THE AIR AFTERGLOW REVISTED

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FREDERICK KAUFMAN

SRCC REPORT NO. 181

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

OCTOBER 1972
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The Center is supported by an Institutional Grant (NsG-416) from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, strongly supplemented by grants from the A.W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust, the Maurice Falk Medical Fund, the Richard King Mellon Foundation and the Sarah Mellon Scaife Foundation. Much of the work described in SRCC reports is financed by other grants, made to individual faculty members.
THE AIR AFTERGLOW REVISITED

Frederick Kaufman

(Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference on Chemiluminescence, Plenum Press, to be published)

Sponsored by
The Office of Aerospace Research, USAF, Project No. CRL-01883, and by the Advanced Research Projects Agency ARPA Order No. 826

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University of Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

October 1972

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A. INTRODUCTION

To begin with a little soul-searching: the fact that science and technology are advancing at an ever accelerating rate, while both the number of investigators working in a given field and their level of support are at best leveling off, has put us in a new bind. Blessed with marvellous gadgets of all types, photomultipliers capable of detecting a few light quanta, tunable lasers of great power, narrow spectral width, and ultrashort repetitive flash duration, with ultrahigh vacuum techniques and ultrafast time resolution, with a bulging arsenal of analytical methods for measuring neutral or charged species in specific quantum states, etc., etc., our ability to study physical and chemical processes ever more minutely appears to be without limit. This widens immensely the discrepancy between what is doable technologically and what can actually be undertaken, particularly when we remember how expensive most of our new 'toys' are. The bind is, then, the increasing selectivity which we must exercise in our choice of systems and problems to work on, since neither the 'Everest' justification ('because it is there') nor the 'Part XXIV in a series of continuing studies' justification is quite good enough.

Serendipitously, it turns out that the air afterglow - the O + NO chemiluminescence - is a fine example of a system well worth studying for many reasons ranging from environmental and societal to purely scientific. Very

*This work was supported by the Department of the Air Force under Contract No. F19628-70-C-0255 and by the Advanced Research Projects Agency of the Department of Defense and was monitored by U.S. Army Research Office-Durham under Contract No. DA-31-124-ARO-D-440.
briefly, these are as follows:

(1) The phenomenon is observed in the normal and perturbed upper atmosphere\(^1\) where its potential usefulness in measuring the local or column integrated \([O][NO]\) product has not yet been fully realized;

(2) It is an extremely sensitive monitor of either \(O\) - or \(NO\) - concentrations wherever one or the other is known and has therefore been successfully used in laboratory \(O\)-atom kinetic studies\(^2\) for about 15 years, but is equally applicable to \(NO\) measurements in combustion and pollution studies, where it may sometimes be preferred over its much more weakly emitting sister-reaction, \(O_3 + NO\);

(3) Following the work of Fontijn, Meyer, and Schiff,\(^3\) it has become a secondary actinometric standard for the study of other glows in the visible or near ultraviolet, a function which is now being expanded in our laboratories to the infrared; and

(4) As a fundamental chemiluminescent system it is one of the best characterized, most thoroughly studied, and represents an opportunity to analyze and resolve in a small system the increasingly insoluble problems of larger molecules. The present review will first attempt to bring the reader up to date on the recent results of direct experimental studies and then to discuss and interpret these results in the light of supporting work on the spectrum, fluorescence, photodissociation, and quantum theoretical calculations of \(NO_2\).

B. REVIEW OF EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS

B. 1. The Pressure Dependence

The once raging battle whether the \(O + NO\) chemiluminescence is a truly bimolecular radiative recombination whose rate constant, \(I_0 = I/[O][NO]\), is pressure independent or whether it is principally a termolecular process at its high pressure limit (even at as low a pressure as 1 Torr because of the long
radiative lifetime of \( \text{NO}_2^* \) which requires \( I_0 \) to fall off with decreasing pressure; this battle is now ended. \( I_0 \) does decrease, but does not do so indefinitely. It apparently levels off again at very low pressures \((\leq 10^{-4} \text{ torr})\) in what appears to be a compromise solution of the problem, albeit one which requires about 90% termolecular and only 10% bimolecular character. This experimental result is much more satisfactorily represented by a model which involves the bimolecular formation of an unstabilized \( \text{NO}_2^* \) collision complex followed by vibrational energy transfer within \( \text{NO}_2^* \), electronic energy transfer to ground-state \( \text{NO}_2 \), (both of them collisional processes), or spontaneous radiative decay to \( \text{NO}_2 \), with the exact nature of \( \text{NO}_2^* \) to be discussed later.

