

Domino Reactions Initiated by Intramolecular Hydride Transfers from Tri(di)arylmethane Fragments to Ketenimine and Carbodiimide Functions

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General Methods

All melting points are uncorrected. Infrared (IR) spectra were recorded neat or as Nujol emulsions. ^1H NMR spectra were recorded in CDCl_3 at 200, 300 or 400 MHz. ^{13}C NMR spectra were recorded in CDCl_3 at 50, 75 or 100 MHz. ^{31}P NMR spectra were recorded in CDCl_3 at 121.4 or 161.9 MHz, using H_3PO_4 as internal reference. The chemical shifts are expressed in ppm, relative to Me_4Si at $\delta = 0.00$ ppm for ^1H , while the chemical shifts for ^{13}C are reported relative to the resonance of CDCl_3 $\delta = 77.1$ ppm. J values are given in Hz.

Materials: 3-methyl-2-nitrobenzaldehyde **7b**,¹ 1-diphenylmethyl-2-nitrobenzene **8a**,² 1-bis[4-(*N,N*-dimethylamino)phenyl]methyl-2-nitrobenzene **8c**,³ 1-bis(4-methoxyphenyl)methyl-2-nitrobenzene **8f**,³ 2-diphenylmethylaniline **9a**,⁴ 2-bis[4-(*N,N*-dimethylamino)phenyl]methylaniline **9c**,³ 2-bis(4-methoxyphenyl)methylaniline **9f**,³ 1-azido-2-diphenylmethylbenzene **10a**,³ 1-azido-2-bis[4-(*N,N*-dimethylamino)phenyl]methylbenzene **10c**,³ 1-azido-2-bis(4-methoxyphenyl)methylbenzene **10f**,³ 1-amino-4-chloro-2-[1-(4-methoxyphenyl)ethyl]benzene **26**,⁵ 1-azido-2-phenylmethylbenzene **31**,⁶ methylphenylketene,⁷ ethylphenylketene⁸ and diphenylketene⁹ were prepared following published experimental procedures.

Preparation of nitrobenzenes **8**

Method A ($\text{R}^1 = \text{H}, \text{CH}_3$; $\text{R}^2 = \text{H}$)

Preparation of 3-methyl-2-nitro-1-diphenylmethylbenzene **8b** ($\text{R}^1 = \text{CH}_3, \text{R}^2 = \text{H}$)

To a suspension of anhydrous aluminum chloride (5 g, 35 mmol) in anhydrous benzene (15 mL) 3-methyl-2-nitrobenzaldehyde **7b** (2.6 g, 16 mmol) was added, and the resulting mixture was stirred at 60 °C under nitrogen for 6 h. After cooling at room temperature, the reaction crude was poured into cold 6N HCl (50 mL), and extracted with dichloromethane (3 x 50 mL). The combined organic layers were dried over anhydrous magnesium sulfate. The solvent was removed under reduced pressure, and the resulting material was purified by column chromatography on silica gel, using hexanes/diethyl ether (7:3; v/v) as eluent.

3-Methyl-2-nitro-1-diphenylmethylbenzene 8b ($R^1 = CH_3$, $R^2 = H$). Yield = 2.28 g, 47%; mp 83-84 °C (colourless prisms from diethyl ether); $\nu_{max}(\text{Nujol})/\text{cm}^{-1}$ 1601 (m), 1527 (vs), 1495 (s), 1472 (m), 1450 (s), 1369 (s), 1265 (m), 1078 (w), 1032 (w), 852 (m), 779 (m), 735 (vs), 700 (vs); $\delta_H(200 \text{ MHz, CDCl}_3)$ 2.26 (3H, s), 5.63 (1 H, s), 6.92 (1 H, d, J 7.6), 7.03-7.08 (4 H, m), 7.11-7.14 (1 H, m), 7.17-7.29 (7 H, m); $\delta_C(50 \text{ MHz, CDCl}_3)$ 17.4, 51.2, 126.9, 128.5, 128.7, 129.3, 129.6, 129.7, 135.0 (s), 141.7 (s), 151.9 (s); HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $C_{20}H_{21}N_2O_3 [M+NH_4]^+$ 321.1603, found 321.1602.

Method B ($R^1 = H, CH_3$; $R^2 = N(CH_3)_2, N\text{-morpholino}$)

Preparation of nitrobenzenes 8d,e

A mixture of anhydrous zinc chloride (3 g, 22 mmol), the corresponding nitrobenzaldehyde 7 (22 mmol) and *N,N*-dimethylaniline or *N*-phenylmorpholine (45 mmol) was heated at 80 °C under nitrogen for 6 h. After cooling at room temperature, water (50 mL) was added, the mixture extracted with dichloromethane (3 x 50 mL), and the combined organic phase was dried over anhydrous magnesium sulfate. The solvent was removed under reduced pressure, and the resulting material was purified by column chromatography on silica gel, using hexanes/diethyl ether (7:3; v/v) as eluent.

1-Bis[4-(*N,N*-dimethylamino)phenyl]methyl-3-methyl-2-nitrobenzene 8d ($R^1 = CH_3$, $R^2 = N(CH_3)_2$). Yield = 6.25 g, 73%; mp 192-194 °C (pale green prisms from diethyl ether); $\nu_{max}(\text{Nujol})/\text{cm}^{-1}$ 1612 (s), 1562 (w), 1520 (vs), 1479 (m), 1444 (m), 1352 (s), 1225 (w), 1165 (m), 950 (w), 765 (s); $\delta_H(400 \text{ MHz, CDCl}_3)$ 2.31 (3 H, s), 2.94 (12 H, s), 5.47 (1 H, s), 6.66-6.68 (4 H, m), 6.95-6.98 (4 H, m), 7.02 (1 H, d, J 7.6), 7.14 (1 H, d, J 7.6), 7.26 (1 H, t, J 7.6); $\delta_C(100 \text{ MHz, CDCl}_3)$ 17.4, 40.4, 49.4, 112.5, 128.7, 129.0, 129.2 (s), 129.5, 129.8, 130.4 (s), 136.7 (s), 149.2 (s), 151.9 (s); HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $C_{24}H_{28}N_3O_2 [M+H]^+$ 390.2176, found 390.2182.

1-Bis[4-(*N*-morpholino)phenyl]methyl-2-nitrobenzene 8e ($R^1 = H$, $R^2 = N\text{-morpholino}$). Yield = 6.67 g, 66%; mp 141-143 °C (colourless prisms from diethyl ether); $\nu_{max}(\text{Nujol})/\text{cm}^{-1}$ 1610 (s), 1514 (vs), 1450 (s), 1230 (vs), 1120 (s), 928 (m), 752 (m), 735 (m); $\delta_H(400 \text{ MHz, CDCl}_3)$ 3.13-3.15 (8 H, m), 3.83-3.86 (8 H, m), 6.13 (1 H, s), 6.80-6.84 (4 H, m), 6.94-6.97 (4 H, m), 7.11 (1 H, dd, J 8.0 and 1.2), 7.35 (1 H, td, J 8.0 and 1.2), 7.47 (1 H, td, J 7.6 and 1.6),

7.83 (1 H, dd, J 7.6 and 1.6); δ_{C} (100 MHz, CDCl_3) 49.2, 49.7, 66.9, 115.5, 124.6, 127.2, 130.1, 131.9, 132.3, 133.7 (s), 139.1 (s), 149.8 (s); HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $\text{C}_{27}\text{H}_{30}\text{N}_3\text{O}_4$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 460.2231, found 460.2233.

Method C ($\text{R}^1 = \text{H}$, CH_3 ; $\text{R}^2 = \text{OCH}_3$)

Preparation of 1-bis(4-methoxyphenyl)methyl-3-methyl-2-nitrobenzene **8g** ($\text{R}^1 = \text{CH}_3$, $\text{R}^2 = \text{OCH}_3$)

To 3-methyl-2-nitrobenzaldehyde **7b** (1.98 g, 12 mmol) and anhydrous aluminum chloride (0.64 g, 4.2 mmol), anisole (2.32 g, 24 mmol) was added dropwise during 5 min. The resulting mixture was stirred at room temperature under nitrogen for 12 h. Then water (25 mL) was added, the mixture extracted with diethyl ether (3 x 50 mL), and the organic phase dried over anhydrous magnesium sulfate. The solvent was removed under reduced pressure, and the residue was purified by column chromatography on silica gel, using hexanes/dichloromethane (3:7; v/v) as eluent.

