

# A Facile, High-Yield Synthesis of *trans*-Fe(CO)<sub>3</sub>(PR<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub> from Fe(CO)<sub>5</sub>, Fe(CO)<sub>4</sub>CHO<sup>-</sup>, HFe(CO)<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup>, or HFe(CO)<sub>3</sub>PR<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>

Richard L. Keiter,\* Ellen A. Keiter,\* Karl H. Hecker, and Carol A. Boecker

Department of Chemistry, Eastern Illinois University, Charleston, Illinois 61920

Received February 18, 1988

The reaction of Fe(CO)<sub>5</sub> with PR<sub>3</sub> and NaBH<sub>4</sub> in refluxing *n*-butyl alcohol affords high yields of *trans*-Fe(CO)<sub>3</sub>(PR<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>. It has been shown that Fe(CO)<sub>4</sub>PR<sub>3</sub>, which does not appear in the collected product, is also not a significant intermediate in the reaction. The reaction proceeds by initial formation of H<sub>2</sub> gas and Fe(CO)<sub>4</sub>CHO<sup>-</sup>. The formyl complex decomposes to HFe(CO)<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup> which reacts with PR<sub>3</sub> to give the disubstituted product. The principal intermediate for this substitution is believed to be HFe(CO)<sub>3</sub>PR<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>, although polynuclear species may also be important. The substitution of HFe(CO)<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup> by PR<sub>3</sub> is favorable when the counterion is Na<sup>+</sup> but not when it is PPN<sup>+</sup>. The overall reaction is very sensitive to choice of solvent; substitution of ethanol for *n*-butyl alcohol leads to greatly reduced yields.

## Introduction

Unassisted thermal and photolytic reactions of Fe(CO)<sub>5</sub> with PR<sub>3</sub> give rise to mixtures of Fe(CO)<sub>4</sub>PR<sub>3</sub> and *trans*-Fe(CO)<sub>3</sub>(PR<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub> which are in general difficult to separate.<sup>1</sup> Several useful procedures that maximize the formation of Fe(CO)<sub>4</sub>PR<sub>3</sub> have been developed, including reactions which are facilitated by AlH<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup> or BH<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup>,<sup>2a</sup> as well as those catalyzed by iron carbonyl anions<sup>2b</sup> or by cobalt salts.<sup>2c</sup> The cobalt-catalyzed reactions are particularly useful because yields are high, starting materials are readily available, reaction times are short, and photolysis is avoided.

Similar success has not been realized for the production of *trans*-Fe(CO)<sub>3</sub>(PR<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub> even though these complexes continue to be widely used.<sup>3</sup> For the thermal preparations, yields typically are low (15–27%) (as for the reactions of PPh<sub>3</sub> with Fe(CO)<sub>5</sub> and Fe<sub>3</sub>(CO)<sub>12</sub><sup>1a</sup>), reaction times are long (50 h) (as for LiAlH<sub>4</sub> facilitated reactions of Fe(CO)<sub>5</sub> and PPh<sub>3</sub><sup>2a</sup>), or reagents are expensive (as for the reaction of PPh<sub>3</sub> with Fe<sub>3</sub>(CO)<sub>11</sub><sup>2-</sup>, Fe<sub>2</sub>(CO)<sub>8</sub><sup>2-</sup>, or Fe<sub>4</sub>(CO)<sub>13</sub><sup>2-2b,4</sup>). Under some conditions, good yields of disubstituted complexes can be obtained by photolysis. Although the early work of Strohmeier demonstrated that photolytic reactions produce both Fe(CO)<sub>4</sub>PR<sub>3</sub> and *trans*-Fe(CO)<sub>3</sub>(PR<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>,<sup>1b</sup> Therien and Trogler recently have shown that disubstituted derivatives (R = Me, *n*-Bu, *c*-C<sub>6</sub>H<sub>11</sub> or Ph) precipitate selectively from solution when formed in cyclohexane.<sup>5</sup>

While yields are high, reaction times range from 5 to 16 h, 4–5 equiv of phosphine are required, and photolytic equipment is necessary.