The experimental basis for this interpretation is shown in Fig. 1 which shows an approximate summary of all work on pressure-dependence on a logarithmic pressure scale, arbitrarily normalized (and extended) to "high" pressure. Its chronology is not without irony. In 1964, both Harteck's\(^4\) and Jonathan's\(^5\) groups reported pressure independence down to 3 millitorr, but this was challenged by Kelso and myself\(^6\) on the basis of experiments in a 2.5 cm diameter flow tube down to 30 millitorr. A few additional experiments of Harteck's group\(^7\) seemed to confirm the pressure independence, but Jonathan and Petty's\(^8\) measurements in flow tubes of 2.5, 5.0, and 12 cm diameters clearly showed a fall-off in \( I_0 \). On the other hand, our early measurements undoubtedly overshot the mark, i.e. showed too large a fall-off due to diffusion and surface recombination effects. All other recent studies have shown good agreement on the decrease of \( I_0 \) with decreasing pressure. McKenzie and Thrush\(^9\) studied pressure and M-effects from 10 to 100 millitorr and their points in Fig. 1 were obtained from their Stern-Volmer type expression (they refer to Ar carrier gas whereas all others refer to M=O\(_2\)), and the extensive work of Becker et al,\(^10,11\) first in a 200 liter and then in a 2x10\(^5\) liter sphere, and that of Cody\(^12\) in my laboratory.
span the much larger pressure range of 0.1 to 100 millitorr.

Our data were obtained in a 15 cm diameter flow tube pumped by any suitable combination of forepump (15 lit/sec), Roots blower (130 lit/sec), and 6 inch oil diffusion pump (about 700 lit/sec with cooled baffle). The emission was viewed by a cooled photomultiplier through any one of 12 interference filters from 4050 to 7850Å, 6 of which could be mounted on a filterwheel. The O-atom concentration was measured by resonance absorption near 1300Å across the flow tube at the same axial position where the chemiluminescence signal was obtained in order to avoid assumptions regarding the catalytic behavior of surfaces over large pressure ranges. Fig. 2 shows a schematic diagram of the apparatus.

The points plotted in Fig. 1 should have variable but reasonably large error bars (+10 to 30%) attached to them, but it is abundantly clear that a substantial fall-off exists and that the two most extensive studies, at Bonn and Pittsburgh, are in excellent agreement. It should also be said that only the points and curve of Becker, Groth, and Thran represent $I_0$ values, properly integrated across the emission spectrum, but since substantially smaller fall-off ratios only occur at the blue end of the spectrum (see B. 3 below) which contributes relatively little to the total emission, the comparison of Fig. 1 is valid.

B. 2. The M-Dependence

This question is complementary to that of the pressure dependence, because, in a truly bimolecular recombination, there is, of course, no M-effect, and in a termolecular one (or in a vibrational energy transfer sequence) it would be astonishing and improbable if there were none. It should be emphasized, however, that large M-effects would be unlikely, since one really observes the ratio of two M-effects, that for the termolecular formation of an $\text{NO}_2^*$ (or its
vibrational relaxation in the energy transfer mechanism) to that for electronic quenching of NO₂*, and although it is unlikely that the relative efficiencies of different M should be the same in the two processes (leading to no effect) it is also likely that, for the simple atoms and molecules investigated, there should be some parallelism and partial cancellation leading to small M-effects.

Experimental data are shown in Table I which includes our earlier results and various other entries. Surprisingly good agreement abounds, when one considers the small magnitude of the relative effect, except for the results of ref. 7 which show no M-effect as well as no pressure dependence. The entries for ref. 11 are their normalized d/q ratios for λ=4450Å and for 5600 or 6320Å where a second value is given. If the truly bimolecular part of I₀ and the radiative lifetime of NO₂* are considered constant in these experiments, d/q equals the ratio of k_{M}^{0}, the termolecular rate constant for the formation of NO₂* to its quenching rate constant, k_{q}^{M}. The results of McKenzie and Thrush⁹ also lend qualitative support to the findings of an M-effect as, for example, in the ratio I₀ (green)/I₀ (blue) which, when normalized as p → 0, approaches high pressure values in the order Ar > O₂ > CO₂, N₂O, CH₄ > SF₆.

### TABLE I

Relative Emission Efficiencies, R_{M}^{0} = I₀_{M}/I₀^{O₂}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>M</th>
<th>Ref. 6</th>
<th>Ref. 7</th>
<th>Ref. 11 (a)</th>
<th>Other Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>He</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>1.28, 1.30</td>
<td>1.25¹³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ne</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ar</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>1.0¹³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N₂</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H₂</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE I (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>M</th>
<th>Ref. 6</th>
<th>Ref. 7</th>
<th>Ref. 11 (a)</th>
<th>Other Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CO₂</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>0.74, 0.79</td>
<td>0.75³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N₂O</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CH₄</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CF₄</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SF₆</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>0.52, 0.51</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H₂O</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) First value: λ=4450Å; second value: λ=6320Å (He), λ=5600Å (CO₂, SF₆)

