

# Competitive reactivity of the aryl isothiocyanate dipolarophile at N=C *versus* C=S with nucleophilic 1,3-dipoles: a combined experimental and theoretical study. The reactions of substituted 1,2,3-triazolium-1-aminide 1,3-dipoles with aryl isothiocyanates: new tricyclic thiazolo[4,5-*d*][1,2,3]triazoles

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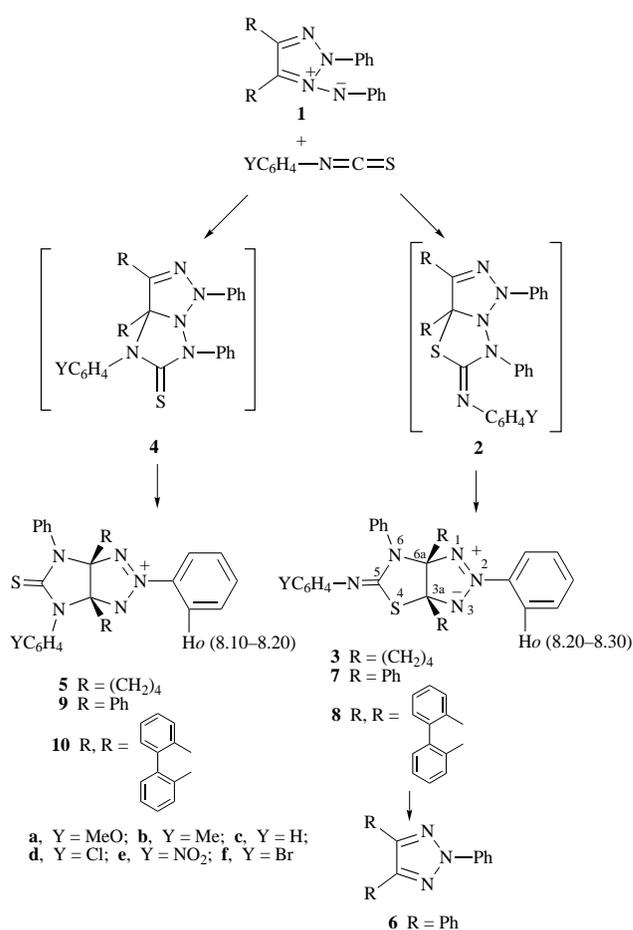
Substituted 1,2,3-triazolium-1-aminide 1,3-dipoles react with aryl isothiocyanates at both the N=C and C=S sites to give mixtures of substituted imidazolo[4,5-*d*][1,2,3]triazoles and new thiazolo[4,5-*d*][1,2,3]triazoles including tricyclic derivatives with the C-3a and C-6a bridgeheads linked *via* (CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>4</sub> and phenanthro groups. The product distribution is controlled by the *para*-substituent of the aryl isothiocyanate. Theoretical calculations, 3-21G\* and 6-31G\*, suggest that linear triple bonded canonical forms of the aryl isothiocyanate system play a key role in the ambident reactivity of these systems.

Because of their high reactivity, thiones have been classified as super dipolarophiles among the hetero-double bond 2π-systems in reactions with a range of 1,3-dipoles.<sup>1-4</sup> A favourable charge-transfer orientation complex as well as a strong HOMO-LUMO interaction has been suggested as the principal reason for the high thione reactivity towards nitron 1,3-dipoles.<sup>4</sup> When the C=S moiety is part of the isothiocyanate cumulene system cycloaddition reactions are often observed on both the N=C and C=S bonds in a competitive manner and the C=S site is not the exclusive reactive centre. Thus diphenyl nitrile imide reacted with phenyl isothiocyanate to give a mixture of 58% of the C=S adduct and 24% of the N=C adduct,<sup>5</sup> while *C*-trifluoromethyl-*N*-phenyl nitrile imide gave only 14% of the C=S adduct with methyl isothiocyanate.<sup>6</sup> Nitron 1,3-dipoles may also react with substituted isothiocyanates at the N=C or C=S sites.<sup>7-9</sup> Some cyclic nitrones have been reported to react with benzoyl isothiocyanate exclusively at C=S but with phenyl and methyl isothiocyanates at N=C.<sup>7,10</sup> Herein we describe the reactions of the dipoles **1** with aryl isothiocyanates where competitive reactivity at both the N=C and C=S sites has been observed. Substituents on the aryl isothiocyanate had a large influence on the competition between the alternative reaction sites and the factors influencing the relative behaviour of the cumulene C=S and N=C bonds for a given 1,3-dipole are assessed through experimental product distributions and calculated bond distances and atomic charges.

