

# An Investigation into the Roles of Photosynthesis and Respiration in H<sup>+</sup> Efflux from Aerated Suspensions of *Asparagus* Mesophyll Cells<sup>1</sup>

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## ABSTRACT

Aerated and stirred suspensions of mechanically isolated *Asparagus sprengeri* Regel mesophyll cells were used to investigate the roles of respiration and photosynthesis in net H<sup>+</sup> efflux. Rates varied between 0.12 and 1.99 nanomoles H<sup>+</sup> per 10<sup>6</sup> cells per minute or 3 and 40 nanomoles H<sup>+</sup> per milligram chlorophyll per minute. The mean rate of H<sup>+</sup> efflux was 10% greater in the dark. 3-(3,4-Dichlorophenyl)-1,1-dimethylurea, an inhibitor of noncyclic photophosphorylation, did not inhibit H<sup>+</sup> efflux from illuminated cells. Bubbling with N<sub>2</sub> or addition of oligomycin, an inhibitor of mitochondrial ATP production, resulted in rapid and virtually complete inhibition of H<sup>+</sup> efflux in light or dark. In the absence of aeration, H<sup>+</sup> efflux came to a halt but resumed with aeration or illumination. When aeration was switched to CO<sub>2</sub>-free air, rates of H<sup>+</sup> efflux were reduced 43% in the dark and 57% in the light. Oligomycin eliminated dark CO<sub>2</sub> fixation but not photosynthetic CO<sub>2</sub> fixation. It is suggested that H<sup>+</sup> efflux is dependent on respiration and dark CO<sub>2</sub> fixation, but independent of photosynthesis.

The membrane potential of plant cells is usually greater than can be accounted for by outward diffusion of accumulated ions. Evidence suggests that an ATP requiring electrogenic H<sup>+</sup> efflux is involved in creating the additional separation of charge across the membrane (8, 14, 26, 27). Reports on the influence of light-dark transitions on membrane potentials and net rates of H<sup>+</sup> flux in photosynthetic cells are conflicting and difficult to interpret. In some cases, changes in illumination cause only transient changes in the resting membrane potential (25) in others, photosynthetically active light causes hyperpolarization of the resting potential (5, 11). Light-dependent alkalization and acidification of the medium bathing leaf slices has been detected (9, 16, 19, 23, 25). The apparent proton influx could be passive and reflect H<sup>+</sup> fluxes within the chloroplast (25) or photosynthetic reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> levels in the medium (9, 11, 16). In slices of pea and *Atriplex* leaves, light stimulated net proton efflux (19, 23). It is not clear, however, that the energy required for active H<sup>+</sup> efflux in light is derived from chloroplasts (11). Unlike mitochondria which can export ATP directly chloroplasts export triosephosphate which may be used for ATP synthesis in the cytosol (7, 28).

Limited gaseous diffusion may have resulted in conflicting literature data. In some reports, the medium bathing the leaf slices is aerated (25) in others the tissue is perfused (5), placed on a shaker (19) or placed in a closed system (9, 16). In all cases

diffusion of O<sub>2</sub> or CO<sub>2</sub> between the medium and the intact tissue could be limiting for respiration or photosynthesis. Diffusion of gases in water-filled air spaces will be significantly slower than diffusion in air, and photosynthetic rates in submerged leaf slices are significantly reduced when compared to intact leaves (20, 21). Thus, reports that photosynthesis can drive membrane transport processes may arise indirectly through a stimulation of respiration resulting from photosynthetic O<sub>2</sub> production.

In the present study, the influence of light on net rates of H<sup>+</sup> efflux was investigated using a suspension of mechanically isolated mesophyll cells. The cell suspension was stirred and aerated to reduce diffusion distance to a minimum. The unbuffered suspension medium of 5 mM KCl, 5 mM NaCl, and 0.1 mM CaCl<sub>2</sub> was chosen to reflect ion concentrations in the leaf free space (18).

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

*Asparagus sprengeri* Regel was grown at 20°C in vermiculite in a growth chamber under a 12-h photoperiod and cool white Sylvania fluorescent tubes. Cladophylls 1.5 to 2.5 cm long and less than 3 months old were washed and 3 g of tissue cut into 0.5-cm long sections. Cells were isolated at room temperature using gentle grinding in 20 mM (pH 7.2) K-phosphate buffer (4). Released cells were filtered through muslin and centrifuged twice at 400g for 2 min before resuspension in 15 ml unbuffered salt solution (5 mM KCl, 5 mM NaCl, 0.1 mM CaCl<sub>2</sub>). Cells were stored on ice in the dark and used the same day. Chl content of the cell suspension was determined by the method of Arnon (1), and cell numbers measured using a hemocytometer and light microscope. The fraction of cells with intact protoplasts was determined through their ability to exclude Evans blue (13).

Recordings of pH changes with time were made using Radiometer (Copenhagen) equipment. A PHM 64 pH meter with a combination electrode was coupled to an REC 61 recorder through an REA 100 pH meter interface. Full scale deflection of the recorder pen (25 cm) corresponded to a pH change of 0.7. The electrode tip was immersed in 7 ml of the unbuffered salt solution and recordings of pH initiated prior to the addition of 10 to 12 × 10<sup>6</sup> cells contained in 3 ml of the cell suspension. The 10-ml volume was maintained at 30°C in an open water-jacketed glass vessel with a tapered inside wall (taper stopper 34/45). The vessel, which was treated with Sigma Sigmacote (Sigma) to prevent cells sticking to the glass, was placed on a magnetic stirrer and the cells were maintained in suspension with a spin bar and aeration at 500 ml min<sup>-1</sup> through an hypodermic needle (Yale 22). Conversion into a stirred but closed system was achieved by sliding a 6-cm high, tapered, polyethylene cone into the glass taper until a 13-ml volume remained. The electrode and an hypodermic needle fitted snugly into holes drilled into the cone to allow pH measurements and addition of reagents. The apparatus was surrounded

