KINETICS OF RAPID GAS PHASE REACTIONS
THE ADDITION OF LEWIS ACIDS TO BASES

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PREFACE

Among the simplest of imaginable chemical reactions is the gas phase association of two molecular species, each of which by itself is stable under the conditions of the experiment. If this reaction is very fast, if it occurs at moderate or low temperatures (i.e., if $E_{\text{act}}/RT < 5$), and in particular, if it can be demonstrated that the rate is overall second order, but first order with respect to each species, it is presumed that the reaction proceeds via bi-molecular encounters between the reactant molecules. For such reactions, what specific chemical factors, what structural types, electron configurations, etc. determine the observed rates? How are these rates affected by substituents in parts of the molecules removed from the reactive centers? Does the ambient gas play a significant role in stabilizing the product?

The gas phase addition of Lewis acids, of which the boron trihalides are typical, to Lewis bases, of which the amines are typical, are such reactions. Since the absolute magnitudes of these rates are difficult to determine with precision over a range of pressures and temperatures, and since the primary interest lies in measurement of the effect of selected molecular parameters on the rates, this research program centered around the measurement of relative rates of addition, taking that of $[\text{BF}_3 + \text{N(CH}_3)_3] \rightarrow (\text{CH}_3)_3\text{N:BF}_3$ as the reference value. This was done by measuring the ratios of products generated in competitive systems:

$$\text{BF}_3 + \left[\text{N(CH}_3)_3\right] \rightarrow \left[(\text{CH}_3)_3\text{N:BF}_3\right]$$
$$\text{NMe}_3 + \left[\text{BF}_3\right] \rightarrow \left[\text{Me}_3\text{N:BF}_3\right]$$
The following summary consists of three manuscripts which are reports on work done at Cornell University over a period of years. These are arranged in inverse order of performance, and are graduated with regard to stage of preparation for publication. The first paper presented (III) has been submitted and accepted for presentation at the forthcoming symposium on boron-nitrogen chemistry, U.S. Army Research Office (Durham), at Duke University, April 23-25, 1963. These papers show the development of our experimental technique and the growth of our understanding of the processes involved.

It is now evident that these reactions are far from 'simple'. Subtle and as yet incompletely investigated factors are operative during the sequence of stages through which the parent species pass on toward becoming parts of the 'adducts'. In oversimplified form these may be enumerated:

1) Description of those encounters between A and B molecules in which their electron configurations are sufficiently perturbed so that a configuration suitable for adduct formation can result; consider dependence on relative kinetic energy, impact parameter, relative orientation, and on specific features in their intermolecular interaction potential.

2) For such encounters, description of the distortions which occur in their structures, particularly in the acid molecule.

3) Estimation of the probability for the redistribution of energy from vibrational and internal rotational modes in which large amplitudes are localized around the newly formed bond to modes in which large amplitudes appear in other parts of the molecules. Consider dependence of this stabilization on the
detailed composition and geometry of the reactants; is there a need for a third body?

iv) Estimation of the probability for the redistribution of energy from the vibrationally excited product molecule to the ambient gas, relative to the probability for the re-accumulation of energy in the newly formed bond, and consequent dissociation. Consider dependence of this de-energization on the nature and concentration of the ambient gas.

v) Estimation of the probability for the exchange reactions: $AB_1 + B_2 \rightarrow AB_2 + B_1$ and of $A_1B + A_2 \rightarrow A_2B + A_1$.

Compare these rates with that of precipitation of $AB_1$ and $A_1B$.

vi) Description of the formation of crystal embryos and nuclei, and of the rate of growth of Lewis salt crystals. Consider possible re-evaporation of reactant species from these hot crystals due to insufficiently rapid transfer of the heat of condensation to the ambient gas.

vii) Consider possible exchange reactions, such as $(AB_1)_{\text{solid}} + B_2 \rightarrow (AB_2)_{\text{solid}} + B_1$, on the surfaces of the hot crystals.

In the following papers attempts have been made to obtain experimental answers to some of the questions raised. We have been only partially successful, and much work remains to be done.

