

E. R. D. E. 25/R/49

~~SECRET - DISCREET~~

COPY No. 17

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~



UNCLASSIFIED

MINISTRY OF SUPPLY

EXPLOSIVES RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT  
ESTABLISHMENT

REPORT No. 25/R/49

20071109138

INV 90

An Assessment of Hydrazine, Hydrazine' Hydrate and  
Liquid Ammonia as fuels for Rocket Propulsion

K. A. Cooper & L. A. Wiseman

REGRADED Conf BY AUTHORITY OF  
R + D Abstracts Vol 11,  
DATED 1958 BY 24

Best Available Copy

Waltham Abbey,  
Essex.

UNCLASSIFIED

August  
1949

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

C824156

(17)



A.R.E.  
Publishing Section

E.R.D.E. 25/R/49.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

X.R. 460/23.

Secret - Discreet.

UNCLASSIFIED

MINISTRY OF SUPPLY.

EXPLOSIVES RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT ESTABLISHMENT.

E.R.D.E. REPORT NO. 25/R/49.

An Assessment of Hydrazine, Hydrazine Hydrate and  
Liquid Ammonia as fuels for Rocket Propulsion.

by

K.A. Cooper & L.A. Wiseman.

This Report contains information of overseas origin.

**DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A**

Approved for Public Release  
Distribution Unlimited

Submitted by :- C.H. Johnson  
C.H. Johnson  
S.P.R.II.

Approved by :-

H.J. Poole  
.....  
H.J. Poole  
C.S., E.R.D.E.

WALTHAM ABBEY,  
ESSEX.

REGRADED Conf BY AUTHORITY OF  
R + D Abstracts Vol 11,  
DATED 1958 BY 24

Best Available Copy

UNCLASSIFIED

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~



UNCLASSIFIED

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

DISTRIBUTION.

EXTERNAL.

T.P.A.3./T.I.B. (41)  
B.J.S.M., thro' T.P.A.3., Dr. Masterman and  
Dr. Dodds.

Ministry of Supply.

Chief Scientist  
C.S.(M)  
C.I.  
C.D.E.E. (2)  
C.E.A.D. (2)  
I.A. (Air) R.A.E., Farnborough.  
C.S.A.R. (2)  
D.Amm.P.  
A.D.Amm.P(X) (Mr. Corbell)  
D.E.R.D. (Dr. Hall)  
D.M.X.R.D. (3)  
D.R.A.E. (3) (including Dr.Parker & Dr.Murray)  
D.G.W.R.D.  
D.O.F.(X)  
D.O.F.(F)  
D.W.P.  
D.W.R.(D)  
P.D.S.R.(A)  
P.D.S.R.(D)  
Sec. O.B. (2)  
A.D./G.W. (R. & D.)  
R.A.E./R.P.D. (Westcott) (6) (including Mr.Baxter,  
Dr. Merrington, Dr. Maxwell)  
S.A.C., L.F.C. Committee (45)  
Chairman S.A.C.  
Chairman M.C.A.B.

War Office.

M.C. of S. Shrivenham (2)  
S.A./A.C.

Air Ministry.

S.A./A.M.  
D.D.O.R. (2)  
D. of Weapons

Admiralty.

A.C.S.I.L.  
D.A.E.R.  
D.N.O.  
D.U.W.  
Supt., A.M.L. (3) (including Mr. Borrows & Dr. Hart)

/INTERNAL

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

INTERNAL.

C.S./E.R.D.E.  
S.P.R.I.  
S.P.R.II.  
S.E.I.  
S.C.E.  
Dr. Cooper  
Mr. Hill  
Dr. Pryde  
Mr. Verschoyle  
Mr. Wiseman  
Tech. Reg. (2)  
Library (12)

Further copies of this report can be obtained from  
Chief Superintendent, Explosives Research & Development  
Establishment, Waltham Abbey, Essex.

UNCLASSIFIED

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

## CONTENTS.

1. Summary.
  2. Introduction.
  3. Availability and Price.
  4. Performance.
  5. General Physical and Chemical Properties.
  6. Chemical Stability.
  7. Compatibility.
  8. Hazards
    - i) Explosion Risks.
    - ii) Fire Risks.
    - iii) Toxicity.
  9. Discussion and Conclusions.
  10. Bibliography.
- Appendix I. Performance of  $\text{NH}_3$ ,  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4 \cdot \text{H}_2\text{O}$  and  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4$  with various oxidants.
- Appendix II. Physical Properties of Ammonia, Hydrazine Hydrate and anhydrous Hydrazine.
- Appendix III. The Properties of Solutions of Lithium in Liquid Ammonia.
- 4 Figs.



Reference X.R. 460/23.

1. SUMMARY.

The use of the fuels liquid ammonia, hydrazine hydrate and anhydrous hydrazine in the field of rocket propulsion has been assessed. It is concluded that liquid ammonia is not promising except possibly in small motors where its high vapour pressure may not be too severe a disadvantage. More data on the system Hydrazine/water, in which the concentration of water is less than in hydrazine hydrate, are desirable, and other methods of lowering the freezing point of anhydrous hydrazine should be investigated. If chlorine trifluoride is developed as an oxidant it will probably be essential to have hydrazine or hydrazine/water as the fuel.

2. INTRODUCTION.

A large amount of attention has been paid to methods of obtaining higher performances than are possible with the normal oxidants and fuels such as hydrocarbons or alcohols. Thus with  $\text{HNO}_3$  or 85% H.T.P. and kerosine at a combustion pressure of 20 ats. a Specific Impulse of about 220 secs. is theoretically possible and, with liquid oxygen and kerosine, one of about 240 secs. A higher performance can be obtained,

- a) by increasing the combustion pressure
- b) by using oxidants such as liquid fluorine or chlorine trifluoride
- c) by using fuels such as hydrazine, certain hydrides of light elements such as  $\text{B}_2\text{H}_6$ , and liquid hydrogen.

Methods b) and c) are not independent since the use of the fluorine group of oxidants probably requires fuels which contain no carbon in order to avoid the formation of the very stable  $\text{CF}_4$ . We have therefore critically examined the merits of hydrazine, hydrazine hydrate and liquid ammonia as fuels both with the three normal oxidants and with chlorine trifluoride, a typical representative of the fluorine group.

3. AVAILABILITY & PRICE.

Ammonia.

Although the annual production in Great Britain is of the order of 400,000 tons per annum, it is insufficient to meet all requirements and any substantial new demand would probably require new plant. The current market price is about £27 per ton in bulk.

Hydrazine Hydrate.

There is at present no large-scale production in Great Britain, but it has recently been reported (1) that the firm of Chemicals and Biologicals Ltd., has been running a pilot plant for more than a year; and this firm claims to have made significant improvements in the Raschig process.

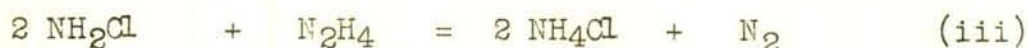
In Germany, by the end of World War II, there were two main factories producing hydrazine hydrate. The first, at Leverkusen, contained a pilot plant with a rated capacity of 50 /tons



CONFIDENTIAL

tons per month. The second, at Gersthofen, had been planned to contain four separate 100 ton per month units. Of these, however, only one was built and working (and owing to supply difficulties it never exceeded 50 tons per month production); a second was very nearly complete. The Gersthofen plant has recently been brought to Great Britain. It is understood that a part of it, capable of 30-35 tons per month production, is to be transferred to Chemicals and Biologicals Ltd., and that a similar portion may be set up at R.O.F. Bridgwater, the rest remaining in store. Hence a total production of 60 tons per month should eventually be available in Britain, with a reserve capacity which would bring the total to 100-200 tons per month.

Both the German plants used a modification of the Raschig process, in which sodium hypochlorite interacts with ammonia in aqueous solution according to the equations :-



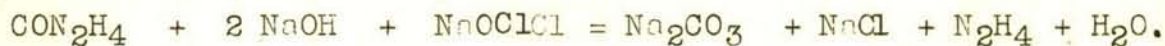
(iii) being a side-reaction which reduces the yield, and which is suppressed to some extent by the addition of glue as an anticatalyst. In the German plants this reaction took place at about 160°C. under 30 atmospheres pressure, the reaction time being a matter of seconds. The hydrazine hydrate, which was formed in dilute solution, was concentrated and separated from sodium chloride and ammonia in a series of evaporations and rectifications; the final product was of 80 to 95 per cent strength as  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_6\text{O}$ .

The materials required for this process are ammonia and electrolytic chlorine. (The latter could be recovered, if needed, from the sodium chloride produced, though at Gersthofen this was not done. A tenfold excess of ammonia was used, with continuous recycling). Besides the electrical energy needed for production of chlorine, a large amount of steam was consumed for heating purposes. 200-250 Kg. of steam (part of it superheated) was used up for every kilogram of hydrazine hydrate produced (2).

The price of hydrazine hydrate was R.M. 4 per Kg. This may be compared with R.M. 1.9 per Kg., the price of 80 per cent  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$ . If the ratio of costs under British conditions of manufacture is about the same as for German, this would correspond to a price of 4s. per lb. for hydrazine hydrate made in Britain; but this is a very rough estimate.

The Western Cartridge Co. in the U.S. is currently producing hydrazine hydrate at a market price of 50 cents per pound.

A process which resembles the Raschig process to some extent is the oxidation of urea with sodium hypochlorite in the presence of excess alkali, the overall reaction being :-



According to some authorities the urea and alkali simply act as a source of ammonia, which then reacts exactly as in the

/Raschig

CONFIDENTIAL



CONFIDENTIAL

Raschig synthesis. The urea process was worked in Germany towards the end of the war by I.G. Ludwigshafen in a plant of 15 tons per month capacity, to supplement the production in their high temperature ammonia-hypochlorite plant at Leverkusen. It is also used by at least one American firm at the present day.

No alternative method of preparation of hydrazine hydrate is at present available in Britain. Two possibilities should, however, be mentioned :-

- (i) Academic research work by Dr. Ross at McGill University, Canada, indicates that a process involving the interaction of hydrocyanic acid, potassium bisulphite and nitrous acid would give good yields by a safe process. The economic practicability is, however, very doubtful, and there has been no development beyond the laboratory stage (3).
- (ii) If anhydrous hydrazine can be produced by any method which does not proceed via the hydrate (see below), then of course the hydrate, or a hydrazine-rich mixture, could be made simply by mixing with water.

There are a number of other processes by which hydrazine has been synthesised in the laboratory. These include, for instance, reduction of nitrous oxide, hyponitrites, or potassium nitrososulphite; decomposition of aminoguanidine; hydrolysis of bis-diazo acetic acid; and also a cyclic process due to Aston (et.al.) (6), in which methyl isopropyl ketone reacts with ethyl nitrite, and the resulting complex is reduced with formation of hydrazine and regeneration of the ketone. None of these methods, however, has so far been shown to be commercially practicable.

It should be added that some 45 tons of hydrazine hydrate of German origin is in store in Britain in the charge of A.D. Amm. P. (X), Ministry of Supply.

#### Hydrazine.

There has as yet been little commercial manufacture of the anhydrous material. The processes which are open to consideration at the moment are the following :-

- (i) Dehydration of hydrazine hydrate.