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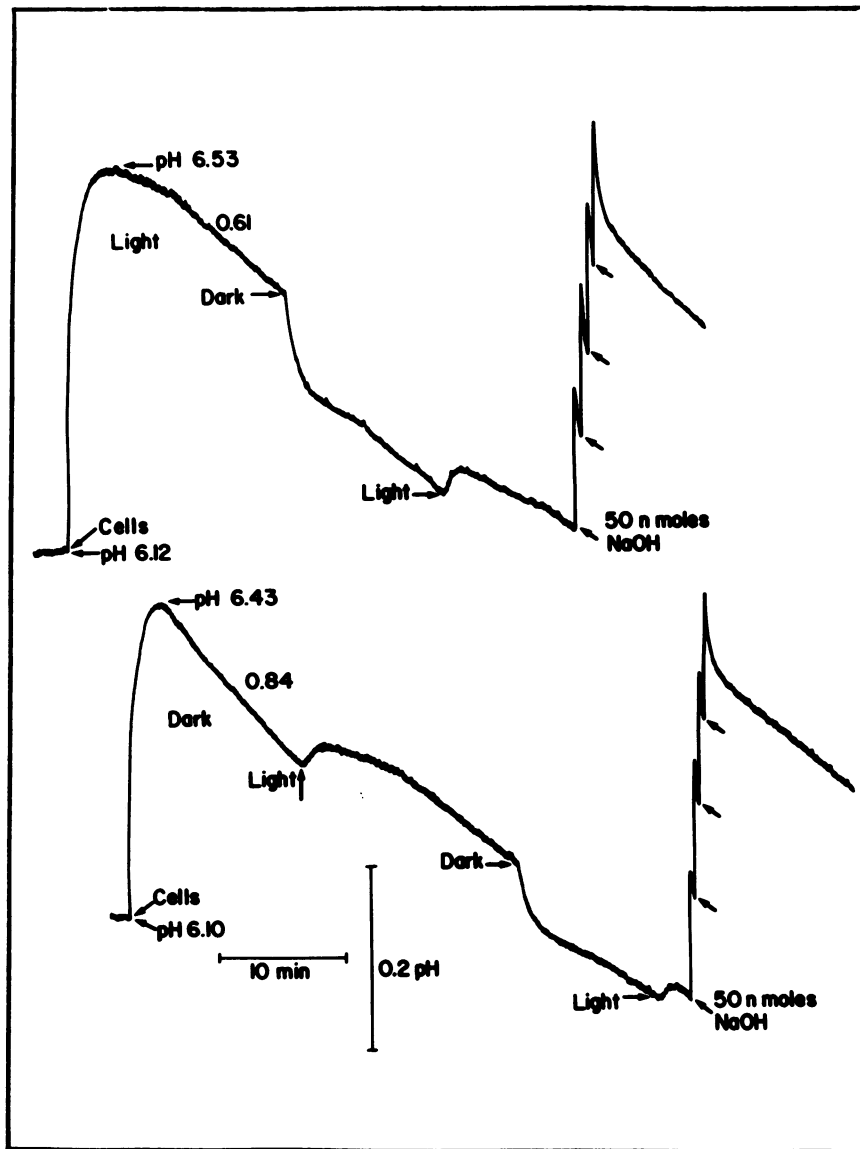


FIG. 1. The influence of light-dark transitions on the rate of acidification. Upper curve experiment started in the light, lower curve experiment started in the dark. Rates indicated are expressed as  $\text{nmol H}^+ / 10^6 \text{ cells} \cdot \text{min}$ .

Table I. *Effect of Light on Net Rates of  $\text{H}^+$  Efflux*

Mean values obtained from a minimum of eight measurements. Results expressed  $\pm$  SD

	Light	Dark
$\text{nmol H}^+ / 10^6 \text{ cells} \cdot \text{min}$	$0.77 \pm 0.45$	$0.85 \pm 0.42$
$\text{nmol H}^+ / \text{mg Chl} \cdot \text{min}$	$18.0 \pm 11.4$	$20.2 \pm 9.6$

by a light tight box with two removable opposite sides to allow illumination of the cells from two directions, and light tight apertures for the electrode, air line, and a syringe needle. Back titration of the cell suspension with standard alkali allowed calculation of the net rate of  $\text{H}^+$  efflux as  $\text{nmol H}^+ / 10^6 \text{ cells} \cdot \text{min}$  or  $\text{nmol H}^+ / \text{mg Chl} \cdot \text{min}$ . Cell suspensions were illuminated with a 300 w reflector lamp (Sylvania) which gave an irradiance at the surface of the vessel of  $1,100 \times 10^{-5} \text{ w cm}^{-2}$  as measured with an Alphametrics radiometer (model 1010) equipped with a broadband (400–100 nm) probe.

Dark  $\text{CO}_2$  fixation experiments were conducted in the same water-jacketed glass vessel as used for pH measurements using  $15 \times 10^6$  cells suspended in 5 ml 5 mM K-phosphate buffer (pH 7.2).

A tapered 7-cm polyethylene cone with aperture for a syringe needle converted the open vessel into a closed vessel of 5 ml capacity. A stirring bar maintained the cells in suspension. At time zero,  $20 \times 10^6$  dpm of  $^{14}\text{C}$  labeled  $\text{H}^{14}\text{CO}_3^-$  ( $58.2 \text{ mCi mmol}^{-1}$ ) was added. At set times, 0.1-ml samples of cell suspension were removed to scintillation vials containing 1 ml 80% (v/v) ethanol and dried overnight in a fume hood, prior to scintillation counting.

Rates of  $\text{O}_2$  production in the light and consumption in the dark were measured with a calibrated Clark  $\text{O}_2$  probe (YSI 4004) connected to a recorder. To the water-jacketed glass vessel was added a stirring bar, 6.5 ml 5 mM K-phosphate buffer (pH 7.2), and 4 to  $6 \times 10^6$  cells contained in 1 ml of suspension. The vessel was converted into a closed system of 7.5 ml capacity using a polyethylene cone with apertures for the electrode and a syringe needle. Rates of  $\text{O}_2$  production were measured at an irradiance of  $1,000 \times 10^{-5} \text{ w cm}^{-2}$ , after addition of 100  $\mu\text{l}$  of sodium bicarbonate (100 mM) to ensure saturation with  $\text{CO}_2$  (4). Rates of  $\text{O}_2$  consumption in the dark were measured immediately the cells were added to the glass vessel.