The last paper included in this final report summarizes computational work by Mr. Nicholas Rol. Since the association mechanism in the gas phase of aliphatic acid monomers presumably has a number of kinetic features similar to that of Lewis acid-base adduct formation, the possibility of measuring these rates
should be investigated. Mr. Rol considered the feasibility of exploiting shock tube techniques.

We here express our sincere appreciation to the Office of Naval Research for the extended support given to this project. We are particularly thankful for the personal interest shown in our research efforts.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART I
The Gas-Phase Association of Lewis Acids and Bases. III.
B₂H₆ and BF₃ in Competition for N(CH₃)₃.
S. H. Bauer and J. V. Martinez

PART II
The Gas-Phase Association of Lewis Acids and Bases. II.
N(CH₃)₃ and NH(CH₃)₂ in Competition for BF₃.
S. H. Bauer and Dennis Price

PART III
The Gas-Phase Association of Lewis Acids and Bases. I.
Temperature Dependence of Rates for N(CH₃)₃ and NH₃ in
Competition for BF₃.
S. H. Bauer and Walter D. Jones

PART IV
An Analyses of the Feasibility for the Determination of
the Dissociation Rate in Dimeric Aliphatic Acids Utilizing
Shock Tube Techniques.
Nicolaas C. Rol
THE GAS-PHASE ASSOCIATION OF ACIDS AND BASES. III.

$\text{B}_2\text{H}_6$ AND $\text{BF}_3$ IN COMPETITION FOR $\text{N(CH}_3)_3$

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ABSTRACT

The relative rates of addition of trimethylamine as a reference base to mixtures of boron trifluoride and diborane diluted with nitrogen have been measured at several temperatures. It was demonstrated that the pair $\text{BF}_3$-$\text{B}_2\text{H}_6$ are compatible in the sense that these gases do not react with each other to produce new substances and that the product of reaction with trimethylamine, in each case, is unaffected by the presence of the other acid. The ratio of the overall rates of addition $R_{\text{BF}_3-\text{NMe}_3}/R_{\text{B}_2\text{H}_6-\text{NMe}_3}$ increases with rising temperature, rather than decreases, as is expected were a displacement mechanism operative, such as:

$$\text{NMe}_3 + \text{B}_2\text{H}_6 \rightarrow \text{Me}_3\text{N:BH}_3 + \text{BH}_3$$

Also, this ratio decreases with increasing pressure of the amine but for constant amine and acid concentrations is independent of the ambient pressure ($\text{N}_2$ diluent). These data can be accounted for by the mechanism:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{NMe}_3 + \text{BF}_3 & \quad \stackrel{k_f}{\longrightarrow} \quad \text{Me}_3\text{N:BF}_3 \quad \text{(fast)} \\
\text{NMe}_3 + \text{B}_2\text{H}_6 & \quad \stackrel{k_a}{\longrightarrow} \quad \text{NMe}_3\cdot\text{B}_2\text{H}_6 \\
\text{NMe}_3\cdot\text{B}_2\text{H}_6 + \text{NMe}_3 & \quad \stackrel{k_b}{\longrightarrow} \quad 2\text{Me}_3\text{N:BH}_3
\end{align*}
\]

The unstable $\text{NMe}_3\cdot\text{B}_2\text{H}_6$ complex rapidly attains a steady state concentration. This leads to

\[
\frac{[\text{B}_2\text{H}_6]}{[\text{BF}_3]} \cdot \frac{[\text{Me}_3\text{N:BF}_3]}{[\text{Me}_3\text{N:BH}_3]} = \frac{k_f}{2k_a} + \frac{k_f}{2k_a k_b [\text{Me}_3\text{N}]} \]

$(k_f/k_a) = 2.2$, and, $\log (k_f/k_a k_b) = -6.620 - 271.7/T$

An analysis of these results will be presented.
INTRODUCTION

The investigation described is a continuation of our program on the determination of the relative rates of the gas phase addition of Lewis acids to bases. Our previous experiments dealt with the rates of addition of boron trifluoride, as the reference acid, to binary mixtures of ammonia, dimethylamine and trimethylamine and covered a range of temperatures, pressures and diluents. These studies indicated that such association were bimolecular and that they proceeded with practically no activation energy. The ratios of the rate constants for pressures greater than one mm are \( k_{NH_3}/k_{NMes} \), approximately 0.1, and \( k_{NHMe_2}/k_{NMes} \), approximately 1.1. During the past year we initiated the study of the relative rates of addition of trimethylamine, as the reference base, to binary mixtures of boron trifluoride, boron trichloride, boron trimethyl and diborane.