1-Bis(4-methoxyphenyl)methyl-3-methyl-2-nitrobenzene **8g** ($\text{R}^1 = \text{CH}_3$, $\text{R}^2 = \text{OCH}_3$).

Yield = 2.05 g, 47%; colourless oil; ν_{max} (neat)/ cm^{-1} 1608 (s), 1583 (m), 1527 (vs), 1510 (vs), 1464 (m), 1367 (s), 1304 (s), 1250 (vs), 1178 (s), 1113 (w), 846 (m), 781 (m), 737 (m); δ_{H} (300 MHz, CDCl_3) 2.29 (3 H, s), 3.77 (6 H, s), 6.52 (1 H, s), 6.79-6.84 (4 H, m), 6.90-6.93 (1 H, m), 6.95-6.98 (4 H, m), 7.15 (1 H, d, J 7.5), 7.26 (1 H, t, J 7.5); δ_{C} (75 MHz, CDCl_3) 17.5, 49.5, 55.3, 113.9, 128.6, 129.4, 129.5 (s), 129.7, 130.2, 134.2 (s), 135.8 (s), 151.9 (s), 158.4 (s); HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $\text{C}_{22}\text{H}_{25}\text{N}_2\text{O}_4$ $[\text{M}+\text{NH}_4]^+$ 381.1814, found 381.1814.

Preparation of anilines **9**

To a solution of the corresponding nitrobenzene **8** (10 mmol) in ethanol (200 mL) Pd on activated charcoal (0.1 g) was added. The reaction mixture was stirred at room temperature under hydrogen for 24 h. Then the solution was filtered through celite, the solvent was removed under reduced pressure and the resulting material was purified by column chromatography on silica gel.

2-Methyl-6-diphenylmethylaniline 9b ($R^1 = CH_3$, $R^2 = H$). Eluent for column chromatography: hexanes/diethyl ether (9.5:0.5, v/v). Yield = 2.27 g, 83%; colourless oil; $\nu_{max}(\text{neat})/\text{cm}^{-1}$ 3456 (m), 3379 (m), 1621 (vs), 1599 (s), 1492 (s), 1465 (vs), 1435 (s), 1329 (w), 1274 (m), 1078 (m), 908 (m), 765 (s), 744 (vs); $\delta_H(200 \text{ MHz, CDCl}_3)$ 2.10 (3 H, s), 3.41 (2 H, broad s), 5.46 (1 H, s), 6.50-6.64 (2 H, m), 6.96 (1 H, d, J 7.0), 7.08-7.12 (4 H, m), 7.14-7.30 (6 H, m); $\delta_C(50 \text{ MHz, CDCl}_3)$ 17.7, 52.4, 117.8, 122.4 (s), 126.6, 128.0, 128.3 (s), 128.5, 128.8, 129.5, 142.3 (s), 142.7 (s); HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $C_{20}H_{20}N$ $[M+H]^+$ 274.1590, found 274.1593.

2-Bis[4-(*N,N*-dimethylamino)phenyl]methyl-6-methylaniline 9d ($R^1 = CH_3$, $R^2 = N(CH_3)_2$). Eluent for column chromatography: hexanes/diethyl ether (7:3, v/v). Yield = 3.02 g, 84%; mp 145-146 °C (colourless prisms from diethyl ether); $\nu_{max}(\text{Nujol})/\text{cm}^{-1}$ 3440 (w), 3367 (m), 1608 (vs), 1583 (s), 1510 (vs), 1462 (vs), 1246 (vs), 1176 (s), 1111 (m), 1035 (s), 874 (w), 839 (m), 769 (s); $\delta_H(300 \text{ MHz, CDCl}_3)$ 2.18 (3 H, s), 2.94 (12 H, s), 3.56 (2 H, broad s), 5.33 (1 H, s), 6.62-6.64 (2 H, m), 6.67-6.71 (4 H, m), 6.97-7.03 (5 H, m); $\delta_C(75 \text{ MHz, CDCl}_3)$ 17.7, 40.7, 50.6, 112.7, 117.6, 122.1 (s), 127.9, 128.3, 129.9 (s), 130.1, 131.3 (s), 142.5 (s), 149.2 (s); HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $C_{24}H_{30}N_3$ $[M+H]^+$ 360.2434, found 360.2437.

2-Bis[4-(*N*-morpholino)phenyl]methylaniline 9e ($R^1 = H$, $R^2 = N\text{-morpholino}$). Eluent for column chromatography: hexanes/diethyl ether (3:7, v/v). Yield = 3.35 g, 78%; mp 106-108 °C (colourless prisms from diethyl ether); $\nu_{max}(\text{Nujol})/\text{cm}^{-1}$ 3439 (w), 3360 (w), 1610 (s), 1492 (s), 1379 (s), 1304 (m), 1263 (vs), 1229 (vs), 1120 (vs), 928 (vs), 833 (m), 804 (m), 734 (vs); $\delta_H(300 \text{ MHz, CDCl}_3)$ 3.11-3.15 (8 H, m), 3.48 (2 H, s), 3.82-3.86 (8 H, m), 5.32 (1 H, s), 6.64-6.68 (3 H, m), 6.81-6.86 (4 H, m), 6.99-7.10 (5 H, m); $\delta_C(75 \text{ MHz, CDCl}_3)$ 49.3, 50.6, 67.0, 115.6, 116.1, 118.5, 127.2, 129.8, 129.9 (s), 130.2, 134.2 (s), 144.3 (s), 149.7 (s); HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $C_{27}H_{32}N_3O_2$ $[M+H]^+$ 430.2489, found 430.2492.

6-Bis(4-methoxyphenyl)methyl-2-methylaniline 9g ($R^1 = CH_3$, $R^2 = OCH_3$). Eluent for column chromatography: hexanes/diethyl ether (7:3, v/v). Yield = 2.17 g, 65%; colourless oil; $\nu_{max}(\text{neat})/\text{cm}^{-1}$ 3454 (w), 3379 (w), 1620 (s), 1608 (s), 1508 (vs), 1463 (s), 1441 (s), 1302 (m), 1277 (m), 1176 (s), 1109 (m), 1034 (s), 835 (m), 737 (m); $\delta_H(300 \text{ MHz, CDCl}_3)$ 2.15 (3 H, s), 3.49 (2 H, broad s), 3.78 (6 H, s), 5.37 (1 H, s), 6.52 (1 H, d, J 7.5), 6.61 (1 H, t, J 7.5), 6.79-6.88 (4 H, m), 6.97 (1 H, d, J 7.5), 6.98-7.04 (4 H, m); $\delta_C(75 \text{ MHz, CDCl}_3)$ 17.8, 50.8,

55.3, 113.9, 117.8, 122.4 (s), 127.9, 128.7, 129.1 (s), 130.4, 135.1 (s), 142.4 (s), 158.3 (s); HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $C_{22}H_{24}NO_2$ $[M+H]^+$ 334.1802, found 334.1806.

Preparation of azides 10

Method A ($R^1 = H, Me; R^2 = H, OMe$).

Preparation of azides 10b,g.

To a solution of the corresponding aniline **9** (8.2 mmol) in a mixture of water (40 mL), concentrated sulfuric acid (10 mL) and 1,4-dioxane (40 mL), cooled at 0 °C, a solution of sodium nitrite (0.62 g, 9.0 mmol) in water (5 mL) was added dropwise. The reaction mixture was stirred at 0 °C for 30 min, and then a solution of sodium azide (0.59 g, 9 mmol) in water (5 mL) was added dropwise over 10 min. After stirring at room temperature for 16 h, the mixture was extracted with diethyl ether (3 x 50 mL) and the organic phase dried over anhydrous magnesium sulfate. The solvent was removed under reduced pressure, and the resulting material was purified by column chromatography on silica gel.