Total dissolved inorganic carbon was determined using the

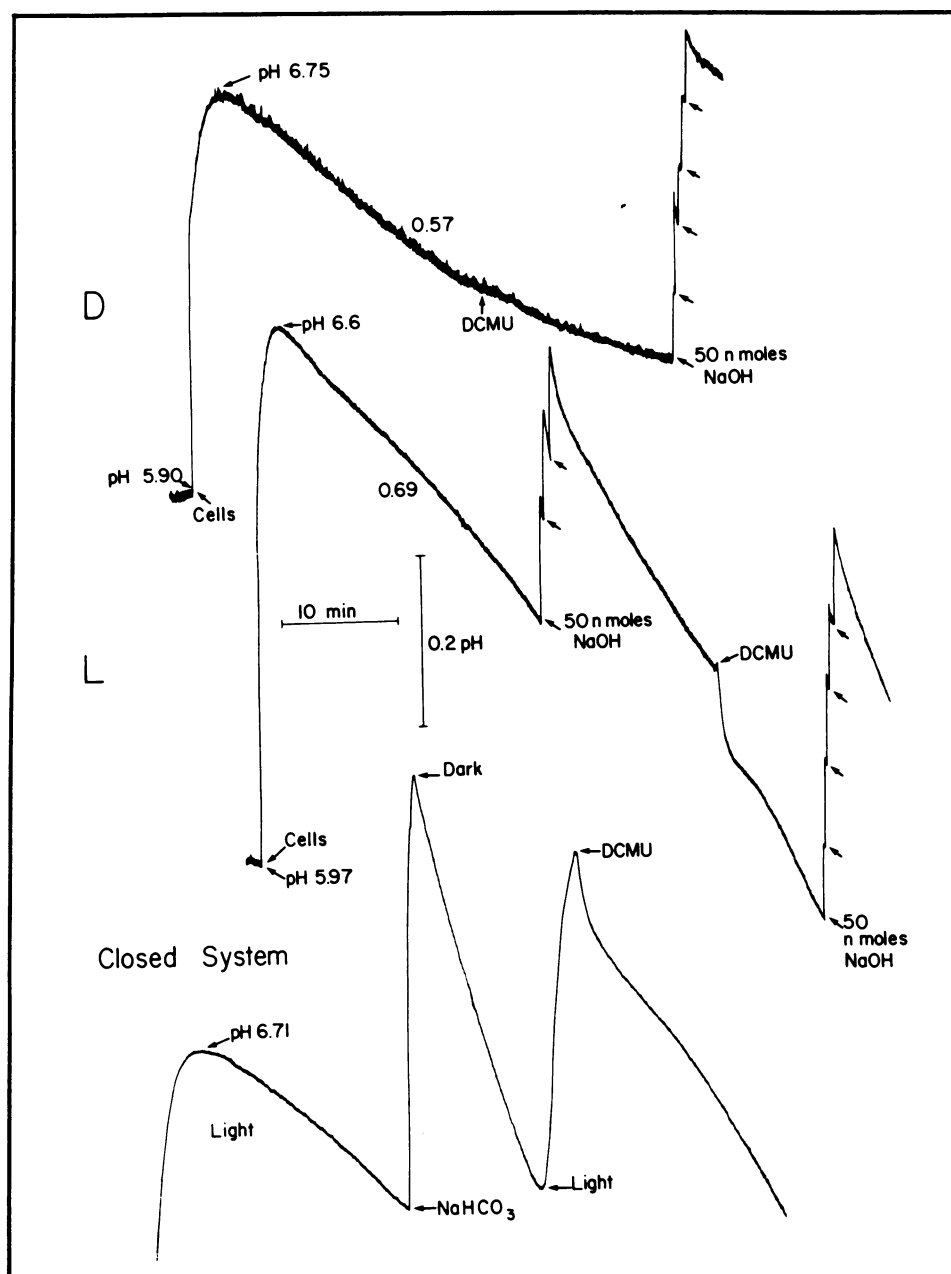


FIG. 2. The influence of DCMU on rates of acidification and light-driven alkalinization. Upper and middle curves derived from experiments with aeration throughout; the lower curve from an experiment which was started in the light using a closed system. The final concentration of DCMU was  $1 \mu\text{M}$ ,  $\text{NaHCO}_3$  addition resulted in a concentration increase of  $70 \mu\text{M}$ . The rates of acidification indicated are expressed in  $\text{nmol H}^+ / 10^6 \text{ cells} \cdot \text{min}$ . L, light; D, dark.

method of Birmingham and Colman (2). Stock solutions of DES,<sup>2</sup> FCCP, DCMU, and oligomycin were made up in 80% (v/v) ethanol and 0.1-ml volumes added to the cell suspension as indicated. All concentrations quoted are final concentrations after dilution with the cell suspension.

## RESULTS

Addition of cells to the stirred and aerated unbuffered salt solution invariably resulted in a rapid pH rise to around 6.3 to 6.8. Typically, the increase was around 0.3 to 0.6 units and greatest when cells were illuminated. After approximately 4 min the pH

started to decline (Figs. 1–4, and 6). Acidification continued at a diminishing rate until a constant pH between 4.0 to 5.0 was attained (data not shown). Initial rates of net  $\text{H}^+$  efflux varied between 0.12 and  $1.99 \text{ nmol H}^+ / 10^6 \text{ cells} \cdot \text{min}^{-1}$  or 3 to  $40 \text{ nmol H}^+ / \text{mg Chl} \cdot \text{min}$ . However, the mean value for net  $\text{H}^+$  efflux in the dark was approximately 10% higher than the rate in the light (Table I), suggesting that light does not result in a significant stimulation of  $\text{H}^+$  efflux.

The influence of light on the rate of net  $\text{H}^+$  efflux was investigated further using light to dark transitions. When illumination began, a short-lived pH increase interrupted the pH decline; when illumination stopped, there was a transient increase in the rate of pH decline (Fig. 1). These rapid changes indicated that photosynthesis reduced the steady-state  $\text{CO}_2$  concentration in the stirred and aerated cell suspension. The relationship between increasing

<sup>2</sup> Abbreviations: DES, diethylstilbestrol; FCCP, carbonyl cyanide *p*-trifluoromethoxyphenyl hydrazone.