This may be carried out with caustic alkali, quicklime or baryta. The method is probably suitable for laboratory scale work, but for plant-scale work it has considerable disadvantages. In the first place the process is long and cumbrous, in the second it is not yet certain that it can be operated under safe conditions. These disadvantages should not be so formidable if only a partial dehydration were desired. In this case the procedure might be facilitated by making use of a recent discovery of Audrieth and his collaborators (4), that above 60°C. certain mixtures of  $N_2H_4 \cdot H_2O$  and NaOH separate into two liquid phases, the less dense of which contains

/most

CONFIDENTIAL



CONFIDENTIAL

most of the hydrazine and least of the alkali (see Appendix II, Table VIId).

(ii) Ammonolysis of Hydrazine Sulphate.

Since the salt  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4 \cdot \text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$  is nearly insoluble in water, it can easily be separated at an early stage of the Raschig process. It has been shown, on a laboratory scale, that hydrazine is obtained by reaction of this salt either with gaseous ammonia at  $150^\circ\text{C}$ . or with anhydrous liquid ammonia at low temperatures; in the latter case the solid reaction product (an ammoniated ammonium sulphate) is insoluble in the liquid  $\text{NH}_3$ . A method is thus made available which avoids not only the difficult dehydration of hydrazine hydrate but also the rectification needed to produce the pure hydrate. The separation of hydrazine and ammonia is easy, as they form no compound and have widely different vapour pressures.

The process using liquid ammonia has been developed to a pilot plant stage by the Mathieson Chemical Corporation in America. It is understood that 3,000 lbs. per month of hydrazine are being produced at 5 dollars per pound.

(iii) Synthesis from the elements or from ammonia.

Various authors have reported the formation of traces of hydrazine when either ammonia gas, or a mixture of nitrogen and hydrogen, is subjected to electrical discharge or to the action of ultraviolet. A review of the literature, together with a statistical-mechanical calculation of equilibrium constants of possible reactions, was made by A.G. Parts in 1945. Parts concluded that the yields from either process were likely to be too small to be of practical use; though the oxidation of ammonia to hydrazine with either oxygen or nitric oxide would be possible if selective catalysts could be found.(5). Parts' calculated equilibrium constants for the synthesis  $\text{N}_2 + 2\text{H}_2 \rightarrow \text{N}_2\text{H}_4$  are in quite good agreement with those recently published by Scott and his collaborators.(32). The value of  $K_p$  is about  $10^{-19}$  at  $700^\circ\text{C}$ . and about  $10^{-15}$  at  $1500^\circ\text{C}$ .

Recently, however, the Batelle Memorial Institute in the United States has claimed the discovery of a process in which gaseous ammonia is passed through a corona discharge; a small quantity of hydrazine is produced, which is separated by refrigeration; the ammonia is then recycled. The yield of hydrazine is said to be sufficient to justify some confidence in the commercial practicability of the process. It is, however, at the moment in a very early stage of development. It is understood that the Batelle Memorial Institute hope to have a small pilot plant in operation by about the end of 1950, which should produce a few pounds of hydrazine per day at a cost of 20 to 30 cents per lb.

Research on the oxidation of ammonia to hydrazine is also being carried out in America but so far no report has been received of any process which offers commercial prospects.

/4.



PERFORMANCE.

In this section the necessary data on Specific Impulse, combustion temperature and physical properties, in so far as they influence operational use and cooling of motors, will be reviewed. For comparison purposes the propellant system  $\text{HNO}_3/\text{n-decane}$ , will be taken as the norm.

The necessary performance data for  $\text{HNO}_3$  with the fuels  $\text{n-decane}$ ,  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4$ ,  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$ ,  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4$  and liq.  $\text{NH}_3$  are given in Table I and in Figs. I & III. It is clear from these figures that anhydrous hydrazine,  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4$ , is superior to the other fuels, both on a weight and on a volume basis. In order to show that this result is general, the performance figures for Chlorine Trifluoride with  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4$ , liq.  $\text{NH}_3$  and  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4 \cdot \text{H}_2\text{O}$  are given in Table II and in Figures II and IV, and some figures for liquid oxygen (Ref.7) are given in Table III. In particular, the performance of the propellant,  $\text{ClF}_3/\text{N}_2\text{H}_4$ , on a volume basis, is definitely better than that of any of the systems based on liq.  $\text{O}_2$  (Table III) or  $\text{HNO}_3$ . We shall therefore discuss the physical properties of hydrazine a little more fully.

Anhydrous Hydrazine.

The first point to note is that the combustion temperatures with this fuel and the oxidants liq.  $\text{O}_2$  and  $\text{HNO}_3$  are only 200-400°C. below those with a hydrocarbon fuel and the optimum performance of the propellant,  $\text{ClF}_3/\text{N}_2\text{H}_4$ , has a combustion temperature of about 3500°K. It will therefore be necessary to cool motors using  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4$  as fuel if advantage is to be made of its higher performance. If the oxidant is  $\text{HNO}_3$ , the  $\text{HNO}_3$  can be used as the regenerative coolant but, if the oxidant is  $\text{ClF}_3$ , or even  $\text{F}_2$ , then it may not be possible to use the fluorine-containing compound as a coolant owing to the very high reactivity of these compounds. Thus we must consider the possibility of using anhydrous hydrazine as a coolant when the combustion temperature is at least 2800°K and may be 3500°K.

The thermal stability of hydrazine has not been exhaustively investigated up to now but, in the absence of catalysts, it seems to be reasonably stable at least up to 150°C (see section 6). This means that anhydrous hydrazine is considerably more stable than H.T.P. and H.T.P. has been successfully used for the regenerative cooling of rocket motors. Thus, the thermal stability is sufficient to allow its use as a regenerative coolant. The critical pressure is high but this disadvantage is not important because the vapour pressure is low and therefore, if thermal decomposition can be avoided, the formation of bubbles in the cooling jacket will not occur at the feed pressures normally used in rockets. Some preliminary results on the cooling of a rocket motor with 90% Hydrazine have been reported (8) for a motor working with the propellant, H.T.P./nitromethane. The hydrazine was used for cooling just one section of the combustion chamber, the combustion temperature being about 2800°K. according to calculations of Stosick (9). The total time in contact with a hot surface is smaller than in the case of complete regenerative cooling and the heat transfer is not so great as when the nozzle is also cooled. However, stable conditions in the coolant were obtained up to a measured bulk temperature of about 190°C in the coolant. When the bulk temperature of the hydrazine reached 240°C., there was some evidence of decomposition as shown by a sudden rise in temperature. It seems therefore that it would be possible to use

/hydrazine



hydrazine as a regenerative coolant although it is clearly necessary to carry out calculations on the conditions for which it can be used, i.e. size of motor as a function of combustion temperature.

The main handicap to the use of hydrazine as an operational fuel is its high melting point. There are two obvious ways of lowering the melting point, firstly by adding Hydrazine Hydrate and secondly, by adding ammonia. These two diluents have one obvious advantage in that both lead to lower combustion temperatures. However, hydrazine hydrate is to be preferred because its density is much higher than that of ammonia, and its vapour pressure is much lower. Thus, on a volume basis and with  $\text{ClF}_3$  as oxidant, the performance with the fuel, Hydrazine + Hydrazine Hydrate would lie between 320 and 360 and with the fuel, Hydrazine and Ammonia, between about 300 and 360 as compared with the figure 280 for the propellant  $\text{HNO}_3/\text{n-decane}$ .

#### Hydrazine Hydrate.

The performance of this fuel is lower than that of Ammonia with both  $\text{HNO}_3$  and  $\text{ClF}_3$  on a weight basis, but definitely better on a volume basis, thus  $\text{ClF}_3 + \text{N}_2\text{H}_4 \cdot \text{H}_2\text{O}$  is better than  $\text{HNO}_3 + \text{n-decane}$  and  $\text{HNO}_3 + \text{N}_2\text{H}_4 \cdot \text{H}_2\text{O}$  is as good as  $\text{HNO}_3 + \text{n-decane}$ . This fuel has a definite advantage over hydrazine and hydrocarbons as the combustion temperature is about  $500^\circ\text{C}$ . lower. The use of Hydrazine hydrate will probably be in lowering the combustion temperature of propulsive systems and in combination with anhydrous hydrazine.

Hydrazine hydrate was developed in Germany as a fuel, because it could be used as a self-igniting fuel with H.T.P. For this purpose, the hydrate (80-92 per cent) could be used, or a mixture with methyl alcohol and a little water ('C-stoff'). To these mixtures it was necessary to add a trace of a catalyst, to insure spontaneous ignition with 80 per cent  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$ . The usual catalyst was potassium cuprocyanide. C-stoff was used in the Me.163 fighter plane, and hydrazine hydrate was to be used as an igniter in the Walter Torpedoes, which were under development at the end of the war. The mixtures containing cuprocyanide were not entirely satisfactory, owing to a tendency for the copper to come out of solution when the liquid was stored in metal containers. Ignition delays, in bifuel systems using H.T.P. with either hydrazine hydrate or 'C-stoff', may be as long as 40-50 milliseconds at ordinary temperatures. A report from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (29) states that the use of potassium cuprocyanide and sodium nitroprusside, together will reduce the ignition delay, with 85 per cent. hydrazine hydrate and H.T.P., to 7 milliseconds at  $100^\circ\text{C}$ . and to 13 milliseconds at  $0^\circ\text{C}$ . The actual catalyst recipe was 0.20 grams Fe as sodium nitroprusside, 0.33 grams Cu as cuprous cyanide, and 0.24 grams K as potassium cyanide, per litre of hydrazine hydrate. Anhydrous hydrazine ignites spontaneously with H.T.P.; with catalysts, the delay can be reduced to about 3 ms. (35).

#### Ammonia.

The disadvantages of this fuel are its high-vapour pressure and low density. The high vapour pressure and the high critical pressure (111.5 ats.) mean that ammonia would be a bad coolant owing to the difficulty of avoiding gas formation in the boundary layer without very high rates of flow or high pressures. On the other hand, its availability and the low combustion temperature are attractive, but it is doubtful whether these are sufficient

/to



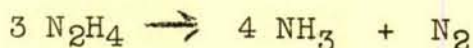
to compensate for its high vapour pressure, e.g. a stronger propellant tank would be required except in the case of small units, where gas pressure or expulsion charges would be used for feeding the propellant components, but in such units the low density would be a great disadvantage.

A possible solution would be the addition of substances to lower its vapour pressure and raise its density, Anhydrous Hydrazine is one such possibility but the vapour pressure data in Table VIII, Appendix 2, shows that it is not very effective. The alkali and alkaline earth metals are very soluble in liquid ammonia. The only one which would not lower the performance appreciably is Lithium, although it would raise the combustion temperature. Lithium will reduce the vapour pressure of liquid ammonia to about 1 at. at 70°C. but the vapour pressure is very sensitive to composition. Unfortunately, solutions of the alkali metals in ammonia are much less dense than liquid ammonia, thus Li + NH<sub>3</sub> has a density of 0.477 at 19°C. and there is also a positive heat of solution (about 8 k. cal./ml) which would lead to a lower performance. A summary of the properties of Li solutions in liquid NH<sub>3</sub> is given in Appendix III. Certain amines are slightly soluble also in liq. ammonia but the addition of carbon containing compounds will render the fuel useless for the fluorine group of oxidants and will rob it of its most important advantage i.e. a low combustion temperature.

This group of fuels has two further important properties. They are very reactive and thus will form self-igniting combinations with HNO<sub>3</sub> (ammonia requires the addition of about 5% N<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub>(10)). It is also to be expected that their combustion efficiency would be high, permitting the use of motors with a small L\*. As they contain no carbon, the exhaust gases from the combustion chamber would give no smoke and, probably, no radar attenuation.

