

Ready, Fire, Aim approach to resolve the Gun Issue

-Ken Larsen, February 2, 2013 3:15 PM EST

1.0 Explanation of “Ready, Fire, Aim”

A “Ready, Fire, Aim” approach should be used to propose and evaluate different solutions to the Gun Issue. It’s a very simple scheme:

Step 1: (Ready) State the problem.

Step 2: (Fire) Propose possible solutions along with the name of the proposer. This is really brainstorming. Criticism is postponed.

Step 3: (Fire) List the pros and cons of each solution. Note: It’s best to postpone this step until a complete list of solutions has been proposed.

Step 4: (Fire) Invite people to add to steps 2 and 3, but don’t remove any proposed solutions.

Step 5: (Aim) By vote, assign numerical weights (1-10) to the various pros and cons after the list has been finished. Then, tabulate to see which solution is deemed best.

2.0 Rationale behind “Ready, Aim, Fire”

The usual method people employ for making a group decision on a difficult problem is:

1. Someone proposes a solution.
2. Someone else criticizes it ... forcing it off the table and alienating the first person.
3. Steps 1 and 2 are repeated continually. Along the way, the people doing the criticizing are also vilified.
4. In the end, no decision is reached and a very toxic atmosphere is created.

“Ready, Fire, Aim” is a much healthier approach, because all suggestions and comments are treated with respect by entering them into the table. Nothing is discarded. Animosity is reduced.

The reality is that many problems (like the Gun issue) do not have a single obvious solution that appeals to all people. All proposed solutions have some negative attributes. In such an environment, picking the optimal solution can be a very tedious and painful process. “Ready, Fire, Aim” is a methodology to expedite the process and reduce the toxicity.

3.0 “Ready, Fire, Aim” applied to the Gun Issue

Here’s a start:

3.1 Problem Statement

Horrible mass shootings have occurred in Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, and Virginia in recent years. How do we significantly reduce the likelihood of such incidents?

Note that I have not phrased the problem as “Should we ban assault rifles?” or “Should more gun control be imposed?” as those are possible solutions. The broader problem is how do we prevent future massacres?

3.2 Possible Solutions and Evaluations of those solutions

#	Proposal	Origin	Pros (+), Cons (-)	Votes
1	Ban assault rifles		<p>+Assault weapons increase the carnage of mass shootings.</p> <p>+Assault weapons are not supported by the 2nd Amendment, because they weren't invented when the 2nd Amendment was passed. For those people who argue otherwise, then does the 2nd Amendment permit people to own nuclear weapons?</p> <p>-NRA alleges that this is counter to the 2nd amendment.</p> <p>-Doesn't solve Chicago's problem. They had over 500 gun related deaths in 2012.</p> <p>-Anecdotes of Los Angeles business owners using assault rifles to successfully defend their businesses during LA riots.</p> <p>-People living near Mexico border and far from local police should be permitted to own assault rifles. Drug trafficking + illegal immigrants present a high problem there.</p>	
2	Ban high capacity magazines.		<p>+High capacity magazines increase the carnage of mass shootings.</p> <p>+High capacity magazines are not supported by the 2nd Amendment, because they weren't invented when the 2nd Amendment was passed. The most powerful weapon in 1791 was a musket. For those people who argue otherwise, then does the 2nd Amendment permit people to own nuclear weapons?</p> <p>-NRA alleges that this is counter to the 2nd amendment.</p>	
3	Improve the background check process to close the "gun show loophole". Non-dealers can currently sell guns at a gun show without doing a background check.		<p>+Will significantly reduce the likelihood of guns falling into the hands of "bad guys".</p>	
4	Prohibit people from selling or loaning guns without a background check ...or failing to report the theft of guns that they own. Impose a hefty penalty if they do.		<p>+Will significantly reduce the likelihood of guns falling into the hands of "bad guys".</p> <p>+Closes a loophole that currently vexes Chicago. People in neighboring towns buy guns for others (who themselves would not pass a background check). These are called "Straw Man Sales".</p>	
5	Improve mental health care so that deranged people can be identified and prohibited from owning guns.			
6	Require that all guns be registered. Impose a stiff penalty if caught with an unregistered gun.		<p>+Highly effective according to a New York City detective I met in 1993.</p> <p>+If cars have to be registered, guns should also be registered.</p> <p>-Likely political suicide for those for pursue it.</p>	
7	Have gun buy-back programs.		<p>+Will reduce the number of guns</p> <p>-The "bad guys" are not likely to turn in their guns.</p>	
8	Increase security at schools and other public locations.	NRA	<p>-Very expensive ... might need an officer every 100 yards around the perimeter of a school.</p> <p>-Pistols won't stop someone with an assault rifle ... so should security people tote assault rifles at schools?</p> <p>-Might be disconcerting to young children at a school.</p> <p>-Didn't stop the Columbine massacre.</p> <p>-Won't stop people who wear body armor.</p>	
9	Permit more people to	NRA	<p>-In Arizona the hero was almost shot by a by-stander with a</p>	

	carry concealed weapons.		concealed weapon. -In a dark theater, the death toll might become significantly higher if everyone drew their weapons-Sounds too much like this Archie Bunker clip: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CLiNJI54GMM	
10	Ban violent video games.	NRA	+Will probably reduce the probability of violence to some degree, but the magnitude of that degree is highly speculative. -Will need a lot of study to measure the connection.	
11	Ban violent movies.	NRA	+Will probably reduce the probability of violence to some degree, but the magnitude of that degree is highly speculative. -Will need a lot of study to measure the connection.	
12	Nationalize gun laws.		+National standardization of guns laws is needed to prevent someone from acquiring guns in lax states and using them in strict states.	
13	Let cities and states decide gun laws ... not the Federal government.		-This results in problems such as Chicago ... where people acquire guns in lax-gun-rule suburbs of Chicago and bring them into Chicago. Chicago has the strictest gun laws of any major city, but they had 500 gun-related murders in 2012 ... mostly caused by people acquiring guns in the suburbs and bringing them into the city.	
14	Repeal the 2 nd Amendment.		+Stats from Europe and China indicate that this would be a highly effective way to reduce violence in America. -Political suicide for those who pursue it. -Numerous anecdotes of homeowners being saved by being able to defend themselves by brandishing a firearm.	
15	Only permit people to own guns if they own real estate, or a business, or have a specified amount of assets.			
16	Ban body armor			
17	Do nothing		-More incidents are likely to occur.	

Note: This is just an example of how “Ready, Fire, Aim” can be used to resolve the gun issue. The proposals and comments entered in the table are all in the inchoate stage and mostly reflect just the opinions of the author of this document.