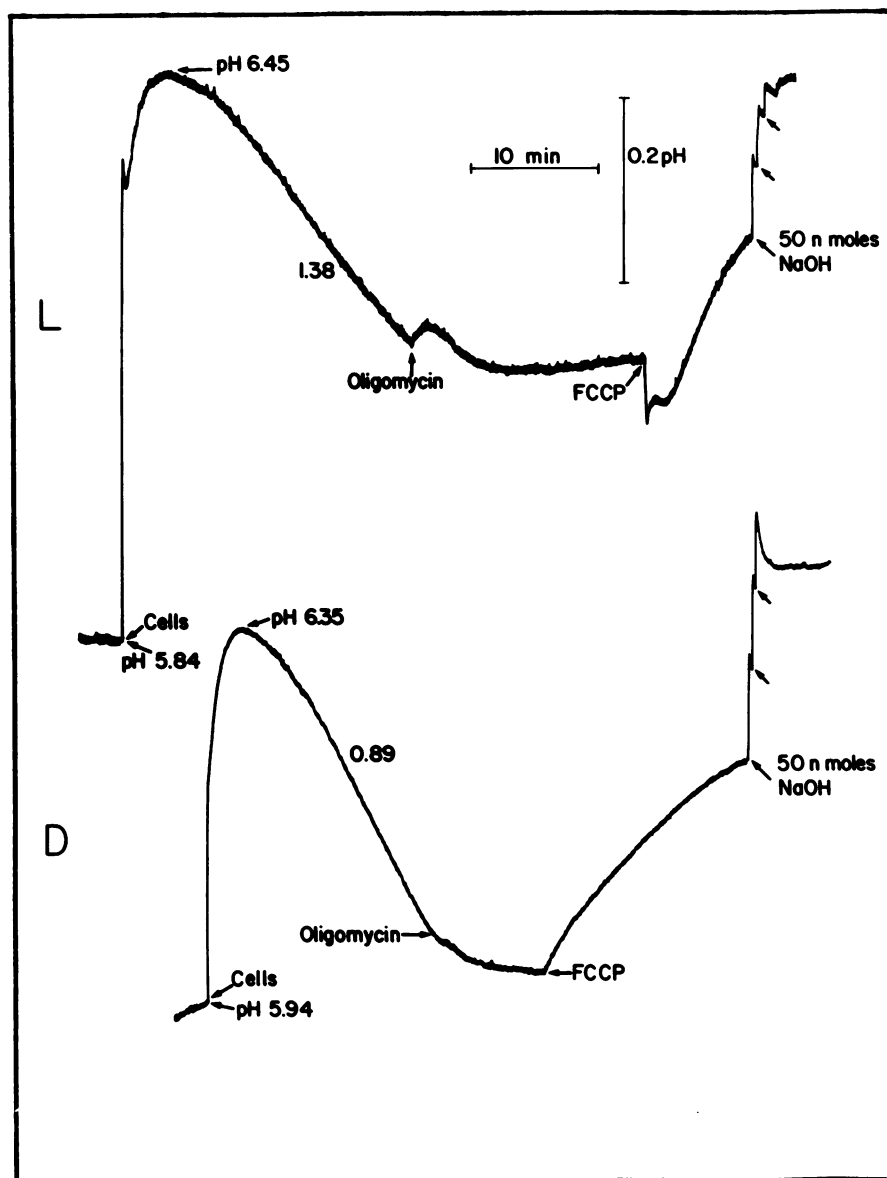


FIG. 3. The influence of oligomycin on rates of acidification in light or dark. The final concentration of oligomycin was  $10 \mu\text{g/ml}$ , and of FCCP  $0.8 \mu\text{M}$ . Rates of acidification are expressed in  $\text{nmol H}^+ / 10^6 \text{ cells} \cdot \text{min}$ . L, light; D, dark.

pH and decreasing  $\text{CO}_2$  concentration was confirmed by removing aliquots of illuminated suspension medium during the pH rise following addition of cells to stirred but nonaerated medium. For each pH value, the total dissolved inorganic carbon was measured and  $\text{CO}_2$  and bicarbonate concentrations calculated. As the pH rose from 5.6 to 6.0, the  $\text{CO}_2$  level dropped from  $35.0$  to  $5.6 \mu\text{M}$  and the bicarbonate concentration dropped from  $6.1$  to  $2.5 \mu\text{M}$ . Alkalinization stopped at approximately the same time as did the decrease in  $\text{CO}_2$  and bicarbonate concentrations. When the cell suspension was aerated, the concentration of  $\text{CO}_2$  at pH 6.54 was found to be  $5.9 \mu\text{M}$ , and that of the bicarbonate  $9.0 \mu\text{M}$ . When air was replaced with  $\text{CO}_2$ -free air, the pH rose within 4 min to 6.93 and the  $\text{CO}_2$  and bicarbonate concentrations were reduced to  $1.8$  and  $6.9 \mu\text{M}$ , respectively.

Apart from immediate transient effects, switching from light to dark diminished the rate of acidification by an average of 10% and switching from dark to light decreased acidification by 23%. Thus, the decline in acidification rate was greater in the presence of light (Fig. 1). In some experiments, the rate of acidification was stimulated by up to 25% when illumination ceased. The Chl

content of the cell suspension varied between 0.02 and  $0.11 \text{ mg Chl} / 10^6 \text{ cells}$ . However, no correlation could be found between net rates of  $\text{H}^+$  efflux in the light and Chl content per cell. This further suggests the absence of a direct relationship between photosynthesis and  $\text{H}^+$  efflux. Support for this view was obtained using DCMU, an inhibitor of noncyclic photophosphorylation. DCMU did not influence acidification in the dark but actually stimulated acidification in the light by approximately 50% (Fig. 2). Experiments were conducted with the closed system to determine whether DCMU inhibited photosynthesis. In the light, cells maintained in suspension with vigorous stirring acidified the medium at a reduced rate. Alkalinization resulted on the addition of  $\text{NaHCO}_3$ , and was reversed immediately when illumination stopped. Reintroduction of light resulted in photosynthetically driven  $\text{CO}_2$  uptake and alkalinization which was reversed immediately  $10^{-6} \text{ M}$  DCMU was added to the cells (Fig. 2). Thus, DCMU inhibited photosynthetic  $\text{CO}_2$  fixation without inhibiting acidification.

The role of respiration in  $\text{H}^+$  efflux was investigated using two inhibitors of oxidative phosphorylation oligomycin and 100%  $\text{N}_2$ .