Correlations\(^1,2\) of the available kinetic data on the amine-boron trifluoride system indicate that the value for the rate constant \( k_f \) for the association reaction of an amine boron trifluoride increases as more methyl groups are substituted for the hydrogen in the amine molecule. In addition, for monosubstituted systems as the size of the alkyl group is enlarged, the rate constant appears to increase. For the pair deutero ammonia, relative to ammonia in a reaction competing for boron trifluoride, it has been shown\(^3\) that the latter reacts approximately twice as rapidly as the former. The absolute rate constant for the addition of trimethylphosphine to boron trifluoride has also been measured\(^4\). In contrast to the considerable amount of
data available on the relative rates of addition of bases to boron trifluoride, there is a paucity of information on the relative rates of addition of various acids to a reference base such as trimethylamine. The kinetics of addition of diborane to phosphine and of diborane to carbon monoxide have been studied. As yet, the relative acidity of boron trichloride and boron trifluoride as Lewis acids has not been determined. Early data suggests that the boron trifluoride is the weaker electron acceptor. The fact that gaseous boron trichloride replaces boron trifluoride from its trimethylamine salt is the basis for Dutton's argument that the trichloride is the stronger acid.

Because of their very rapid rates, addition reactions between Lewis acids and bases are diffusion controlled. To measure the absolute rates of these reactions one must use a flame diffusion technique such as has been developed by Kistiakowsky and coworkers. However, it is possible to measure the relative rates of addition by simple competitive techniques in which it is merely important to establish that the observed ratios of products is not affected by local depletion in the reaction chamber. It is, of course, essential to establish that the products and the reactants are mutually compatible; i.e., that once a product salt is formed it does not further react with one of the competing reactants to alter its composition.

In this work we have shown first that the pairs BF₃-BCl₃, BF₃-BMe₃, BCl₃-B₂H₆ and BMe₃-B₂H₆ are not compatible. We have no information regarding the compatibility of BCl₃-BMe₃. However,
we have demonstrated that one can study, by such a comparative process the relative rates for BF$_3$ and B$_2$H$_6$ adding to trimethylamine. In mixtures of boron trifluoride-boron trichloride an equilibrium is rapidly established between the mixed halides$^{13}$ so that one must deal with four reactants, rather than two, in a rather complex kinetic system. It also appears that in mixtures of diborane with boron trichloride and with boron trimethyl similar scrambling reactions occur. Where this may not be the case for mixtures of boron trifluoride and boron trimethyl, we have demonstrated that BF$_3$ displaces BMe$_3$ from the solid salt, Me$_3$N:BMe$_3$. However, the pair BF$_3$-B$_2$H$_6$, gave very interesting results.

EXPERIMENTAL PROCEDURE

The gaseous reagents used in this work were obtained in cylinders from commercial sources. Diborane, boron trifluoride and trimethylamine were purified in a distillation train but the nitrogen used as a carrier was taken directly from the cylinder. The specified purity of nitrogen was 99.996%.

Occasionally the purity of the three distilled gases was checked by scanning a sample of the gas with a Perkin-Elmer Model 21 Spectrophotometer. The infrared spectra thus obtained agreed in every respect with the spectra given in the literature.

From the purified reagents a mixture of diborane, boron trifluoride and nitrogen and a mixture of trimethylamine and nitrogen were prepared in two separate twelve liter bulbs. Only nitrogen was admitted to a third twelve liter reservoir bulb. For any ex-
periment the pressures of all three bulbs were made approximately equal. Mixing of the gases in the amine bulb was insured by spot heating the bulb with a small resistance heater at approximately 40 to 50°C for two hours before permitting the bulb to remain undisturbed overnight. A similar procedure was initially used for mixing in the acid bulb before determining the decomposition of diborane. Later, mixing in the diborane-containing bulb was insured by keeping it half immersed in ice water for two hours after which it was totally immersed and permitted to stand overnight.