We have found that Fe(CO)<sub>5</sub> reacts with PR<sub>3</sub> and NaBH<sub>4</sub> in refluxing *n*-butyl alcohol to give *trans*-Fe(CO)<sub>3</sub>(PR<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub> without contamination from Fe(CO)<sub>4</sub>PR<sub>3</sub>. Large excesses of phosphine are unnecessary, reaction times of 2 h are satisfactory, and specialized equipment is not needed. In this paper we present the details of this simple synthesis and supply evidence that the reaction proceeds stepwise through Fe(CO)<sub>4</sub>CHO<sup>-</sup>, HFe(CO)<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup>, and HFe(CO)<sub>3</sub>PR<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup> intermediates.

## Experimental Section

**General Procedures.** All reactions were carried out under an atmosphere of N<sub>2</sub>. Ethanol and *n*-butyl alcohol were obtained from various supply companies and purged with N<sub>2</sub> for 30 min prior to use. THF was distilled from Na and benzophenone under an atmosphere of N<sub>2</sub>. Phosphines were purchased from Pressure Chemical Co. The complexes [PPN][HFe(CO)<sub>4</sub>], [Et<sub>4</sub>N][HFe(CO)<sub>3</sub>PPh<sub>3</sub>], K[HFe<sub>3</sub>(CO)<sub>11</sub>], and Fe(CO)<sub>4</sub>PPh<sub>3</sub> were prepared as described previously.<sup>6a,7a,8a,2c</sup> All other chemicals, including Fe(CO)<sub>5</sub>, were used as received from commercial sources.

Infrared spectra (CHCl<sub>3</sub>) were recorded on a Nicolet 20 DX-B FT spectrometer. Proton and <sup>31</sup>P{<sup>1</sup>H} NMR spectra (CDCl<sub>3</sub>) were obtained with Varian T-60 and home-built 250-MHz NMR spectrometers, respectively. <sup>31</sup>P NMR chemical shifts, relative to 85% phosphoric acid, are reported with positive values downfield from the reference.

**Synthesis of *trans*-Fe(CO)<sub>3</sub>(PR<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub> Complexes.** The synthesis of the PPh<sub>3</sub> derivative is detailed below; the same basic procedure was applied for the preparation of the other complexes with a slight modification, as described, for the P(*n*-Bu)<sub>3</sub> case.

To a stirred mixture of PPh<sub>3</sub> (5.97 g, 22.8 mmol) and NaBH<sub>4</sub> (0.289 g, 7.60 mmol) in 150 mL of *n*-butyl alcohol was added Fe(CO)<sub>5</sub> (1.00 mL, 7.60 mmol). Evolution of gas was vigorous and a yellow solution resulted. After gas evolution, the reaction mixture was refluxed for 2 h (longer reaction times do not increase yield), cooled to room temperature, and placed in a freezer (5 °C) for 12 h. During this specific preparation, some yellow precipitate was noted after 15 min of refluxing, and large quantities were observed upon cooling the reaction mixture to room temperature. The precipitate was collected by filtration and washed with several portions of methanol to remove borate salts. The remaining

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precipitate was treated with approximately 30 mL of CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>, and undissolved solid was removed by filtration. To the resulting solution approximately 30 mL of CH<sub>3</sub>OH was added, which induced immediate precipitation. The mixture was allowed to remain in a freezer for several hours before the product was collected by filtration. Both IR and <sup>31</sup>P NMR spectra showed the isolated product to be exclusively *trans*-Fe(CO)<sub>3</sub>(PPh<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>.<sup>5b</sup> Infrared spectra of some crude reaction mixtures showed evidence for small quantities of Fe(CO)<sub>4</sub>PR<sub>3</sub>, but in no case was any monosubstituted derivative observed in the collected product. Yields of the disubstituted complexes, including the effects of varying ligand concentration, are shown in Table II. When identical reactions were carried out in ethanol, yields of approximately 15% were obtained.

The above procedure was modified for the preparation of *trans*-Fe(CO)<sub>3</sub>[P(*n*-Bu)<sub>3</sub>]<sub>2</sub>, which is soluble in *n*-butyl alcohol. After the reaction, *n*-butyl alcohol was removed under vacuum and the crude reaction mass was crystallized from CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>/CH<sub>3</sub>OH.