#### Hydrazine as a Monopropellant and Gas Producer.

Anhydrous hydrazine is an endothermic compound and can therefore be used as a monopropellant. The Specific Impulse, when the decomposition is to N<sub>2</sub> + H<sub>2</sub>, is 167 at a combustion pressure of P<sub>c</sub> = 20 ats. American experience has shown that decomposition to NH<sub>3</sub> by the equation



can occur in a rocket motor. In this case the Specific Impulse is slightly higher. Decomposition can be initiated by hot wire and certain catalysts have been developed (10).

The disadvantage of anhydrous hydrazine as a monopropellant is its high melting point and there is not sufficient data to determine how much water can be added to the system and still give a reasonable performance. It should be possible to lower the melting point by the addition of small quantities of other compounds, e.g. some of the metallic compound hydrides might be used or even hydrazine nitrate, which would probably lead to a higher specific impulse.



## 5. GENERAL PHYSICAL AND CHEMICAL PROPERTIES.

Ammonia is a colourless gas with a pungent odour, of density 0.65 times that of air; it condenses at  $-33.4^{\circ}\text{C}.$ , under atmospheric pressure, to a colourless liquid. The vapour pressure of the liquid is 4.2 atmospheres at  $0^{\circ}\text{C}.$ , 8.5 atmospheres at  $20^{\circ}\text{C}.$ , and 25.8 atmospheres at  $60^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $140^{\circ}\text{F}$ ); its density is 0.61 grams per cc at  $20^{\circ}\text{C}.$  Ammonia is very soluble in water, giving an alkaline solution.

Hydrazine is a colourless liquid freezing at  $+2^{\circ}\text{C}$  and boiling at  $113.5^{\circ}\text{C}.$  under atmospheric pressure; its density is 1.01 grams per cc. at  $20^{\circ}\text{C}.$  It has a slight odour, fumes in air, is hygroscopic, and completely miscible with water. In aqueous solution it behaves as a base, rather weaker than ammonia. It forms two sets of salts of the type  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4\cdot\text{H X}$  and  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4\cdot 2\text{HX}$  respectively, but the latter are almost completely hydrolysed in water. It is a very powerful reducing agent, being capable, under some conditions, of reducing salts of silver, gold, copper and mercury to the metals; it reacts violently with some metallic oxides, as described in Section 7 (ii). It interacts with numerous organic compounds (aldehydes, ketones, nitro-compounds, etc.).

Though the name "hydrazine hydrate" is given to an equimolar mixture of hydrazine and water (64.0 per cent  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4$  by weight), it is not certain whether, in the liquid state, a true compound  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4\cdot\text{H}_2\text{O}$  exists. If it does so, it must be to some extent dissociated, since the constant-boiling mixture at atmospheric pressure is not of exactly equimolar concentration; according to Lobry de Bruyn and Dito (11), it contains 58.5 moles per cent.  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4$ . The cryoscopic diagram shows, however, that the compound  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4\cdot\text{H}_2\text{O}$  exists in the solid state. In the vapour state, though there is some conflict in the published data, it is probable that there is no association between hydrazine and water.

The equimolar mixture, "hydrazine hydrate", melts at  $-51.5^{\circ}\text{C}.$ , and boils at about  $120^{\circ}\text{C}.$  under atmospheric pressure. There is a eutectic on the water rich side at approximately 40.5 per cent  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4$  by weight,  $-88^{\circ}\text{C}.$  freezing point, and another on the hydrazine rich side at 69 per cent  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4$ , freezing at  $-53.5^{\circ}\text{C}.$  A mixture containing 73 per cent  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4$  freezes at  $-40^{\circ}\text{C}.$  Hydrazine solutions show a tendency to supercool. The density of the equimolar mixture is 1.05 at  $15^{\circ}\text{C}.$  It is a colourless, fuming, hygroscopic liquid, with a faint smell like that of hydrazine.

Hydrazine and ammonia form no compound; there is a eutectic mixture freezing at  $-80^{\circ}\text{C}.$ , containing 13 per cent  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4$  by weight. A mixture containing 51 per cent  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4$  freezes at  $-40^{\circ}\text{C}.$

More information on the physical properties of these compounds is given in the Appendices.

/6.



Ammonia is a stable chemical compound. Hydrazine on the other hand, is thermodynamically unstable, and its decomposition is exothermic. Its rate of decomposition is, however, so small under suitable conditions that storage, even in tropical climates, may prove not to present a serious problem. The stability on storage would certainly be much better than that of H.T.P. Some experimental data pointing to this conclusion may be briefly reviewed.

(a) Welsh and Broderson (12) stored 50 ml. samples of 99.7 per cent  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4$  in sealed glass vessels at ordinary temperatures, for up to two years, without observing appreciable decomposition.

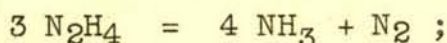
(b) Liquid hydrazine has been heated, in academic laboratory research, to above  $350^\circ\text{C}$  under pressure, and a critical temperature of  $380^\circ\text{C}$  has been estimated, without any mishap (13).

(c) Workers at California Institute of Technology heated 15 ml. of 95.5 per cent  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4$  in a 22 ml. bomb. They found a rate of rise of pressure at  $320^\circ\text{F}$  ( $160^\circ\text{C}$ ) of 2.5 lb. per square inch per minute, which corresponds to one per cent decomposition in 3 to 5 hours, depending on the gaseous products. The reaction appeared to be a surface catalysed vapour phase decomposition (7).

(d) 90-93 per cent hydrazine has been employed, in the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, California Institute of Technology, as a coolant for a section of a rocket motor (c.f. Section \*). In one experiment, the liquid reached  $470^\circ\text{F}$  ( $243^\circ\text{C}$ ). It was of course only in the chamber for a short time; on the other hand, it was in contact with copper, which is said to have some catalytic action on its decomposition. In other experiments at J.P.L. explosions occurred at  $150^\circ\text{C}$ . It seems that this was due to the presence of iron oxides in the cooling jacket (10).

(e) The M.W. Kellogg Co. (30) heated hydrazine in a stainless steel bomb under a nitrogen pressure of about 600 p.s.i. At  $200^\circ\text{C}$ . the decomposition, over 23 hours, did not exceed 1.5 per cent per hour. At  $255^\circ\text{C}$ ., however, one experiment led to sudden decomposition in 30 minutes and another to violent explosion in 10 minutes.

Hydrazine in aqueous solution decomposes catalytically in contact with certain finely divided metals, such as platinum and nickel. In neutral solutions the overall reaction is said to be:-



but in presence of excess alkali some hydrogen is produced as well. Hydrazine solutions are less stable when excess alkali is present. It may be worth while to point out that the solid catalysts which bring about decomposition of hydrazine are not always the same as those which decompose hydrogen peroxide. Silver, for example, is an active catalyst for  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$ , but has been recommended for construction of apparatus in which hydrazine is distilled.

Hydrazine solutions are susceptible to oxidation by atmospheric oxygen. The mechanism is a complex one, hydrogen peroxide being formed as an intermediate product. Nearly all the work done on this reaction has been done on dilute aqueous solutions, and it is not known how far attack by air could affect concentrated

/hydrazine



hydrazine or its hydrate, stored in bulk. (The liquids should however, in any case be stored in closed vessels, as they absorb water and  $\text{CO}_2$ ). The rate of oxidation, in dilute solution, is greatly increased by excess of alkali, and also by traces of copper. Audrieth and Mohr (15), in a study of the effect of various substances which form complexes with copper, found that potassium xanthate was a very good inhibitor, and that thiourea, sodium sulphide, cyanide, and thiocyanate and other substances have a considerable effect. The interesting question suggests itself, whether substances which stabilise hydrogen peroxide against heavy metal ions (e.g. sodium stannate and colloidal tin oxide) will also stabilise hydrazine against either oxidation or catalytic decomposition. At the moment, however, there is no clear reason for supposing that either hydrazine or its hydrate will require any added stabilisers for storage.

Hydrazine vapour decomposes in contact with a quartz surface at  $250\text{--}300^\circ\text{C}$ ., and at lower temperatures in contact with catalytic metals such as platinum. The vapour of "hydrazine hydrate" has also been observed to decompose, under some conditions, in contact with hot steel turnings (see Section 3(i)). This may, however, have been due to the presence of iron oxides on the steel turnings.

## 7. COMPATIBILITY.

Hydrazine hydrate can be stored, under temperate climatic conditions, in containers of aluminium, stainless steel, or iron lined with a suitable plastic (oppanol, a polyisobutylene, was used in Germany). Mild steel leads to discoloration of the hydrate, and might lead to catalytic decomposition in time, though this is not marked at first. Hot hydrazine hydrate vapour attacks aluminium and its alloys to some extent, so that stainless steel will probably be the best metal for tropical storage vessels (2). Hot hydrazine hydrate slowly attacks glass, but the cold liquid can be kept in clean glass bottles.

Hydrazine hydrate brought to Britain from Germany (65 tons in March 1947, 11 tons in March 1948), and stored in horizontal stainless steel vessels, is still in good condition in June 1949; thus the 65 ton sample when analysed in March 1947 was 89.9% Hydrazine Hydrate and 89.6% in February 1949; the 11 ton batch was 85.5% Hydrazine Hydrate in March 1948 and 85.4% in February 1949.

No full study has been made of the compatibility of hydrazine hydrate with plastics. As indicated above, at least some grades of polyisobutylene may be used. Rubber is attacked. Sulphur is dissolved chemically so that compositions containing it would not be safe. Cork is also attacked.

Little can be said at the moment about suitable storage vessels for anhydrous hydrazine, or its mixtures with ammonia, or for ternary mixtures of hydrazine, water and ammonia. The hydrazine-water mixture which freezes at  $-40^\circ\text{C}$ ., which may prove most suitable for Service use, will probably behave very much as does hydrazine hydrate; but experimental confirmation of this will have to be obtained. The Kellogg Co. (New Jersey) recommend standard stainless steels for storage of anhydrous hydrazine, and state that most plastics and synthetic rubbers can be used with it (30).

/8.Hazards.



i) Explosion Risks.

Ammonia presents no problem, apart from the possibility of pressure bursts in faulty containers. The vapour pressure of anhydrous  $\text{NH}_3$  reaches 26 atmospheres at  $60^\circ\text{C}$ . ( $140^\circ\text{F}$ ).

Hydrazine Hydrate.

This substance does not appear to be detonable in the liquid state (16). The vapour, which is probably fully dissociated into  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4$  and  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$  (17), will explode when mixed with air in a proportion of 25 per cent. or more  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_6\text{O}$ , according to German information (2). Any apparatus or plant in which hydrazine hydrate above 50 per cent concentration is distilled, even at low pressure, should be filled with nitrogen.

The hot vapour of hydrazine hydrate, even in absence of air, may explode if a catalytic surface is present. At Gersthofen, the final fractionating column, in which the hydrate was concentrated from 50 to 80-90 per cent  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_6\text{O}$ , was at one time packed with cleaned turnings of austenitic stainless steel (V.2.A). A mild explosion occurred, however, which damaged the column, in spite of the fact that it had been filled with nitrogen. Laboratory tests were made, in which hydrazine hydrate vapour was passed over steel turnings, and it was found that occasional isolated spots glowed red-hot, causing decomposition of the vapour to  $\text{N}_2$ ,  $\text{NH}_3$ , and possibly  $\text{H}_2$ . After this observation, the top half only of the final column was packed with turnings; the bottom half, which was in contact with the more concentrated vapour, was fitted with bell-plates of stainless steel, in order to avoid exposing a large surface or any sharp points or corners. No further explosions occurred during a few months' running, but whether the danger should be regarded as entirely eliminated is perhaps open to question (2). It has been recently reported that the Western Cartridge Co.(U.S.) has had an explosion in a distillation column while concentrating hydrazine hydrate.