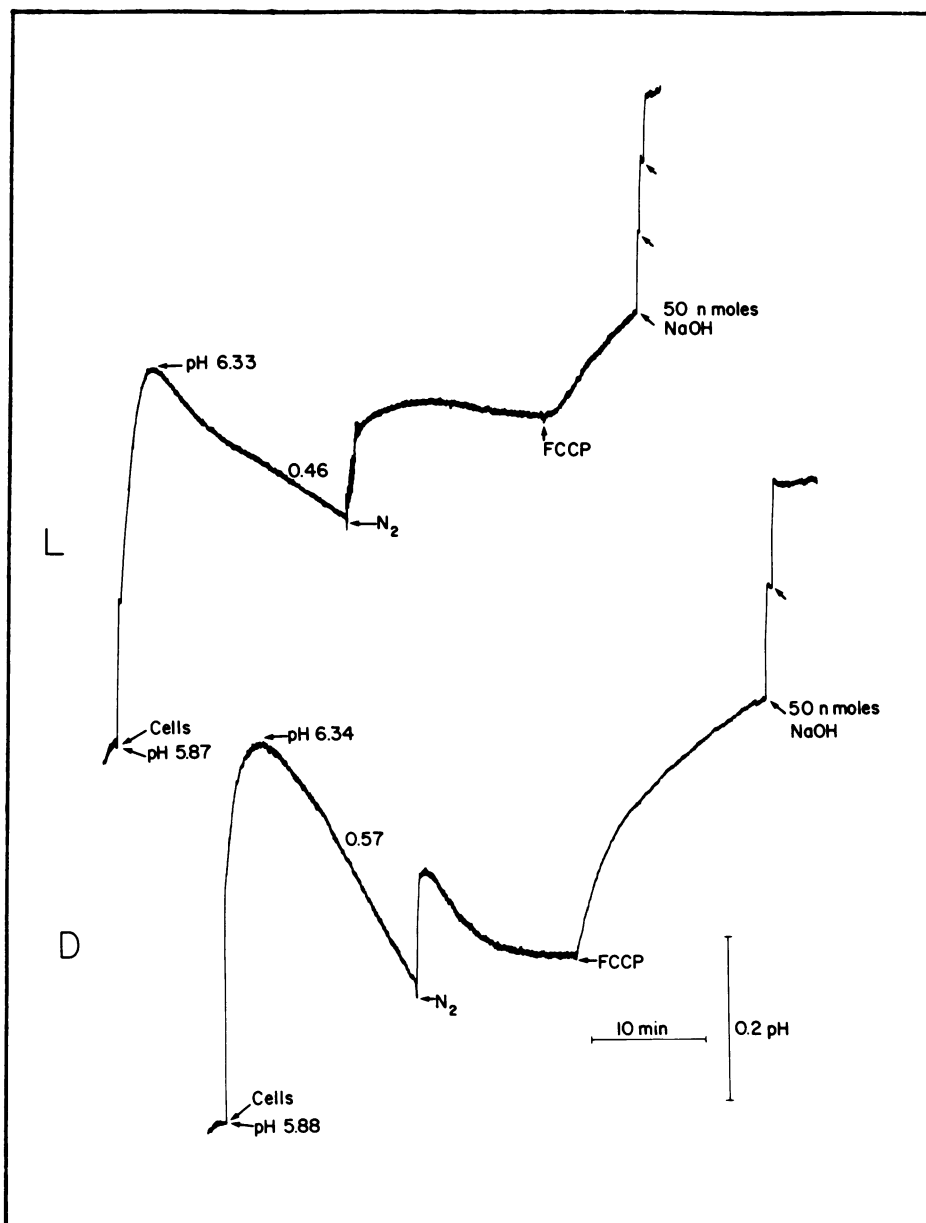


FIG. 4. The influence of N<sub>2</sub> on rates of acidification in light or dark. Bubbling was changed from air to 100% N<sub>2</sub> at the times indicated. Rates of acidification are expressed in nmol H<sup>+</sup>/10<sup>6</sup> cells · min. The final concentration of FCCP was 0.8 μM. L, light; D, dark.

The volatile nature of cyanide and its acid base properties precluded its use in an aerated nonbuffered system. Both inhibitors resulted in rapid virtually complete inhibition of acidification in light or dark (Figs. 3 and 4). The replacement of air by N<sub>2</sub>, however, also resulted in a rapid pH increase resulting from reduction in the CO<sub>2</sub> level of the cell suspension medium (Fig. 4). Inhibition by N<sub>2</sub> was reversed completely on the reintroduction of air (data not shown). It appears that H<sup>+</sup> efflux is dependent on respiration and this view is supported by findings that, in the absence of aeration, net H<sup>+</sup> efflux was eliminated (Fig. 5). After acidification was inhibited by oligomycin or N<sub>2</sub> addition of the protonophore, FCCP resulted in rapid alkalization, indicating back diffusion of H<sup>+</sup> into the cells (Figs. 3 and 4).

When the nonilluminated cell suspension was stirred slowly without aeration, the majority of cells settled to the bottom of the glass vessel and acidification came to a halt (Fig. 5). The introduction of aeration or light resulted in a period of alkalization followed by restoration of acidification. Alkalization can be

attributed to the removal of accumulated respiratory CO<sub>2</sub>, acidification to the introduction of O<sub>2</sub> via aeration or photosynthesis.

The influence of CO<sub>2</sub> on rates of H<sup>+</sup> efflux was investigated in light or dark by switching aeration between air and CO<sub>2</sub>-free air. On changing to CO<sub>2</sub>-free air, the reduced CO<sub>2</sub> level invariably led to a pH increase and acidification then resumed at a reduced rate. Acidification in the light was inhibited by a mean value of 57%, whereas the value in the dark was 43%. Reintroduction of air rapidly reduced the pH and often resulted in a stimulated rate of acidification, even though the rate of acidification normally decreased with lower pH (Fig. 6). To investigate the possible relationship between dark fixation of CO<sub>2</sub> and H<sup>+</sup> efflux, the influence of known inhibitors of net H<sup>+</sup> efflux on rates of dark fixation of H<sup>14</sup>CO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup> was examined. Oligomycin (26 μg/ml) DES (8 μM) and FCCP (20 μM) all inhibited dark fixation completely within 5 min. In addition, DES and FCCP inhibited photosynthetic fixation (data not shown), whereas oligomycin did not (Fig. 7). In the absence or presence of oligomycin the rate of CO<sub>2</sub> fixation in the