**Reaction of Fe(CO)<sub>5</sub> with NaBH<sub>4</sub> in *n*-Butyl Alcohol.** When Fe(CO)<sub>5</sub> is added to NaBH<sub>4</sub> in *n*-butyl alcohol in proportions identical with those of the foregoing synthesis, a gas is vigorously evolved. An IR spectrum of this gas shows traces of *n*-butyl alcohol and Fe(CO)<sub>5</sub> and an even smaller quantity of CO. The gas cannot be condensed with liquid N<sub>2</sub>, and it reacts explosively when it is mixed with O<sub>2</sub> and ignited. The *n*-butyl alcohol solution that remains after gas evolution gives rise to infrared signals in the carbonyl region at 2025, 1935, and 1909 cm<sup>-1</sup> (lit. for Fe(CO)<sub>4</sub>CHO: 2018, 1930, and 1902 cm<sup>-1</sup>, THF<sup>9</sup>). A <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectrum of this solution shows a chemical shift at 14.6 ppm (lit. for Fe(CO)<sub>4</sub>CHO: 14.95 ppm, THF<sup>9</sup>).

The solution described above was stirred under N<sub>2</sub> over a period of approximately 2 weeks, with periodic examination of its <sup>1</sup>H NMR spectrum. The signal at 14.6 ppm gradually disappeared and a signal at -9.9 ppm (lit. for HFe(CO)<sub>4</sub>: -8.74 ppm, THF<sup>10</sup>) simultaneously grew into the spectrum, becoming the dominant signal observed after about 5 days. The solution at this point was an orange/red color. Over the remainder of the monitoring period, the color gradually changed to deep red, the NMR signal at -9.9 ppm diminished, and a signal at -14.8 ppm (lit. for HFe<sub>3</sub>(CO)<sub>11</sub>: -14.9, Me<sub>2</sub>SO-*d*<sub>6</sub><sup>8,10</sup>) appeared.

**Synthesis of [PPN][Fe(CO)<sub>4</sub>CHO].** To a stirred mixture of NaBH<sub>4</sub> (0.29 g, 7.6 mmol) in 25 mL of *n*-butyl alcohol at 0 °C was added Fe(CO)<sub>5</sub> (1.00 mL, 7.6 mmol) in 20 mL of *n*-butyl alcohol dropwise over 15 min. Gas was evolved, and the reaction mixture was stirred for 1.5 h, followed by addition of [PPN]Cl (4.36 g, 7.6 mmol). Formation of a light pink precipitate was immediate. The precipitate was collected by filtration and washed several times with methanol to remove salts. The light brown product (70%) was identified by its IR spectrum (THF).<sup>9</sup>

**Reaction of PPh<sub>3</sub> with [PPN][Fe(CO)<sub>4</sub>CHO].** A stirred mixture of PPh<sub>3</sub> (1.60 g, 6.11 mmol) and [PPN][Fe(CO)<sub>4</sub>CHO] (1.50 g, 2.04 mmol) in 100 mL of *n*-butyl alcohol was refluxed for 2 h. Infrared analysis showed the presence of [PPN][HFe(CO)<sub>4</sub>]<sup>6b</sup> but no phosphine-substituted product. When this reaction was carried out in the presence of NaBH<sub>4</sub> (2.04 mmol), a 30% yield of disubstituted product was obtained.

**Reaction of PPh<sub>3</sub> with [PPN][HFe(CO)<sub>4</sub>].** A stirred mixture of PPh<sub>3</sub> (1.48 g, 5.65 mmol) and [PPN][HFe(CO)<sub>4</sub>] (2.00 g, 2.82 mmol) in 100 mL of *n*-butyl alcohol was refluxed for 2 h. No phosphine-substituted product was detected in the infrared spectrum, and 80% of the starting material was recovered.

**Reaction of PPh<sub>3</sub> with Na[HFe(CO)<sub>4</sub>].** A solution (6.5 mL) of Na[HFe(CO)<sub>4</sub>] was prepared from NaOH and Fe(CO)<sub>5</sub> (5.32 mmol) in CH<sub>3</sub>OH/H<sub>2</sub>O, as described in the literature,<sup>10</sup> and diluted with 100 mL of *n*-butyl alcohol. To this stirred solution was added PPh<sub>3</sub> (16.0 mmol). The reaction mixture was refluxed for 2 h. A copious precipitate resulted upon cooling. The product was collected by filtration, recrystallized from CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>/CH<sub>3</sub>OH, and identified by IR as *trans*-Fe(CO)<sub>3</sub>(PPh<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub> (95%).