2-Azido-3-methyl-1-(diphenylmethyl)benzene 10b ($R^1 = CH_3, R^2 = H$). Eluent for column chromatography: hexanes/diethyl ether (9.5:0.5, v/v). Yield = 2.18 g, 89%; colourless oil; $\nu_{max}(\text{neat})/\text{cm}^{-1}$ 2110 (vs), 1599 (m), 1493 (s), 1450 (s), 1427 (s), 1288 (s), 1080 (m), 756 (vs), 700 (vs); $\delta_H(200 \text{ MHz, } CDCl_3)$ 2.41 (3 H, s), 5.90 (1 H, s), 6.74 (1 H, dd, J 7.2 and 2.2), 6.97-7.01 (1 H, m), 7.05-7.10 (5 H, m), 7.21-7.33 (6 H, m); $\delta_C(50 \text{ MHz, } CDCl_3)$ 18.1, 52.3, 125.9, 126.5, 128.4, 129.5, 129.7, 133.1 (s), 136.9 (s), 138.4 (s), 143.2 (s); HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $C_{20}H_{18}N_4$ $[M+H-N_2]^+$ 272.1439, found 272.1430.

2-Azido-1-bis(4-methoxyphenyl)methyl-3-methylbenzene 10g ($R^1 = CH_3, R^2 = OCH_3$). Eluent for column chromatography: hexanes/diethyl ether (9:1, v/v). Yield = 2.45 g, 83%; mp 74-75 °C (colourless prisms from diethyl ether); $\nu_{max}(\text{Nujol})/\text{cm}^{-1}$ 2108 (vs), 1608 (s), 1583 (s), 1510 (vs), 1462 (s), 1302 (s), 1246 (vs), 1111 (m), 1035 (s), 739 (m); $\delta_H(300 \text{ MHz, } CDCl_3)$ 2.40 (3 H, s), 3.78 (6 H, s), 5.80 (1 H, s), 6.74 (1 H, dd, J 7.2 and 1.5), 6.79-6.84 (4 H, m), 6.95-7.01 (4 H, m), 7.02 (1 H, d, J 7.2), 7.04 (1 H, d, J 1.5); $\delta_C(75 \text{ MHz, } CDCl_3)$ 18.1,

50.6, 55.3, 113.7, 125.8, 128.3, 129.6, 130.3, 133.0 (s), 135.7 (s), 136.8 (s), 138.9 (s), 158.1 (s); HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $C_{22}H_{22}NO_2$ $[M+H-N_2]^+$ 332.1651, found 332.1650.

Method B ($R^1 = H, Me$; $R^2 = NMe_2, N$ -morpholino).

Preparation of azides 10d,e.

To a solution of the corresponding aniline **9** (10 mmol) in a mixture of concentrated HCl and water (1:1, v/v) (10 mL), cooled at 0 °C, a solution of sodium nitrite (0.76 g, 11 mmol) in water (6 mL) was added dropwise. Next a solution of sodium azide (0.76 g, 12 mmol) and sodium acetate (7.6 g, 93 mmol) in water (20 mL) was added, and the reaction mixture was stirred at room temperature for 1 h. Then the reaction mixture was extracted with diethyl ether (3 x 50 mL) and the organic phase dried over anhydrous magnesium sulfate. The solvent was removed under reduced pressure, and the resulting material was purified by column chromatography on silica gel.

2-Azido-1-bis[4-(*N,N*-dimethylamino)phenyl]methyl-3-methylbenzene 10d ($R^1 = CH_3, R^2 = N(CH_3)_2$). Eluent for column chromatography: hexanes/diethyl ether (9:1, v/v). Yield = 1.73 g, 45%; mp 117-118 °C (colourless prisms from diethyl ether); ν_{max} (Nujol)/ cm^{-1} 2108 (vs), 1612 (s), 1518 (vs), 1444 (m), 1348 (m), 1163 (w), 1061 (w), 949 (w), 814 (w); δ_H (400 MHz, $CDCl_3$) 2.39 (3 H, s), 2.91 (12 H, s), 5.72 (1 H, s), 6.64-6.67 (4 H, m), 6.80 (1 H, dd, J 7.2 and 2.4), 6.92-6.98 (4 H, m), 6.99-7.03 (2 H, m); δ_C (100 MHz, $CDCl_3$) 18.2, 40.8, 50.3, 112.6, 125.7, 128.4, 129.2, 130.0, 132.0 (s), 132.7 (s), 136.8 (s), 139.7 (s), 149.1 (s); HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $C_{24}H_{28}N_5$ $[M+H]^+$ 386.2339, found 386.2346.

1-Azido-2-bis[4-(*N*-morpholino)phenyl]methylbenzene 10e ($R^1 = H, R^2 = N$ -morpholino).

Eluent for column chromatography: hexanes/diethyl ether (1:9, v/v). Yield = 3.28 g, 72%; mp 159-160 °C (yellow prisms from diethyl ether); ν_{max} (Nujol)/ cm^{-1} 2123 (vs), 1610 (m), 1510 (s), 1227 (m), 1184 (w), 1122 (m), 924 (w), 893 (m), 762 (w); δ_H (400 MHz, $CDCl_3$) 3.11-3.13 (8 H, m), 3.82-3.84 (8 H, m), 5.65 (1 H, s), 6.79-6.83 (4 H, m), 6.91-6.96 (5 H, m), 7.02 (1 H, td, J 5.7 and 0.9), 7.13 (1 H, dd, J 5.7 and 0.9 Hz), 7.24 (1 H, td, J 5.7 and 1.2); δ_C (100 MHz, $CDCl_3$) 49.0, 49.3, 67.0, 115.4, 118.1, 124.5, 127.6, 130.1, 130.8, 134.9 (s), 136.1 (s), 138.1 (s), 149.5 (s); HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $C_{27}H_{30}N_5O_2$ $[M+H]^+$ 456.2394, found 456.2396.

Preparation of iminophosphoranes 11

To a solution of the corresponding azide **10** (5 mmol) in anhydrous diethyl ether (20 mL) triphenylphosphine (1.30 g, 5 mmol) was added in five portions. The reaction mixture was stirred at room temperature under nitrogen for 16 h. Then, the precipitated compound **11** was isolated by filtration and washed with anhydrous diethyl ether (15 mL).

These compounds were used in the following step without further purification.

For analytical samples iminophosphoranes **11** were recrystallized from diethyl ether.

1-Diphenylmethyl-2-triphenylphosphoranylideneaminobenzene 11a ($R^1 = H$, $R^2 = H$).

Yield = 2.49 g, 96%; mp 164-167 °C (colourless prisms from diethyl ether); $\nu_{\max}(\text{Nujol})/\text{cm}^{-1}$ 1587 (s), 1477 (vs), 1437 (vs), 1338 (s), 1265 (m), 1220 (m), 1181 (s), 1024 (m), 999 (w), 777 (m), 740 (s), 696 (s), 609 (m); $\delta_{\text{H}}(300 \text{ MHz, CDCl}_3)$ 6.48 (1 H, s), 6.52 (1 H, d, J 7.8), 6.60 (1 H, t, J 7.8), 6.76-6.84 (2 H, m), 7.12-7.25 (10 H, m), 7.34-7.40 (7 H, m), 7.45-7.51 (3 H, m), 7.55-7.62 (5 H, m); $\delta_{\text{C}}(75 \text{ MHz, CDCl}_3)$ 52.1, 116.9, 121.0 (d, J 39.9), 125.3, 126.2, 127.2, 128.3 (d, J 11.9), 129.9, 131.3 (d, J 2.8), 131.4 (d, J 98.8) (s), 138.4 (d, J 21.7), 132.5 (d, J 9.5), 133.7 (d, J 19.3), 145.4 (s), 149.2 (s); $\delta_{\text{P}}(121.4 \text{ MHz, CDCl}_3, \text{H}_3\text{PO}_4)$ 1.6; HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $\text{C}_{37}\text{H}_{31}\text{NP}$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 520.2189, found 520.2194.