B. 3. The Spectral Dependence on p and M

Recent data of the pressure shift of the emission spectrum and of fairly monochromatic fall-off measurements which provide \( I_o \lambda(p) \) over a wide pressure range represent the clearest proof for the correctness of the termolecular/energy transfer mechanism. This was first shown qualitatively by Freedman and Kelso\(^1\) in my former laboratory, then by McKenzie and Thrush,\(^9\) and in much greater detail by Becker et al\(^11\) and by Cody.\(^12\) The overall spectrum shifts towards the blue with decreasing pressure, i.e. although the spectral threshold remains unchanged, the relative intensities increase at the short wavelength end and decrease at long wavelengths. There is a concomitant change in the fall-off characteristics of \( I_o \lambda(p) \) which is also a function of M, such that there is increasing fall-off as \( \lambda \) is increased from its threshold near 3970Å, as predicted by the energy transfer mechanism, since \( NO_2^* \) molecules which have lost some of their vibrational energy can not emit radiation at the blue end of the spectrum. Conversely, the emission very close to 3970Å must come mainly.
from unstabilized NO$_2$* and should therefore show no fall-off. This is supported by the recent data of Becker et al$^{11}$ and of Cody$^{12}$ as shown in Table II. Considering the very different experimental techniques, the agreement is very good.

### Table II

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>$\lambda$, Å</th>
<th>3980</th>
<th>4030</th>
<th>4050</th>
<th>4360</th>
<th>4450</th>
<th>4700</th>
<th>5360</th>
<th>5600</th>
<th>5660</th>
<th>6320</th>
<th>7250</th>
<th>Ref.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$I_0^\lambda(p\rightarrow\infty)$/$I_0^\lambda(p\rightarrow\Omega)$</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>4.52</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data of Becker et al are probably more accurate, but the discrepancy at the long wavelength end is due at least partly to the manner of extrapolation from the highest pressures used in these experiments, which was near 100 millitorr in both studies, to $I_0^\lambda(p\rightarrow\infty)$ which should be reached near 1 torr. This amounted to 25-30% in Becker's and to about 15% in our studies. For the spectrally integrated $I_0^\lambda$ ratio Becker et al report 15.2 which represents a considerable further increase over a value of about 12.5 at their lowest measured pressure of 0.2 millitorr. This leads them to set $I_0^\lambda = 4.2 \times 10^{-18}$ cm$^3$ molecule$^{-1}$ sec$^{-1}$ for the rate constant of the purely two-body process by normalization to the high pressure $I_0$ of $6.4 \times 10^{-17}$ by Fontijn et al$^{3}$. Although all of our data have not yet been fully analyzed, we would favor an integrated $I_0^\lambda$ ratio in the 10-12 range.

A spectral $M$-dependence was first seen qualitatively by Freedman and Kelso$^{15}$ at high pressures, and recently in much greater detail by Becker et al$^{11}$. In terms of the energy transfer mechanism, such a dependence of spectrally resolved fall-off curves on $M$ is, of course, absolutely required if a total,
integrated M-effect exists as the data in Table I seem to indicate. Since the residual, low pressure, truly bimolecular emission process can not depend on M and must therefore be identical in all gas mixtures, this high pressure M-effect suggests different efficiencies for vibrational energy transfer for different M in such a way that an M for which R in Table I is greater than 1 (such as He) should have larger spectrally resolved fall-off ratios in the red, and an M such as SF₆ should have smaller ones. Thus, ref. 11 reports a $I_0^λ(p^∞)/I_0^λ(p^0)$ of 8.45 for CO₂ and 5.8 for SF₆ at 5600 Å compared to 10.5 for O₂, but one of 17.2 for He at 6320 Å compared with 13.5 for O₂. The mechanistic picture appears to be entirely consistent with the available experimental data.

B. 4. The Temperature Dependence

The temperature dependence has been experimentally studied only at high pressures, first by Clyne and Thrush¹³ between 200 and 300 K who reported, for $M=O₂$, $I_0^∞ = 5 \times 10^{-18} \exp\left[(1500 \pm 400)/RT\right] \text{cm}^3 \text{molecule}^{-1} \text{sec}^{-1}$ or an analogous $T^{-n}$ expression of $6.4 \times 10^{-17} (T/300)^{-3 \pm 0.8}$. Hartunian et al.¹⁶ covered the range 500 - 1200 K in their glow discharge shock tube experiments and reported a somewhat lesser negative temperature dependence of $T^{-1.55}$ in $T^{-n}$ form but a somewhat larger exponential dependence of $\exp(2200/RT)$. Parkes¹⁷ studied the temperature dependence for $M=O₂$, He, Ar, CF₄, and SF₆ at 1.5 torr from 170 to 370 K in a simple, yet accurate flowtube experiment with three matched photomultiplier tubes of which one viewed the chemiluminescence at a position whose temperature was varied, while the other two simultaneously measured the intensity at 300 K up-and downstream of that position. This provided accurate intensity ratios as the temperature of the center section was varied slowly and continuously. Neither a pure $T^{-n}$ nor an $\exp(E/RT)$ gave a fully satisfactory fit, but a two parameter expression $T^{-m} \exp(-300/RT)$ provided a good description with
m=2.50 for O₂, 2.65 for He and Ar, and 1.90 for CF₄ and SF₆, which predicts that in the 900 to 1200°K range the emission will have equal intensity for all 5 M-gases. This effect can be qualitatively ascribed to the increasing probability of re-excitation of vibrationally quenched NO₂⁺ at higher temperatures and to unequal energy increments in the vibrational ladder.

