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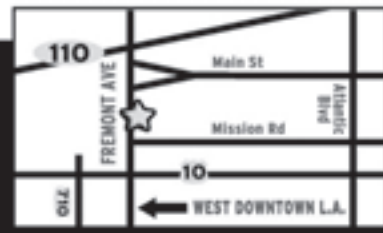
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LARRY YANG is a graduate of Georgetown University Law Center with a master's degree in Law and practices before California State Courts, United States District Courts, the California Appeals for the 9th Circuit and U.S. Bankruptcy Courts.

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FROM THE FRONT PAGE

Mar gives way to Noynoy

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and emotional as he read a prepared statement that still surprised many despite speculation for several weeks that he would give way to the younger Aquino, whose popularity is rising a month after the death of his mother.

Roxas said his decision was the product of serious talks with Sen. Aquino and that he would like to make the sacrifice for the sake of the country.

"Over the weekend, Noynoy and I had many long conversations. *Masinsinang usapan.* We agreed. Let us forget about ourselves for a moment. This is not about us; this is about our people and our country. This is about our common dream. The dream of our parents," Roxas said.

"But let us not remain a country of dreamers. *Tama na ang pangarap. Gawin na natin, ngayon* (dreaming should end. We should do it now). on September 2, I am announcing my support for the candidacy of Noynoy Aquino for President in 2010," he said.

Roxas was cheered by the audience composed of his family members, LP leaders and members led by party chairman emeritus, former Senate president Jovito Salonga, and sup-

porters.

Sen. Roxas' mother, Judy sat and listened silently to her son, while the senator's fiancée broadcast journalist Korina Sanchez also appeared sad and emotional but managed not to cry unlike the cousins and other relatives of Roxas.

He flashed the Laban sign as the audience chanted: "*Mabuhay si Mar!*" "Go Mar!" and "We love you, Mar!"

Some of his staff were stunned because they said only Roxas and Aquino knew what they would say before the media.

"Noy (Sen. Aquino) has made it clear to me that he wants to carry the torch of leadership," Roxas said.

Roxas said the passing of Aquino's mother, former President Aquino, has reawakened a passion among Filipinos.

"I acknowledge this as fuel to bring us to the realization of our dream: Good will triumph over evil. "To you Noy, I say: I began the campaign to sow the seeds *para sa pagbabago at reporma* (for change and reforms). You must now be the one to grow them in the arena of leadership," Roxas added.

While he did not make it clear whether he would run as vice president of Aquino, Roxas stressed: "*Hindi kami maghihiwalay ni* (we will not be divided) Noy. I will stand with him," Roxas said.

"*At sa aking mga kababayan, sa mga nagtiwala sa akin: Mahal na mahal ko po kayo. Mahal na mahal ko po ang ating bayan. Hindi rin tayo maghihiwalay. Itutulong natin ang pagbabago sa ating bansa. Itutulong natin ang laban para sa reporma!*" Roxas said.

"*Kay Noy, at sa aking mga kababayan: Country above self! Bayan bago sarili! Hindi ko kayo pababayaan! Lalaban tayo!*" Roxas said.

Putting "country first before self," Roxas said, was the legacy of his grandfather, former President Manuel Roxas.

"Our nation is in trouble. Leadership is bankrupt. Institutions are in disarray. People are hungry. Noynoy Aquino and I share the same outrage over the mess we are all in, the same way we share the solution - clean,

honest, selfless public service," Roxas said.

"*Marami at matindi ang mga problema ng bansa. Kailangan nating ayusin. Matindi ang kalaban* (The country has many serious problems we need to resolve. The opponent is strong). We need a determined force for good far stronger than the festering evil around us. We need to fight just as our own fathers fought dictatorship, and just as both died believing that good will conquer evil," he said.

"Noynoy and I want to make a difference, but we also know that we need to unite to achieve what we want," Roxas further said.

He said that as LP president it was within his power to preside over a potentially divisive process or to make the party a bridge for the forces of change.

"I choose to lead unity, not division. *Bilang pinuno ng aking partido, magdedesisyon ako. Mahal ko ang Partido Liberal.* My grandfather (former President Manuel Roxas) founded it. My father led it during the most difficult times of martial law. *Sa harap ng peligro, sa kabila ng napakaraming tukso - hindi siya sumuko.* He inspired me - to stay the course, to fight the good fight, to pass the test of true character. To believe," Roxas said, referring to his father, former senator Gerardo Roxas.

"**This is his day**" Sen. Aquino said he was also surprised that Roxas made the decision in such a short period of time.

He said the two of them have been having long talks and that he himself was already close to making a decision.

"If you admire him (Roxas) now, you'll admire him more this time. This is his day. Let us give this day to him," Aquino told *The Star* before Roxas made the announcement.

Sen. Aquino is expected to make an announcement on September 2.

Liberal Party stalwart and former education chief Florencio Abad said Roxas' decision was a result of personal talks between Sens. Roxas and Aquino.

"It was his personal decision *para umusad lang ang usapan*

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