With reference to Fig. 1, the bulbs were connected to a multi-way stopcock which had the feature of allowing either pure nitrogen or the acid and base mixtures to begin to flow simultaneously to the reaction vessel. The steady-state reaction pressure was set by the pressure in the bulbs and the size of the capillary orifices. A cross-section of the capillary unit is shown in Fig. 1. During the experiment the gases flowed through glass coils for temperature stabilization and through fritted glass plugs for better distribution before reaction. The reaction vessel was equipped with manometers to monitor the steady-state reaction pressure. Two traps were placed immediately after the reaction vessel to insure collection of all solid produced. One of these was a cold finger trap which was not only filled with liquid nitrogen but which was also surrounded with liquid nitrogen. The cold finger in the reaction vessel was likewise filled with the coolant.

Before experiment the system was evacuated to $10^{-5}$mm overnight. During the experiment the reaction vessel was continually evacuated
to maintain a steady state pressure and prevent any building up of concentration due to unused acid. To initiate the experiment nitrogen was allowed to flow for a period sufficient to maintain a constant steady state pressure after which the acid and base reagents were introduced. This period depended upon the reaction pressure, being less for the higher pressure experiments. The introduction of the base and acid mixtures was simultaneous with the isolation of nitrogen flow, a characteristic feature of the multiway stopcock. After sufficient solid had accumulated to permit a good analysis, requiring a period anywhere from 2 to 90 minutes depending on the pressure, the flow process was reversed as the nitrogen served to purge unreacted reagents while still maintaining a constant steady state pressure. After this step, the multiway stopcock was closed, the coolant in the cold fingers allowed to escape and the residual gas evacuated until the pressure in the reaction vessel system was approximately 0.2mm. This final pressure was attained by opening the system to the high vacuum in stages while the coolant was evaporating since some excess acids had condensed in the traps. Thereafter, the entire reaction vessel system was filled to atmospheric pressure with nitrogen and allowed to reach room temperature.

As the entire reaction vessel system was constructed with a minimum of lubricated joints, the portion of the system containing all visible solid was broken from the rest of the system. The solid was extracted with analytical reagent grade chloroform. In the analysis of the resulting solution, aliquot portions were scanned with the Model 21 infrared spectrometer between the region of 9.5 to 11.5μ in order to determine a relative measure of salts produced. The determination was obtained from a Beer's law cali-
The calibration was obtained by plotting the ratio of peak height absorptions vs molar weight ratio of trimethylamine borane to trimethylamine boron trifluoride. These salts were prepared employing the same procedure as described for carrying out the reaction rate study. However, only one acid was used at a time in the acid mixture, and whereas in the rate study the solid was extracted with solvent, the pure salts were recovered mechanically. The calibration solutions were then obtained by weighing the amounts of salts and subsequently adding the solvent. In effect, the molality of each component in the calibration solutions was known. The absorption peak heights were obtained from the 9.95μ band and the 10.94μ band for the borane and trifluoride, respectively. A fixed thickness cell of approximately 0.10 mm path was used in conjunction with a variable path length cell which compensated for the solvent.

In extracting the solid produced in the reaction rate experiments carried out at room temperature and above, it was observed that not all the solid dissolved in the chloroform; no residue was found for runs made at the lower temperatures. The quantity of the insoluble material increased as the temperature of the experiment was increased, and limited the upper temperature for this experiment to 60°C. Attempts to identify the insoluble material were unsuccessful. The side product, which was found to be soluble in water and in acetone, formed principally on the cold finger.

In one particular experiment performed at 80°C, pure trimethyl-
amine borane was prepared from the reagent gases and the major portion of the substance was recovered mechanically. (see footnote-1.). The amount of insoluble material was determined to be no more than 5% of the total amount of solid produced.

EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS

Investigations were carried out at -80°, -35°, 25° and over the region 50°-90°C. The conditions for the experiments and results are summarized in Tables Ia through Id. The final relative rate constants are summarized in Fig. 2.