Hydrazine.

An examination has been made of a sample of 92 per cent material (i.e. 92 per cent  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4$ , 8 per cent  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$ ), in the Sensitivity Section of E.R.D.E. It was found that there was practically no sensitiveness to impact or friction, and the lead block powers was very low. It may be added that a good deal of academic research on anhydrous hydrazine is reported in the literature, including experiments in which the substance was heated to  $350^\circ\text{C}$ . or above; and no specially explosive tendency has been reported.

The Bureau of Mines (U.S.A.) have been able to find no evidence of propagation of detonation in 98%  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4$  in steel tubes of 7/8" diameter, but measurements on the ballistic mortar have given powers of 135 (T.N.T. = 100). No such effects were observed with 85%  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4.\text{H}_2\text{O}$ . Sensitivity to impact and to friction was zero both for 98%  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4$  and 85%  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4.\text{H}_2\text{O}$  (16). Confirmatory evidence is available from M.W. Kellogg Co.(30).

It seems probable that the vapour of hydrazine may explode if locally overheated or brought into contact with hot catalytic surfaces. In addition, the vapour would of course explode if mixed with air and ignited. The vapour of both the hydrate and

/anhydrous



anhydrous hydrazine can be ignited by a spark at a pressure of 200 mm.. (16). Metallic sodium dissolves in anhydrous hydrazine to give a solution in which, by a slow chemical reaction, a sodium derivative said to be sodium hydrazide,  $\text{NaNH.NH}_2$ , is formed. This substance is exceedingly sensitive to detonation by shock. The same product is formed when sodamide reacts with hydrazine (18), and for this reason sodamide cannot be recommended as a dehydrating agent for hydrazine hydrate. It is less likely that the material would be formed from caustic alkalis and hydrazine, especially if the hydrazine was not completely dehydrated, but in any case hydrazine is said to be particularly unstable in presence of alkalis, so that the safety of the usual processes for dehydrating the hydrate requires investigation.

It must also be borne in mind that the oxidation of hydrazine under some conditions leads to the formation of hydrazoic acid or azides. Hence, any solid deposits, or sludges, observed in vessels in which hydrazine or its solutions have been in contact with metals, should be handled with caution.

#### (ii) Fire Risk.

Ammonia gives rise to no fire risk in air, although it will burn in oxygen. Liquid hydrazine hydrate does not ignite in air, though the vapour, as already mentioned, may explode in air under some conditions (2). At ambient temperatures the vapour pressure of hydrazine hydrate is not sufficient for this to occur.

Anhydrous hydrazine, however, is very inflammable. It has also been observed in E.R.D.E. that it will ignite spontaneously if dropped on to a number of oxides. Immediate or almost immediate ignition occurred when a single drop of hydrazine (92 per cent) fell on to cupric oxide, manganese dioxide, silver oxide, or mercuric oxide; there was a slightly delayed ignition with ferric oxide. On the other hand the oxides  $\text{PbO}$ ,  $\text{ZnO}$ ,  $\text{MgO}$ ,  $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$ ,  $\text{CaO}$ , and  $\text{BaO}$  seemed to have no action. In some cases, with the oxides which caused ignition, two stages could be distinctly seen: first the oxide in contact with the hydrazine glowed red-hot (presumably owing to its rapid reduction): then the excess hydrazine ignited in the air. This clearly indicates a possible danger that if hydrazine, even in absence of air, comes in contact with small quantities of such oxides, a "hot spot" may develop from which an exothermic decomposition may spread. Similar results with ferric oxide have been observed by the Bureau of Mines (16).

Thin films of anhydrous hydrazine, exposed to the air (e.g. on rags) may ignite spontaneously after a delay, especially if exposed to sunlight (30).

The U.S. Bureau of Mines (16) give the minimum concentration of hydrazine vapour which will ignite in air as 4.67 per cent. (There is no upper limit, because pure hydrazine vapour will propagate a flame). In nitrogen, the lower limit is given as 38 per cent  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4$ .

#### (iii) Toxicity.

##### Ammonia.

The hazard from this substance is well known. It has a very pungent smell, and irritates the upper respiratory tract and the

/eyes



eyes. Owing to the strength of the smell, the presence of ammonia in the air can be detected at concentrations too low to be dangerous; the chief risk is that of sudden bursts, leaks, or spillages which cause an immediate high concentration locally. Under such circumstances, workers may be overcome; or secondary accidents may occur as temporarily blinded persons try to escape from the locality. Delayed death from oedema of the lungs, or bronchitis or pneumonia may follow. Other symptoms which have been observed are restlessness, vertigo, gastric pain, nausea, and disturbance of the bladder function. Contact of ammonia with the cornea of the eye may lead to serious or permanent damage (19). Gas masks containing activated carbon impregnated with copper sulphate give protection from ammonia.

The following table, taken from Jacobs' Analytical Chemistry of Industrial Poisons, Hazards and Solvents, gives an indication of the concentrations of ammonia gas in air which give rise to various degrees of danger.

|                                                                                |                          |   |   |   |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|---|---|---|
| Maximum concentration tolerable for several hours without serious disturbance. | 0.01 per cent by volume. |   |   |   |
| Concentration dangerous in 30-60 minutes.                                      | 0.25-0.45                | " | " | " |
| Concentration lethal in a few minutes.                                         | 0.5 -1.0                 | " | " | " |
| Minimum concentration detectable by odour.                                     | 0.0053                   | " | " | " |

These figures should not, perhaps, be accepted as established beyond all doubt. The authors of a very recent paper (20) conclude that "the present accepted limit of 100 p.p.m. is probably safe but needs re-examination."

It may be added that as ammonia is lighter than air it is very non-persistent.

Men working in a high concentration of the gas, protected by masks, may experience some soreness of the skin in moist areas (e.g. groin or armpits). This is probably due to the alkalinity of ammonia solution.

#### Hydrazine and Hydrazine Hydrate.

Since hydrazine immediately forms its hydrate on contact with water in the liquid phase, the two may be considered together for most purposes. Some further work is needed to give a complete picture of the poisonous properties of these substances. The information available at present is summarised below.

Hydrazine sulphate, administered by subcutaneous injection, is fatal to mammals in doses of about 0.1 grams per kilogram body weight. It has a very specific action on the liver, causing a kind of "fatty degeneration" of that organ, due to attack on the parenchymatous cells. The blood sugar falls; bile pigments and protein may occur in the urine, but sugar does not. The recovery of the liver, with sub-lethal doses, is said to be remarkably rapid and complete (21). The actual symptoms observed are first restlessness and vomiting, then (in fatal cases) depression, fall in pulse rate, respiratory difficulty, and finally coma and death. If the blood-sugar content falls very low, convulsions may occur

/before



before the end. The whole process takes a very few days (22,31). In non-fatal cases there may be considerable emaciation.

Izume and Lewis (23) have observed that hydrazine hydrate, acetate, and sulphate have similar effects upon rabbits in equivalent amounts, and they conclude that the anion is not involved. Bodansky, however, (14) suggests that the free base is less specific in its action than the sulphate; he found damage to the kidneys of a dog as well as to the liver. In one of Izume and Lewis' experiments, a rabbit was injected with 100 mg. per Kg. hydrazine hydrate; depression was noticed very soon, and convulsions, followed rapidly by death, took place in a little under  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hours. The blood sugar content had fallen from 0.111 to 0.057 per cent. The Merck Index (5th edition, U.S.A., 1940) describes the following effects when rabbits were injected subcutaneously with 0.2 to 0.3 g. per Kg. hydrazine hydrate: "trembling, muscular paralysis, rapid respiration, clonic spasms, paralysis and death, usually within two hours". The dose here quoted is much larger than the minimum fatal dose, which is about 30 mg. of  $N_2H_4$ , or 50 mg. of  $N_2H_4.H_2O$  per Kg.

is required

A fuller study of the effects of hydrazine vapour, and of the effects of chronic exposure to vapour, droplets or splashes. It is not quite clear whether hydrazine, if inhaled, could react with haemoglobin sufficiently rapidly to act as a blood-poison. The evidence available at present regarding the toxic effects of chronic exposure to hydrazine is a little conflicting, possibly owing to the differing susceptibility of different individuals. (It is likely, inter-alia, that vitamin C deficiency will cause increased susceptibility). The fact that hydrazine and its hydrate have only a slight smell tends to enhance the danger, though this is to some extent offset by the fact that both liquids fume visibly in air. The available data may be briefly summarised:

#### (i) Effect on the Eyes.

According to the chemist in charge of the Gersthofen factory, some workers who had been exposed to fumes or droplets of hydrazine hydrate suffered from an irritation of the eyes which might not be noticed for as much as ten hours afterwards. The cornea and eyelids became inflamed and discharged pus, and temporary blindness for two or three days might occur. Recovery was said to be complete in a matter of weeks.

Tests were made at C.D.E.S., Porton, in which 30 per cent solutions of hydrazine hydrate, in water and methyl alcohol respectively, were instilled into a rabbit's eye on 14 days out of 16. Only a slight superficial inflammation resulted, which cleared up spontaneously within a few days of the final instillation (24).

#### (ii) Skin Irritancy.

Apparently no trouble of this kind was met with at Gersthofen but at Pennemunde it was noticed that a small proportion of workers (estimated roughly as 3 in 50) were unusually susceptible and suffered inflammation. (These workers had been handling mixtures containing hydrazine hydrate, ethyl alcohol, and traces of potassium cuprocyanide). There was also a tendency for cuts

/already



already present to become septic (25). Some workers of R.A.E., Farnborough, who handled "C-stoff" (mixture of hydrazine hydrate, methanol, water, and trace of cuprocyanide) experienced a mild inflammation of the hands and fore-arms (24).

A series of tests was made by C.D.E.S., Porton, with 30 per cent solutions of hydrazine hydrate in water and methanol. It was found that repeated application of the liquid to the skin for a fortnight would produce a mild to moderate inflammation which afterwards cleared up quickly. No subject tested was immune, though some suffered worse inflammation than others. In the worst cases, there was severe itching, which could be treated with lotions such as calamine lotion. There was no true sensitisation dermatitis. Previous application of vaseline or lanoline gave some degree of protection (24).

The M.W. Kellogg Co. (New Jersey), after handling anhydrous hydrazine for about a year and a half, have reported that no serious toxic effects were observed. Persons whose hands had been wetted with the liquid suffered no ill-effect if it was immediately washed off. One man whose face was sprayed with the liquid developed small white blisters, in spite of immediate washing; these disappeared after two days with application of vaseline. Minor irritation of mucous tissues, and headaches, were sometimes noticed (30).

#### (iii) General Systemic effects.

Workers who have been exposed to vapour, droplets, or unnoticed splashes on the skin have complained of various symptoms, including headaches, minor stomach troubles, diarrhoea, restlessness, and loss of power of concentration (25,26,30).

From general experience it would seem that the effects of continued exposure to hydrazine and its hydrate can be avoided by straightforward precautions, including good ventilation, use of protective clothing (especially rubber gloves). The gas masks used for ammonia will give protection from hydrazine, though it may be necessary to add a cloth filter to stop droplets. Extra milk, and extra vitamin C in some form, may be helpful to workers. Injections of calcium were prescribed in Germany for persons showing symptoms of poisoning.