**Reaction of PPh<sub>3</sub> with [Et<sub>4</sub>N][HFe(CO)<sub>3</sub>PPh<sub>3</sub>].** A stirred solution of [Et<sub>4</sub>N][HFe(CO)<sub>3</sub>PPh<sub>3</sub>] (2.33 mmol) and PPh<sub>3</sub> (2.33

Table I. <sup>31</sup>P NMR and IR Data for *trans*-Fe(CO)<sub>3</sub>(PR<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>

phosphine	chem shift (ppm)	stretching freq (cm <sup>-1</sup> ) <sup>a</sup>	ref
PPh <sub>3</sub>	82.5	1881 (s), 1886 (s), 1944 (w)	5b
PPh <sub>2</sub> H	53.9	1880 (s), 1886 (s), 1978 (w)	20
PPh <sub>2</sub> CH=CH <sub>2</sub>	76.5	1880 (s), 1886 (s), 1973 (w)	21
PPh <sub>2</sub> Et	77.7	1868 (s), 1882 (s), 1967 (w)	22
PPh <sub>2</sub> Me	64.7	1872 (s), 1882 (s), 1966 (w)	2c
P(Cy) <sub>3</sub>	86.1	1842 (s), 1858 (s), 1947 (w)	5b
P( <i>n</i> -Bu) <sub>3</sub>	62.4	1854 (s), 1856 (s), 1955 (w)	5b

<sup>a</sup> Splitting of the E' mode is not unusual in CHCl<sub>3</sub>. The weak forbidden A<sub>1</sub>' mode was found in all spectra.

Table II. Percentage Yields for *trans*-Fe(CO)<sub>3</sub>(PR<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>

ligand	ratio of Fe(CO) <sub>5</sub> /ligand	yield, %
PPh <sub>3</sub>	1.0:2.0	65
PPh <sub>3</sub>	1.0:2.5	75
PPh <sub>3</sub>	1.0:3.0	87
PPh <sub>2</sub> H	1.0:3.0	66
PPh <sub>2</sub> CH=CH <sub>2</sub>	1.0:3.0	72
PPh <sub>2</sub> CH <sub>2</sub> CH <sub>3</sub>	1.0:3.0	91
PPh <sub>2</sub> Me	1.0:2.0	90
P(Cy) <sub>3</sub>	1.0:2.0	61
P( <i>n</i> -Bu) <sub>3</sub>	1.0:2.0	47

mmol) in 100 mL of *n*-butyl alcohol was refluxed for 2 h. Cooling to room temperature gave a green-black precipitate which was collected by filtration, crystallized from CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>/CH<sub>3</sub>OH, and identified by IR as *trans*-Fe(CO)<sub>3</sub>(PPh<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub> (67%).

**Reaction of Fe(CO)<sub>5</sub>PPh<sub>3</sub> with PPh<sub>3</sub> and NaBH<sub>4</sub> in *n*-Butyl Alcohol.** To 100 mL of *n*-butyl alcohol were added NaBH<sub>4</sub> (0.289 g, 7.61 mmol), PPh<sub>3</sub> (0.585 g, 2.23 mmol), and Fe(CO)<sub>5</sub>PPh<sub>3</sub> (0.960 g, 2.23 mmol). This solution was refluxed with stirring for 2 h, cooled to room temperature, and refrigerated for several hours. The yellow precipitate (0.92 g) was collected by filtration and shown by IR to be Fe(CO)<sub>4</sub>PPh<sub>3</sub><sup>2c</sup> contaminated with traces of *trans*-Fe(CO)<sub>3</sub>(PPh<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>.

**Reaction of K[Fe<sub>3</sub>(CO)<sub>11</sub>] with PPh<sub>3</sub>.** A stirred mixture of K[Fe<sub>3</sub>(CO)<sub>11</sub>] (prepared from 24 mmol of Fe(CO)<sub>5</sub> and PPh<sub>3</sub> (48 mmol) in 100 mL of *n*-butyl alcohol was refluxed for 2 h. A yellow precipitate formed as the solution began to reflux. The product, which was collected after the reaction pot reached room temperature, consisted of a mixture of *trans*-Fe(CO)<sub>3</sub>(PPh<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub> (major component) and Fe(CO)<sub>4</sub>PPh<sub>3</sub>, as shown by IR spectroscopy.