Inspection of the processed data shows a linear dependence between the ratio j/s and the reciprocal of the average steady state trimethylamine concentration. This linear dependence is shown in Fig. 2. The lines as drawn were obtained using the method of least squares. The parameters for the four linear relations are summarized in Table II. We should emphasize that j/s did not correlate with the total steady state pressure, nor with its inverse, nor with the ratio of the total pressure to that of the amine.

A plot of the log of \( \beta \) vs the reciprocal of the absolute temperature is shown in Fig. 3a. The method of least square gives the following relationship:

\[
\log \beta = -6.620 - 271.7/T \quad \beta \text{ in (moles/cc)}
\]

(1)

\(<\alpha> = 2.2\)
DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Interpretation of the data for BF$_3$ + NR$_3$: The addition of trialkylamine to boron trifluoride, according to an inverse Lindemann-Hinshelwood mechanism$^{12}$, where the carrier gas serves as a third body for the stabilization of a product molecule, will serve as a first approximation. The production of the fluoride salt is given by

\[ \frac{d[\text{Me}_3\text{N}:\text{BF}_3]}{dt} = k_f[\text{BF}_3][\text{Me}_3\text{N}], \]

for which the high pressure limiting rate constant, $k_f$, has been measured$^{12}$ to be $2.8 \times 10^{12}$ cc mole$^{-1}$ sec$^{-1}$.

The reaction between trimethylamine and diborane may follow one of several mechanisms. However, it is immediately evident that the following ones are incompatible with the data:

\[ \text{(3)} \quad \text{B}_2\text{H}_6 \xrightarrow{k_d} 2 \text{BH}_3 \]
\[ \text{BH}_3 + \text{NMe}_3 \xrightarrow{k_3} \text{H}_3\text{B}:\text{NMe}_3 \]

\[ \text{(4)} \quad \text{B}_2\text{H}_6 + \text{NMe}_3 \xrightarrow{k_4} \text{H}_3\text{B}:\text{NMe}_3 + \text{BH}_3 \]
\[ \text{BH}_3 + \text{NMe}_3 \xrightarrow{k_5} \text{H}_3\text{B}:\text{NMe}_3 \]

Since the reaction between boron trifluoride and trimethylamine occurs with practically no activation energy, while in mechanism (3) the dissociation of B$_2$H$_6$ requires an increase in energy of about 26 kcal (see Footnote 2.) and in mechanism (4) we anticipate that the displacement reaction will require somewhere between 3 and 6 kcal, (see Footnote 3.) it is clear that the amount of borane salt relative to BF$_3$ salt should decrease as the temperature of the reaction in which the competitive process occurs is decreased. However, the inverse
has been observed as shown by the slopes in Fig. 2. One must therefore find a mechanism which favors the formation of the borane salt at the lower temperatures. We therefore propose that the reaction between the diborane and the trimethylamine occurs as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
(5) \quad & (a) \quad B_2H_6 + \text{NMe}_3 \xrightarrow{k_a/k_a} \text{NMe}_3:BH_3'BH_3 \\
& (b) \quad \text{Me}_3N + \text{Me}_3N:BH_3'BH_3 \xrightarrow{k_b} 2 \text{Me}_3\text{NBH}_3.
\end{align*}
\]

Under the steady-state condition, steps (a) and (b) yield

\[
\frac{d[\text{Me}_3N:BH_3]}{dt} = \frac{2k_a k_b [B_2H_6] [\text{NMe}_3]^2}{2k_a + k_b [\text{NMe}_3]}
\]

With relation (2) as a reference, expression (6) leads to

\[
\frac{[B_2H_6]}{[\text{BF}_3]} \frac{d[\text{Me}_3N:BF_3]}{d[\text{Me}_3N:BH_3]} = \frac{k_f}{2k_a} + \frac{k_f}{2k_a k_b [\text{NMe}_3]}
\]

where \( K_a \) is the equilibrium constant for reaction (5a) in \( \text{mole/cc}^{-1} \). (See footnote 4).