### 9. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS.

Ammonia, by far the most available of the three compounds under discussion, has the following advantages over a hydrocarbon fuel;

- a) a lower combustion temperature
- b) a slightly higher performance with liquid oxygen  
(although a slightly lower one with Nitric Acid)
- and c) possibly a better combustion efficiency.

The disadvantages are its low density and high vapour pressure. In attempting to remove these disabilities by the addition of other compounds to liquid ammonia it is essential that the amount of additive should be small as otherwise the other advantages will be removed. It is therefore unlikely that the density can be greatly increased in practice. A mixture of liq.  $\text{NH}_3$  and anhydrous  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4$  (Table VIII Appendix II) is also not very useful owing to the small solubility of  $\text{NH}_3$  in  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4$  at reasonable pressures. The vapour pressure of liquid ammonia can be very greatly reduced by the addition of about 11% Lithium but, apart from the question of the stability of these solutions, the density is also greatly reduced. It therefore seems that, on balance, there is no

/advantage



advantage in using liq.NH<sub>3</sub> as a fuel except possibly in small uncooled motors where the high vapour pressure is not too serious a disadvantage.

Hydrazine Hydrate can meet the climatic storage requirements, has about the same performance as a hydrocarbon, and gives a relatively low combustion temperature for about the same performance as a hydrocarbon. Thus it has the advantages of liquid ammonia without the disadvantages.

The main disadvantage of anhydrous hydrazine is its high melting point, and it may well be possible to overcome this. An addition of 26% H<sub>2</sub>O is required to lower the setting point to -40°C., but it is possible that other additives, in smaller quantity, may achieve this temperature. Recently the Aerojet Engineering Corporation have shown (33) that both sodium and lithium borohydride are soluble in hydrazine. The sodium salt is more soluble (20.2% by weight) but only reduces the freezing point to -26°C., whereas 12.4% of the lithium salt reduces the freezing point to -44.5°C. Apart from availability the lithium salt would be preferred because of the low molecular weight of lithium. However, it is also understood that with Boron compounds there is always difficulty because of the deposition of the glassy oxide on the walls of the combustion chamber and venturi. If the Services would consider a higher low temperature limit for special purpose weapons, then Hydrazine with 10-20% water would be a practicable fuel, both on performance and probable ease of manufacture.

The main conclusions are :-

- i) liquid ammonia does not merit further consideration either alone or in combination with hydrazine, except possibly as a cheap fuel for uncooled rockets.
- ii) more information on stability, toxicity, storage and stability of the system hydrazine/water with less than 36% water is necessary. In particular methods of reducing the melting point of N<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub> with additives other than water should be found, e.g. amines, inorganic amides, complex metallic hydrides, etc. This is of particular importance in view of the possible use of ClF<sub>3</sub> as an oxidant.

/10. Bibliography.



- 1) Chemistry and Industry, March 26th, 1949, p.206.
- 2) C.I.O.S. Report No.XXII-18: "Hydrazine Hydrate and C-stoff Production at Gersthofen".
- 3) Minutes of Liquid Fuels Committee, M.C.A.B., meeting on Sept. 9th 1948: Communication A.C.9896/LFC.53.
- 4) L.F. Audrieth and R.A.Penneman, J.A.C.S. 71, p. 1644 (1949).
- 5) A.G. Parts, A.R.D. Explosives Reports Nos. 234/45 and 245/45.
- 6) J.G. Aston, D.F. Menard, and M.G. Mayberry, J.A.C.S. 54, p.1530 (1932).
- 7) J.W. Parsons, T.L. Thompson and T.F. Dixon: "A Survey of Liquid Propellants", North American Aviation Inc. Report No. N.A.4795.
- 8) C.R. Forster: "Preliminary Experiments with Hydrazine as a Rocket Motor Coolant", J.P.L. Progress Report No.4-45.
- 9) A.J. Stosick: "Liquid Propellants for Rockets", J.P.L. Progress Report No.9-9.
- 10) British Joint Services Mission, Washington: Explosives and Propellants News Letter No.S.M.2. (Feb.1949).
- 11) ~~L.W. Muller~~ W. Muller, Comprehensive Treatise, Vol.VIII., p.311.
- 12) T.W.B. Welsh and H.J. Broderson, J.A.C.S. 37, p.816 (1915).
- 13) International Critical Tables, ed.I., vol.3. pp.228-9.
- 14) M. Bodansky, J. Biol. Chem. 58, p.799 (1924).
- 15) L.F. Audrieth, B.J. Ackerson, et alia; "The Chemistry of Hydrazine", University of Illinois, 1948 (N.6.ori-71-Chemistry Task No.XX).
- 16) "Explosive Properties of Hydrazine", U.S. Bureau of Mines, May 1949.
- 17) P.A. Giguere and R.E. Rundle, J.A.C.S. 63, p.1135 (1941).
- 18) R. Stolle, J. Prakt Chem. 83, p.200.
- 19) A.J. Lanza and J.A. Goldberg, Industrial Hygiene (Oxford Medical Publications, 1939), p.503.
- 20) L. Silverman, J.L. Whittenberger, and J. Muller, (Journ. Industrial Hygiene and Toxicology, March 1949, p.74).
- 21) H.G. Wells, Journal Exp. Med. X. p.457 (1908).
- 22) F.P. Underhill et alia, J. Biol. Chem. 4, p.165 (1908); ibid 10, p.159 (1911); 22 p.499 (1915); 27, p.169 (1916); 58, p.147 (1924). Compare also B.M. Hendrix and A.J. McAmis, ibid, 61 p.45 (1924); Lewis and Izume, ibid 71, p.33 (1926); Curti, Riv. Pat. Nerv. 42, p.27 (1933); J.Conn, J.Amer.Med.Assoc. 134, p.130 (1947).
- 23) S. Izume and B. Lewis, J. Pharm. & Exp. Therapeutics, XXX, p.87 (1927).
- 24) B. Woolcott and T.W.N. Truckle, C.D.E.S. Porton Technical Paper No.22 (Sept.1947).
- 25) T.E.E. Greenock, S.T.R. No.487 (Dec.1945): "The Broad Features of the German Development of Hydrogen Peroxide as a Propulsive", p.31.
- 26) Lewin, Gifte unde Vergiftung, under heading "Hydrazine".



- 27) "The Storage and Handling of Hydrazine Hydrate" (Instructions issued by S.E.I., A.R.D. Woolwich, October 18th 1946.)
- 28) F.I.A.T. Final Report No.839: "Production of Hydrazine Hydrate", by J. Robell.
- 29) News Letter END/2/48, by E.N. Dodd.
- 30) M.W. Kellogg Co., Special Projects Dept., Jersey City, New Jersey, Report No. SPD.134 (March 19th, 1948).
- 31) S. Minami, Jap. J. Exp. M.11, pp.253 & 475 (1933).
- 32) D.W. Scott et alia, J.A.C.S. 71, p.2293 (1949).
- 33) D.L. Armstrong & J.F. Warfel. Investigation of Liquid Rocket Propellants. Aerojets Engineering Corporation Report No.820-4.
- 34) H. Maisner & F. Zwicky. Light Metal Amides and Compounds of a Similar Nature. Aerojet Engineering Corporation Report No.RTM-30.
- 35) M.I.T., Hydrogen Peroxide Laboratories, NOrd 9107, Task C, Progress Report No.21 (30.4.47) pp.5-6.



# APPENDIX I

Performance of  $\text{NH}_3$ ,  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4 \cdot \text{H}_2\text{O}$  and  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4$  with various oxidants

TABLE I

Performance of oxidant, 100%  $\text{HNO}_3$  with various fuels at  $P_c = 20$  ats.

(a) Fuel = n-Decane.

| <u>Wt. Ratio</u> | <u><math>T_c(^{\circ}\text{K})</math></u> | <u><math>\gamma</math></u> | <u>S.I. (secs.)</u> | <u>S.I. <math>\times \bar{\delta}</math></u> |
|------------------|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| 2.56             | 2000                                      | 1.283                      | 198.4               | 231                                          |
| 3.04             | 2400                                      | 1.255                      | 210.6               | 252                                          |
| 3.70             | 2800                                      | 1.230                      | 219.3               | 271                                          |
| 4.12             | 2950                                      | 1.221                      | 221.2               | 278                                          |
| 6.25             | 2950                                      | 1.210                      | 210.3               | 278                                          |
| 7.44             | 2800                                      | 1.211                      | 202.2               | 272                                          |
| 9.94             | 2400                                      | 1.223                      | 184.2               | 255                                          |
| 12.69            | 2000                                      | 1.241                      | 166.4               | 234                                          |

(b) Fuel =  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4 \cdot \text{H}_2\text{O}$

| <u>Wt. Ratio</u> | <u><math>T_c(^{\circ}\text{K})</math></u> | <u><math>\gamma</math></u> | <u>S.I.</u> | <u>S.I. <math>\times \bar{\delta}</math></u> |
|------------------|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------------------|
| .6804            | 2000                                      | 1.2538                     | 202.9       | 240                                          |
| .7976            | 2200                                      | 1.2411                     | 209.0       | 251                                          |
| .9425            | 2400                                      | 1.2291                     | 213.9       | 261                                          |
| 1.0811           | 2400                                      | 1.2280                     | 210.9       | 261                                          |
| 1.386            | 2200                                      | 1.2309                     | 197.7       | 251                                          |
| 1.7514           | 2000                                      | 1.2470                     | 184.8       | 240                                          |

(c) Fuel = liq.  $\text{NH}_3$

| <u>Wt. Ratio</u> | <u><math>T_c(^{\circ}\text{K})</math></u> | <u><math>\gamma</math></u> | <u>S.I.</u> | <u>S.I. <math>\times \bar{\delta}</math></u> |
|------------------|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------------------|
| .1071            | 2000                                      | 1.2632                     | 207.7       | 195                                          |
| .1209            | 2200                                      | 1.2496                     | 213.4       | 206                                          |
| .1363            | 2400                                      | 1.2373                     | 218.3       | 216                                          |
| .2009            | 2400                                      | 1.2324                     | 206.8       | 223                                          |
| .2402            | 2200                                      | 1.2410                     | 194.3       | 218                                          |
| .2833            | 2000                                      | 1.2505                     | 182.2       | 211                                          |

(d) Fuel =  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4$

| <u>Wt. Ratio</u> | <u><math>T_c(^{\circ}\text{K})</math></u> | <u><math>\gamma</math></u> | <u>S.I.</u> | <u>S.I. <math>\times \bar{\delta}</math></u> |
|------------------|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------------------|
| .1285            | 2000                                      | 1.2987                     | 223.2       | 254                                          |
| .1961            | 2400                                      | 1.2695                     | 233.1       | 275                                          |
| .2910            | 2800                                      | 1.2429                     | 238.6       | 293                                          |
| .5125            | 2800                                      | 1.2315                     | 222.1       | 289                                          |
| .7619            | 2400                                      | 1.2428                     | 198.2       | 267                                          |
| 1.0159           | 2000                                      | 1.2588                     | 176.7       | 244                                          |