3-Methyl-1-diphenylmethyl-2-triphenylphosphoranylideneaminobenzene 11b ($R^1 = \text{CH}_3$,

$R^2 = H$). Yield = 2.48 g, 93%; mp 208-209 °C (colourless prisms from diethyl ether); $\nu_{\max}(\text{Nujol})/\text{cm}^{-1}$ 1589 (w), 1456 (vs), 1433 (vs), 1342 (s), 1113 (m), 1028 (w), 932 (m), 891 (m), 754 (m), 696 (vs); $\delta_{\text{H}}(300 \text{ MHz, CDCl}_3)$ 1.93 (3 H, s), 5.98 (1 H, s), 6.60-6.71 (6 H, m), 6.93-6.96 (1 H, m), 7.07-7.15 (6 H, m), 7.33-7.39 (7 H, m), 7.46-7.51 (8 H, m); $\delta_{\text{C}}(75 \text{ MHz, CDCl}_3)$ 22.1, 51.6, 118.5 (d, J 3.1), 125.4, 127.7, 128.4 (d, J 23.6) (s), 128.5 (d, J 12.0), 128.6, 129.9, 131.2 (d, J 2.7), 132.4 (d, J 9.5), 132.8 (d, J 4.9), 133.0 (d, J 100.6) (s), 138.1 (d, J 9.1), 145.6 (s), 147.0 (d, J 1.3); $\delta_{\text{P}}(121.4 \text{ MHz, CDCl}_3, \text{H}_3\text{PO}_4)$ - 7.0; HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $\text{C}_{38}\text{H}_{32}\text{NP}$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 534.2345, found 534.2349.

1-Bis[4-(*N,N*-dimethylamino)phenyl]methyl-2-triphenylphosphoranylideneamino-

benzene 11c ($R^1 = H$, $R^2 = \text{NMe}_2$). Yield = 2.60 g, 86%; mp 209-211 °C (yellow prisms from diethyl ether); $\nu_{\max}(\text{Nujol})/\text{cm}^{-1}$ 1612 (s), 1587 (s), 1517 (vs), 1475 (vs), 1437 (vs), 1344 (vs), 1111 (s), 1024 (w), 947 (w), 814 (m), 715 (m), 694 (m); $\delta_{\text{H}}(400 \text{ MHz, CDCl}_3)$ 2.86 (12 H, s), 6.26 (1 H, s), 6.47 (1H, d, J 7.8), 6.56 (1 H, t, J 7.4), 6.60 (4 H, d, J 8.5), 6.72-6.76 (1 H, m), 6.78-6.80 (1 H, m), 6.98 (4 H, d, J 8.5), 7.32-7.37 (6 H, m), 7.42-7.46 (3 H, m), 7.55-7.60 (6

H, m); δ_C (100 MHz, $CDCl_3$) 41.1, 50.0, 112.7, 117.0, 121.1 (d, J 9.7), 125.8, 128.3 (d, J 12.0), 130.0, 130.4, 131.3 (d, J 2.4), 131.7 (d, J 99.4) (s), 132.7 (d, J 9.6), 134.7 (s), 139.9 (d, J 21.1) (s), 148.6 (s), 149.1 (s); δ_P (121.4 MHz, $CDCl_3$, H_3PO_4) 0.8; HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $C_{41}H_{41}N_3P$ $[M+H]^+$ 606.3033, found 606.3036.

1-Bis[4-(*N,N*-dimethylamino)phenyl]methyl-3-methyl-2-triphenylphosphoranylidenamino-benzene 11d ($R^1 = CH_3$, $R^2 = N(CH_3)_2$). Yield = 3.07 g, 99%; mp 144-145 °C (yellow prisms from diethyl ether); ν_{max} (Nujol)/ cm^{-1} 1612 (m), 1516 (vs), 1456 (s), 1435 (vs), 1344 (m), 1111 (s), 947 (w), 802 (m), 739 (s), 696 (s); δ_H (400 MHz, $CDCl_3$) 1.90 (3 H, s), 2.86 (12 H, s), 5.72 (1 H, s), 6.49-6.55 (7 H, m), 6.61-6.62 (2 H, m), 6.87-6.89 (1 H, m), 7.29-7.36 (8 H, m), 7.45-7.47 (8 H, m); δ_C (100 MHz, $CDCl_3$) 22.2, 41.1, 49.7, 112.6, 118.4, 127.7 (d, J 2.9), 128.3 (d, J 11.9), 128.5, 128.7 (d, J 18.4), 130.3, 131.0 (d, J 2.7), 132.5 (d, J 9.5), 133.1 (d, J 100.4) (s), 133.8 (d, J 19.4), 134.7 (s), 139.6 (d, J 8.9) (s), 146.8 (s), 148.5 (s); δ_P (121.4 MHz, $CDCl_3$, H_3PO_4) - 7.1; HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $C_{42}H_{43}N_3P$ $[M+H]^+$ 620.3189, found 620.3200.

1-Bis[4-(*N*-morpholino)phenyl]methyl-2-(triphenylphosphoranylidenamino)benzene 11e ($R^1 = H$, $R^2 = N$ -morpholino). Yield = 3.41 g, 99%; mp 209-210 °C (colourless prisms from diethyl ether); ν_{max} (Nujol)/ cm^{-1} 1610 (s), 1512 (vs), 1475 (vs), 1340 (vs), 1228 (m), 1053 (m), 1024 (m), 931 (s), 819 (m); δ_H (300 MHz, $CDCl_3$) 3.06-3.09 (8 H, m), 3.82-3.85 (8 H, m), 6.28 (1 H, s), 6.47 (1 H, d, J 8.1), 6.56 (1 H, t, J 6.9), 6.73-6.78 (6 H, m), 6.97-7.02 (4 H, m), 7.32-7.39 (6 H, m), 7.44-7.48 (3 H, m), 7.49-7.55 (6 H, m); δ_C (75 MHz, $CDCl_3$) 49.8, 50.3, 67.1, 115.3, 117.0, 121.1 (d, J 9.7), 126.1, 128.4 (d, J 11.9), 129.9, 130.3, 131.4 (d, J 2.7), 131.6 (d, J 98.9) (s), 132.6 (d, J 9.6), 137.6 (s), 139.2 (d, J 21.3) (s), 149.0 (s), 149.2 (s); δ_P (121.4 MHz, $CDCl_3$, H_3PO_4) 1.1; HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $C_{45}H_{45}N_3O_2P$ $[M+H]^+$ 690.3244, found 690.3253.

1-Bis(4-methoxyphenyl)methyl-2-triphenylphosphoranylidenamino-benzene 11f ($R^1 = H$, $R^2 = OCH_3$). Yield = 2.75 g, 95%; mp 129-130 °C (colourless prisms from diethyl ether); ν_{max} (Nujol)/ cm^{-1} 1608 (s), 1587 (s), 1508 (s), 1475 (vs), 1438 (s), 1246 (s), 1174 (m), 1034 (m), 825 (w), 715 (w), 694 (m); δ_H (400 MHz, $CDCl_3$) 3.74 (6 H, s), 6.31 (1 H, s), 6.48 (1 H, d, J 7.8), 6.56 (1 H, t, J 7.4), 6.72 (4 H, d, J 8.4), 6.73-6.74 (1 H, m), 6.76 (1 H, t, J 7.8), 7.01 (4 H, d, J 8.4), 7.33-7.37 (6 H, m), 7.44-7.48 (3 H, m), 7.53-7.58 (6 H, m); δ_C (100 MHz,

CDCl₃) 50.4, 55.2, 113.2, 117.0, 121.2 (d, *J* 9.7), 126.2, 128.4 (d, *J* 12.0), 128.7 (d, *J* 18.2), 129.9, 130.8, 131.4 (d, *J* 2.3), 131.6 (d, *J* 99.5) (s), 132.6 (d, *J* 9.7), 133.8 (d, *J* 19.4), 138.0 (s), 139.1 (d, *J* 21.4) (s), 149.2 (s), 157.5 (s); δ_P (121.4 MHz, CDCl₃, H₃PO₄) 0.8; HRMS (ESI): Calcd for C₃₉H₃₅NO₂P [M+H]⁺ 580.2400, found 580.2402.