Expression (7) is of the proper functional form not only with respect to the effect of temperature but also with respect to the trimethylamine pressure dependence. The integrated form of equation (7) may be obtained under assumption that the amount of salts produced are small enough that the amount of acid used in their production remain essentially unchanged (steady-state concentration due to gas inflow). Application of the differential form interprets the real case more closely than does imposing the necessary restrictions to obtain the integrated form. Even so, in applying the differential form, an average value for the concentration of trimethylamine must be used.
Hence,

\[
\frac{[\text{B}_3\text{H}_6][\text{Me}_3\text{N}:\text{BF}_3]}{[\text{BF}_3][\text{Me}_3\text{N}:\text{BH}_3]} = \frac{k_f}{2k_a} + \frac{k_f}{2k_a k_b}
\]

On comparing equation (8) with the empirical formulation of the data, j/s = α + βq, one may identify α with \(k_f/2k_a\) and β with \(k_f/2k_\alpha k_b\). Within the precision of the experiments α has no temperature dependence; an average value \(\langle\alpha\rangle = 2.2\) is proposed. Using the above quoted magnitude for \(k_f\) one finds,

\[k_a = 6.4 \times 10^{11} \text{ cc mole}^{-1} \text{ sec}^{-1}\]

This is the limiting rate for very high amine pressures for the formation of the 1:1 complex. At 293°K, the smoothed experimental value for β = 2.94 \(\times 10^{-8}\) mole cc\(^{-1}\), so that \(k_\alpha k_b = 4.8 \times 10^{19} \text{ cc}^2 \text{ mole}^{-2} \text{ sec}^{-1}\) at that temperature.

The temperature dependence of β is due to the non-vanishing of the sum of the enthalpy increment in (5a) and the activation energy for (5b). One may plot \(\log \left(k_\alpha k_b \right) / T\) vs 1/T as in Fig. 3b. The slope gives

\[\Delta H_\alpha^0 + E_b = -1.65 \text{ kcal/mole}\]

Thus, the net process in going from the reactants in (5a) to the transition state of (5b) is slightly exothermic.

The assumption of the 1 to 1 complex between trimethylamine and diborane may appear strange at first. However, some indication of the existence of the triethylamine-borane complex at -64° has been given by Brown and coworkers\(^{16}\) and a similar 1 to 1 complex has been
proposed by Parry and Shore\textsuperscript{17}. Our kinetic data require merely that this complex be present in very small amounts during the course of this reaction.

**OBSERVATIONS ON THE BCl\textsubscript{3}-B\textsubscript{2}H\textsubscript{6} SYSTEM**

We attempted to obtain an estimate of relative reaction rates of BCl\textsubscript{3} and of diborane with trimethylamine. When competitive kinetics experiments were run even at temperatures as low as -80°C, absorption bands appeared in the infrared spectrum of the products which were not present in the solutions of the pure salts. These peaks interfered with the analysis for the relative amounts of Me\textsubscript{3}N:BCl\textsubscript{3} and Me\textsubscript{3}N:BH\textsubscript{3}. The spectra of the separate salts in chloroform solution were previously run and calibration curves for the mixtures were obtained. In preparing these calibration curves we demonstrated that in chloroform solution these two salts are mutually compatible. This led us to question whether any reaction took place between gaseous mixtures of BCl\textsubscript{3} and B\textsubscript{2}H\textsubscript{6}. Two earlier works \textsuperscript{15,18} have shown that no reaction occurs between these acids under conditions similar to those used in this work. However, we found that a reaction did occur as evidenced by the appearance of new bands in the infrared spectrum of the mixture. The rate of appearance of the new bands were followed and the rate was determined to depend on the ratio of the diborane to boron trichloride pressures. Fig. 4 shows this conversion rate for three such ratios.

It is clear that, if one could work over a period of less than half an hour, this scrambling reaction would introduce a minimum amount of difficulty. It is therefore evident that
some displacement reaction occurs during the initial stages of
the formation of the salts. Hence, the mechanism for this system
is more complicated than what we have postulated and found satis-
factory for the BF₃-B₂H₆ system. Further work on this mixture
is required before conclusions regarding the relative rate con-
stants can be obtained from our data. Compatibilities (or lack
of them) for several acid systems are summarized in Table III.

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FOOTNOTES

1. This material could be separated into a crystalline portion which deposited around the cold finger, and an 'amorphous' portion which adhered to the walls of the reaction vessel below the cold finger, down towards the reaction zone. The spectra of both these samples were identical with that of trimethylamine borane. Extractions were made of the solid remaining in the vessel, using chloroform and acetonitrile. After extraction, the residual material was recovered mechanically and incorporated in a KBr pellet. Its IR spectrum was not of H₃B:NMes₃, and could not be identified.