/Table II



TABLE II

Performance of oxidant,  $\text{ClF}_3$ , with various fuels at  $P_c = 20$  ats.(a) Fuel =  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4$ 

| Wt. Ratio |        | $T_c(^{\circ}\text{K})$ | $\gamma$ |        | S. I. |       | S.I. x $\bar{\delta}$ |     |
|-----------|--------|-------------------------|----------|--------|-------|-------|-----------------------|-----|
| i         | ii     |                         | i        | ii     | i     | ii    | i                     | ii  |
| .4832     | .5225  | 2000                    | 1.3387   | 1.3386 | 223.8 | 221.7 | 264                   | 264 |
| .7082     | .7603  | 2400                    | 1.3253   | 1.3252 | 234.9 | 233.7 | 290                   | 290 |
| .9837     | 1.0711 | 2800                    | 1.3147   | 1.3144 | 243.5 | 240.2 | 314                   | 314 |
| 1.1697    | 1.2728 | 3000                    | 1.3111   | 1.3107 | 246.2 | 242.8 | 326                   | 325 |
| 1.3924    | 1.5167 | 3200                    | 1.3086   | 1.3081 | 248.3 | 244.7 | 337                   | 336 |
| 1.6749    | 1.8356 | 3400                    | 1.3076   | 1.3069 | 249.6 | 245.7 | 348                   | 347 |
| 2.0205    | 2.2311 | 3600                    | 1.3080   | 1.3071 | 250.5 | 246.2 | 358                   | 357 |

(i) -  $\Delta H_f(\text{ClF}_3) = 30$  k.cals./mol. (ii) -  $\Delta H_f(\text{ClF}_3) = 42$  k.cals./mol.(b) Fuel = liq.  $\text{NH}_3$ 

| Wt. Ratio |        | $T_c(^{\circ}\text{K})$ | $\gamma$ |        | S. I. |       | S.I. x $\bar{\delta}$ |     |
|-----------|--------|-------------------------|----------|--------|-------|-------|-----------------------|-----|
| i         | ii     |                         | i        | ii     | i     | ii    | i                     | ii  |
| 1.4224    | 1.5383 | 2000                    | 1.3397   | 1.3396 | 208.9 | 205.8 | 206                   | 207 |
| 1.7351    | 1.8753 | 2400                    | 1.3255   | 1.3253 | 221.5 | 218.1 | 230                   | 232 |
| 2.1328    | 2.3201 | 2800                    | 1.3139   | 1.3135 | 231.2 | 227.4 | 254                   | 255 |
| 2.3870    | 2.6076 | 3000                    | 1.3099   | 1.3093 | 235.1 | 231.0 | 266                   | 268 |
| 2.7044    | 2.9674 | 3200                    | 1.3071   | 1.3065 | 238.1 | 233.8 | 278                   | 280 |
| 3.1147    | 3.4335 | 3400                    | 1.3060   | 1.3056 | 240.3 | 235.9 | 291                   | 293 |

(i) -  $\Delta H_f(\text{ClF}_3) = 30$  k.cals./mol. (ii) -  $\Delta H_f(\text{ClF}_3) = 42$  k.cals./mol.(c) Fuel =  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4 \cdot \text{H}_2\text{O}$ 

| Wt. Ratio | $T_c(^{\circ}\text{K})$ | $\gamma$ | S. I.  | S.I. x $\bar{\delta}$ |
|-----------|-------------------------|----------|--------|-----------------------|
| .6521     | 2000                    | 1.3030   | 204.17 | 253.0                 |
| .8704     | 2400                    | 1.2901   | 216.65 | 278.6                 |
| 1.1513    | 2800                    | 1.2813   | 226.25 | 302.27                |
| 1.3478    | 3000                    | 1.2793   | 229.75 | 313.6                 |
| 1.4793    | 3100                    | 1.2796   | 231    | 319.5                 |

The calculations on  $\text{ClF}_3$  have been carried out: (a) with two possible heats of formation which are the limits of uncertainty in this property, (b) the dissociation of  $\text{HF}$  has been neglected but this introduces a negligible error and (c) no calculations of system in which free fluorine can be formed, i.e. oxidant rich systems, have been made owing to the great uncertainty of the thermodynamic properties of Fluorine (c.f. E.R.D.E. Tech. Memo. No. 6/M/49)



TABLE III

Performance of oxidant, liq. O<sub>2</sub>, with various fuels at P<sub>c</sub> = 20 ats.(a) N<sub>2</sub>H<sub>4</sub>

| Wt. Ratio | T <sub>c</sub> (°K) | $\gamma$ | S.I. (secs.) | S.I. x $\bar{\delta}$ |
|-----------|---------------------|----------|--------------|-----------------------|
| .249      | 1906                | 1.309    | 236.5        | 245                   |
| .333      | 2272                | 1.286    | 246.0        | 256                   |
| .399      | 2576                | 1.270    | 252.5        | 264                   |
| .665      | 3083                | 1.240    | 264          | 279                   |
| 1.000     | 3500                | 1.228    | 257          | 276                   |

(b) liq. NH<sub>3</sub>

| Wt. Ratio | T <sub>c</sub> (°K) | $\gamma$ | S.I. (secs.) | S.I. x $\bar{\delta}$ |
|-----------|---------------------|----------|--------------|-----------------------|
| .704      | 1840                | 1.283    | 219          | 202                   |
| .94       | 2361                | 1.243    | 242          | 229                   |
| 1.13      | 2806                | 1.200    | 251.6        | 242                   |

(c) Aviation Gasoline (Density 0.720 gm./cc. at 10°C)

| Wt. Ratio | T <sub>c</sub> (°K) | $\gamma$ | S.I. (secs.) | S.I. x $\bar{\delta}$ |
|-----------|---------------------|----------|--------------|-----------------------|
| 1.5       | 1817                | 1.285    | 200.4        | 190                   |
| 2.0       | 2861                | 1.235    | 235.7        | 226                   |
| 3.0       | 3383                | 1.212    | 237.8        | 237                   |
| 3.5       | 3406                | 1.211    | 233.9        | 236                   |



## APPENDIX II

### Physical Properties of Ammonia, Hydrazine Hydrate & Anhydrous Hydrazine

TABLE IV

#### Comparison of Most Important Physical Properties

| Property                                    | $\text{NH}_3$                   | $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4 \cdot \text{H}_2\text{O}$ | $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4$       |
|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Boiling Point ( $^{\circ}\text{C}.$ )       | -33.5                           | 118.5/740 mm.Hg.                                | 113 to 113.5                 |
| Melting Point ( $^{\circ}\text{C}.$ )       | -77.7                           | -51.5                                           | +2 to +1.4                   |
| Density (gr./cc.)                           | 0.616/16.5 $^{\circ}\text{C}.$  | 1.0305/21 $^{\circ}\text{C}.$                   | 1.013/15 $^{\circ}\text{C}.$ |
| Critical Temp. ( $^{\circ}\text{C}.$ )      | 132.4                           | -                                               | 380                          |
| Critical Pressure (ats.)                    | 111.5                           | -                                               | 145                          |
| Heat of Formation (300 $^{\circ}\text{K}$ ) | -15.84 (liquid)<br>-10.94 (gas) | -58.05                                          | +12.05                       |

TABLE V

#### Physical Properties of Liquid & Gaseous Ammonia

##### (a) Vapour pressure of liquid ammonia

|                      |      |       |       |        |        |        |        |        |
|----------------------|------|-------|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| $T^{\circ}\text{C}.$ | -60  | -30   | 0     | 30     | 60     | 80     | 100    | 120    |
| P (ats.)             | .216 | 1.179 | 4.238 | 11.512 | 25.797 | 40.902 | 61.816 | 89.802 |

##### (b) Density of liquid ammonia

|                     |       |      |      |      |      |      |
|---------------------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|
| $T^{\circ}\text{C}$ | -70   | -50  | -30  | -10  | 0    | +20  |
| Density (gr./cc.)   | 0.725 | .705 | .677 | .652 | .638 | .610 |

TABLE VI

#### Physical Properties of Anhydrous Hydrazine

##### (a) Vapour pressure

|                     |       |       |       |      |      |     |      |      |     |
|---------------------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|-----|------|------|-----|
| $T^{\circ}\text{C}$ | 0     | 20    | .40   | 60   | 140  | 170 | 200  | 300  | 380 |
| P (ats.)            | .0035 | .0139 | .0445 | .122 | 2.27 | 5.0 | 10.0 | 56.3 | 145 |

##### (b) Density

|                       |        |        |        |
|-----------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| $T(^{\circ}\text{C})$ | 0      | 20     | 50     |
| Density (gr./cc.)     | 1.0253 | 1.0083 | 0.9828 |

These figures are calculated from the equation

$$d = 1.0253 (1 - 0.00085 t) \quad (t = \text{deg. C.})$$

##### (c) Specific Heat of Hydrazine

$$0.75 \text{ calories per gram. per } ^{\circ}\text{C} \quad (30)$$

/Table VII



TABLE VII

## Physical Properties of Hydrazine-Water Mixtures

## (a) Vapour Pressure of Hydrazine Hydrate (28)

|            |    |    |     |     |     |
|------------|----|----|-----|-----|-----|
| T °C.      | 40 | 60 | 80  | 100 | 119 |
| P (mm.Hg.) | 20 | 55 | 135 | 325 | 760 |

These figures have been obtained from a curve in Ref. 28.

## (b) Density of System-Hydrazine/Water at 15°C (Ref. 11)

|                                               |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
|-----------------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Wt. per cent of N <sub>2</sub> H <sub>4</sub> | 0.0    | 14.0   | 26.45  | 40.85  | 64.1   | 80     | 100    |
| Density (gr./cc.)                             | 0.9991 | 1.0142 | 1.0272 | 1.0389 | 1.0470 | 1.0379 | 1.0114 |

## (c) Freezing Point of System - Hydrazine/Water

|                                            |    |     |         |     |        |        |       |       |     |    |     |
|--------------------------------------------|----|-----|---------|-----|--------|--------|-------|-------|-----|----|-----|
| Wt. per cent N <sub>2</sub> H <sub>4</sub> | 0  | 20  | 40.5(i) | 50  | 60(ii) | 64(ii) | 69(i) | 73    | 80  | 90 | 100 |
| T °C.                                      | -8 | -22 | -88     | -65 | -52.5  | -51.55 | -53.5 | -40.5 | -25 | -9 | -32 |

(i) Eutectic (ii) Hydrazine Hydrate

## (d) Composition of Ternary Mixtures containing NaOH (4)

Certain of these mixtures, at temperatures above 60°C. form a two phase system. No similar effect is found with KOH, K<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub>, Na<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub>, Na<sub>3</sub>PO<sub>4</sub> or Na<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>. The table gives some actually observed compositions.

| T °C | Material    | Wt. per cent                  |      |
|------|-------------|-------------------------------|------|
|      |             | N <sub>2</sub> H <sub>4</sub> | NaOH |
| 100  | Upper Phase | 92.7                          | 2.4  |
| 90   | "           | 92.2                          | 2.0  |
| 70   | "           | 90.9                          | 3.2  |
| 60   | "           | 77.5                          | 9.3  |
| 100  | Lower Phase | 5.7                           | 70.3 |
| 90   | "           | 5.9                           | 69.3 |
| 70   | "           | 6.7                           | 67.6 |
| 60   | "           | 19.0                          | 51.4 |
| 100  | Plait Point | 45.9                          | 27.9 |
| 90   | "           | 45.6                          | 28.2 |
| 70   | "           | 45.4                          | 28.5 |
| 60   | "           | 45.5                          | 29.6 |

(e) Specific Heat of Hydrazine Hydrate: 0.78 calories per gram per °C. (30)

