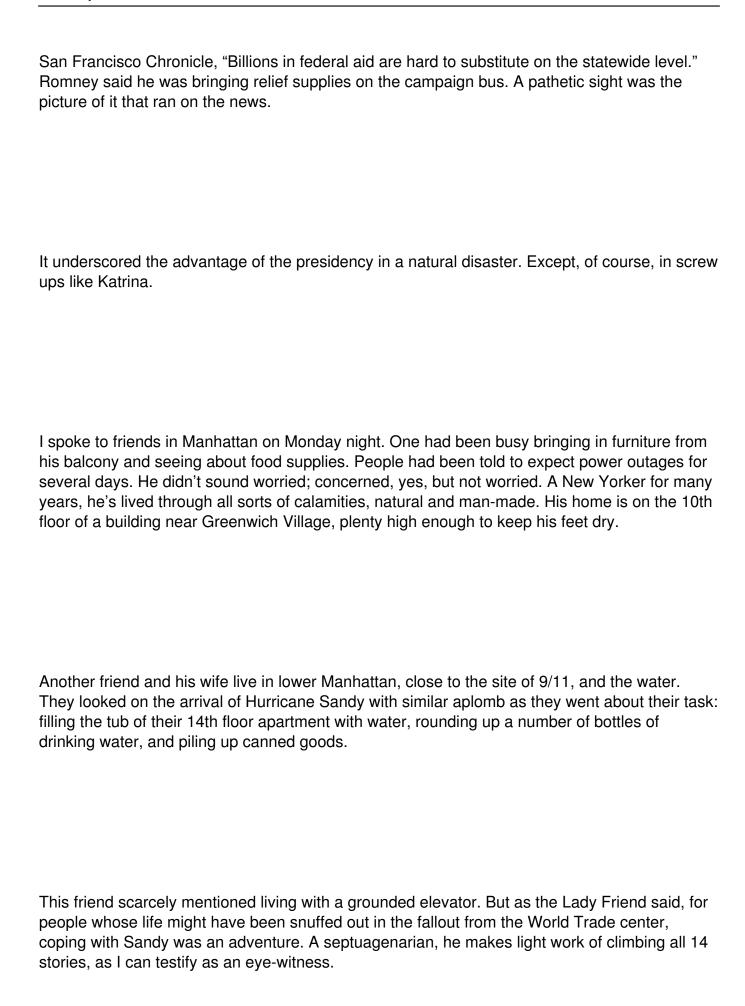
Stormy Politics
By Mel Lavine
Special to the Times
Has Hurricane Sandy made a significant impact on an election almost everyone has been saying was too close to call? Looking like a commander in chief, President Obama pledged the country's help and told us early Monday before the monster storm struck, "I'm not worried about the election right now. I'm worried about families — ¦the election will take care of itself next week."
Did the crisis hurt Mitt Romney? He said in a primary debate in the long ago that FEMA (the Federal Emergency Management Agency) should be done away with, and the job given to the states or privatized. On Monday he seemed to hold his ground saying the states "are first responders and are in the best position to aid impacted individuals and communities."
A valid point, but, as David McCumber, a reporter for Hearst newspapers, pointed out in the



Whatever the political fallout from Sandy, it's sadly clear the electorate is racially divided. Charles M. Blow, in his Saturday column in the New York Times, pointed to a Washington Post-ABC News poll that found the president "has a deficit of 23 percentage points, trailing Republican Mitt Romney 60 percent to 37 percent among whites." On the other hand, nearly 80 percent of non-whites support Obama, while 91 percent of Romney's supporters are white.

Such data give rise to speculation that Obama could win re-election if he wins in the electoral college even if he loses the popular vote. It happened in 2000.

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