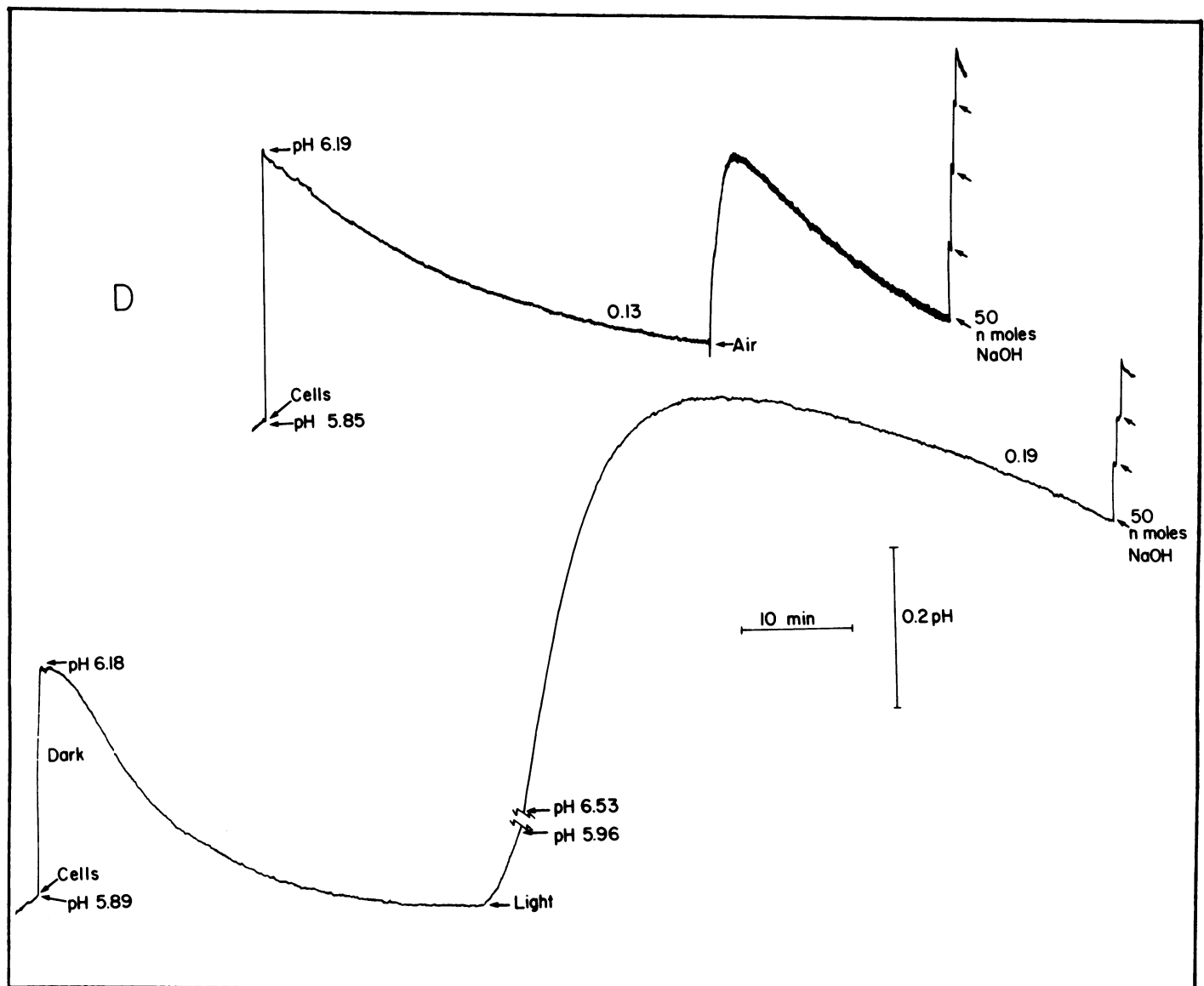


FIG. 5. The influence of aeration or light on rates of acidification from cells stored in the dark with stirring but without aeration. Aeration or light introduced at the times indicated. Rates of acidification are expressed in  $\text{nmol H}^+ / 10^6 \text{ cells} \cdot \text{min}$ . D, dark.

light was 15 to 20 times greater than the rate in the dark.

Using nine different cell preparations the relative rates of photosynthesis, respiration, and net  $\text{H}^+$  efflux were determined on a Chl basis. The mean rate of photosynthetic  $\text{O}_2$  production was  $34.4 \mu\text{mol O}_2 \text{ mg}^{-1} \text{ Chl h}^{-1}$  ( $\pm 12.4 \text{ SD}$ ), the rate of respiratory  $\text{O}_2$  consumption  $6.9 \mu\text{mol O}_2 \text{ mg}^{-1} \text{ Chl h}^{-1}$  ( $\pm 2.8 \text{ SD}$ ), and the net rate of  $\text{H}^+$  efflux  $1.02 \mu\text{mol H}^+ \text{ mg}^{-1} \text{ Chl}$  ( $\pm 0.46 \text{ SD}$ ). DCMU ( $10^{-6} \text{ M}$ ) completely inhibited photosynthetic  $\text{O}_2$  production.

#### DISCUSSION

Acidification of the medium could result from (a) the release of organic acids, (b)  $\text{HCO}_3^-$  uptake, (c) the formation of carbonic acid from respiratory  $\text{CO}_2$ , and (d)  $\text{H}^+$  efflux. Titration of the suspension medium after acidification did not reveal any buffering capacity, indicating that acidification was not due to excretion of organic acids (data not shown). *Asparagus* cells take up  $\text{CO}_2$  not  $\text{HCO}_3^-$  during photosynthesis (personal communication, Dr. B. Colman, York University). Experiments in which medium in an open beaker system was gently agitated on a gyratory shaker demonstrated that  $\text{CO}_2$  escapes to the atmosphere too rapidly to allow significant acidification (24). In this study, the medium was

both stirred and vigorously bubbled to ensure rapid equilibration with the gas mixture being used. The small but rapid increases in pH which occurred when normal air containing  $\text{CO}_2$  was replaced with  $\text{CO}_2$ -free air or  $\text{N}_2$  demonstrates that equilibration occurred within 4 min in this system (Figs. 4 and 6). Similar small rapid changes in pH were obtained when medium without cells was subjected to changes in the aerating gas. It is particularly difficult to argue that acidification in the light results from  $\text{CO}_2$  accumulation when the cells photosynthetic capacity to remove  $\text{CO}_2$  appears to be five times greater than the cells respiratory activity. The rapid alkalization which occurs on the addition of the protonophore FCCP (Figs. 3 and 4) is a strong indication that acidification results from  $\text{H}^+$  efflux against a proton electrochemical gradient.