## Results and discussion

### Products

When the substituted dipoles **1** were treated with a series of *p*-substituted phenyl isothiocyanates, mixtures of the corresponding imidazolo[4,5-*d*][1,2,3]triazoles **5**, **9** and **10**, and the new substituted thiazolo[4,5-*d*][1,2,3]triazoles **3**, **7** and **8**, were obtained (Scheme 1, Table 1). These products, which are not interconvertible, arose from the cycloaddition–rearrangement sequence *via* the intermediates **2** and **4**, which we have established<sup>11,12</sup> as a general reaction pathway for the dipoles **1** with many dipolarophiles. Throughout the series of reactions, electron-withdrawing groups at the *para*-position of the phenyl



Scheme 1

isothiocyanates oriented the reaction strongly towards the C=S site, and a good correlation of the log **3**:**5** ratio with the Hammett  $\sigma_p$  value of this substituent was observed for the series with the dipole **1** [R,R = (CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>4</sub>] ( $r^2 = 0.9813$ , slope 0.7102, intercept 0.239 63). The log of this **3**:**5** ratio also correlated

**Table 1** Product distribution from reaction of **1** with *p*-substituted aryl isothiocyanates

Entry	Y ( $\sigma_p$ )	Ratio <sup>a</sup> <b>3</b> : <b>5</b>	Products					
			Comp.	Mp ( $T/^\circ\text{C}$ )	Yield (%)	Comp.	Mp ( $T/^\circ\text{C}$ )	Yield (%)
1	MeO (−0.27)	1:1	<b>3a</b>	132–134	42.5	<b>5a</b>	186–188	42.5
2	Me (−0.17)	1.3:1	<b>3b</b>	140–142	49	<b>5b</b>	209–211	37
3	H (0)	1.9:1	<b>3c</b>	140–142	58	<b>5c</b>	211–212	30
4	Cl (0.23)	2.8:1	<b>3d</b>	144–146	63.5	<b>5d</b>	213–215	22.5
5	NO <sub>2</sub> (0.78)	5.8:1	<b>3e</b>	126–128	75	<b>5e</b>	241–243	13
6	MeO	1:1.2 <sup>b</sup>	<b>9a</b>	109–111	40.5	<b>7a</b>	231–232	48.5
7	H	1.1:1 <sup>b</sup>	<b>9c</b>	126–128	52	<b>7c</b>	265–266	46.3
8	NO <sub>2</sub>	3:1 <sup>b</sup>	<b>9e</b>	98–100	60.5	<b>7e</b>	247–248	20.2
9	MeO	—	— <sup>c,d</sup>	—	—	<b>8a</b>	216–218	60
10	Me	—	— <sup>c,d</sup>	—	—	<b>8b</b>	219–221	55
11	H	—	— <sup>c,d</sup>	—	—	<b>8c</b>	227–228	65
12	Br	—	<b>10f</b>	210–211	22	<b>8f</b>	238–239	46
13	NO <sub>2</sub>	—	<b>10e</b>	209–211	44	— <sup>e</sup>	—	—

<sup>a</sup> In acetone at 20 °C. <sup>b</sup> **9**:**7** product ratio. <sup>c</sup> Not detected. In each of these reactions 2-phenyl-2*H*-phenanthro[9,10-*d*]triazole was isolated in 18–25% yield. <sup>d</sup> Reactions at 90 °C in toluene.