1-Bis(4-methoxyphenyl)methyl-3-methyl-2-triphenylphosphoranilydenaminobenzene

11g (**R**¹ = CH₃, **R**² = OCH₃). Yield = 2.58 g, 87%; mp 169-171 °C (colourless prisms from diethyl ether); ν_{\max} (Nujol)/cm⁻¹ 1606 (s), 1587 (s), 1508 (vs), 1456 (vs), 1435 (vs), 1359 (s), 1244 (s), 1174 (s), 1109 (s), 1035 (s), 997 (m), 835 (m), 812 (m), 737 (s), 696 (s); δ_H (300 MHz, CDCl₃) 1.90 (3 H, s), 3.73 (6 H, s), 5.80 (1 H, s), 6.54-6.65 (10 H, m), 6.90 (1 H, d, *J* 6.6), 7.31-7.49 (15 H, m); δ_C (75 MHz, CDCl₃) 22.1, 49.9, 55.2, 113.1, 118.5 (d, *J* 3.1), 128.1, 128.4 (d, *J* 11.9), 130.6, 131.1 (d, *J* 2.7), 132.4 (d, *J* 9.5), 132.8 (d, *J* 4.9), 132.9 (d, *J* 100.9) (s), 138.0 (s), 138.8 (d, *J* 8.9) (s), 146.9 (s), 157.3 (s); δ_P (121.4 MHz, CDCl₃, H₃PO₄) - 7.0; HRMS (ESI): Calcd for C₄₀H₃₇NO₂P [M+H]⁺ 594.2556, found 594.2554.

Preparation of the Quinolines 13

To a solution of iminophosphorane **11** (1 mmol) in anhydrous dichloromethane (15 mL) ethylphenylketene (0.15 g, 1 mmol) or methylphenylketene (0.13 g, 1 mmol) in the same solvent (5 mL) was added. The reaction mixture was stirred at room temperature for 30 min. Then, the solvent was removed under reduced pressure and the resulting crude material was chromatographed on a silica gel column, using hexanes/diethyl ether (9:1, v/v) as eluent, to give the corresponding ketenimine **12**.

A solution of the ketenimine **12** (0.5 mmol) in anhydrous toluene (20 mL) was heated at reflux temperature under an atmosphere of nitrogen for 5-144 h. After cooling at room temperature, the solvent was removed under reduced pressure and the resulting material was purified by column chromatography on silica gel.

3-Methyl-3,4,4-triphenyl-3,4-dihydroquinoline 13a (**R**¹ = H; **R**² = H; **R**³ = CH₃).

Reaction conditions: anhydrous toluene, 120 h. Eluent for column chromatography: hexanes/diethyl ether (9:1, v/v). Yield = 0.11 g, 60%; mp 194-195 °C (colourless prisms from diethyl ether/hexane); ν_{\max} (Nujol)/cm⁻¹ 1633 (s), 1595 (m), 1493 (vs), 1471 (s), 1387 (w), 1265 (m), 1221 (w), 1031 (m), 939 (w), 791 (m), 758 (vs), 737 (vs), 698 (vs), 619 (s); δ_H (300 MHz; CDCl₃) 1.83 (3 H, s), 6.61 (2 H, d, *J* 7.5), 6.90 (4 H, t, *J* 7.2), 6.98-7.06 (4

H, m), 7.10-7.21 (6 H, m), 7.45 (1 H, dd, J 7.5 and 1.2), 7.55-7.58 (2 H, m), 8.21 (1 H, s); δ_{C} (75 MHz; CDCl_3) 20.2, 48.5 (s), 61.4 (s), 126.2, 126.3, 126.6, 126.7, 127.2, 127.5, 127.6, 127.9, 128.4, 128.6, 129.2, 131.8, 135.1 (s), 138.2 (s), 140.8 (s), 141.7 (s), 146.1 (s), 167.8; HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $\text{C}_{28}\text{H}_{24}\text{N}$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 374.1903, found 374.1907.

3-Ethyl-3,4,4-triphenyl-3,4-dihydroquinoline 13b ($\text{R}^1 = \text{H}$, $\text{R}^2 = \text{H}$, $\text{R}^3 = \text{CH}_2\text{CH}_3$).

Reaction conditions: anhydrous *ortho*-xylene, 144 h. Eluent for column chromatography: hexanes/diethyl ether (9:1, v/v). Yield = 0.03 g, 15%; yellow oil; ν_{max} (neat)/ cm^{-1} 1625 (s), 1597 (m), 1493 (s), 1452 (s), 1377 (w), 1263 (m), 1084 (w), 1036 (w), 874 (w), 773 (s), 737 (s), 702 (s); δ_{H} (300 MHz; CDCl_3) 0.80 (3 H, t, J 7.2), 2.00-2.10 (1 H, m), 2.53-2.62 (1 H, m), 6.61 (2 H, d, J 7.6), 6.93-7.25 (14 H, m), 7.41-7.46 (3 H, m), 8.63 (1 H, s,); δ_{C} (75 MHz; CDCl_3) 8.8, 24.8, 51.6 (s), 62.6 (s), 126.5, 126.6, 126.7, 126.8, 127.2, 127.3, 127.4, 127.8, 128.3, 129.0, 130.4, 130.5, 131.7, 135.2 (s), 135.3 (s), 141.8 (s), 142.3 (s), 144.0 (s), 167.7; HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $\text{C}_{29}\text{H}_{26}\text{N}$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 388.2060, found 388.2066.

3,8-Dimethyl-3,4,4-triphenyl-3,4-dihydroquinoline 13c ($\text{R}^1 = \text{CH}_3$, $\text{R}^2 = \text{H}$, $\text{R}^3 = \text{CH}_3$).

Reaction conditions: anhydrous toluene, 30 h. Eluent for column chromatography: hexanes/diethyl ether (7:3, v/v). Yield = 0.19 g, 99%; mp 195-196 °C (colourless prisms from diethyl ether); ν_{max} (Nujol)/ cm^{-1} 1633 (m), 1304 (s), 1265 (s), 1155 (m), 1085 (m), 1034 (m), 939 (m), 891 (w), 779 (m), 765 (m), 740 (s), 721 (vs), 688 (m), 629 (m); δ_{H} (400 MHz; CDCl_3) 1.81 (3 H, s), 2.56 (3 H, s), 6.65 (2 H, d, J 10.0), 6.86-7.04 (10 H, m), 7.09-7.24 (4 H, m), 7.54-7.57 (2 H, m), 8.25 (1 H, s); δ_{C} (100 MHz; CDCl_3) 18.5, 20.6, 48.0 (s), 61.8 (s), 126.3, 126.6, 126.7, 127.1, 127.4, 127.5, 128.0, 128.8, 128.9, 132.1, 135.0 (s), 135.9 (s), 138.5 (s), 140.1 (s), 141.4 (s), 146.2 (s), 167.4; HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $\text{C}_{29}\text{H}_{26}\text{N}$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 388.2060, found 388.2066.

3-Ethyl-8-methyl-3,4,4-triphenyl-3,4-dihydroquinoline 13d ($\text{R}^1 = \text{CH}_3$, $\text{R}^2 = \text{H}$, $\text{R}^3 = \text{CH}_2\text{CH}_3$).

Reaction conditions: anhydrous toluene, 96 h. Eluent for column chromatography: hexanes/diethyl ether (7:3, v/v). Yield = 0.12 g, 61%; mp 145-147 °C (colourless prisms from diethyl ether); ν_{max} (Nujol)/ cm^{-1} 1628 (m), 1597 (m), 1581 (m), 1495 (vs), 1464 (s), 1444 (s), 1375 (w), 1265 (s), 1089 (m), 1036 (m), 742 (s), 702 (vs); δ_{H} (400 MHz; CDCl_3) 0.78 (3 H, t, J 9.6), 1.96-2.08 (1 H, m), 2.54 (3 H, s), 2.58-2.63 (1 H, m), 6.57 (2 H, d, J 9.0), 6.91-7.20 (14 H, m), 7.43 (2 H, d, J 9.0), 8.68 (1 H, s); δ_{C} (100 MHz; CDCl_3) 8.80, 18.4, 24.9, 50.9 (s),

62.9 (s), 126.4, 126.5, 126.7, 126.8, 126.9, 127.1, 127.2, 127.3, 129.0, 130.4, 130.6, 131.9, 134.9 (s), 135.5 (s), 140.6 (s), 142.0 (s), 144.2 (s), 166.2; HRMS (ESI): Calcd for C₃₀H₂₈N [M+H]⁺ 402.2216, found 402.2219.