## Results and Discussion

The reaction of Fe(CO)<sub>5</sub> with PR<sub>3</sub> and NaBH<sub>4</sub> in refluxing *n*-butyl alcohol affords *trans*-Fe(CO)<sub>3</sub>(PR<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>, which precipitates from the cooled solution and is uncontaminated by the monosubstituted derivative. Seven complexes with a variety of phosphine ligands have been synthesized by this method and characterized by <sup>31</sup>P NMR and IR spectroscopy (Table I). Yields, which range from 47 to 91% for the compounds of this study, are maximized with a reaction time of 2 h and a small excess of phosphine (Table II). Large excesses of NaBH<sub>4</sub> lead to reduced yields, presumably due to competing side reactions. The choice of solvent is critical for a successful reaction; when ethanol is substituted for *n*-butyl alcohol, only 15% conversion to the *trans* product is realized.

Reactions involving PPh<sub>2</sub>CH=CH<sub>2</sub> lead to some reduction of the vinyl group giving *trans*-Fe(CO)<sub>3</sub>-(PPh<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>3</sub>)(PPh<sub>2</sub>CH=CH<sub>2</sub>) and *trans*-Fe(CO)<sub>3</sub>-(PPh<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub> as minor products. <sup>31</sup>P chemical shifts for these two compounds are (76.65 and 76.67) and 76.80 ppm, respectively, and *J*<sub>PP</sub> for the mixed ligand complex, which gives rise to an AB spectrum, is 37.9 Hz.

When the reactants for the synthesis are mixed, an immediate vigorous evolution of a gas is observed. This gas has been identified as H<sub>2</sub> by virtue of its infrared silence and failure to condense at 77 K. It also forms when Fe-

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(CO)<sub>5</sub> and NaBH<sub>4</sub> are allowed to react in *n*-butyl alcohol in the absence of PR<sub>3</sub> at room temperature. No reaction occurs, however, when NaBH<sub>4</sub> and *n*-butyl alcohol are mixed at room temperature. Moreover, the reaction between Fe(CO)<sub>5</sub> and NaBH<sub>4</sub> leads to Fe(CO)<sub>4</sub>CHO<sup>-</sup>, suggesting that the overall reaction is initiated by attack of H<sup>-</sup> on bound CO. Although NaBH<sub>4</sub> is generally ineffective as a reagent for the production of formyl complexes<sup>11</sup> and the reaction of Fe(CO)<sub>5</sub> with NaBH<sub>4</sub> in diglyme has been reported to give mixtures of complexes,<sup>12</sup> infrared data show the conversion in *n*-butyl alcohol to be nearly quantitative.

The formyl complex (Fe(CO)<sub>4</sub>CHO<sup>-</sup>) exhibits considerable stability in *n*-butyl alcohol, despite the protic nature of the solvent. Proton NMR shows that slow conversion to HFe(CO)<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup> occurs at room temperature, although this process is rapid in refluxing *n*-butyl alcohol. The decomposition of Fe(CO)<sub>4</sub>CHO<sup>-</sup> to HFe(CO)<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup> in THF has been well-studied, and recently it has been shown that a free radical pathway is important.<sup>13</sup> It is also possible to isolate the formyl complex in good yield from an *n*-butyl alcohol solution. The reaction of Fe(CO)<sub>5</sub> with NaBH<sub>4</sub>, followed by addition of [PPN]Cl gives [PPN][Fe(CO)<sub>4</sub>CHO] as an immediate precipitate in 70% yield. Although spectroscopic yields of greater than 90% have been reported for this complex,<sup>14-16</sup> isolation in quantities greater than 50% has not.<sup>16</sup>