with the resonance enhanced  $\sigma_p$  values with lower correlation coefficient ( $r^2 = 0.9540$ , slope 0.3848, intercept 0.298 28). The products **7** were unstable and broke down to the corresponding 4,5-diphenyl-2-aryl-1,2,3-triazole **6** and a mixture of isothiocyanates on being heated or under prolonged stirring. In a previous study<sup>13</sup> with the dipoles **1** (R = Ph) this decomposition occurred unknowingly under the conditions employed which involved heating and this prevented the detection of the new ring system **7**. The new tricyclic systems **3** and **8** were more stable but with the phenanthro series heat was necessary for the reaction and the products **8** also tended to decompose to 2-phenyl-2*H*-phenanthro[9,10-*d*]triazole which was always encountered (Table 1, entries 9–13). Hence the reaction with the dipole **1** [R,R = (CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>2</sub>], which gave clean high-yield mixtures of the stable products **3** and **5**, was the most suitable for assessing the reactivity of the separate unsaturated bonds of the aryl isothiocyanate system with the triazolium-1-aminide 1,3-dipole (Table 1, entries 1–5). The product ratios (Table 1, entries 1–5) were obtained by direct analysis of the product mixture using 270 MHz proton NMR spectroscopy prior to separation. For any **3**–**5** pair the *ortho*-H atoms, H<sub>o</sub>, of the azimine moiety in **5** were about 0.1 ppm more deshielded and readily distinguished from those in **3**. These assignments and ratios were fully confirmed within experimental error ( $\pm 1\%$ ) by direct isolation of both products. The ratio quoted for the products from *p*-nitrophenyl isothiocyanate is obtained by direct separation and isolation of the products **3e** and **5e** since there was an overlap of the H<sub>o</sub> proton signals with those of the H atoms *ortho* to the NO<sub>2</sub> substituent. The results for the product series **3** and **5** were the same for reactions carried out at ambient temperatures in either of the solvents acetone, ethyl acetate, acetonitrile or toluene and product decomposition was not a problem.

### Structure of the products

The structures of the products were established from microanalyses, IR, proton, carbon-13 and nitrogen-15 NMR spectra which showed all of the expected signals. The products **9** have been previously reported<sup>13</sup> and fully characterised. The compounds **5** and **10** showed the expected similar spectral features. In these compounds the key quaternary N–C–N bridgehead carbons appear at 93–106 ppm in the carbon-13 NMR spectra and the thioamido carbon appears at 182–186 ppm. In the new fused ring systems **3** the N–C–N bridgehead appeared in the range 94–96 ppm while the S–C–N bridgehead appeared at 87–89.5 ppm. The *ortho* H-atoms of the exocyclic imino aryl group (YC<sub>6</sub>H<sub>4</sub>) of the series **3** lie under the N=C in an *endo* direction towards the bent fused bicyclic 5,5-structure and it shows exceptional shielding at 6.8–7.0 ppm in the proton NMR spectrum. In compounds **5** these *ortho* H-atoms of the YC<sub>6</sub>H<sub>4</sub> group appear in the normal aromatic envelope. In the N-15 NMR

spectra of the series **5** the imidazole N-atoms N-4 and N-6 appeared at –234 to –235 ppm (from MeNO<sub>2</sub>) while in compound **3e** the thiazole N-6 appeared at –256 ppm and the other signal was replaced by the exocyclic imino C=N at –146 ppm. All of the compounds showed the azimine nitrogens, N-1 and N-3 at –63 to –76 ppm and 2-N-Ph at –84 to –94 ppm.

### Theoretical method

All calculations were carried out using the gamess (US) program.<sup>14</sup> The aryl isothiocyanate structures were optimised with the 3-21G\* basis set using gradient methods. As there is some question as to the experimental structure of phenyl and other isothiocyanates<sup>15–17</sup> optimisations were also performed on HNCO, HNCS, MeNCO, MeNCS, PhNCO and PhNCS at the 3-21G\* and 6-31G\* levels. The results for the detailed dimensions and energy values for this series will be published separately. The main features relevant to the current synthetic work are as follows. The NCX bond angle is slightly less than linear, –175°, as has been found theoretically for many other cumulenes.<sup>18</sup> The Z–N=C bond angle varies from 125° to 180° according to species and theoretical method. In all cases the 3-21G\* basis set gives linear or near linear angles. With the 6-31G\* set, the Z–N=C angles in HNCO, MeNCO and PhNCO are 125°, 143° and 142°, while the barriers to their linear counterparts are 7, 1 and 1 kcal mol<sup>–1</sup>, respectively. Only HNCS of the thio molecules gave a bent Z–N=C angle of 142° with a barrier of 0.4 kcal mol<sup>–1</sup>. At least at the Hartree–Fock level, methyl and phenyl isothiocyanates are nearly linear, while the isocyanates are angular but with small barriers to the linear structure. Preliminary studies using large basis sets and high level correlation techniques for the H and Me molecules show similar trends, with electron correlation slightly increasing with barriers.