4,4-Bis[4-(*N,N*-dimethylamino)phenyl]-3-methyl-3-phenyl-3,4-dihydroquinoline 13e (**R**¹ = H, **R**² = N(CH₃)₂, **R**³ = CH₃). Reaction conditions: anhydrous toluene, 6 h. Eluent for column chromatography: hexanes/diethyl ether (1:1, v/v). Yield = 0.14 g, 63%; mp 190-191 °C (colourless prisms from diethyl ether); ν_{\max} (Nujol)/cm⁻¹ 1613 (s), 1519 (s), 1448 (s), 1359 (s), 1231 (w), 1207 (m), 1163 (w), 1063 (w), 950 (w), 818 (m), 800 (m), 761 (w), 695 (m); δ_{H} (300 MHz; CDCl₃) 1.77 (3 H, s), 2.90 (12 H, s), 6.37 (2 H, d, *J* 9.0), 6.50 (2 H, d, *J* 9.0), 6.65 (2 H, d, *J* 8.1), 6.72 (2 H, d, *J* 8.1), 6.93 (2 H, t, *J* 7.5), 6.99-7.04 (2 H, m), 7.10-7.20 (2 H, m), 7.37-7.42 (3 H, m), 8.23 (1 H, s); δ_{C} (75 MHz; CDCl₃) 20.6, 40.3, 40.7, 49.0 (s), 59.9 (s), 110.5, 111.2, 126.4, 126.6, 127.3, 127.8, 128.2, 129.0, 129.8, 132.6, 134.0 (s), 136.6 (s), 139.1 (s), 141.8 (s), 148.8 (s), 148.9 (s), 169.4 (s); HRMS (ESI): Calcd for C₃₂H₃₄N₃ [M+H]⁺ 460.2747, found 460.2751.

4,4-Bis[4-(*N,N*-dimethylamino)phenyl]-3-ethyl-3-phenyl-3,4-dihydroquinoline 13f (**R**¹ = H, **R**² = N(CH₃)₂, **R**³ = CH₂CH₃). Reaction conditions: anhydrous toluene, 20 h. Eluent for column chromatography: hexanes/diethyl ether (7:3, v/v). Yield = 0.19 g, 80%; mp 171-172 °C (colourless prisms from diethyl ether); ν_{\max} (Nujol)/cm⁻¹ 1610 (s), 1518 (s), 1444 (s), 1354 (s), 1265 (m), 1163 (m), 1061 (w), 949 (w), 808 (m), 733 (m), 700 (m), 629 (s); δ_{H} (400 MHz; CDCl₃) 0.74 (3 H, t, *J* 7.3), 1.98-2.07 (1 H, m), 2.45-2.54 (1 H, m), 2.85 (6 H, s), 2.91 (6 H, s), 6.37 (2 H, d, *J* 9.1), 6.53 (2 H, d, *J* 9.1), 6.70 (2 H, d, *J* 7.7), 6.76 (2 H, d, *J* 7.7), 7.00-7.09 (4 H, m), 7.14-7.20 (2 H, m), 7.24-7.26 (2 H, m), 7.40 (1 H, dd, *J* 7.6 and 1.3), 8.63 (1 H, s); δ_{C} (100 MHz; CDCl₃) 9.0, 25.6, 40.4, 40.5, 52.0 (s), 60.9 (s), 110.5, 110.8, 126.4, 126.7, 127.1, 127.5, 128.0, 128.9, 129.9 (s), 130.6, 131.3 (s), 131.7, 132.2, 136.4 (s), 136.5 (s), 142.3 (s), 148.9 (s), 149.0 (s), 168.5; HRMS (ESI): Calcd for C₃₃H₃₆N₃ [M+H]⁺ 474.2904, found 474.2910.

4,4-Bis[4-(*N,N*-dimethylamino)phenyl]-3,8-dimethyl-3-phenyl-3,4-dihydroquinoline 13g (**R**¹ = CH₃, **R**² = N(CH₃)₂, **R**³ = CH₃). Reaction conditions: anhydrous toluene, 6 h. Eluent for column chromatography: hexanes/diethyl ether (1:1, v/v). Yield = 0.18 g, 78%; mp 170-171 °C (colourless prisms from diethyl ether); ν_{\max} (Nujol)/cm⁻¹ 1610 (s), 1518 (vs), 1443 (m),

1352 (m), 1231 (m), 949 (w), 814 (w), 798 (m), 737 (m), 696 (m); δ_{H} (400 MHz; CDCl_3) 1.75 (3 H, s), 2.54 (3 H, s), 2.87 (6 H, s), 2.88 (6 H, s), 6.36 (2 H, d, J 8.8), 6.48-6.51 (2 H, m), 6.62 (2 H, d, J 7.6), 6.71 (2 H, d, J 8.8), 6.88-7.04 (6 H, m), 7.37-7.39 (2 H, m), 8.27 (1 H, s); δ_{C} (100 MHz; CDCl_3) 18.5, 20.9, 40.4, 40.7, 48.3 (s), 60.3 (s), 110.5, 111.2, 126.4, 126.8, 127.1, 127.3, 128.4, 129.1, 129.6 (s), 130.1, 132.7, 134.0 (s), 135.4 (s), 136.4 (s), 139.3 (s), 140.1 (s), 148.8 (s), 148.9 (s), 167.9; HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $\text{C}_{33}\text{H}_{36}\text{N}_3$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 474.2904, found 474.2909.

4,4-Bis[4-(*N,N*-dimethylamino)phenyl]-3-ethyl-8-methyl-3-phenyl-3,4-dihydroquinoline 13h ($\text{R}^1 = \text{CH}_3$, $\text{R}^2 = \text{N}(\text{CH}_3)_2$, $\text{R}^3 = \text{CH}_2\text{CH}_3$). Reaction conditions: anhydrous toluene, 5 h. Eluent for column chromatography: hexanes/diethyl ether (7:3, v/v). Yield = 0.18 g, 75%; mp 165-167 °C (colourless prisms from diethyl ether); ν_{max} (Nujol)/ cm^{-1} 1610 (s), 1517 (vs), 1466 (m), 1444 (m), 1352 (m), 1214 (w), 949 (w), 808 (w), 737 (m), 700 (s); δ_{H} (300 MHz; CDCl_3) 0.72 (3 H, t, J 7.2), 1.94-2.06 (1 H, m), 2.45-2.50 (1 H, m), 2.53 (3 H, s), 2.86 (6 H, s), 2.92 (6 H, s), 6.36 (2 H, d, J 9.0), 6.53 (2 H, d, J 9.0), 6.67 (2 H, d, J 8.1), 6.76 (2 H, d, J 8.1), 6.91-7.08 (6 H, m), 7.23-7.26 (2 H, m), 8.68 (1 H, s); δ_{C} (75 MHz; CDCl_3) 15.4, 18.4, 25.7, 40.5, 40.6, 51.4 (s), 61.2 (s), 110.4, 110.7, 126.3, 126.7, 126.9, 127.1, 128.4, 130.2 (s), 130.6, 131.7 (s), 131.8, 132.4, 135.1 (s), 136.2 (s), 136.8 (s), 140.6 (s), 148.9 (s), 149.0 (s), 167.0; HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $\text{C}_{34}\text{H}_{38}\text{N}_3$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 488.3060, found 488.3065.