Thus, the evidence indicates that long-term acidification results from energy-dependent  $\text{H}^+$  efflux. However, the rapid changes in pH which occur within 4 min in response to changes in aeration or illumination are consistent with changes in steady-state levels of  $\text{CO}_2$  in the medium (Figs. 1, 4, and 6). Analysis of dissolved inorganic carbon demonstrated that  $\text{CO}_2$  in the medium diminished when a transient increase in pH occurred in response to a

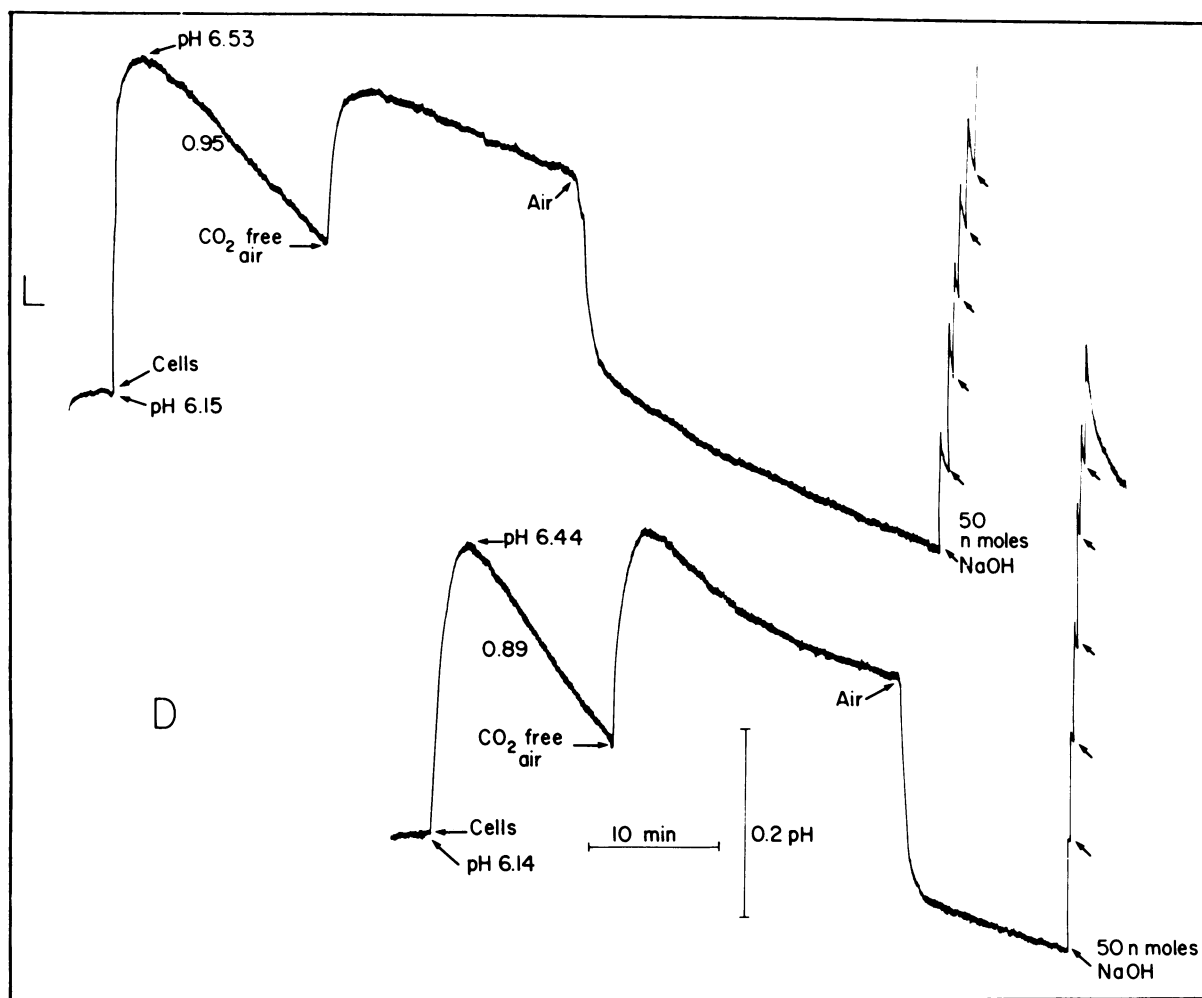


FIG. 6. The influence of CO<sub>2</sub> free air on rates of acidification in light or dark. CO<sub>2</sub>-free air, or air were introduced at the times indicated. Rates of acidification are expressed as nmol H<sup>+</sup>/10<sup>6</sup> cells · min. L, light; D, dark.

switch from air to CO<sub>2</sub>-free air. The rapid acidification seen on termination of illumination (Fig. 1) may well indicate a change in the steady-state level of CO<sub>2</sub> when photosynthetic CO<sub>2</sub> assimilation ceases and a postillumination CO<sub>2</sub> burst occurs. The rest of this discussion is concerned with the long-term acidification process.

The inhibition of acidification in cells exposed to light and N<sub>2</sub> suggests that either oxidative phosphorylation, which requires O<sub>2</sub>, or noncyclic photophosphorylation, which requires CO<sub>2</sub>, are required for net H<sup>+</sup> efflux. Cyclic photophosphorylation, however, requires neither O<sub>2</sub> nor CO<sub>2</sub> and inhibition of acidification by N<sub>2</sub> demonstrates that this process cannot drive H<sup>+</sup> efflux. However, the stimulation of H<sup>+</sup> efflux by DCMU in illuminated aerated cells demonstrates that noncyclic photophosphorylation is not a requirement for H<sup>+</sup> efflux (Fig. 2). The ability of DCMU to inhibit noncyclic photophosphorylation was indicated by its rapid and complete inhibition of light-driven CO<sub>2</sub> uptake (Fig. 2) and photosynthetic O<sub>2</sub> production. Oligomycin inhibition of H<sup>+</sup> efflux in illuminated cells (Fig. 3) without inhibition of light-dependent CO<sub>2</sub> fixation (Fig. 7) suggests that noncyclic photophosphorylation can not be used as an energy source for H<sup>+</sup> efflux.

