

COMBINATIONS OF OFFENSE AND DEFENSE AT DIFFERENT LEVELS OF ANALYSIS

Policy Motive	Strategic Rationale	Operational Orientation
A. Offensive	Aggressive ¹	Offensive
B. Defensive	Preventive ²	Offensive
C. Defensive	Preemptive ³	Offensive
D. Defensive	Counteroffensive ⁴	Defensive ► Offensive
E. Defensive	Forward Defense ⁵	Defensive
F. Defensive	Defense in Depth ⁶	Defensive

Comment: Two thirds of basic strategic rationales require offensive operations although only one sixth flow from offensive motives. ODT aims to eliminate various conditions that make half of strategic rationales (B, C, D) logical and channel strategic and operational choices into the lower third of options (E, F), and preferably only one (E) since F poses losses to a defender. Eliminating so much variety in the circumstances in which countries find themselves is a tall order and underlines doubt that OD balance is more manipulable than other causes of war.

¹ Unprovoked attack to gain territory: e.g., Germany v. Poland, 1939; Iraq v. Kuwait, 1990.

² Attack against an unprepared enemy before it develops sufficient offensive war potential, in order to fight an apparently inevitable war on terms more favorable than they will be after waiting for enemy power to mature: e.g., Israel v. Egypt, 1956.

³ Striking first blow to break up apparent enemy preparation for imminent attack: e.g., Israel v. Egypt and Syria, 1967.

⁴ Initial holding action, shifting to counterattack when enemy attack is successfully blunted.

⁵ Defense near border: e.g., France v. Germany, 1939.

⁶ Retreat from succession of prepared positions: e.g., Germans v. Allies in Italy, 1944. Other forms of trading space for time: e.g., USSR v. Germany, 1941-42; Chinese doctrine of "People's War."