3-Methyl-4,4-bis[4-(*N*-morpholino)phenyl]-3-phenyl-3,4-dihydroquinoline 13i ($\text{R}^1 = \text{H}$, $\text{R}^2 = \text{N-morpholino}$, $\text{R}^3 = \text{CH}_3$). Reaction conditions: anhydrous toluene, 12 h. Eluent for column chromatography: hexanes/diethyl ether (1:9, v/v). Yield = 0.18 g, 65%; mp 221-222 °C (orange prisms from diethyl ether); ν_{max} (Nujol)/ cm^{-1} 1608 (s), 1512 (vs), 1448 (s), 1379 (m), 1304 (w), 1261 (m), 1238 (vs), 1122 (vs), 930 (s), 819 (m), 760 (m), 735 (m), 698 (m); δ_{H} (400 MHz; CDCl_3) 1.79 (3 H, s), 3.06-3.09 (8 H, m), 3.79-3.85 (8 H, m), 6.55 (2 H, d, J 8.4), 6.65-6.67 (4 H, m), 6.78 (2 H, d, J 8.4), 6.93 (2 H, t, J 7.6), 7.03 (2 H, t, J 8.4), 7.17 (2 H, t, J 7.6), 7.45 (3 H, m), 8.23 (1 H, s); δ_{C} (100 MHz; CDCl_3) 20.1, 48.2, 48.4 (s), 48.8, 59.7 (s), 66.4, 66.5, 112.9, 113.6, 126.2, 126.5, 127.0, 127.5, 127.9, 128.3 (s), 128.4, 128.5, 129.3, 131.8 (s), 132.2, 135.6 (s), 136.7 (s), 138.3 (s), 141.4 (s), 148.9 (s), 149.1 (s), 168.6; HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $\text{C}_{36}\text{H}_{38}\text{N}_3\text{O}_2$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 544.2959, found 544.2963.

3-Ethyl-4,4-bis[4-(*N*-morpholino)phenyl]-3-phenyl-3,4-dihydroquinoline 13j ($R^1 = H$, $R^2 = N\text{-morpholino}$, $R^3 = CH_2CH_3$). Reaction conditions: anhydrous toluene, reflux, 72 h. Eluent for column chromatography: hexanes/diethyl ether (1:9, v/v). Yield = 0.17 g, 60%; mp 184-185 °C (orange prisms from diethyl ether); ν_{\max} (Nujol)/ cm^{-1} 1713 (s), 1608 (s), 1512 (vs), 1450 (s), 1379 (m), 1363 (m), 1265 (s), 1238 (vs), 1122 (vs), 931 (s), 814 (m), 737 (vs), 702 (s); δ_H (400 MHz; $CDCl_3$) 0.76 (3 H, t, J 6.8), 1.94-2.04 (1 H, m), 2.45-2.52 (1 H, m), 3.07-3.16 (8 H, m), 3.81-3.86 (8 H, m), 6.54 (2 H, d, J 8.8), 6.67-6.72 (4 H, m), 6.80 (2 H, d, J 7.6), 7.00-7.11 (4 H, m), 7.15-7.21 (2 H, m), 7.29 (2 H, d, J 8.8), 7.41 (1 H, d, J 7.6), 8.60 (1 H, s); δ_C (100 MHz; $CDCl_3$) 8.4, 22.0, 48.3, 48.5, 51.4 (s), 60.6 (s), 66.4, 66.5, 112.7, 113.1, 126.1, 126.5, 126.8, 127.2, 127.6, 128.4, 130.1, 131.2, 131.8, 132.7 (s), 134.1 (s), 135.4 (s), 135.7 (s), 141.8 (s), 148.9 (s), 149.0 (s), 167.7; HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $C_{37}H_{40}N_3O_2$ $[M+H]^+$ 558.3115, found 558.3122.

4,4-Bis(4-methoxyphenyl)-3-methyl-3-phenyl-3,4-dihydroquinoline 13k ($R^1 = H$, $R^2 = OCH_3$, $R^3 = CH_3$). Reaction conditions: anhydrous toluene, 24 h. Eluent for column chromatography: hexanes/diethyl ether (4:1, v/v). Yield= 0.12 g, 57%; mp 168-170 °C (colourless prisms from diethyl ether); ν_{\max} (Nujol)/ cm^{-1} 1606 (s), 1464 (s), 1443 (s), 1296 (m), 1252 (vs), 1184 (s), 1033 (s), 825 (w), 737 (w), 696 (w); δ_H (400 MHz; $CDCl_3$) 1.78 (3 H, s), 3.72 (3 H, s), 3.75 (3 H, s), 6.54 (2 H, d, J 9.0), 6.62 (2 H, d, J 7.7), 6.67 (2 H, d, J 9.0), 6.78 (2 H, d, J 8.4), 6.93 (2 H, t, J 7.7), 7.01-7.06 (2 H, m), 7.15-7.19 (2 H, m), 7.43-7.46 (3 H, m), 8.21 (1 H, s); δ_C (100 MHz; $CDCl_3$) 20.5, 48.8 (s), 55.2, 55.3, 60.2 (s), 111.8, 112.9, 126.7, 127.1, 127.6, 128.0, 128.5, 128.8, 128.9, 130.0, 132.9, 133.1 (s), 136.0 (s), 138.3 (s), 138.6 (s), 141.8 (s), 158.0 (s), 158.1 (s), 169.0; HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $C_{30}H_{28}NO_2$ $[M+H]^+$ 434.2115, found 434.2119.

3-Ethyl-4,4-bis(4-methoxyphenyl)-3-phenyl-3,4-dihydroquinoline 13l ($R^1 = H$, $R^2 = OCH_3$, $R^3 = CH_2CH_3$). Reaction conditions: anhydrous toluene, 120 h. Eluent for column chromatography: hexanes/diethyl ether (7:3, v/v). Yield= 0.12 g, 52%; mp 187-188 °C (colourless prisms from diethyl ether); ν_{\max} (Nujol)/ cm^{-1} 1606 (s), 1508 (vs), 1464 (s), 1296 (m), 1254 (s), 1184 (s), 1036 (s), 819 (w), 737 (m), 702 (m); δ_H (400 MHz; $CDCl_3$) 0.77 (3 H, t, J 7.3), 1.96-2.05 (1 H, m), 2.45-2.55 (1 H, m), 3.73 (3 H, s), 3.78 (3 H, s), 6.55 (2 H, d, J 9.1), 6.67 (2 H, d, J 7.7), 6.71 (2 H, d, J 9.1), 6.82 (2 H, d, J 7.7), 7.01-7.05 (2 H, m), 7.07-7.10 (2 H, m), 7.15 (1 H, dd, J 7.8 and 1.3), 7.19 (1 H, td, J 7.4 and 1.4), 7.31 (2 H, d, J 8.5

Hz), 7.42 (1 H, dd, J 7.7 and 1.2), 8.63 (1 H, s); δ_{C} (100 MHz; CDCl_3) 8.9, 25.4, 51.8 (s), 55.2, 55.3, 61.2 (s), 111.8, 112.3, 126.7, 127.1, 127.3, 127.8, 128.2, 128.8, 130.4, 131.8, 132.6, 134.0, 135.7 (s), 135.8 (s), 135.9 (s), 142.2 (s), 158.1 (s), 158.3 (s), 168.1; HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $\text{C}_{31}\text{H}_{30}\text{NO}_2$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 448.2271, found 448.2273.

4,4-Bis(4-methoxyphenyl)-3,8-dimethyl-3-phenyl-3,4-dihydroquinoline 13m ($\text{R}^1 = \text{CH}_3$, $\text{R}^2 = \text{OCH}_3$, $\text{R}^3 = \text{CH}_3$). Reaction conditions: anhydrous toluene, 15 h. Eluent for column chromatography: hexanes/diethyl ether (7:3, v/v). Yield= 0.19 g, 85%; mp 158-160 °C (colourless prisms from diethyl ether); ν_{max} (Nujol)/ cm^{-1} 1629 (m), 1606 (s), 1581 (m), 1506 (vs), 1464 (s), 1385 (w), 1296 (s), 1252 (vs), 1184 (s), 1117 (w), 1036 (s), 810 (s), 737 (s), 698 (s); δ_{H} (300 MHz; CDCl_3) 1.76 (3 H, s), 2.55 (3 H, s), 3.72 (3 H, s), 3.74 (3 H, s), 6.53 (2 H, d, J 8.4), 6.59 (2 H, d, J 7.8), 6.67 (2 H, d, J 8.7), 6.76 (2 H, d, J 7.8), 6.92-7.02 (6 H, m), 7.44 (2 H, d, J 8.4), 8.26 (1 H, s); δ_{C} (75 MHz; CDCl_3) 18.5, 20.7, 48.1 (s), 55.1, 55.2, 60.5 (s), 111.6, 112.7, 126.6, 126.7, 127.3, 127.5, 128.8, 128.9, 130.1, 133.0, 133.5 (s), 135.7 (s), 135.8 (s), 138.2 (s), 138.7 (s), 140.0 (s), 157.9 (s), 158.0 (s), 167.6; HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $\text{C}_{31}\text{H}_{30}\text{NO}_2$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 448.2271, found 448.2276.

