2. Preparation of $R^3-M$ ($M = \text{MgCl, Cu, Cu}_2\text{Li}_3, \text{Ag, Ag}_2\text{Li}_3, \text{ZnCl or Zn}_2\text{Li}_3$)

The $R^3-M$ compounds shown in Tables I and II were obtained by adding an appropriate amount of $\text{MgCl}_2, \text{CuBr, AgBr(LiBr)}, \text{or ZnCl}_2$, respectively to $R^3-\text{Li}$ (0.020 mole) in THF at $-20^\circ\text{C}$ (see under 1). Stirring at this temperature was continued for 15 min. Vinylzinc chloride (0.020 mole) was obtained by stirring a solution of $\text{H}_2\text{C=C-MgBr}$ (0.020 mole) with $\text{ZnCl}_2$ (0.020 mole) for 30 min at 0°C in THF (40 ml). The zinc compound $\text{HC=C-ZnCl}$ (0.020 mole) was prepared by stirring, $\text{HC=C-MgCl}$ (0.020 mole) with $\text{ZnCl}_2$ (0.020 mole) at 25°C, in THF (40 ml). The resulting solutions were used as such.

3. General procedure for the conversion of 1 and 4 into 2

To a stirred solution of $R^3-M$ (0.020 mole: $M = \text{Li, MgCl, Cu, Ag or ZnCl}; 0.010$ mole: $M = \text{Cu}_2\text{Li}_3, \text{Ag}_2\text{Li}_3$ or $\text{Zn}_2\text{Li}_3$) in THF (40 ml: $R^3 = \text{H}; 120$ ml: $R^3 = \text{HC=C-C=C-}$) were subsequently added, at $-20^\circ\text{C}, \text{Pd[PPh_3]_4}$ (0.02 M solution in THF; for amounts see Tables I and II) and substrates 1 (0.020 mole) or 4 (0.020 mole). Stirring of the resulting mixture was continued for the periods and at the temperatures indicated in Tables I and II. The reaction mixture was poured into a saturated aqueous solution of $\text{NH}_4\text{Cl}$ (containing $\text{NaCN (~1 g)}$ when $M$ was $\text{Cu, Cu}_2\text{Li}_3, \text{Ag or Ag}_2\text{Li}_3$). The products were isolated by extraction with pentane (3 x 75 ml); after washing the combined extracts and drying with $\text{MgSO}_4$ the solvent was evaporated in vacuo. The residue was distilled; when $R^3$ was $\text{PhC=C or HC=C-C=C-}$, purification was performed by column chromatography ($\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3 + 5\% \text{H}_2\text{O}/\text{hexane}$). Physical constants and characteristic spectroscopic data for allenes 2 are given in Table III.

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### Preliminary Communications

#### A Molecular Cation Channel

A.J.M. van Beijnen, R.J.M. Nolte, J.W. Zwikker and W. Drenth

Laboratory for Organic Chemistry, University at Utrecht, Croesestraat 79, 3502 AD Utrecht, The Netherlands

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Abstract. A polymer of an isocyanide, [R-N=C<]$_n$, has been synthesized in which R contains a benzo-18-crown-6 group. The crown ether rings are situated on top of each other and form channels which bind metal ions.

In this communication we report on the construction of a synthetic molecular cation channel. This system might serve as a model for a molecular channel in biological membranes. The model system is a polymer of an isocyanide. Polymers of isocyanides, called poly(iminomethylene)s or poly(carbonimidoyls), [R-N=C<]$_n$, are prepared from isocyanides by the catalytic action of nickel(II) salts. Their structure is very regular and rigid. The polymer chain is a tightly coiled helix with four repeating units per helical turn (Figure 1). Poly[α-phenylethyl-iminomethylene], Ia, has extensively been studied both by Millich and by us. In this polymer the side chains form four stacks which run parallel to the polymer helix axis. In these stacks the phenyl groups are situated on top of each other and are locked in this position by the tight structure of the polymer chain. If the phenyl groups are part of a crown ether ring system, like in Ib, these crowns are on top of each other and form four channels (Figure 2). Polymer Ib was prepared as shown in Scheme 1. Starting material is 4-acetylbenzo-18-crown-
which corresponds to 40 repeating units. The keto function in the latter compound was converted into a formamide group by means of a Leuckart reaction. Formamide 2 was dehydrated with phosphorus oxychloride and base to give isocyanide 3. The isocyanide was purified by column chromatography. Polymerization was performed by heating the monomer neat at 90°C for 5 days with 3 mol % of NiCl₂·6H₂O. The molecular weight of the polymer amounted to M̅ = 15,000, which corresponds to 40 repeating units.

Copolymers of α-phenylethyl isocyanide and crown ether containing isocyanide 3 were prepared by reacting mixtures of the monomers with NiCl₂·6H₂O at 25-30°C for 5 days. The polymerization product was worked up as indicated in Ref. 10. The reddish glassy polymerization product was worked up by dissolving it in chloroform. The latter solution was extracted v/w with water, concentrated to a smaller volume, and added dropwise to a well-stirred mixture of crown ether containing isocyanide 3 the data for this compound are taken from Ref. 6.

Acknowledgement. We thank Professor D.J. Cram for his interest and Mrs. Vera Kaats-Richters for experimental assistance.

References and Notes

1. A solid state model of a K⁺ channel has very recently been reported: D.F. Behr, J.-M. Leh, A.C. Dook and D. Mora, Nature 295, 526 (1982).
9. Woelm W 200 neutral alumina, eluent diethyl ether-ethyl acetate, 1:1 v/v. Yield 80% of colorless oil: ¹H NMR (CDCl₃) δ: 1.62 (m, 3H, CH₃); 3.67 (s, 4H), 3.73 (s, 1H), 4.15 (m, 4H), crown ether protons; 4.74 (m, 1H, CH); 6.09 (s, 3H, ArH); IR (neat) 2138 cm⁻¹ (NC), 1260 and 1100 cm⁻¹ (CO).
10. The redish glassy polymerization product was worked up by dissolving it in chloroform. The latter solution was extracted with water, concentrated to a smaller volume, and added dropwise to a well-stirred mixture of diethyl ether- n-hexane (1:1, v/v). The flocks precipitate was filtered, washed with diethyl ether- n-hexane (1:1, v/v) and dried to give pale yellow polymer. Yield 75%; [ν] 0.031 (toluene, 30.00°C); Mw = 15,000 (see Ref. 11); IR (KBr) 1625 cm⁻¹, 1386 (1980).
12. In a representative experiment 1.3 g (3.5 mmol) of 3 and 1.1 g (8.4 mmol) of α-phenylethyl isocyanide were heated with 3 mol % of NiCl₂·6H₂O at 40°C for 5 days. The polymerization product was worked up as indicated for lb. Yield 1.0 g of yellow polymer; [ν] 0.17 (toluene, 30°C); Mw = 42,000 (see Ref. 11); IR (KBr) 1625 cm⁻¹ (NC), 1260 and 1100 cm⁻¹ (CO). Anal. Calcd. for C₁₉H₁₇NO₇: C, 62.45; H, 7.45; N, 3.83; O, 26.27. Found: C, 62.13; H, 7.19; N, 3.96; O, 26.72.
14. Calculated from the number of repeating units and the distance between these units (0.1 nm, from Ref. 2).