Vanpee et al. recently reported a new measurement of the integrated rate constant I₀∞ of 6.8 x 10⁻¹⁷ cm³ molecule⁻¹ sec⁻¹ ± 35% for M=O₂ and N₂ in a free jet at 367°K at pressures near 1 torr. They also reported a greater contribution of near infrared radiation to the spectrum which is responsible for a 12% increase in the spectrally integrated I₀∞ under otherwise identical conditions. With this correction and the above temperature dependence measured by Parkes, a value of (9.3 ± 3.2) x 10⁻¹⁷ is obtained for comparison with that of (6.4 ± 1.9) x 10⁻¹⁷ of Fontijn et al. at 296°K.

B. 5. Infrared Measurements

The absolute intensity measurements of Fontijn et al. extended to 1.4μm where the signal was found to be negligible, but this was primarily a detectability problem. Since then, the infrared chemiluminescence and vibraluminescence has been studied by Stair and Kennealy who measured the emission spectrum to 7μm using Fourier interferometer spectroscopy and found a considerably stronger infrared component of the emission than the earlier workers. I₀∞ decreased about 20 fold from 1.25 to 3.3μm, but then increased about 3 fold to a peak at 3.7μm and fell sharply to near zero at 4.0μm. Vanpee's spectral measurements to 2.0μm are in qualitative agreement with the more extensive work of Stair and Kennealy, but they indicate a somewhat too great intensity decrease between 1.2 and 2.0μm.

Roche and Golde in my laboratory are now doing absolute intensity measurements using liquid nitrogen cooled PbS and InSb detectors and a circularly variable
filter for spectral dispersion. Preliminary results at total pressures from 0.3 to 3 torr are in good agreement with Stair's results on the spectral distribution including the peak at 3.7\(\mu\)m and suggest a larger absolute rate constant in the overlapping 1.0 to 1.5\(\mu\)m range than either Fontijn or Vanpee.

C. DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

C. 1. The NO\(_2^*\) Energy Transfer Model

It is clear from the preceding sections that either simultaneous two-body and three-body recombination (Model I) or the two-body formation of an unstabilized NO\(_2^*\) collision complex followed by vibrational, electronic, and radiative processes (Model II) can be used in the interpretation of experimental data. Model I can be set down as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{NO} + 0 & \rightarrow \frac{1}{k_1} \text{NO}_2 + h\nu \\
\text{NO} + 0 + M & \rightarrow \frac{2}{k_2} \text{NO}_2^* + M \\
\text{NO}_2^* + M & \rightarrow \frac{3}{k_3} \text{NO}_2 + M \\
\text{NO}_2^* & \rightarrow R \rightarrow \text{NO}_2 + h\nu
\end{align*}
\]

which, with NO\(_2^*\) in steady state, yields

\[
I_0^M = k_1 + \frac{k_2}{k_R} \frac{[M]}{k_3 + [M]} 
\]

(1)

with limiting values \(I_0^M(p\rightarrow 0) = k_1\) and \(I_0^M(p\rightarrow \infty) = k_1 + (k_2k_R/k_3)\) i.e. a fall-off ratio of \(1 + (k_2k_R/k_3k_1)\). Although \([M]\) has cancelled out in this expression, the fall-off is, of course, M-dependent, since the rate constants \(k_2\) and \(k_3\) will be different for different M, and should perhaps have better been labelled \(k_2^M\) and \(k_3^M\). In this, its simplest form, Model I is unsatisfactory as most Stern-Volmer type models, because it recognizes only a single energy level
in the excited state and can therefore not explain spectral shifts due to p or M.

In this form it may be compared with Stern-Volmer data on NO₂ fluorescence quenching\(^1\), and the second term of eq. 1 can be re-written \(k_2[M]/(1+a[M])\), where \(a = k_3/k_R\) is the quenching constant, on the (unreasonable) assumption that the same single excited state is reached in both processes. Model I can now be generalized by allowing for a large number of levels in NO₂\(^*\), summing over all of their steady state concentrations and introducing \(k_{21}^M\) and \(k_{31}^M\) as well as \(k_R\). With that number of adjustable parameters, one could, of course, explain the spectral p and M dependence as well as pressure fall-off plots as complex as the silhouette of a giraffe or the oboe part of the first movement of Beethoven’s Seventh. Yet, some physical unreasonableness would remain in this complicated model, since it would require that all levels of NO₂\(^*\) have to be formed and quenched in single collisions, no matter how large the energy gap between them and the NO + O continuum or the NO₂ ground state, i.e. it retains the “strong collision” approximation.

