Aharoni's book could be placed, as a challenge, in the hands of a first-year graduate student, although such a student would probably need some help in studying it.

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Plant Growth Substances. L. J. Audus. Leonard Hill, London; Interscience, New York, ed. 2, 1959. xxii + 553 pp. Illus. + plates. $10.

Audus has presented, in readable detail, the background of the nature of plant growth from cell division to the nutritional and hormonal factors affecting development. He has included a discussion of the general physiology of natural auxins, including assay methods, isolation, and identification, and a section on the chemistry of natural and synthetic auxins, relating to structure and activity. From this orientation in fundamental principles, Audus proceeds to a comprehensive coverage and classification of auxins as general growth stimulators and inhibitors, initiators of rooting, stimulators of fruit development, and selective weed killers. He defines their role in flowering and reproduction and their influence in tissue differentiation. The appendixes delineating auxin-treatment responses of plant species from all over the world are a unique feature.

This edition includes material on the advances made since 1953 in the field of plant growth substances and sections on recently isolated and newly synthesized growth substances, the separation and identification of natural plant growth substances, and on new and varied applications which have been tried and evaluated. A chapter on the mechanism of action of auxins is a significant addition, and this, taken with the comprehensive discussions concerning the physiological action of other classes of growth regulators given in succeeding chapters, offers one of the most complete and up-to-date surveys of this kind on the subject.

This book should be accepted with interest and pleasure by the intelligent layman who engages in serious reading for a better understanding of the biological responses of the plants in his environment and, more specifically, for an understanding of the factors involved in regulating these response phenomena. It is not, as Audus points out, a manual for the specific treatment of growing plants, but rather, a digest of information on the control of plant development by growth-regulating substances. While the professional chemist or physiologist will not consider it a necessary acquisition for his technical library, the student of agriculture or horticulture will certainly find it a most useful reference source. The work contains, in logically presented order, a wealth of information, possibly to the degree that it encompasses too much. It is indeed difficult to collate in one volume material which is intelligible and appealing to the layman and which, by reason of its technical information, is also valuable to the specialist.

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The United States in the World Arena. An essay in recent history. W. W. Rostow. Harper, New York, 1960. xxii + 568 pp. $8.75.

W. W. Rostow specializes in the Large View of history. His particular mode of contributing lies in fashioning new points of view from which to analyze past events, present trends, and future prospects. This he did admirably and neatly in his recent book, *The Stages of Economic Growth.* Unfortunately not so much can be said for the present volume.

The author sets about to analyze in one fell swoop the military and diplomatic events of World War II and the Truman and Eisenhower administrations to see how these events fit his conception of America's national interest. He invents a useful notion, "national style" ("that is, the typically American way of dealing with the nation's environment"), as a means of tying together his unwieldy material and relating it to his major theme. He finds serious deficiencies in the national style and suggests numerous reforms which he thinks are urgently needed in view of the political and technological changes which are going on in the world.

The persuasiveness of Rostow's critique depends ultimately on the persuasiveness of his concept of America's national interest. In company with most critics of public policy today, he holds that our national interest has a dimension over and above simple considerations of geography. Thus, while he says that the United States, "a continental island off the greater land mass of Eurasia," must prevent any single power or groups of powers, hostile or potentially hostile to itself, from dominating that area, he goes further and says that our national interest demands that "the societies of Eurasia develop along lines broadly consistent with the nation's own ideology."

So far, so good, but the trouble is that Rostow is quite unable to articulate anything worthy of being called "the nation's own ideology." Leaving aside the question of whether or not ideology is the right word, he describes the dynamic element of America's national interest in humanistic terms, and perhaps this is why his essay at this crucial point lacks both precision and good philosophical syntax. It remains to be shown that the language of humanism permits the asking of the really important questions which must be answered if one is to articulate our national interest in its dynamic dimension—questions such as "What beliefs make real and rational our concern about the future welfare of other nations and other races?" A simple benevolence toward the individuals who make up the human race is no substitute for philosophy any more than it is a substitute for national interest. Rostow is at pains to avoid the latter pitfall but does not show that he has escaped the former.

But if the author is not successful in coming up with a persuasive and practical definition of the dynamic element in our national interest, he is very successful in illustrating the perils of trying to get along without such a definition. The lack of such a definition, according to Rostow, has been a distinguishing characteristic of our national style in military and diplomatic policy since the beginning of World War II. (Earlier, he says, we alternated between the geopolitical ideas of Admiral Mahan and the idealism of Woodrow Wilson when we were not content with moralistic isolationism, which, he contends, was rarely so.)

The author finds that our national style in military and diplomatic policy came off a poor second to that of the British in World War II and to that of the Russians in the postwar period. As stylists, Roosevelt and Truman get better marks than Eisenhower (whose administration the author finds consistent-