The hydride (HFe(CO)<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup>), upon forming from the formyl complex at room temperature in *n*-butyl alcohol, slowly decomposes to HFe<sub>3</sub>(CO)<sub>11</sub><sup>-</sup>, as shown by proton NMR. In refluxing *n*-butyl alcohol in the presence of PR<sub>3</sub>, it yields *trans*-Fe(CO)<sub>3</sub>(PR<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>. This reaction may occur via direct substitution of the hydride to form HFe(CO)<sub>3</sub>PR<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>, or it may involve formation of HFe<sub>3</sub>(CO)<sub>11</sub><sup>-</sup>, which subsequently undergoes substitution. We have synthesized both HFe(CO)<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup> and HFe<sub>3</sub>(CO)<sub>11</sub><sup>-</sup> independently and investigated their reactions with PPh<sub>3</sub>. For HFe(CO)<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup> the collected product is identical with that for the reaction of Fe(CO)<sub>5</sub> with PPh<sub>3</sub> and NaBH<sub>4</sub>: *trans*-Fe(CO)<sub>3</sub>(PPh<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub> with no monosubstituted complex. The trinuclear species also yields the disubstituted derivative but with distinct contamination by Fe(CO)<sub>4</sub>PPh<sub>3</sub>. We therefore conclude that HFe(CO)<sub>3</sub>PPh<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup> is more likely to be the principal intermediate, although the polymetallic species probably plays a role as well.

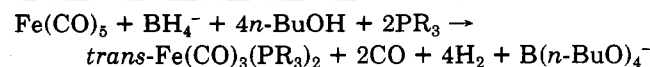
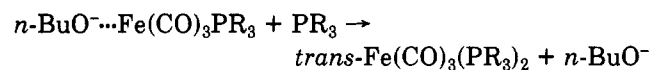
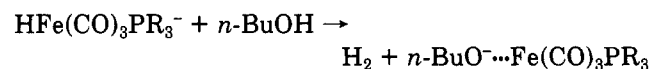
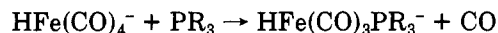
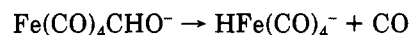
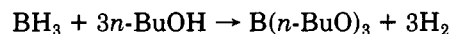
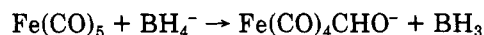
Infrared spectroscopic evidence for reaction intermediates was sought by monitoring the reaction of Fe(CO)<sub>5</sub> with PPh<sub>3</sub> and NaBH<sub>4</sub>. Immediately following evolution of H<sub>2</sub>, CO absorption bands for Fe(CO)<sub>4</sub>CHO<sup>-</sup> at 2025, 1935, and 1909 cm<sup>-1</sup> are present.<sup>9</sup> As the reaction proceeds, a signal at 2001 cm<sup>-1</sup>, assigned to HFe(CO)<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup>,<sup>6b</sup> gradually appears and grows in intensity. Although HFe<sub>3</sub>(CO)<sub>11</sub><sup>-</sup> also absorbs at 1999 cm<sup>-1</sup>, absence of other characteristic signals for this compound at 2067 and 1979 cm<sup>-1</sup> rule it out as the source of the signal at 2001 cm<sup>-1</sup>.<sup>8a</sup> In addition, the formyl absorption at 1909 cm<sup>-1</sup> broadens and develops a shoulder at 1895 cm<sup>-1</sup>, which is also assigned to HFe(CO)<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup>. The region in the vicinity of 1900 cm<sup>-1</sup> is particularly complicated because *trans*-Fe(CO)<sub>3</sub>(PPh<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub> gives its principal CO absorption at 1884 cm<sup>-1</sup><sup>5b</sup> and dominates the reaction

mixture even in the early stages. A signal at 2050 cm<sup>-1</sup>, characteristic of Fe(CO)<sub>4</sub>PPh<sub>3</sub><sup>6b</sup> but never becoming a major absorption, was also observed during the course of the reaction and in the final crude reaction mixture. Minor amounts of this compound may form from direct substitution of Fe(CO)<sub>5</sub> or HFe(CO)<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup>. Presumably both HFe(CO)<sub>3</sub>PR<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup> and HFe<sub>3</sub>(CO)<sub>11</sub><sup>-</sup> would be too unstable under the conditions of the reaction to be observable spectroscopically.