Model II relies on a stepladder process of vibrational energy transfer:

\[
\begin{align*}
O + NO & \xrightarrow{V_0} NO₂^* \xrightarrow{-V_0} NO₂ + \nu \\
NO₂^* & \xrightarrow{E_0} NO₂ + M \\
& \xrightarrow{R_0} NO₂ \ + \ \nu \\
NO₂^* & \xrightarrow{V_1} NO₂^* + M \\
& \xrightarrow{E_1} NO₂ + M \\
& \xrightarrow{R_1} NO₂ \ + \ \nu \\
\end{align*}
\]
where the collision complex, \( \text{NO}_2^{*0} \), is capable of rapid redissociation, \( k_{-1} \), in addition to three other modes of transformation, \( V \) (vibrational energy transfer), \( E \) (electronic energy transfer), and \( R \) (spontaneous radiation). If now, in the simplest approximation, all \( V_i \) are set equal, \( V_i = V \), all \( E_i = E \), and all \( R_i = R \), the steady state approximation is applied to all \( \text{NO}_2^{*i} \), and (very reasonably) \( k_{-1} \gg (V[M], E[M], R) \), (to avoid having a flood of subscripted k's, the rate constants are labelled V, E, and R), one obtains, setting \( k_{-1}/k_1 = K \),

\[
I_0(p) = KR \left[ 1 + \frac{1}{1+S+X} + \left( \frac{1}{1+S+X} \right)^2 + \cdots + \left( \frac{1}{1+S+X} \right)^n \right] \tag{2}
\]

where \( S = E/V \), \( X = R/(V[M]) \), and \( n \) is the number of vibrational levels which are able to radiate at a given emission wavelength, i.e. \( n = 1 + (v_0 - v_\lambda)/\Delta v_V \) with \( v_0 = 25,160 \) cm\(^{-1}\), the full \( O + NO \) bond energy, \( v_\lambda \) the reciprocal of the emitted wavelength, and \( \Delta v_V \) the average vibrational energy (cm\(^{-1}\)) transferred per collision with M. It must be pointed out that, in addition to all other simplifications, eq. 2 neglects the spectral difference of the \( I_0^{*i} \) contributions coming from the different \( \text{NO}_2^{*i} \) and therefore does not explicitly show the spectral pressure shift. As \( p \to \infty \), \( X \to 0 \), so that the model predicts \( I_0^{*i}(p \to \infty)/I_0^{*i}(p \to 0) \) ratios to equal \( 1 + 1/(S+1) + \cdots + 1/(S+1)^n = (1-B^n)/(1-B) \) where \( B = 1/(S+1) = V/(E+V) \), and, for \( n \to \infty \) the ratio approaches \( 1 + (V/E) \).

Model II was first proposed by Keyser, Kaufman, and Zipf\(^{22} \) on the basis of \( \text{NO}_2 \) fluorescence studies in which \( E \) and \( V \) were fitted to data on monochromatic, steady excitation of \( \text{NO}_2 \) with monochromatic fluorescence intensity measurements, and \( R \) was measured by the phase shift method using modulated excitation\(^{23} \). As applied to the \( O + NO \) chemiluminescence, it predicted surprisingly accurately the now experimentally observed fall-off ratio of about 10 for the spectrally integrated, high pressure emission rate constant, \( I_0^{*i} \), to its low pressure limit.
It was also used by Becker et al.\textsuperscript{11} to extract information on the magnitudes of $E$, $V$, and $\Delta \nu_V$ from their fall-off data, i.e. $E = 2 \times 10^{-12}$ cm$^3$ molecule$^{-1}$ sec$^{-1}$, $V = 2 \times 10^{-10}$ cm$^3$ molecule$^{-1}$ sec$^{-1}$, and $\Delta \nu_0 \sim 800$ cm$^{-1}$, based on a radiative lifetime of 60$\mu$sec for NO$_2^*$. Similar analysis of Cody's\textsuperscript{12} data appears to give $V = (1$ to $2) \times 10^{-10}$, $E \sim 1 \times 10^{-11}$ cm$^3$ molecule$^{-1}$ sec$^{-1}$ and $\Delta \nu_V \sim 500$ to 1000 cm$^{-1}$.

The model does, of course, correctly predict the decreasing values of the spectrally resolved fall-off ratios (see Table II) at lower $\lambda$, because as $\lambda$ is decreased so is $n$, the number of NO$_2^*$ levels which are able to emit, and thereby the number of contributing terms in eq. 2.

