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On: 21 February 2013, At: 10:42

Publisher: Taylor & Francis

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954

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Molecular Crystals and Liquid Crystals

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/gmcl16>

The Molecular Rearrangement in the Solid State of an Orthocyclohexadienone into the Para Isomer

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Version of record first published: 17 Oct 2011.

To cite this article: Jacques Vicens, Robert Perrin, G. Aureille-salvadori & Monique Perrin (1983): The Molecular Rearrangement in the Solid State of an Orthocyclohexadienone into the Para Isomer, *Molecular Crystals and Liquid Crystals*, 96:1, 45-47

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00268948308074690>

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THE MOLECULAR REARRANGEMENT IN THE SOLID STATE OF AN
ORTHOCYCLOHEXADIENONE INTO THE *PARA* ISOMER

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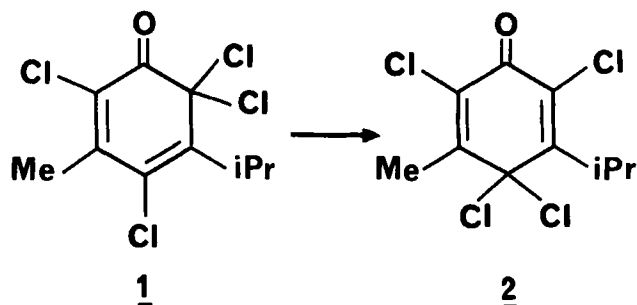
Abstract Here we describe the solid state rearrangement of *orthocyclohexadienone*, (1), into *paracyclohexadienone*, (2). The thermal and photochemical (1)→(2) transformations in the solid are homogeneous. The thermal reaction is observed to be radicalic. The observed results are rationalized in terms of the molecular packing of crystal (1).

INTRODUCTION

Halogenocyclohexadienones are known to undergo rearrangements in the solid state. For example a tribromodienone rearranges autocatalytically and presumably homolytically in the solid phase at room temperature, giving a phenolic derivative¹.

Orthochlorocyclohexadienones have been observed to rearrange into their parachloro isomer in the solid state at room temperature and under warming².

We undertook this work in order to get further insight into the molecular mechanism of such transformations in the solid state. In the present paper we describe the preliminary results on the transformation in the solid state of 2,4,6,6-tetrachloro-3-methyl-5-isopropyl cyclohexa-2,4-dien-1-one, (1), into 2,4,4,6-tetrachloro-3-methyl-5-isopropyl cyclohexa-2,5-dien-1-one, (2), via a (1,3) chlorine migration.



RESULTS

After a 8 years-storage in sealed tubes crystalline compound (1), ($C_{10}H_{10}OCl_4$, mp $70.5 - 71^\circ\text{C}$, monoclinic, $P2_1/c$, $a = 8.398 \text{ \AA}$, $b = 11.457 \text{ \AA}$, $c = 13.274 \text{ \AA}$, $\beta = 108.20^\circ$, $Z = 4$. UV spectrum in hexane $\epsilon_{378} = 1020 \pm 30$) was observed to be quantitatively rearranged to crystalline product (2), ($C_{10}H_{10}OCl_4$, mp $89.2 - 89.5^\circ\text{C}$, monoclinic, $P2_1/c$, $a = 18.736 \text{ \AA}$, $b = 9.892 \text{ \AA}$, $c = 13.758 \text{ \AA}$, $\beta = 105.09^\circ$, $Z = 8$. UV spectrum in hexane $\epsilon_{256} = 16200 \pm 500$).

The solid (1) \rightarrow (2) conversion can be initiated upon UV irradiation or by heating. Microscopic observations of single crystals irradiated under UV show the crystals become cloudy in the bulk. Heating solid (1) below the mp increases the (1) \rightarrow (2) conversion and the reaction is accompanied by a melt. The solid state mechanism is concluded to be homogeneous as defined in the CURTIN and PAUL paper³. In addition ESR signals at $g = 2.007$ are observed during the thermal transformation of powders and single crystals of (1). A phenoxo radical intermediate was indentified.

DISCUSSION

The molecular mechanism of the reaction is rationalized in terms of the crystalline structures of (1) and (2). Investi-

gations of the molecular packing of compound (1) show that the distance between one chlorine atom attached to the C-6 position of a molecule of (1) and the C-4 position of the neighbouring molecule is 4.6 Å. In agreement with the topological disposition it is assumed that a radical chlorine atom migrates along the C-4 → C-6 direction. During this process two adjacent molecules (1) having their planar rings almost perpendicular move in such a way that they become nearly parallel, as they are in crystalline (2).

Such a molecular motion in the solid phase is actually under investigation.

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