To further test the intermediacy of HFe(CO)<sub>3</sub>PR<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup> in the overall reaction, it was prepared independently (with R = Ph) and allowed to react with PPh<sub>3</sub> in refluxing *n*-butyl alcohol. It was found to readily give *trans*-Fe(CO)<sub>3</sub>(PPh<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>. Thus it appears that substituting PR<sub>3</sub> for CO in HFe(CO)<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup> increases the electron density on Fe, thereby enhancing the hydridic nature of the bound hydrogen atom such that it reacts with *n*-butyl alcohol, liberating hydrogen gas and providing a vacant coordination site for the second PPh<sub>3</sub> ligand. In contrast, it appears that HFe(CO)<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup> does not significantly react with *n*-butyl alcohol under the conditions of the reaction and as a consequence a vacant coordination site does not become available which would allow the formation of Fe(CO)<sub>4</sub>PR<sub>3</sub>. Hence the production of the disubstituted complex and the exclusion of the monosubstituted derivative can be accounted for by the relative reactivities of HFe(CO)<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup> and HFe(CO)<sub>3</sub>PR<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup> toward refluxing *n*-butyl alcohol.

Whereas Fe(CO)<sub>5</sub> is readily converted to the disubstituted *trans* derivative when subjected to the conditions described herein, Fe(CO)<sub>4</sub>PR<sub>3</sub> is relatively unreactive under these same conditions (substantial starting material is recovered and only traces of *trans* product are observed). It is clear from this result that Fe(CO)<sub>4</sub>PR<sub>3</sub> is not a significant intermediate in the formation of *trans*-Fe(CO)<sub>3</sub>(PR<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>. It would appear that either Fe(CO)<sub>4</sub>PR<sub>3</sub> is not converted to Fe(CO)<sub>3</sub>PR<sub>3</sub>CHO<sup>-</sup> or, if the latter forms, it reduces *n*-butyl alcohol and in so doing regenerates Fe(CO)<sub>4</sub>PR<sub>3</sub>.

A plausible reaction sequence based on the foregoing discussion is



In addition to these reactions, BH<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup> will react with *n*-BuOH at elevated temperatures to give species such as HB(*n*-BuO)<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>, H<sub>2</sub>B(*n*-BuO)<sub>2</sub><sup>-</sup>, and H<sub>3</sub>B(*n*-BuO)<sup>-</sup> which may also serve as hydride sources.<sup>17</sup>

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As indicated previously, refluxing ethanol provides a much less favorable medium for the reaction. Formyl and hydride complex formation proceed as in *n*-butyl alcohol, but phosphine substitution is unfavorable. The additional energy provided by a higher boiling alcohol such as *n*-butyl alcohol apparently is essential for this step to proceed. Furthermore, substitution depends strongly on the nature of the counterion. We find that [PPN][HFe(CO)<sub>4</sub>] reacts with PPh<sub>3</sub> in refluxing *n*-butyl alcohol to give, after 2 h, traces of *trans*-Fe(CO)<sub>3</sub>(PPh<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub> and unreacted starting material. When the same experiment is carried out with Na[HFe(CO)<sub>4</sub>], a 95% yield of the *trans* product is obtained. Moreover, the reaction of PPh<sub>3</sub> with [PPN][Fe(CO)<sub>4</sub>CHO] gives only [PPN][HFe(CO)<sub>4</sub>] while the reaction with Na[Fe(CO)<sub>4</sub>CHO] produces an 87% yield of *trans*-Fe(CO)<sub>3</sub>(PPh<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub> (Table II). This is consistent with Darensbourg's observation that Na[HFe(CO)<sub>4</sub>] is much more reactive than [PPN][HFe(CO)<sub>4</sub>] toward O<sub>2</sub> in THF.<sup>6b,18</sup> In addition, Ungvary and Wojcicki have shown that Na[Co(CO)<sub>4</sub>] undergoes rapid substitution by phosphines while [PPN][Co(CO)<sub>4</sub>] is unreactive, further underscoring the importance of the counterion in reactions

involving organometallic carbonyl anions.<sup>19</sup>

In the course of elucidating the mechanism for the reaction of PR<sub>3</sub> with Fe(CO)<sub>5</sub> and NaBH<sub>4</sub>, we have also discovered that *trans*-Fe(CO)<sub>3</sub>(PPh<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub> may be prepared in high yield from the reaction of Fe(CO)<sub>5</sub>, PPh<sub>3</sub>, and NaOH. Furthermore, preliminary results suggest that the reaction of HFe(CO)<sub>3</sub>PR<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup> with PR'<sub>3</sub> provides a useful route to complexes containing two different phosphines. The generality of both of these reactions is now under investigation.