2. The imposition of a steady state condition on mechanism (3) leads to:

\[
\frac{d[MesN:BH₃]}{dt} = \frac{k_a}{2} [MesN] \left\{ \left(8K_d[B₃H₆] + \frac{k_a}{k_d} [MesN]^2 \right)^{1/2} - \frac{k_a}{k_d} [MesN] \right\}
\]

The magnitude of \( K_d \) has been given 22; on re-estimating the entropy for BH₃, we recommend

\[
\log_{10} K_d(\text{atm}) = 7.775 - 6205/T
\]

The value for \( k_a \) should be temperature independent, and possibly a bit larger than \( k_f \). For \( k_d \), a value in the neighborhood of \( 10^{13} \) to \( 10^{14} \) cc mole\(^{-1}\) sec\(^{-1}\) is reasonable. [See, S. H. Bauer, 20 J. Amer. Chem. Soc., 78, 5775 (1956)]. One may therefore introduce several approximations in the above expression, to reduce the ratio of salts produced to:

\[
\frac{[B₃H₆]}{[BF₃]} \frac{d[MesN:BF₃]}{d[MesN:BH₃]} = \frac{k_f}{2K_d} [MesN]
\]
3. The imposition of a steady state condition on mechanism (4) leads to:

$$\frac{d[\text{Me}_3N:\text{BH}_3]}{dt} = 2k_4 [\text{Me}_3N][\text{BaH}_3]$$

$$\frac{[\text{BaH}_3]}{[\text{BF}_3]} \frac{d[\text{Me}_3N:\text{BF}_3]}{d[\text{Me}_3N:\text{BH}_3]} \frac{k_f}{2k_4}$$

Now, for the reaction,

$$\text{B}_2\text{H}_6 + \text{PH}_3 \xrightarrow{k_4} \text{H}_3\text{B}:\text{PH}_3 + \text{BH}_3$$

Brumberger and Marcus found $k_4 = 2.3 \text{ cc mole}^{-1} \text{ sec}^{-1}$ at 0°C. Also, they found that the activation energy was 11.4 kcal/mole, and the steric factor was $3 \times 10^{-5}$, of the same order of magnitude as generally observed in hydrocarbon abstraction reactions. Even if one allows a factor of $10^8$ for the ratio $k_4/k_4'$, because of the greater base strength of $\text{NMes}$ compared with $\text{PH}_3$, our data are not consistent with what one would expect for such a mechanism.

4. Parallel to (5b) an additional reaction may occur

(5) (c) $\text{Me}_3\text{N}:\text{BH}_3 + \text{X} \xrightarrow{k_5} \text{Me}_3\text{N}:\text{BH}_3 + \text{BH}_3 + \text{X}$

where X is any molecular species other than $\text{NMes}$

(d) $\text{BH}_3 + \text{Me}_3\text{N} \xrightarrow{k_6} \text{Me}_3\text{N}:\text{BH}_3$

One must now introduce a steady state condition on (BH$_3$). It then follows that an expression corresponding to (7) takes the form

(7) $$\frac{[\text{BaH}_3]}{[\text{BF}_3]} \frac{d[\text{Me}_3\text{N}:\text{BF}_3]}{d[\text{Me}_3\text{N}:\text{BH}_3]} = \frac{k_f}{2k_a} + \frac{k_f}{2k_a(k_b[\text{NMes}] + k_5[X])}$$

Under the conditions of our experiment we have demonstrated that $k_5[X]$ is not much larger than $k_b[\text{NMes}]$; otherwise $j/s$ would correlate
with the inverse of the total pressure. However, it is possible that \( k_s[X] \approx k_s[\text{NMe}_3] \). We could not vary the ratio of amine concentration to total pressure over a sufficient range to check this possibility. Hence, it may be that \( K_a K_b \approx 2.5 \times 10^{19} \text{ cc}^2 \text{ mole}^{-2} \text{ sec}^{-1} \) rather than the larger value given in the text.
REFERENCES


