Reduction of Dipyrido Ureas *via* 6-Alkyloxydipyrido[1,2-*c*;2′,1′-*e*]imidazolium Salts

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Dipyrido uronium salts can readily be synthesized by alkylation of dipyrido ureas with Meerwein's reagent. Compared to the corresponding ureas, the uronium salts are more reactive towards basic or reducing agents like metal hydrides. Reactivity studies show that the uronium salts can react as alkylating agents towards DMSO, DBU and NaOEt along with release of the respective dipyrido ureas. In contrast, reduction of the dipyrido uronium salts with sodium borohydride or sodium trimethoxyborohydride in dry and degassed acetonitrile leads to the imidazolium salts **7a** and **7b** in moderate yields. Analysis of the by-products reveals an *in situ* carbene formation which can be reversed by using degassed but wet acetonitrile as solvent. The yield of **7b** was increased significantly by these means.

Key words: Urea, Imidazolinone, Uronium Salts, Imidazolium Salts, Reduction