Conversely, the demonstration that H<sup>+</sup> efflux is not inhibited when cells are transferred from light to dark suggests that oxidative phosphorylation is in some manner coupled to H<sup>+</sup> efflux (Fig. 1). This suggestion is supported by the observation that two inhibitors of mitochondrial ATP production N<sub>2</sub> and oligomycin inhibit acidification rapidly and completely in light or dark (Figs. 3 and

4). Whereas this interpretation appears clear for N<sub>2</sub>, oligomycin may also inhibit H<sup>+</sup> efflux through inhibition of a plasma membrane ATPase that functions in H<sup>+</sup> efflux (22). The conclusion that oxidative phosphorylation, not photosynthesis, is required for net H<sup>+</sup> efflux is consistent with reports demonstrating that levels of ATP and rates of transport processes in green cells are often independent of illumination (10, 17). If H<sup>+</sup> efflux is coupled to ATP hydrolysis, then the inability of chloroplasts to export ATP directly (7, 28) may be significant in this context.

The vast majority of papers on the influence of light-dark transitions on ion transport processes ignore the possibility that O<sub>2</sub> may be limiting in submerged green tissue. Thus, any stimulation of a process attributed to photosynthesis could in fact be caused by increased O<sub>2</sub> levels and rates of oxidative phosphorylation. This suggestion was tested by experiments in which cells were stirred in the dark in the absence of aeration. Under those circumstances, H<sup>+</sup> efflux came to a halt, indicating the O<sub>2</sub> levels were limiting. When aeration or illumination was initiated, alkalization due to removal of CO<sub>2</sub> resulted and then acidification resumed. This experiment demonstrates that photosynthetic release of O<sub>2</sub> may be important in determining rates of ion transport processes in submerged green tissue. A recent preliminary report suggests that light stimulated H<sup>+</sup> efflux from submerged nonaerated protoplasts of mesophyll cells is mediated via photosynthetic O<sub>2</sub> production (15). Although the K<sub>m</sub> for O<sub>2</sub> uptake during leaf respiration is low and approximately 2.5 × 10<sup>-6</sup> M (20) it seems clear that the O<sub>2</sub> concentration will eventually become

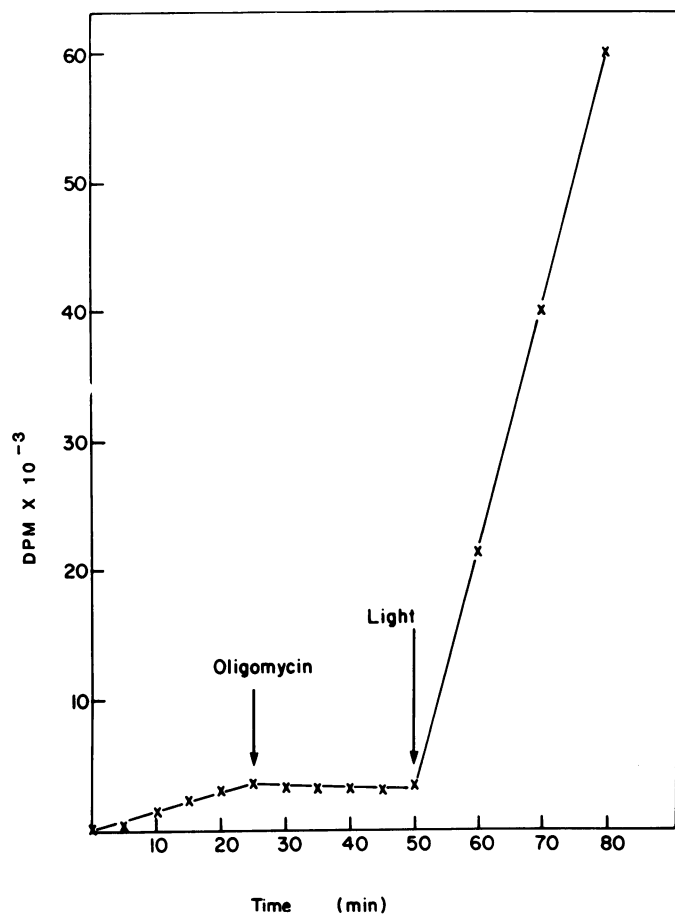


FIG. 7. The influence of oligomycin on the rate of dark  $\text{CO}_2$  fixation. Oligomycin, final concentration  $20 \mu\text{g}/\text{ml}$ , and light were introduced at the times indicated. At time zero,  $20 \times 10^6$  dpm of  $^{14}\text{C}$ -labeled  $\text{NaHCO}_3$  ( $58.2 \text{ mCi}/\text{nmol}$ ) was added.

limiting if respiration removes  $\text{O}_2$  faster than it can be replaced by diffusion through water.

Net  $\text{H}^+$  efflux was inhibited in light or dark when aeration was switched from air to  $\text{CO}_2$ -free air (Fig. 6). Many reports have demonstrated a correlation between rates of  $\text{H}^+$  efflux and dark fixation and models of  $\text{H}^+$  efflux suggest that dark fixation of  $\text{CO}_2$  into malate is the process which replaces the  $\text{H}^+$  excreted (6, 12). Inhibitors of  $\text{H}^+$  efflux, such as oligomycin, may inhibit dark fixation through a pH-stat mechanism in which cytoplasmic pH and rates of dark fixation decrease when  $\text{H}^+$  efflux is inhibited (6, 12). To my knowledge, this is the first report which demonstrates that the rate of  $\text{H}^+$  efflux can be regulated by changing  $\text{CO}_2$  levels in the bathing medium. The increase in rate of  $\text{H}^+$  efflux when cells are treated with DCMU, may indicate that the rate of  $\text{H}^+$  efflux is diminished when photosynthetic and dark  $\text{CO}_2$  fixation processes compete for  $\text{CO}_2$ . Phosphoenolpyruvate carboxylase activity in *Asparagus* mesophyll cells has been detected (personal communication, Dr. B. Colman, York University).

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