

If the assumption is made, in accordance with the stoichiometry of the reaction, that this mixture contains 0.19 g. of triphenylphosphine and 1.39 g. of triphenylphosphine oxide, then the residue, 1.05 g. contains 2.6% nitrogen. If it is then further assumed that this residue is a mixture of benzoic and benzoic *p*-nitrobenzoic anhydrides, then of this mixture 1.2 mole is benzoic anhydride and 1.0 mole is benzoic *p*-nitrobenzoic anhydride.

Benzoic Anhydride and Triphenylphosphine in the Presence of *p*-Nitrobenzoate.—To a mixture of 0.50 g. of triphenylphosphine and 1.13 g. (0.005 mole) of benzoic anhydride in 30 ml. of dry chloroform at a temperature of 50°, there was added 1.13 g. (0.005 mole) of trimethylammonium *p*-nitrobenzoate. The solution was allowed to stand for 5 min. and then poured into 20 ml. of 5% sodium bicarbonate solution. The chloroform was further extracted with 10 ml. of water and then dried over magnesium sulfate. The chloroform was evaporated to yield 1.60 g. of material which partially crystallized. Infrared analysis showed a small peak at 1531 cm.⁻¹.

Anal. Found: N, 0.19.

If we assume that of the 1.60 g. recovered 0.50 g. is triphenylphosphine then the remaining 1.10 g. contains 0.28% nitrogen, which using the reasoning applied above, indicates that the mixture contains 21 moles of benzoic anhydride to 1 mole of benzoic *p*-nitrobenzoic anhydride.

Benzoyl Peroxide and *p*-Nitrobenzoate Ion.—A solution of 1.21 g. (0.005 mole) of benzoyl peroxide and 1.13 g. (0.005 mole) of trimethylammonium *p*-nitrobenzoate in 30 ml. of chloroform was allowed to stand for two hours. The mixture was then extracted with two 10-ml. portions of 10% sodium bicarbonate solution followed by 10 ml. of water. The chloroform solution was dried over magnesium sulfate and the solvent was removed *in vacuo*. Infrared analysis of the resulting white solid showed the absence of the nitro group band at 1531 cm.⁻¹. The material was crystallized from chloroform-methanol to yield 0.95 g. (78%) of benzoyl peroxide, m.p. 103.5–104°.

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[CONTRIBUTION FROM THE PIONEERING RESEARCH DIVISION, TEXTILE FIBERS DEPARTMENT, E. I. DU PONT DE NEMOURS AND CO., INC.]

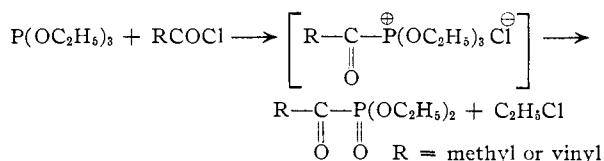
Preparation and Pyrolyses of Some Organophosphonates

BY LUTHER A. R. HALL AND C. WAYNE STEPHENS

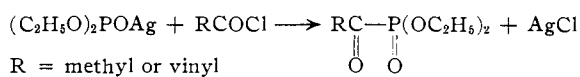
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Acyl phosphonates were prepared by the reaction of acyl halides and a trialkyl phosphite. Unexpected molecular weight observations on the products as well as an infrared study of by-products of the preparative reaction are discussed. The pyrolyses of diethyl 1-cyano-1-hydroxyethylphosphonate and 1,1-bis-(diethylphosphono)-ethyl acetate lead to excellent yields of acrylonitrile and acetic acid, respectively.

The reaction of acetyl chloride with triethyl phosphite in the Arbuzov reaction to yield diethyl acetylphosphonate has been reported along with the preparation of a cyanohydrin derivative.¹ It was desired to extend the Arbuzov reaction, which can be employed to prepare either alkyl- or acylphosphonates, to the preparation of unsaturated alkyl- or acylphosphonates.

