of Mason's stand on the issues, he is almost unknown. He is not bombarded by reporters waiting to print his every move, nor are the crowds gathering at his campaign stops longing to get one look at a man who wants to be the next president. Instead, Mason gets an audience when and wherever he can and is fighting to get his name included on the ballots in all 50 states. So far, voters in 27 states will see his name listed on the ballot with Ronald Reagan and the Democratic nominee for president.

"This system is really hell bent on trying to make sure people don't listen to a political alternative," Mason said. "We have been basically excluded from the national media. I tried to get on ABC's 'Nightline' but was told I couldn't.

"So to compensate, we have to

make personal contact with people." Mason's message to all he meets is the same.

"Working people have to throw their political weight behind themselves," Mason said. "What we have to do is become the government. We have a lovely, breathing example of what workers can do when they come to power and that's Cuba. Although still a poor country, they have free medical care, free college and education, no unemployment and housing is a right. This is a very crystal clear example of what we can do."

Unlike the Rev. Jesse Jackson, Mason said his campaign is one that truly represents a rainbow coalition. Blacks, women, Hispanics and working class whites are all supporters of Mason.

Mason, a former member of the Black Panther Party, insists that he is not a rebel looking for a cause, but a "rebel who won't give up the cause."



Mel Mason: The other black contender.

"After the Panthers, it was a long hunt to find another national political organization," said Mason, who still dons a 60s style afro. "I probably investigated every organization on the left and I was impressed with the Socialist Workers Party."

There, Mason said, he has found a home. Since joining the party as a full member, he has worked to educate others and to uphold the beliefs of his party. And being nominated to serve as his party's presidential candidate is a high honor and one that

Mason said he hopes will be fruitful.

So far, the prognosis is good, Mason said. The South, an area usually classified as hard-line Democratic and anti-union, has been receptive to Mason, he said. In the High Point, Greensboro and Winston-Salem area alone, Mason said, there are approximately 700 supporters -- not enough to win a campaign, but enough to let him know that there are people out there looking for an alternative, and enough to keep him going.

Williams addresses MBL

The Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Minority Business League met recently at an evening meeting at Winston Mutual Life Insurance Company.

Mrs. Frieda Williams, economic development coordinator for the city of Winston-Salem, was the guest speaker. She told members about available resources in her office and the N.C. Department of Commerce.

James Lassiter, a local attorney, who serves as the League's temporary president, appointed a committee to work toward goals for the League. George Brown of Brown Oil Company will serve as the committee chairman. Committee members are Miss Marguerita Marsh, photographer and receptionist with Hanes, Mike Buston of Southern Fasteners and Supply, and William F. Fulton, secretary of Winston Mutual. They will make a report tonight.

Mrs. Evelyn Wright of REST

Church burns mortgage

On Sunday, July 22, at 3 p.m., the congregation of Mount Pleasant Baptist Church at 795 N.W. Crawford Place, will have a mortgage burning and cornerstone-laying ceremony.

The Rev. A.C. Robinson, pastor of Pleasant Grove Baptist Church in Marion County, S.C., will be the guest speaker. As a part of the service, the Prince Hall Masons of Bivouac Lodge No. 503 will be conducting Masonic Rite.

The Rev. Wilbur Hines is the pastor.

Couple wed 30 years ago

Mr. and Mrs. Charlie E. Hill were the guests of honor Saturday, July 14, at an outdoor reception at their home on 2700 Fondly Road in celebration of the couple's 30th wedding anniversary.

Hostesses for the celebration were the Hill's daughters, Audrey, Wanda, Sandra, Penny Hill and granddaughter, Yakhia Hill.

Guests were treated to a variety of foods, desserts and wedding cake.

Special guest included Mr. Hill's great aunt, Mrs. Betty Lyons, who is 118 years old.

Out-of-town guests were Mrs. Margaret Ware and her children, Bob and Ruby, and Aulin Moyer, all from Reidsville.

Inc. served as the temporary secretary and also offered record keeping assistance for a new business.

At the meeting tonight, a representative from the N.C. Department of Commerce is tentatively scheduled to correlate local goals with state goals related to minority businesses.

Another highlight of tonight's meeting will be some evaluative remarks by Lloyd Leonard of Twin City Chrysler-Plymouth dealership.



Twenty-month-old Edward Brown Jr., the grandson of Blanche Brown, center, won the recent Bivouac Chapter No. 530 of the Order of the Eastern Star Baby Contest. Tremaine Toney, left, the granddaughter of Ruby Toney, placed

second and 7-year-old Omega L. Smith, the daughter of Levonia Smith, placed third. The proceeds will go to the Eastern Star student loan and scholarship fund (photo by James Parker).

Chronicle reception

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Roland Hayes; Marshall Bass, vice president of R.J. Reynolds; Charlie Webb, executive director of the Winston-Salem Chamber of Commerce; Lloyd Walter, Chamber president and partner with Hamill-Walter Associates Inc., the architectural firm that designed the new building.

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