/Table VIII



TABLE VIII

Vapour Pressures of Saturated Solutions of  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4$  in liquid  $\text{NH}_3$   
 (in equilibrium with solid  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4$ ) (Mellor "Comprehensive  
 Treatise" VIII p.315)

| $T(^{\circ}\text{C.})$ | Wt. per cent $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4$ | $p$ (mm.Hg.) |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------|
| -80 (eutectic)         | 13                                  | 40           |
| -70                    | 19.5                                | 78           |
| -60                    | 29.1                                | 145          |
| -50                    | 39.7                                | 252          |
| -40                    | 51.0                                | 395          |
| -30                    | 63.8                                | 562          |
| -20                    | 76.0                                | 675          |
| -10                    | 87.6                                | 620          |
| -5                     | 92.6                                | 470          |
| 0                      | 98.0                                | 175          |
| +1                     | 98.6                                | 105          |



### APPENDIX III

#### The Properties of Solutions of Lithium in Liquid Ammonia

The alkali metals have a high solubility in liquid ammonia but, on account of the importance of the molecular weight of combustion products, only the system with Lithium metal can be considered as a fuel for rocket propulsion. It would suffer from the disadvantage of being highly attenuating. The alkaline earth metals form solutions of the compound  $M.(NH_3)_6$ , except Mg. which is insoluble. Aluminium is also insoluble and this fact, in conjunction with the insolubility of Mg. makes it almost certain that Be would be insoluble. The only practicable system,  $NH_3$  + metal, is therefore Lithium +  $NH_3$ . Johnson and Piskur (J.Phys.Chem. XXXVII p.93 (1933)) give the following figures for the vapour pressure of  $NH_3$  over saturated solutions of Li in liq.  $NH_3$ .

| <u>T °C.</u> | <u>Vapour Pressure (mm.Hg.)</u> | <u>mols. <math>NH_3</math>/Li</u> | <u>Wt. % Li</u> |
|--------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| 0            | 34.0                            | 3.60                              | 11.32           |
| -32.7        | 3.4                             | 3.74                              | 10.90           |
| -33.2        | 3.4                             | 3.75                              | 10.89           |
| -63.5        | 1.1                             | 3.81                              | 10.70           |

From this it can be seen that the solubility of Li in liquid ammonia is only slightly dependent on the temperature and that the Li reduces the vapour pressure of liquid ammonia by a factor of about 20.

Ruff & Zedner (*Berichte* 41 p. 1948 (1908)) give the following figures for the boiling points and setting points of solutions of Li in liquid  $NH_3$ .

| <u>Atom per cent Li</u> | <u>Boiling Point</u> | <u>Atom per cent Li</u> | <u>Setting Point</u>                                |
|-------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| 2.31                    | -33.1                | 0                       | -76                                                 |
| 3.17                    | -33.0                | 6.8                     | -77                                                 |
| 5.74                    | -32.7                | 9.9                     | -77.5                                               |
| 8.72                    | -31.7                | 15.6                    | -79                                                 |
| 11.28                   | -29.8                | 22.9                    | No solidification<br>down to temp. of<br>liquid air |
| 11.83                   | -29.5                |                         |                                                     |
| 16.04                   | -19.4                |                         |                                                     |
| 25.5 (saturated)        | +63                  |                         |                                                     |
| (11.7% by wt.)          |                      |                         |                                                     |

Jaffe (Zeit. f. Physik 93 p. 741 (1935)) showed that the setting point of the saturated solution was  $-181^\circ \pm 3^\circ C$ .

The heat of solution of Li in liquid ammonia is slightly exothermic, Kraus and Schmidt (J.A.C.S. 56 p. 2297 (1934)) stating a value of 8.0 kilocalories per mol.

Thus, as far as vapour pressure and solubility are concerned, solutions of Li in liq.  $NH_3$  are very attractive as fuels. The slight loss of energy in forming the solution is not important and in any case would be more than compensated by heat of formation of  $Li_2O$  formed during the combustion of the fuel. However, there are two disadvantages. The first, that of chemical instability, may or may not be insuperable. The various authors referred to mention the necessity for pumping off hydrogen which is formed on solution but give no information as to whether hydrogen is evolved subsequently. Schechter, Thomson & Kleinberg (J.A.C.S. 71 (1949) p.1816)

/give



give experimental data on the oxidation of Na in liq.  $\text{NH}_3$  to the amide or the oxide, depending on the experimental conditions by gaseous oxygen. Similar oxidation may also occur with  $\text{Li}$  solutions. This is not an insurmountable difficulty but does add to the handling problems.

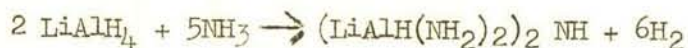
Finally it should be mentioned that the Aerojet Engineering Corporation (33) have found that in solutions of  $\text{Li}$  in liq.  $\text{NH}_3$  the metal amide is formed quite fast at  $0^\circ\text{C}$ . and observably at  $-78.5^\circ\text{C}$ .

An even more serious objection is the extremely low density of solutions in liquid ammonia. Jaffe (loc.cit.) gives the following figures for the density of the saturated solution:-

|                          |                               |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| at $+19^\circ\text{C}$ . | $d = 0.477 \pm 0.006$ gr./cc. |
| at $-80^\circ\text{C}$ . | $d = 0.495 \pm 0.006$ " "     |

The density is thus much lower than that of liquid  $\text{NH}_3$  (0.610 gr./cc at  $20^\circ\text{C}$ .) which virtually rules out the use of this fuel for the majority of weapons.

It might be possible to reduce the vapour pressure by the addition of salts such as  $\text{LiAlH}_4$ . This salt reacts, according to information quoted in "Preliminary Data Sheet No.4 (dated 1.5.49) of "Metal Hydrides Incorporated", as follows:-



If the product is stable and only small quantities are required it might be worth while doing a little work on this system and possibly with  $\text{LiAlH}_4$  or a similar salt in anhydrous hydrazine.

It is shown in Ref. 33 that both Lithium and Sodium Borohydride are soluble in liquid ammonia. The minimum freezing point with the first salt is  $+8^\circ\text{C}$ . but a 50% solution of the sodium salt has a freezing point  $-26^\circ\text{C}$ . and a vapour pressure of about 1 at. The density of this solution is believed to be between 0.7 - 0.8 gr./cc. and its cost per lb. would probably be higher than that of anhydrous hydrazine. It, therefore, seems more reasonable to concentrate on hydrazine where difficulties due to the deposition of oxide (i.e.  $\text{B}_2\text{O}_3$ ) do not occur. It should also be stressed that the stability of the solutions of these borohydrides in  $\text{NH}_3$  and  $\text{N}_2\text{H}_4$  does not seem to have been investigated. A summary of the properties of amides and similar compounds and the properties of solution of metals and salts in liquid ammonia is given in Ref. 34.

S. No. 100  
M.No.405/49

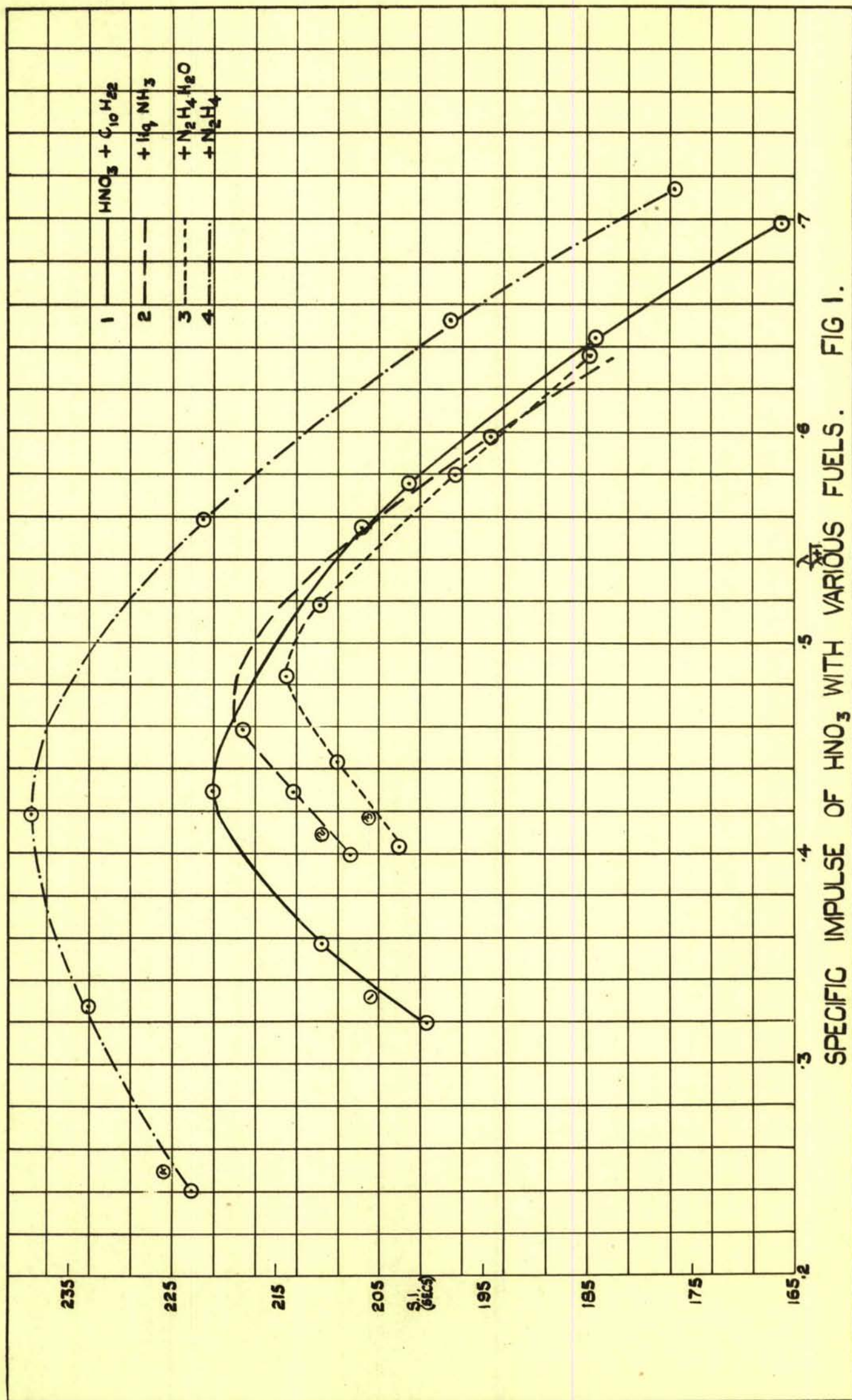


### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

The authors desire to express their indebtedness to A.D.Amm.P.(X), Ministry of Supply, for information regarding the availability of the hydronitrogens in Britain; to Dr. S. Masterman of B.J.S.M., Washington, for similar information about the situation in the United States; to Miss M. Hooper for a number of performance calculations; and to Mr. T.C.H. Hill for an extensive search of the published literature.