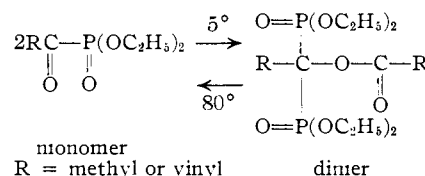


The acylphosphonates possess an active carbonyl group which can undergo many of the normal carbonyl reactions including formation of hydrazones with materials such as 2,4-dinitrophenylhydrazine.¹⁰ The phosphonates above can also be prepared by the procedure



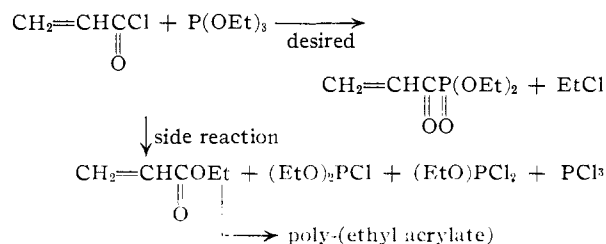
The α -ketophosphonates prepared exhibited molecular weight properties which indicated that they could exist in an equilibrium between a monomeric and a postulated dimeric form. Other materials such as acetyl cyanide (pyruvitrile) are known to

form dimers easily. In the case of α -ketophosphonates the equilibrium is apparently reversible.



The molecular weight of these compounds taken by a cryoscopic method in benzene at 5° showed them both to be essentially dimers, while ebullioscopic molecular weights in benzene at 80° indicated them to be all or largely monomeric. It is presumed that at room temperature they exist as some mixture of the two forms. Attempts to dimerize diethyl acetylphosphonate deliberately using alkaline catalyst were unsuccessful, however.

While the preparation of diethyl acetylphosphonate was relatively straightforward, the same method applied to the formation of diethyl acrylylphosphonate led to a rather large variety of products including the desired one. A possible side reaction that could occur in the reaction of acrylyl chloride and triethyl phosphite is



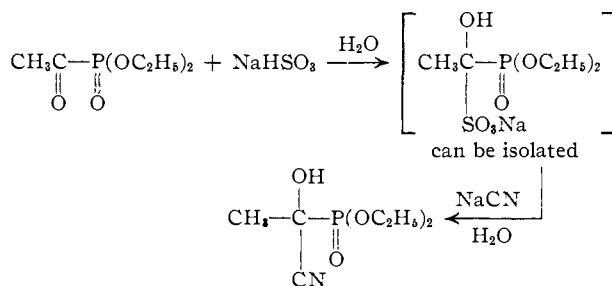
(1) (a) M. I. Kabachnik and P. A. Rossiiskaya, *Bull. Acad. Sci. U.R.S.S., Classe Sci. Chim.*, 364 (1945); *C. A.*, 40, 4688 (1946); (b) M. I. Kabachnik, P. A. Rossiiskaya and E. S. Shepeleva, *ibid.*, 163 (1947); *C. A.*, 42, 4133 (1948); (c) A. E. Arbuzov and M. M. Azanovskaya, *Doklady Akad. Nauk. S.S.S.R.*, 68, 1961 (1947); *C. A.*, 46, 8606 (1952).

The formation of many by-products was indicated by the numerous fractions obtained on distillation. This was also shown by the formation of resin in the still-pot and the study of the infrared spectra of all the products.

The infrared spectra of the various fractions from the preparative reaction for diethyl acrylylphosphonate were very complex and difficult to interpret. From the multiplicity of carbonyl and unsaturation bands, it was clear that a large number of by-products were being formed along with the desired diethyl acrylylphosphonate. It was impossible to assign a definite portion of this spectrum to diethyl acrylylphosphonate although a certain number of bands seemed to be associated most probably with the diethyl acrylylphosphonate molecule. There were, for example, five different types of carbonyl bands and four different unsaturation bands in the spectra of the fraction believed to be the diethyl acrylylphosphonate product. This fraction possessed the proper phosphorus analysis and molecular weight. Two of these carbonyl bands were strong. One corresponded to the normal acrylate ester band wave length. The other band was shifted to shorter wave lengths. It was assumed that the latter band was due to carbonyl adjacent to P=O. The normal ester band could have resulted from the dimeric form of diethyl acrylylphosphonate, the polymeric form thereof or from polyacrylates prepared by a polymerization of ethyl acrylate by-product. Unsaturation bands also varied with the different fractions. There was a relationship between the appearance and disappearance of carbonyl and unsaturation bands; however, due to the lack of pure authentic samples, no definite assignments could be given. There was no hydroxyl band present in the diethyl acrylylphosphonate spectra and only a small trace of P-H impurities.