In its above form, Model II assigns equal statistical weights to the vibrational states of NO$_2^*$, which is unreasonable, because with three oscillators there is a higher density of states at higher energy. Schwartz and Johnston\textsuperscript{24} introduced an RRK statistical weight, $g_j = (j+s-1)!/j!(s-1)!$, with $j =$ total number of average vibrational quanta (set equal to 1250 cm$^{-1}$) above the origin of NO$_2^*$ (set equal to 12,500 cm$^{-1}$) and $s=3$, in their study of NO$_2$ fluorescence. For NO$_2^*$ states near the 0 + NO continuum, $j$ therefore equals 10 and $g_j=66$, whereas the equivalent $g_j$ for ground state NO$_2$ ($j=20$) equals 231, and by coming down 5 vibrational steps (which is equivalent to going from about 4000 to 5300Å in emission threshold) $g_j$ would decrease to 21 in NO$_2^*$ and to 105 in the ground state. In future calculations this effect, which will tend to deplete higher energy levels faster than lower ones, should be included and $g_j$ calculated more realistically.

The experimentally fitted parameters, $V$, $E$, and $\Delta \nu_V$ are in surprisingly good agreement with the results of two fluorescence studies,\textsuperscript{23,24} although it is puzzling (a) that for $M=O_2$ $\Delta \nu_V$ should be in the range 500 to 1000 cm$^{-1}$ when $\nu(O_2) = 1580$ cm$^{-1}$, and (b) that the energy transfer rate to O$_2$ would still be nearly gas-kinetic. On the whole, however, the physical picture is remarkably
consistent, and has good predictive power with an economical minimum of assumptions and adjustable parameters. It requires only a single electronically excited state which it reasonably assumes to be identical with that reached in fluorescence, and, using its known (average) lifetime, interprets all aspects of the radiative recombination in terms of an energy transfer model which has had many successful applications in simple, non-radiative processes. We may be tempted to stop here and bask in its simple glory, but there are promises to keep, and miles to go before we sleep.

C. 2. Connections with NO₂ Spectroscopy, Fluorescence, Photodissociation and Quantum Calculations

Before we launch into this general discussion, a few experimental facts:

(1) The absorption spectrum of NO₂ in the visible from 4000 to 8000Å is amazingly complex, and has, with the exception of a band progression near 4000Å which Douglas and Huber²⁵ showed to arise from a 2B₁→2A₁ transition, resisted analysis, even at 1.5°K.²⁶ Discrete features of the resonance fluorescence spectrum of NO₂ excited at 5145Å with an argon ion laser were analyzed by Abe, Myers, McCubbin, and Polo²⁷ and ascribed to a 2B₂→2A₁ transition. Still more recently, Stevens, Swagel, Wallace, and Zare²⁸ have analyzed the fluorescence spectrum excited at 5934 to 5940 Å by a narrow band, pulsed, tunable dye laser and report features due to both 2B₁ and 2B₂ states.

(2) The extensive quantum calculations of Gangi and Bünnele²⁹ indicate that the two lowest excited states of NO₂, 2B₁ and 2B₂, lie 1.75 and 3.33 eV above the 2A₁ ground state in its equilibrium configuration and that their radiative lifetimes, τᵣ, are 1.53 and 0.125μsec, respectively. Of the next three states, 4B₂, 4A₂, and 2A₂, only the 4A₂ state has an appreciable transition probability to the ground state corresponding to a τᵣ of 8μsec. The 2B₁ state
has a linear or nearly linear equilibrium configuration and the $^2B_2$ state is
more strongly bent than the ground state ($\sim 110^\circ$).

(3) Photodissociation studies of NO$_2$ at 3471 Å by Busch and Wilson$^{30}$
have shown that the rapidly dissociating (or predissociating) state reached in
the initial absorption is predominantly of $B_2$ symmetry. Their upper limit of
$-2 \times 10^{-13}$ sec for the dissociation lifetime is in good agreement with the
results of high pressure photolysis experiments by Gaedtke, Hippler, and Troe.$^{31}$

(4) Finally, we must consider the increasing number of partly contradic-
tory fluorescence lifetime studies and their relevance to the air afterglow.
Ever since Neuberger and Duncan's$^{32}$ direct measurement of 44 μsec for $\tau_R$, the
discrepancy between that value and 0.26 μsec calculated from the integrated
absorption coefficient has been under experimental and theoretical scrutiny.
The experimental search for a second, very much faster state gave uniformly
negative results$^{23,24,33}$ with the exception of recent indications$^{34}$ that a very
small fraction of the total emitted fluorescence may have a shorter lifetime
(0.5 to 3.7 μsec) at a few wavelengths. This observation, even if correct, does,
of course, in no way help to bridge the lifetime anomaly. Surprisingly, then,
at least six studies$^{23,24,32,33,35,36}$ are in broad agreement that the measured
lifetime is in the 60 to 70 μsec range when viewing geometry corrections are
applied$^{23,24,35}$, although a minor controversy remains whether $\tau_R$ remains
essentially constant$^{23}$ over the 4000 to 6000 Å excitation range or exhibits
fairly discontinuous variations of 10 to 20% when the excitation band width is
narrowed to 1 to 5 Å. Only the recent findings of Zare's group$^{28}$ of non-
exponential decays in the unresolved fluorescence at 5934.5 Å, which is then
spectrally resolved into stronger features coming from a $^2B_2$ state with $\tau_R =
30 \pm 5$ μsec and weaker features believed to be coming from a $^2B_1$ state with
$\tau_R = 115 \pm 10$ μsec, are in some conflict with the other data, but although such
experiments are clearly most important and desirable, they will have to be repeated for an extremely large number of lines in the complex NO₂ absorption spectrum before conclusions may be drawn about their importance in the overall process. It is significant to note that four of the above six lifetime studies\(^{23,32,33,35}\) directly or indirectly looked for non-exponential behavior and found either none or very little.\(^{35}\)