TABLE Ia. TYPICAL DATA FOR KINETICS EXPERIMENTS AT(50-90°C)

<table>
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<td>3.0</td>
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<td>7.0</td>
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<tr>
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<td>14.43</td>
<td>0.013</td>
<td>76.92</td>
<td>1.42</td>
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</table>

a) pressure of diborane in the acid mixture at room temperature (mm)
b) ditto for boron trifluoride
c) total pressure in acid bulb at room temperature (mm)
d) pressure of trimethylamine in base mixture at room temperature (mm)
f) average steady-state reaction pressure during flow of Lewis reagents (mm)
g) period of Lewis reagents flow (min)
h) average partial steady-state reaction pressure (mm) of boron trifluoride
j) ratio of diborane to boron trifluoride in acid mixture
m) ditto (h) for trimethylamine
r) reciprocal of average steady-state trimethylamine pressure (mm⁻¹)
s) measured molar ratio of borane salt to fluoride salt, \([\text{Me}_3\text{N}:\text{BH}_3]/[\text{Me}_3\text{N}:\text{BF}_3]\)
q) reciprocal of average steady-state trimethylamine concentration (\([\text{moles}/cc]^{-1}\))
**TABLE II.** LINEAR DEPENDENCE OF $j/s$ on $q$ ($j/s = \alpha + \beta q$)

AS A FUNCTION OF TEMPERATURE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>$T$ ($^\circ$K)</th>
<th>$\alpha$</th>
<th>$\beta$ (moles/cc)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>323</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>$3.68 \times 10^{-8}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>298</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>$3.11 \times 10^{-8}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>238</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>$1.36 \times 10^{-8}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>188</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>$1.08 \times 10^{-8}$</td>
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</table>
TABLE III
THE AVAILABLE DATA ON COMPATIBILITY OF ACID PAIRS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acid</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Compatibility</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>BF₃</td>
<td>Rapid scrambling of the gas phase. (Higgins, et al 19)</td>
<td>Compatible (Martinez and Bauer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BF₃ displaces BMe₃ from its solid salts with t½ = several minutes. (Price and Bauer)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCl₃</td>
<td></td>
<td>Gases react slowly. Chloroform solutions of pure salts are compatible. Acids attack freshly generated salts. (Martinez and Bauer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BMe₃</td>
<td></td>
<td>Gases react but rates may be slow enough for competitive study. (Schlesinger and Walker, 21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBr₃</td>
<td>Scrambling of the gas phase. Equilibrium established in a few hours. (Long and Dollimore, 19)</td>
<td>Gases react slowly similar to BCl₃. (Schlesinger and Burg, 19)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LEGENDS FOR FIGURES

Fig. 1. Diagram of apparatus and cross-section of capillary unit.

Fig. 2. Plot of overall reaction rate vs reciprocal of trimethyl-
amine steady state concentration for different temperatures.

\[
\frac{j/s}{(\frac{P_{B_2H_6}}{P_{BF_3}})} = \frac{[\text{Me}_3\text{N}:\text{BF}_3]}{[\text{Me}_3\text{N}:\text{BH}_3]}
\]

\[q = [\text{Me}_3\text{N}]^{-1} \text{in (cc/mole)}\]

Fig. 3a. Plot of log \( \beta \) vs the reciprocal of the absolute temperature.

Fig. 3b. Plot of log \( [K_a k_b/T] \) vs the reciprocal of the absolute temperature.

Fig. 4. Plot of absorbance vs time for 9.12\( \mu \) band from \( B_2H_6-BCl_3 \) reaction at room temperature for different initial pressure ratios.

\[P_{B_2H_6}/P_{BCl_3} = 26.5 \text{ for a; 12.8 for b; 6.6 for c.}\]

\[P_{B_2H_6} + P_{BCl_3} = 55.0 \text{ mm for a; 44.0 mm for b; 30.5 mm for c.}\]
Capillary Unit

To coil
From multiway stopcock
Full Size

To acid reservoir
To base reservoir

To N₂ reservoir

Multiway stopcock

To traps
To manometers

Half Size
slope = 361.

$$E_A + \Delta H_d = -1.65 \text{ kcal/mole}$$