Since explaining the effects of substituents on the synthetic product distributions is the primary object of this study, fifteen aryl isothiocyanate structures were optimised at the 3-21G\* level. These were: H, *p*-Cl, *m*-Cl, *p*-Me, *m*-Me, *p*-CN, *m*-CN, *p*-NH<sub>2</sub>, *m*-NH<sub>2</sub>, *p*-NO<sub>2</sub>, *m*-NO<sub>2</sub>, *p*-OH, *m*-OH, *p*-COMe, *p*-OMe. From the optimised structures, bond distances and the Mulliken charges were obtained. Of particular use are the total atomic and  $\pi$  orbital charges on the N and S atoms. The  $\pi$  orbital charges were obtained by summing the charges of the two 2p<sub>z</sub> orbitals on N and the two 3p<sub>z</sub> and appropriate 3d<sub>z</sub> orbitals on S, *z* being the direction involved in the conjugated  $\pi$  system in the aryl and NCS moieties.  $\pi$  Orbital charges typically vary from zero, one and two corresponding to an empty p orbital, a one electron atomic orbital contributing to a  $\pi$  molecular orbital, and a lone pair in resonance structures, **13**, **12** and **11** for the N atom and **11**, **12** and **13** for the S atom, respectively. The calculated values of bond lengths, charges and HOMO–LUMO energies are given in Table 2.



(C=S);  $\delta_{\text{N}}$ (CDCl<sub>3</sub>) -60.7 (N-1, N-3), -89.7 (N-2), -234.2 (N-4, N-6).

**Reaction of *N*,2,4,5-tetraphenyl-2*H*-[1,2,3]triazol-1-ium-1-aminide with phenyl isothiocyanate (Entry 7, Table 1)**

A solution of **1** (R = Ph) (0.5 g, 1.29 mmol) in dry acetone (10 ml) was treated with phenyl isothiocyanate (0.17 ml, 1.4 mmol), stirred at room temperature for 4 h, evaporated under reduced pressure and the residue, in dichloromethane (3 ml), placed on a silica gel column (230–400 mesh ASTM) and eluted with a petrol (bp 40–60 °C)–diethyl ether gradient mixture. The first product from the column was 2,3a,6,6a-tetraphenyl-5-phenylimino-3a,5,6,6a-tetrahydro-3*H*-thiazolo[4,5-*d*][1,2,3]-triazol-2-ium-3-ide **7c** (0.35 g, 52%); mp 126–128 °C (EtOH) (Found: C, 75.8; H, 4.7; N, 12.9. C<sub>33</sub>H<sub>25</sub>N<sub>5</sub>S requires C, 75.7; H, 4.8; N, 13.4%);  $\delta_{\text{H}}$ (CDCl<sub>3</sub>) 8.18–8.21 (2H, d, H<sub>o</sub> of 2-N-Ph, *J* 7.3), 6.93–7.69 (23H, m, aromatic protons);  $\delta_{\text{C}}$ (CDCl<sub>3</sub>) 94.7 and 103.1 (C-3a and C-6a), 152.2, 146.4, 140.6, 140.3, 132.8, 130.0, 129.7, 129.1, 128.9, 128.6, 128.4, 128.2, 128.1, 126.7, 126.1, 124.7, 124.0, 123.3, 122.4 and 119.2 (aromatics), 157.7 (N=C).

The second product off the column was 2,3a,4,6,6a-penta-phenyl-5-thioxo-3,3a,4,5,6,6a-hexahydroimidazolo[4,5-*d*]-[1,2,3]triazol-2-ium-3-ide **9c** (0.31 g, 46%); mp 265–266 °C (EtOH) (lit.,<sup>13</sup> mp 265–266 °C) (Found: C, 75.8; H, 4.9; N, 13.05. Calcd. for C<sub>33</sub>H<sub>25</sub>N<sub>5</sub>S: C, 75.7; H, 4.8; N, 13.4%);  $\delta_{\text{H}}$ (CDCl<sub>3</sub>) 8.48–8.51 (2H, d, H<sub>o</sub> of 2-N-Ph, *J* 7.3), 6.97–7.68 (23H, m, aromatics);  $\delta_{\text{C}}$ (CDCl<sub>3</sub>) 101.1 (C-3a and C-6a), 139.9, 138.5, 135.2, 132.8, 129.5, 129.2, 128.5, 127.8, 127.7, 127.6, 127.5 and 122.9 (aromatics), 185.0 (C=S).