The extent to which the lifetime anomaly is explainable in terms of well-known physical processes was characterized very clearly by Douglas\(^{33}\) who suggested four independent causes, the \(v^3\) frequency effect, transition moment variation with internuclear distance, vibrational level mixing, and interelectronic state mixing. Of these, the first may contribute small factors, e.g. excitation (or recombination) at an effective excitation wavelength of 4000Å and radiation at 6000Å provides for a factor of 3.4; the second is difficult to assess, but is unlikely to be large, at least by analogy with the behavior of diatomic molecules; the third, although surely applicable in NO₂ whose vibration frequencies are low and whose excited states have substantially different equilibrium geometries from the ground state, is more likely to help explain the very complex absorption spectrum, because each band is spread into overlapping weaker bands, than the lifetime anomaly except again through the \(v^3\) and \(R_e\) effects; it seems, therefore, that interelectronic state mixing must supply the bulk of the total factor of nearly 300 which needs to be rationalized, i.e. a factor of 30 to 100. Two prerequisites must then be fulfilled: (a) the states must interact strongly, and (b) their level density ratio must be sufficiently large. The second of these requirements, in conjunction with the known energetics of all possible states,\(^{29}\) strongly points to the ground state as the cause of the perturbation, i.e. both in fluorescence and chemiluminescence, vibrationally highly excited NO₂(\(X^2A_1\)) may be strongly
mixed with the $^2B_1$ and $^2B_2$ states. For $^2B_1$, the interaction cannot be vibronic, as there are no vibronic symmetry species common to both states, but may be due to Coriolis interaction. The latter will increase strongly with increasing rotational energy, but may not be sufficiently strong to provide the extensive mixing which is required. For $^2B_2$, vibronic interactions are possible.

In the absence of detailed information on the vibration frequencies of the two excited states, no quantitative estimates of level density ratios can be made, but certain limiting approximations provide useful information. At the high levels of vibrational excitation, at least for the ground state, the semiclassical expression of Marcus and Rice

$$N(e) = (e + e_z)^s \int [\Gamma(s) \pi \hbar \nu]$$

should be applicable. Here $e_z$ is the total zero-point energy and $s$, the number of oscillators, equals 3. For NO$_2$(X), $e_z = 1850$ cm$^{-1}$ and since $e$ values of 15,000 to 25,000 cm$^{-1}$ are of interest here, $e_z$ may be neglected. If it is further assumed that excited state frequencies are roughly equal to those of NO$_2$(X), the level density ratio is given by $(e/e')^2$ where $e$ and $e'$ are the total vibrational energies of the ground and excited states. If the frequencies are not equal it will be more likely that the excited state frequencies will be lower than those of the ground state, and in that case, the $N/N'$ ratio will be less than $(e/e')^2$. Now, for the $^2B_1$ state, both experiment and theory put its energy minimum at or below about 12,000 cm$^{-1}$ (corresponding to an origin of the $^2B_1$-$^2A_1$ band system at or beyond 8000Å) which, at excitation frequencies (or recombination energy) of 20,000 to 25,000 cm$^{-1}$, will make $e/e' \leq 2$ and the level density ratio $\leq 4$, i.e. far too small to explain the lifetime anomaly. For the higher lying $^2B_2$ state the situation is somewhat better, since its energy minimum is calculated to be about 2.2 eV above that of the ground state which, depending on excitation frequency, may give $e/e'$ in the 3 to 10 range and corresponding density ratios of 10 to 100. The danger and
possible fallacy of this argument is, however, that, particularly in the excitation range where \( N/N' \) is large, its magnitude is primarily controlled by that of \( N' \) which is decreasing rapidly as the origin of the \( ^2B_2-^2A_1 \) band system is approached and one would therefore predict a strong dependence of observed fluorescence lifetime on excitation frequency, i.e. an increase of \( \tau_R \) up to about 6000Å, and a sharp decrease beyond that wavelength. Schwartz and Johnston\(^{211} \) did report a small increase of \( \tau_R \) in the excitation wavelength range from 4000 to 5600Å and a small decrease from there to 6000Å, but our own work did not support even these minor trends and showed \( \tau_R \) to be constant. Nevertheless, it would be interesting to measure \( \tau_R \) in the low pressure limit as far into the red as possible. On the whole, the fluorescence lifetime anomaly seems less resolved than ever, even though the great complexity of the absorption and emission spectrum comes as no surprise. The weakness of the level density argument has all but eliminated one of the principal potential explanations, the pseudo-degeneracy of the upper state by mixing with excited ground state.