**Acknowledgment** is made to the donors of the Petroleum Research Fund, administered by the American Chemical Society, and to the National Science Foundation, Grant CHE-85-13021, for support of this research. We are grateful to the University of Illinois for the use of a 250-MHz NMR spectrometer. We thank Robert Newman for some of the initial experimental work.

**Registry No.** [PPN][HFe(CO)<sub>4</sub>], 56791-54-9; [Et<sub>4</sub>N][HFe(CO)<sub>3</sub>PPh<sub>3</sub>], 80612-33-5; Fe(CO)<sub>4</sub>PPh<sub>3</sub>, 35679-07-3; Fe(CO)<sub>5</sub>, 13463-40-6; *trans*-Fe(CO)<sub>3</sub>(PPh<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>, 21255-52-7; *trans*-Fe(CO)<sub>3</sub>[P(*n*-Bu)<sub>3</sub>]<sub>2</sub>, 49655-14-3; NaBH<sub>4</sub>, 16940-66-2; [PPN][Fe(CO)<sub>4</sub>CHO], 41900-55-4; Na[HFe(CO)<sub>4</sub>], 53558-55-7; K[Fe<sub>3</sub>(CO)<sub>11</sub>], 116466-60-5; *trans*-Fe(CO)<sub>3</sub>(PPh<sub>2</sub>H)<sub>2</sub>, 40697-11-8; *trans*-Fe(CO)<sub>3</sub>(PPh<sub>2</sub>CH=CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>2</sub>, 87137-61-9; *trans*-Fe(CO)<sub>3</sub>(PPh<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>, 36870-06-1; *trans*-Fe(CO)<sub>3</sub>(PPh<sub>2</sub>Me)<sub>2</sub>, 40757-44-6; *trans*-Fe(CO)<sub>3</sub>[P(*c*-cy)<sub>3</sub>]<sub>2</sub>, 40697-14-1.

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## Oxidative Addition Reactions of Compounds of the Type (η<sup>5</sup>-C<sub>5</sub>Me<sub>5</sub>)Os(CO)LR (L = CO, PMe<sub>2</sub>Ph; R = Alkyl). The Role of Oxidized Intermediates in Electrophilic Cleavage Reactions of Osmium-Carbon σ-Bonds

Laura J. Johnston and Michael C. Baird\*

Department of Chemistry, Queen's University, Kingston, Canada K7L 3N6

Received February 24, 1988

Compounds of the type Cp\*Os(CO)LR (Cp\* = η<sup>5</sup>-C<sub>5</sub>Me<sub>5</sub>; L = CO, PMe<sub>2</sub>Ph; R = Me, Et, *i*-Pr, CH<sub>2</sub>Ph), most of them new, have been prepared and their reactions with the electrophiles CF<sub>3</sub>CO<sub>2</sub>H, Br<sub>2</sub>, and HgBr<sub>2</sub> have been investigated. All of the electrophiles oxidatively add to give labile, formally osmium(IV) complexes of the type [Cp\*Os(CO)(L)(R)(E)]<sup>+</sup>X<sup>-</sup>, one of which, [Cp\*Os(CO)(PMe<sub>2</sub>Ph)(Me)(HgBr)]<sup>+</sup>, has been isolated as the PF<sub>6</sub><sup>-</sup> salt. In all cases, the osmium(IV) complexes decompose in solution to give the normal products of electrophilic cleavage.

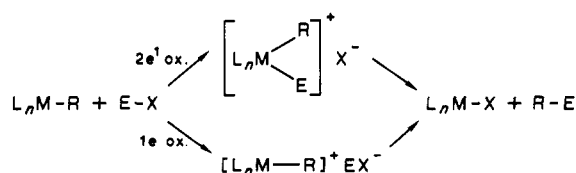
### Introduction

Mechanisms of cleavage reactions of transition-metal-carbon bonds by electrophilic reagents have attracted considerable attention in recent years.<sup>1,2</sup> Reactions are generally of the form



M = transition metal; L = neutral, anionic ligands;  
R = alkyl; EX = HX, X<sub>2</sub>, CuX<sub>2</sub>, HgX<sub>2</sub>; X = halogen

### Scheme I. S<sub>E</sub> (Oxidative) Mechanisms



Many of the studies have involved a number of iron alkyl complexes of the type CpFe(CO)LR (L = CO, tertiary phosphine; R = alkyl),<sup>3-9</sup> but similar compounds of ru-

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