Diethyl acrylylphosphonate prepared from silver diethyl phosphite had a similar spectrum to that from triethyl phosphite and acrylyl chloride, but more impurities were present. This caused more extraneous bands to appear which made difficult point-by-point comparison of the two diethyl acrylylphosphonate spectra. A similarity between the two was enough to conclude that diethyl acrylylphosphonate was formed by both reaction routes.

The carbonyl adjacent to the phosphonate can also undergo normal bisulfite addition followed by reaction with cyanide to form a normal cyanohydrin.^{1b}

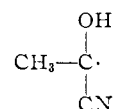


The infrared spectrum of this material was rather anomalous in light of subsequent reactions of the product. The infrared spectrum of diethyl 1-

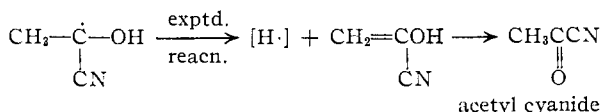
ciano-1-hydroxyethylphosphonate showed no absorption in the hydroxyl region indicating no hydrogen bonded hydroxyl and the general unavailability of hydroxyl groups. This was confirmed by failure of the material to undergo acetylation upon refluxing with acetic anhydride for a prolonged period. The above spectrum also showed no absorption in the nitrile region. However, this evidence was contradicted by the production of acrylonitrile upon pyrolysis and the fact that cyanohydrins often show very weak or no infrared absorption in the nitrile region.²

The successful dehydration or deacetylation of selected phosphonates would lead to vinyl monomers containing phosphorus. The relative weakness of the C-P bond (the slightly smaller energy needed to rupture this bond compared to that for C-H, C-C, C-O, etc., bonds) negates any hope of securing most vinyl monomers containing phosphorus by straight thermal or pyrolytic means.³ It was found that the pyrolyses of diethyl 1-cyano-1-hydroxyethylphosphonate and 1,1-bis-(diethylphosphono)-ethyl acetate lead to acrylonitrile and acetic acid which are relatively thermally stable.

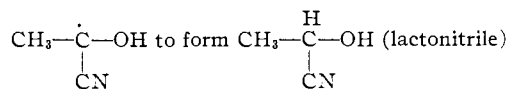
The pyrolysis of diethyl 1-cyano-1-hydroxyethylphosphonate produced an unexpectedly high yield of acrylonitrile (83%). It is thought that the C-P bond was the first to rupture during even mild pyrolysis, and the first species formed in the hot tube was probably



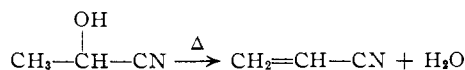
which could undergo several different reaction routes to give some stable product(s). (The phosphonate parts of the pyrolysis products were not identified.) Then



While this reaction could lead to acetyl cyanide, the H· formed could combine with



which would undergo dehydration to the observed acrylonitrile.



This mechanism would assume the equal molar formation of acetyl cyanide and acrylonitrile. This was not apparently the case unless the acetyl cyanide so formed was essentially quantitatively reduced to lactonitrile which was then dehydrated to acrylonitrile. The presence of reducing materials (phosphorus containing) in the system as seen from subjective identification of phosphine type mate-

(2) R. E. Kitson and H. E. Griffith, *Anal. Chem.*, **24**, 334 (1952).

(3) I. C. Pauling, "Nature of the Chemical Bond," Cornell University Press, Ithaca, N. Y., 1939; M. L. Huggins, *This Journal*, **75**, 4123 (1953).