The implications of this large body of related work for the \( 0 + NO \) afterglow are unclear. The \( ^2B_1 \) is favored as the emitter by its direct correlation with \( O(^3P) + NO(^{2\Pi}) \) whereas the \( ^2B_2 \) state can be reached only through an intermediate state in a pre-association for which Burnelle et al\(^{29} \) have suggested a high-lying \( ^2A_1 \left(^2\Sigma^+_g\right) \) state as a likely intermediate. Carrington\(^{38} \) points out that, since the recombination proceeds by way of highly unsymmetrical configurations of \( NO_2 \), i.e. in \( C_s \) rather than \( C_{2v} \) symmetry, the \( ^2A_1' \) state corresponding to \( ^2B_2 \) may possibly be reached directly. The fact that the spectral onset of chemiluminescence corresponds closely to the full \( 0-NO \) bond energy makes it unlikely that the curve crossing occurs appreciably below the continuum threshold. The smoothness of the emission
spectrum, on the other hand, argues (weakly) against invoking both excited states as does the success of the earlier parametric representation of experimental data.

The very large vibrational relaxation rate constant suggests that the role of rotational excitation in the collision complex and subsequent rotational relaxation also be considered. In their recent high pressure photolysis studies of NO$_2$, Troe and co-workers$^{39}$ have been able to measure the limiting high pressure, second-order rate constant for the total O + NO reaction, 

\[ k^\infty = 2 \times 10^{-11} \text{ cm}^3 \text{ molecule}^{-1} \text{ sec}^{-1} \]

which includes all initial recombination pathways and is therefore an upper limit to \( k_1 \) in Model II. This \( k^\infty \) corresponds to a maximum impact parameter of 1Å for collisions of spherical particles and even when allowance is made for the exclusion of wrong end collisions of NO, the impact parameter is unlikely to be larger than 2Å which means that rotationally highly excited NO$_2^*$ will not be an important intermediate.

Lastly, the question to what extent recombination to form NO$_2^*$ is distinct from the known overall three-body recombination process may be examined semi-quantitatively. Assuming R to be constant and equal to 1.6x10$^4$ sec$^{-1}$, and KR, the low pressure limit for I$_0$, to be 5 to 6x10$^{-18}$ cm$^3$ molecule$^{-1}$ sec$^{-1}$, \( K = k_1/k_\perp \) equals 3 to 4x10$^{-22}$ molecule$^{-1}$ cm$^3$. If, at sufficiently high pressures (>0.1 torr) all NO$_2^*$ are vibrationally relaxed with rate constants in the 1 to 2x10$^{-10}$ cm$^3$ molecule$^{-1}$ sec$^{-1}$ range as obtained in section C.1. above, the effective three-body recombination through NO$_2^*$ is of the order 3 to 6x10$^{-32}$ cm$^6$ molecule$^{-2}$ sec$^{-1}$ which is in the range of the reported overall rate constants of 6 to 8x10$^{-32}$, i.e. the process represents a major part of the total recombination. This had been suggested by us$^6$ earlier in terms of the three body NO$_2^*$ mechanism and was confirmed recently by Becker et al$^{11}$. 
The molecular dissociation rate constant of unstabilized NO$_2^*$, $k_1$, is then $\leq 5 \times 10^{10}$ sec$^{-1}$ which is a reasonable value under thermal conditions at 300°K compared with the much higher $5 \times 10^{12}$ sec$^{-1}$ for NO$_2^*$ with 10 to 12 kcal of excess energy from photodissociation$^{30}$ and high pressure photolysis$^{31}$. The close equality of the radiative and total rate constants further supports the notion of extensive state mixing in the excited state and decreasing meaning of pure state labels. Perhaps, in desperation and exhaustion, we need not worry, then, whether $^2B_1$ or $^2B_2$ labels apply to the air afterglow emitter, because both (or more than two) are variably and complicatedly mixed with the ground state.
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FIGURE 1

Pressure dependence of $I_0$

FIGURE 2

Diagram of apparatus. Top view looking down along axis of 15 cm diameter flow tube.
Title: The Air Afterglow Revisited

Abstract:
Past and present experimental work on the $0 + NO$ chemiluminescence is reviewed, conclusions are drawn regarding the pressure and $M$-dependence of its radiative rate constant, and a stepladder mechanism for the vibrational relaxation of electronically excited NO$_2$ is proposed and fitted to the data. The results are then interpreted in view of related work on the spectrum, photodissociation radiative lifetime, and quantum chemistry of NO$_2$. 
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