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Despite the heavy balloting in Tuesday's election, far too many of the nation's eligible voters didn't journey to the polls. A high percentage of those who couldn't be bothered, here in Craven and from coast to coast, will be among the loudest complainers for the next four years.

The way a man votes, like his religion, is a matter of personal conscience. Instinctively, every citizen feels that way. There's no quicker route to riling a fellow human than challenging his approach to God or his choice of candidates.

If you prefer to keep your political leanings private, even your closest friend has no right to invade this privacy. Certainly an eager politician doesn't. That's why our forefathers, to guard against intimidation or fear of reprisal, provided for protective secrecy when you go to the polls.

By the same token, any citizen who wants to proclaim his political inclinations is, and should be, at liberty to do so. Where those of us who are willing, or even anxious, to parade our views step out of line is when we try to back others into a corner for an admission of their intentions.

To express one's opinions, as this editor in the nature of his occupation feels it not only proper but obligatory to do, is the privilege of every citizen. However, individuals as well as the press ought to keep in mind that the right to dissent is as precious as the right to speak out for a cause dear to our heart. Peaceful dissent, that is.

Four our part we have no respect for hecklers who take advantage of this right to dissent to interrupt and attempt to drown out speakers at public gatherings. It matters not whether he is a Democrat, Republican, American Independent, or a solitary figure on a soapbox, if there are those who want to hear him, he ought to be heard.

And with no desire for further violence in an America already plagued by senseless violence, we still would be less than frank if we failed to admit that those who deliberately disrupt meetings get no sympathy from us when they are subjected to rough physical treatment.

Law and order is a term every Presidential aspirant harped on to make the most of the public's present mood; and denounce him though some of us might, George Wallace blazed the trail that others followed in their campaigns.

Whether you admire the man or not, he was on solid ground when he insisted that this nation of ours must become a place where the great majority of Americans aren't fearful of venturing out on the street after nightfall, or in some locations in broad open daylight.

To the surprise of so many, Wallace ceased to be a candidate whose following was restricted to the South. He ceased to be just a sectional contender, because his doctrine of law and order stirred people in parts of the country removed from the South who have been subjected to even more violence than those of

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SEEING AIN'T BELIEVING — Don't jump at conclusions as you gaze at an apparently anguished but still exceptionally pretty Bethany Lewis. Notwithstanding her tearful eyes, and the tense muscles in her throat, this isn't a time of grief for the popular New Bern High school senior. To the contrary, she couldn't be happier, and why not? Less than a minute earlier she had learned that fellow students at NBHS had chosen her above all others as their Homecoming

Queen. Joy Williams, performing the final act of her own reign, places the tiny crown on Bethany's blonde tresses. Shakespeare once said, "Laugh and the world laughs with you, weep and you weep alone." When Bethany wept at NBHS Stadium last Friday night, she was anything but alone, and many in the Homecoming crowd, gathered for the New Bern-Elizabeth City game, shed a few tears too.—Photo by Chick Natella.