

FINDING THE ELUSIVE IODOCARBENE: FLUORESCENCE EXCITATION AND SINGLE VIBRONIC LEVEL EMISSION SPECTROSCOPY OF CHI

C. TAO, C. EBBEN, H. T. KO AND S. A. REID, *Department of Chemistry, Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI 53233*; Z. WANG AND T. J. SEARS, *Department of Chemistry, Brookhaven National Laboratory, Upton, NY 11973*.

Among the triatomic halocarbenes, only the iodicarbene remain to be characterized. The search for these elusive species is motivated by a controversy regarding the multiplicity of the ground state. Photoelectron spectra of Lineberger and co-workers^a suggest a triplet ground state for CHI, at variance with recent *ab initio* studies, which suggest a singlet ground state with a singlet-triplet gap of around 4 kcal mol⁻¹. In this work, we have succeeded in finding the spectra of CHI and its deuterated isotopomer using pulsed discharge jet spectroscopy. Rotationally resolved fluorescence excitation spectra are consistent with a singlet-singlet transition, and the derived rotational constants are in good agreement with theoretical predictions. Single vibronic level emission spectra confirm a singlet multiplicity for the ground state, and reveal extensive mixing of the singlet and triplet levels at higher energy. We are able to set a lower limit on the singlet-triplet gap of 4.1 kcal mol⁻¹, in excellent agreement with theory. Extrapolation of the observed bending levels for CHI and CDI to a common origin suggests that the origin of the A^1A'' state lies near 10 500 cm⁻¹, and we will report on high resolution measurements near the electronic origin made at Brookhaven National Laboratory.

^aM. K. Gilles, K. M. Ervin, J. Ho, and W. C. Lineberger, *J. Phys. Chem.* 96, 1130 (1992).