**Reaction of 9,10-bis(phenylazo)phenanthrene with *p*-bromophenyl isothiocyanate (Entry 12, Table 1)**

A solution of 9,10-bis(phenylazo)phenanthrene (0.4 g, 1.04 mmol) in dry toluene (20 ml) was treated with *p*-bromophenyl isothiocyanate (0.67 g, 3.12 mmol), stirred at 90 °C for 40 h, evaporated under reduced pressure and the residue, in dichloromethane (3 ml), placed on a silica gel column (230–400 mesh ASTM) and eluted with a gradient mixture of petrol (bp 40–60 °C)–dichloromethane (1:0–1:1.5 v/v). The first product from the column was 2-phenyl-2*H*-phenanthren[9,10-*d*]triazole (16%). The next product eluted off the column was 6-(*p*-bromophenyl)-2,4-diphenyl-5-thioxo-3,3a,4,5,6,6a-hexahydro-3a,6a-(biphenyl-2,2'-diyl)imidazolo[4,5-*d*][1,2,3]triazol-2-ium-3-ide **10f** (0.28 g, 46%), mp 238–239 °C (MeCN) (Found: C, 66.4; H, 3.8; N, 11.5. C<sub>33</sub>H<sub>22</sub>N<sub>5</sub>SBr requires C, 66.0; H, 3.7; N, 11.7%);  $\delta_{\text{H}}$ (CDCl<sub>3</sub>) 7.15 and 7.92 (4H, 2 × d, H<sub>m</sub> and H<sub>o</sub>, resp. of 6-N-C<sub>6</sub>H<sub>4</sub>Br, AA'BB', *J*<sub>AB</sub> 8.6), 6.80–7.53 (16H, m, aromatics), 8.24 (2H, d, H<sub>o</sub> of 2-N-Ph);  $\delta_{\text{C}}$ (CDCl<sub>3</sub>) 93.8 (C-3a), 94.1 (C-6a), 139.8, 122.7, 128.9 and 128.2 (C-1', C-2', C-3' and C-4' of 2-N-Ph), 137.5, 123.5, 129.1 and 129.4 (C-1', C-2', C-3' and C-4' of 4-N-Ph), 136.6, 123.6, 129.6 and 123.0 (C-1', C-2', C-3' and C-Br of 6-N-C<sub>6</sub>H<sub>4</sub>Br), 182.6 (C=S), remaining aromatics; 127.7, 129.7, 129.9, 131.4, 132.2, 132.4 and 133.2. One signal overlapped in the 129–132 ppm region.

This was followed from the column by 5-(*p*-bromophenyl-imino)-2,6-diphenyl-3a,5,6,6a-tetrahydro-3*H*-3a,6a-(biphenyl-2,2'-diyl)thiazolo[4,5-*d*][1,2,3]triazol-2-ium-3-ide **8f** (0.14 g, 22%), mp 210–212 °C (MeCN) (Found: C, 66.1; H, 3.6; N, 11.5. C<sub>33</sub>H<sub>22</sub>N<sub>5</sub>SBr requires C, 66.0; H, 3.7; N, 11.7%);  $\delta_{\text{H}}$ (CDCl<sub>3</sub>) 6.78 and 7.93 (4H, 2 × d, H<sub>m</sub> and H<sub>o</sub>, resp. of 5-imino-N-C<sub>6</sub>H<sub>4</sub>Br, AA'BB', *J*<sub>AB</sub> 8.2), 7.02–7.52 (16H, m, aromatics), 8.10 (2H, d, H<sub>o</sub> of 2-N-Ph);  $\delta_{\text{C}}$ (CDCl<sub>3</sub>) 91.4 (C-3a and C-6a), 140.4, 122.9, 129.1 and 127.6 (C-1', C-2', C-3' and C-4' of 2-N-Ph), 137.6, 123.6, 128.5 and 129.9 (C-1', C-2', C-3' and C-4' of 4-N-Ph), 137.1, 123.7, 127.9 and 112.9 (C-1', C-2', C-3' and C-Br of 5-imino-N-C<sub>6</sub>H<sub>4</sub>Br), 149.5 (C=N), remaining aromatics; 124.4, 129.5, 129.7, 130.4, 131.4, 131.7, 132.2 and 133.0.

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