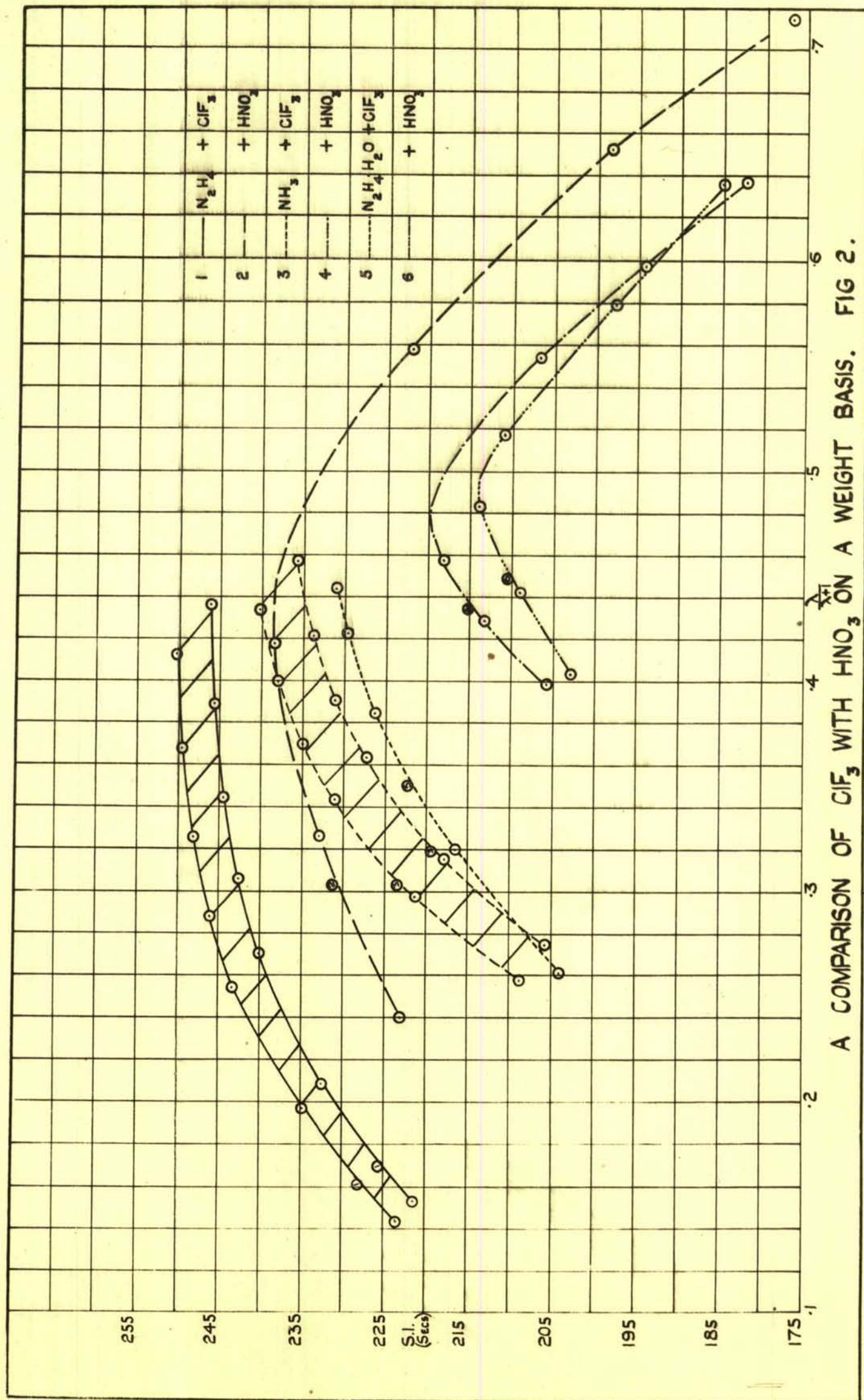
As may be seen from the Bibliography, many sources of information have been used in compiling this report. Special reference should be made, however, to a compilation by Dr. L.F. Audrieth and his collaborators, of the University of Illinois, entitled "The Chemistry of Hydrazine" (reference 15). This was made available to us through the kindness of Dr. G. Sunderlin, Office of U.S. Naval Attache in Britain, and has greatly facilitated the preparation of this review. Considerable use has also been made of reports issued by North American Aviation Inc. (reference 7) and M.W. Kellogg Co. (reference 30).





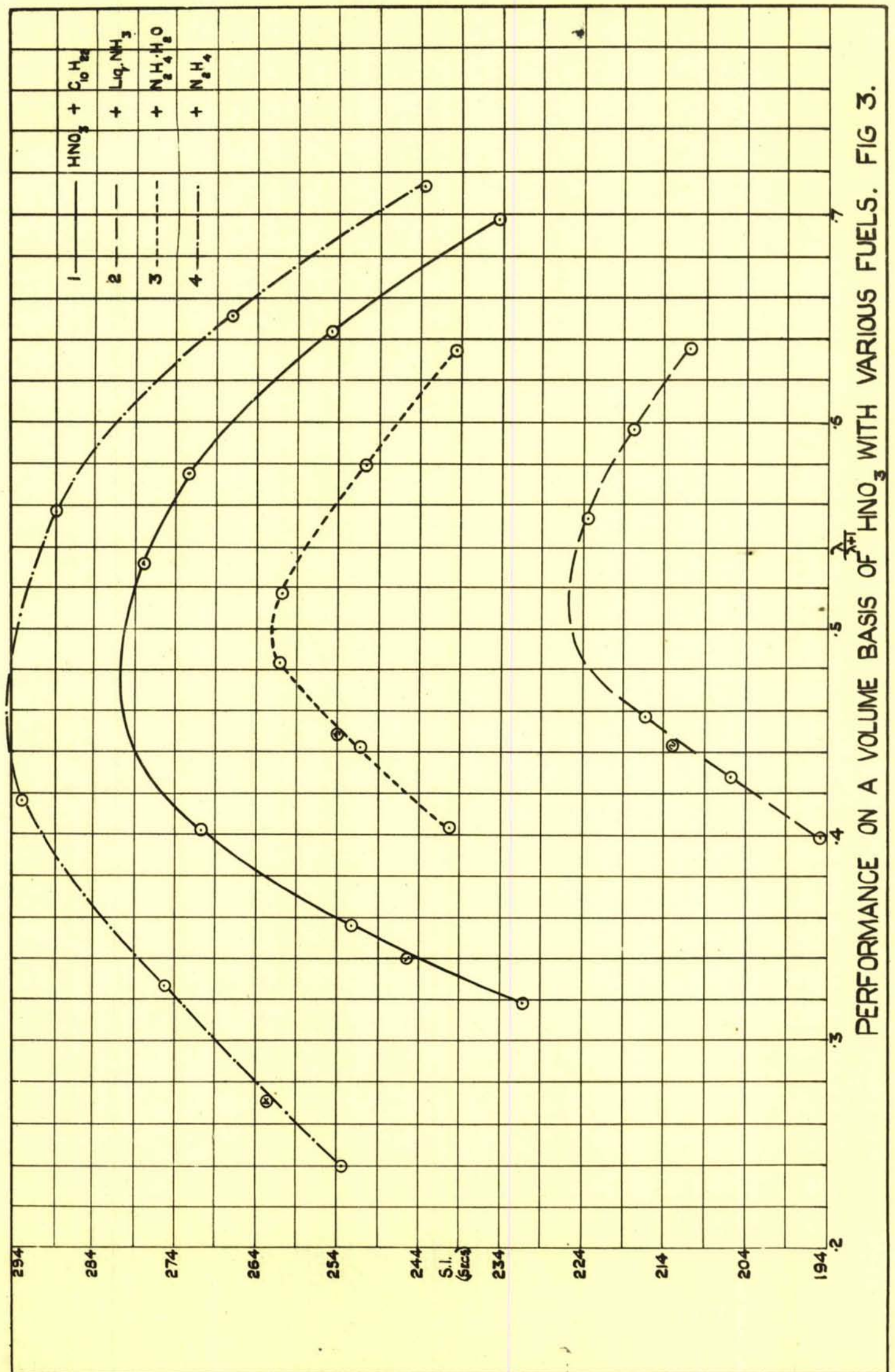
SPECIFIC IMPULSE OF  $\text{HNO}_3$  WITH VARIOUS FUELS. FIG 1.





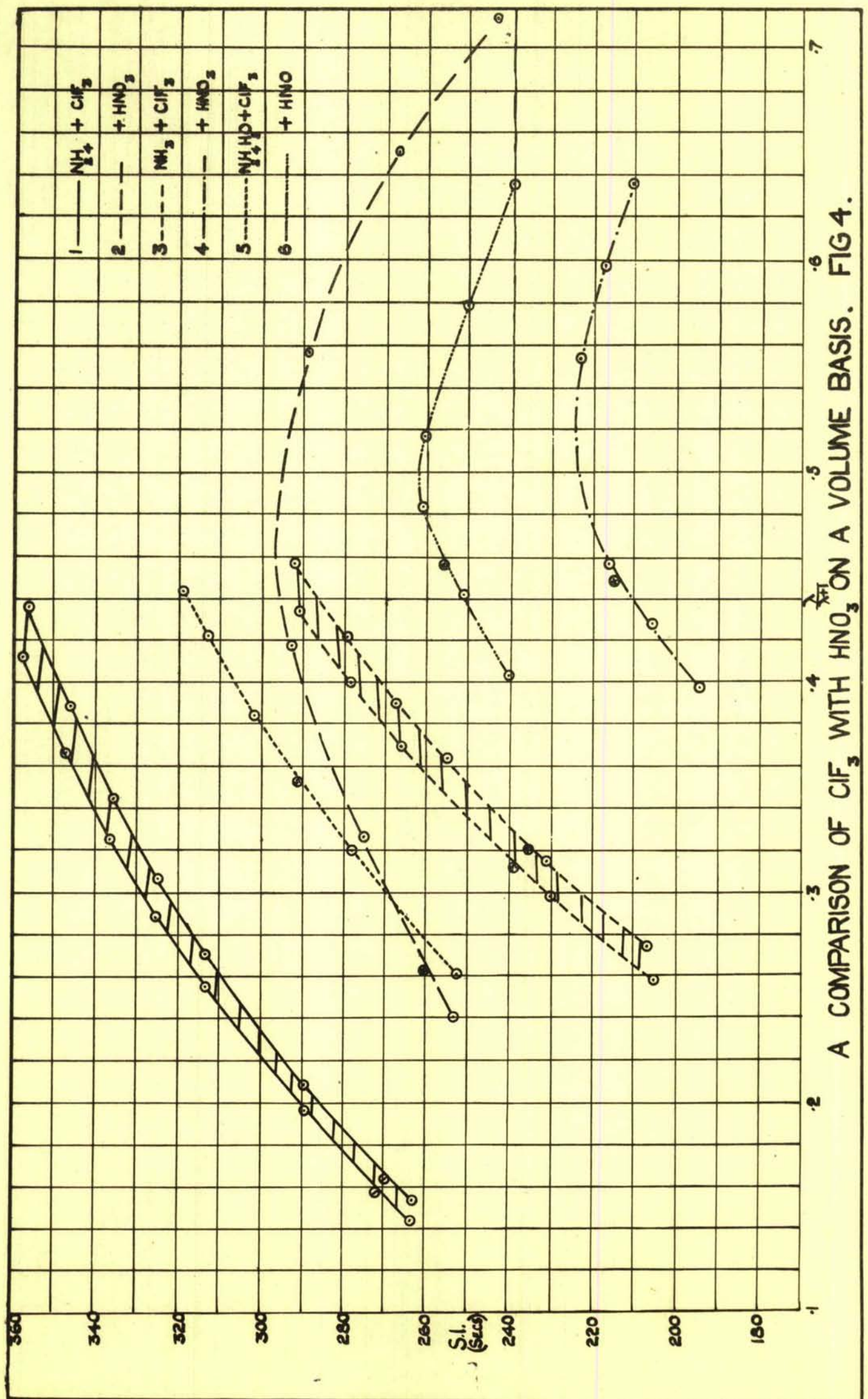
A COMPARISON OF  $ClF_3$  WITH  $HNO_3$  ON A WEIGHT BASIS. FIG 2.







UNCLASSIFIED

A COMPARISON OF  $\text{ClF}_3$  WITH  $\text{HNO}_3$  ON A VOLUME BASIS. FIG 4.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED