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Authors
Feather, David H.
Budiler, Alfred.

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David H. Feather and Alfred Büchler

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GASEOUS THALLIUM (I) METABORATE AND THALLIUM (I) ALUMINUM FLUORIDE

David H. Feather and Alfred Büchler

Inorganic Materials Research Division, Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory, and Department of Materials Science and Engineering, College of Engineering, University of California, Berkeley, California 94720

While all the thallium (I) halides have been studied, only two gaseous ternary compounds of monovalent thallium, thallium (I) nitrate and thallium (I) sulfate, have been reported so far. The purpose of this work was to extend the range of known gaseous ternary compounds of thallium (I) and to compare their mass spectrometric behavior to that of the corresponding alkali compounds. We have therefore examined the vapors above thallium (I) metaborate and an equimolar mixture of thallium (I) fluoride and aluminum fluoride.

Samples of thallium metaborate, thallium fluoride and aluminum fluoride were obtained from Research Organic/Inorganic Chemical Corporation. Mass spectra were run on an Atlas CH-4 mass spectrometer. The samples were contained in platinum-lined nickel effusion cells. Mass spectra obtained are shown in Tables 1 and 2.

The mass spectrum of thallium metaborate (Table 1) is similar to that of the alkali metaborates. Both thallium metaborate monomer, TlBO₂, and dimer, Tl₂(BO₂)₂, are present in the vapor, the latter identified by means of the fragment ion Tl₂BO₂⁺. The different temperature dependence of Tl₂BO₂⁺ and TlBO₂⁺ showed the latter to be the monomer parent ion rather than a dimer fragment. The dimer parent ion Tl₂(BO₂)₂⁺ was not found; it was present to the extent of less than one part in 400 of the fragment ion Tl₂BO₂⁺. It may be noted that for gaseous thallium nitrate
-2-
dimer the fragment ion \( \text{Tl}_2\text{NO}_3^+ \) was the only ion observed. \(^2\) In this respect the two thallium pseudohalides resemble the alkali halides and pseudohalides, whose mass spectra only show dimer fragment ions \( \text{M}_2\text{X}^+ \) and differ from the thallium halides, whose mass spectra contain dimer parent ions \( \text{Tl}_2\text{X}_2^+ \). \(^2\) The monomer-dimer ratio in thallium metabolborate vapor is difficult to establish since the thallium ion, which one would otherwise suppose to be a fragment of the monomer, had an appearance potential of 6 eV showing the presence of free thallium in the vapor.

Turning now to the mass spectrum of the vapor above the \( \text{TlF}-\text{AlF}_3 \) mixture, (Table 2), we see that the mixed thallium aluminum fluoride, \( \text{TlAlF}_4 \), is indeed present. Its existence was in fact suggested by the observation of the corresponding indium compound, \( \text{InAlF}_4 \), in work on the reduction of \( \text{AlF}_3 \) by indium. \(^5\) In addition, the presence of the ion \( \text{Tl}_2\text{AlF}_4^+ \) shows the existence of a higher polymer. In analogy with the assignment of the corresponding ions in the \( \text{LiF}-\text{AlF}_3 \) and \( \text{NaF}-\text{AlF}_3 \) systems, \(^6\) we are inclined to assign this ion to the double dimer \( \text{Tl}_2(\text{AlF}_4)_2 \). The presence of the mixed trimer, \( \text{Tl}_2\text{AlF}_5 \), however, cannot be ruled out. In the case of \( \text{TlAlF}_4 \), the parent ion, \( \text{TlAlF}_4^+ \), is present in the mass spectrum, in contrast to \( \text{LiAlF}_4 \) and \( \text{NaAlF}_4 \), in whose mass spectra only the fragments \( \text{LiAlF}_3^+ \) and \( \text{NaAlF}_3^+ \) are observed. The difference in behavior between the two sets of compounds may be explained by the recent work of Berkowitz. \(^7,8\) In interpreting the photoelectron spectra of \( \text{TlCl} \) and \( \text{TlBr} \) he concluded that the highest-lying orbital is a thallium s-orbital, in agreement with the calculations of Hastie \(^9\) and Cusachs. \(^10\) In Berkowitz's interpretation \( \text{TlCl} \) and \( \text{TlBr} \) are essentially ionic compounds, and removal of the thallium s-electron on ionization will actually
strengthen the ionic bond, the ion formed being effectively $\text{Tl}^{++}\text{X}^-$. Removal of a halogen p-electron (the next highest orbital, but with an appearance potential below that of the thallium s-orbital) removes the charge on the halogen and leads to the fragment ion $\text{Tl}^+$. 

This analysis may be extended to $\text{TlAlF}_4$ and the alkali aluminum fluorides if we assume that the mixed thallium halide has the same structure as $\text{NaAlF}_3$, which has two bridging fluorine atoms between the sodium and aluminum atoms. Removal of a thallium s-electron leads to the parent ion $\text{TlAlF}_4^+$, whereas no such process is possible in the alkali compounds. Removal of a bridging fluorine p-electron, on the other hand, leads to the fragment ions $\text{MAlF}_3^+$ in both the thallium and the alkali compounds.

The general similarity of the thallium compounds to the corresponding alkali compounds suggests a bridge structure for the thallium halide dimers similar to that of the lithium halide dimers. A linear structure $\text{X-Tl-Tl-X}$ is unlikely if the constituent Tl-X units are ionic, and the fact the ion $\text{Tl}_2^+$ is observed in the mass spectrum may be due to simple rearrangement: it has been shown that the ion $\text{Cs}_2^+$ in the mass spectrum of cesium sulfate vapor arises from the dissociative ionization of $\text{Cs}_2\text{SO}_4$, in which the cesium atoms are presumably located at opposite ends of the sulfate group.

This work was done under the auspices of the U. S. Atomic Energy Commission.
REFERENCES

5. A. Büchler and J. L. Stauffer, unpublished work.
Table 1. Mass Spectrum of Vapor Above Thallium (I) Metaborate at 634C (70 volt ionizing electrons)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ion</th>
<th>Relative Intensity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tl⁺</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>TlO⁺</td>
<td>0.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TlBO⁺</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>TlBO₂⁺</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tl₂⁺</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tl₂O⁺</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tl₂BO₂⁺</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Table 2. Mass Spectrum of Vapor Above an Equimolar Thallium (I) Fluoride-Aluminum Fluoride Mixture at 413C (70 volt ionizing electrons)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tl⁺</td>
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<td>TlF⁺</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tl₂₂AlF₄⁺</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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