3-Ethyl-4,4-bis(4-methoxyphenyl)-8-methyl-3-phenyl-3,4-dihydroquinoline 13n ($\text{R}^1 = \text{CH}_3$, $\text{R}^2 = \text{OCH}_3$, $\text{R}^3 = \text{CH}_2\text{CH}_3$). Reaction conditions: anhydrous toluene, 48 h. Eluent for column chromatography: hexanes/diethyl ether (7:3, v/v). Yield = 0.23 g, 99%; colourless oil; ν_{max} (neat)/ cm^{-1} 1606 (s), 1508 (vs), 1469 (s), 1296 (m), 1254 (vs), 1184 (s), 1036 (s), 835 (w), 810 (m), 734 (vs), 704 (s); δ_{H} (400 MHz; CDCl_3) 0.75 (3 H, t, J 7.2), 1.99 (1 H, m), 2.49 (1 H, m), 2.53 (3 H, s), 3.71 (3 H, s), 3.76 (3 H, s), 6.54 (2 H, d, J 8.8), 6.64 (2 H, d, J 7.6), 6.70 (2 H, d, J 8.8), 6.81 (2 H, d, J 8.0), 6.95-7.09 (6 H, m), 7.31 (2 H, d, J 8.0), 8.67 (1 H, s); δ_{C} (100 MHz; CDCl_3) 8.9, 18.3, 25.5, 51.1 (s), 55.1, 55.2, 61.4 (s), 111.7, 112.2, 126.5, 126.6, 127.1, 127.3, 128.9, 130.4, 131.9, 132.7, 134.2 (s), 135.4 (s), 135.5 (s), 135.9 (s), 136.2 (s), 140.5 (s), 158.0 (s), 158.2 (s), 166.6; HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $\text{C}_{32}\text{H}_{32}\text{NO}_2$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 462.2428, found 462.2436.

Preparation of acridines 18, 2-arylquinolines 20 and quinolines 22

To a solution of iminophosphorane **11** (1 mmol) in anhydrous dichloromethane (15 mL) a solution of diphenylketene (0.19 g, 1 mmol) in the same solvent (5 mL) was added. The reaction mixture was stirred at room temperature under nitrogen for 30 min. Next the solvent was removed under reduced pressure and the resulting material was purified by column

chromatography on silica gel, using hexanes/diethyl ether (9:1; v/v) as eluent, to provide the expected ketenimine **15**.

A deoxygenated solution of the ketenimine **15** (0.5 mmol) in anhydrous *ortho*-xylene (20 mL) was heated in a sealed tube at 180 °C during 2-21 d. After cooling, the solvent was removed under reduced pressure. The resulting material was purified by column chromatography on silica gel.

10-(2,2-Diphenylethenyl)-9-phenyl-9,10-dihydroacridine 18a ($R^1 = H$, $R^2 = H$). Reaction time: 7 d. Eluent for column chromatography: hexanes/diethyl ether (9.5:0.5, v/v). Yield = 0.21 g, 95%; mp 191-192 °C (colourless prisms from diethyl ether); ν_{\max} (Nujol)/ cm^{-1} 1589 (s), 1495 (s), 1308 (s), 1286 (s), 1261 (m), 1074 (w), 956 (w), 877 (w), 748 (vs), 700 (vs); δ_{H} (300 MHz; CDCl_3) 5.22 (1 H, s), 6.61 (1 H, s), 6.83-6.88 (4 H, m), 7.07-7.21 (14 H, m), 7.37-7.41 (3 H, m), 7.48-7.51 (2 H, m); δ_{C} (75 MHz; CDCl_3) 47.9, 114.0, 121.5, 124.0, 124.7 (s), 126.1, 127.2, 127.5, 127.8, 128.2, 128.3, 128.5, 128.6, 129.0, 129.6, 137.7 (s), 140.1 (s), 145.5 (s), 147.3 (s); HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $\text{C}_{33}\text{H}_{26}\text{N}$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 436.2060, found 436.2064.

10-(2,2-Diphenylethenyl)-3-methoxy-9-(4-methoxyphenyl)-9,10-dihydroacridine 18b ($R^1 = H$, $R^2 = \text{OCH}_3$). Reaction time: 5 d. Eluent for column chromatography: hexanes/diethyl ether (9:1, v/v). Yield = 0.15 g, 61%; mp 150-151 °C (colourless prisms from diethyl ether); ν_{\max} (Nujol)/ cm^{-1} 1595 (vs), 1508 (vs), 1483 (vs), 1443 (vs), 1302 (m), 1269 (s), 1254 (s), 1213 (s), 1176 (m), 1038 (m), 752 (m), 698 (s); δ_{H} (400 MHz; CDCl_3) 3.72 (3 H, s), 3.73 (3 H, s), 5.12 (1 H, s), 6.42 (1 H, dd, J 8.4 and 2.8), 6.59 (1 H, s), 6.62-6.65 (2 H, m), 6.74 (1 H, d, J 2.4), 6.76-6.78 (2 H, m), 6.85 (1 H, m), 6.98 (1 H, d, J 8.0), 7.08 (2 H, d, J 7.2), 7.10-7.21 (6 H, m), 7.38-7.41 (3 H, m), 7.46-7.49 (2 H, m); δ_{C} (100 MHz; CDCl_3) 46.3, 55.3, 55.4, 100.5, 106.4, 113.9, 114.0, 117.8, 121.5, 123.9, 125.4 (s), 127.0, 127.8, 128.1, 128.2, 128.4, 128.5, 128.6, 129.0, 129.5, 130.2, 137.8 (s), 139.9 (s), 140.0 (s), 140.3 (s), 141.0 (s), 145.7 (s), 157.8 (s), 158.9 (s); HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $\text{C}_{35}\text{H}_{30}\text{NO}_2$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 496.2271, found 496.2275.

2,4-Bis[4-(*N,N*-dimethylamino)phenyl]-3,3-diphenyl-3,4-dihydroquinoline 20a ($R^1 = H$, $R^2 = \text{N}(\text{CH}_3)_2$). Reaction time: 1 d. Eluent for column chromatography: hexanes/diethyl ether

(7:3, v/v). Yield = 0.13 g, 50%; colourless oil; $\nu_{\max}(\text{neat})/\text{cm}^{-1}$ 1608 (vs), 1520 (vs), 1477 (m), 1444 (m), 1360 (s), 1265 (m), 1198 (m), 1167 (m), 947 (w), 818 (m), 737 (s), 700 (s); $\delta_{\text{H}}(400 \text{ MHz}; \text{CDCl}_3)$ 2.82 (6 H, s), 2.89 (6 H, s), 4.56 (1 H, s), 6.31 (2 H, d, J 7.6), 6.40-6.43 (4 H, m), 6.57 (2 H, d, J 8.8), 6.79 (2 H, t, J 8.4), 6.93-6.98 (3 H, m), 7.08-7.18 (2 H, m), 7.21-7.23 (2 H, m), 7.31 (2 H, d, J 9.2), 7.40 (1 H, d, J 8.0), 7.63 (2 H, d, J 8.0); $\delta_{\text{C}}(100 \text{ MHz}; \text{CDCl}_3)$ 40.1, 40.6, 54.6, 59.0 (s), 110.5, 112.2, 125.6, 125.9, 126.5, 126.7, 126.9, 127.2, 127.3 (s), 127.6, 127.9, 128.8 (s), 129.7, 131.1, 131.2, 131.4, 131.8, 142.0 (s), 142.1 (s), 144.1 (s), 149.6 (s), 150.7 (s), 171.7 (s); HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $\text{C}_{37}\text{H}_{36}\text{N}_3$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 522.2904, found 522.2908.

2,4-Bis[4-(*N,N*-dimethylamino)phenyl]- 8-methyl-3,3-diphenyl-3,4-dihydroquinoline 20b ($\text{R}^1 = \text{CH}_3$, $\text{R}^2 = \text{N}(\text{CH}_3)_2$). Reaction time: 2 d. Eluent for column chromatography: hexanes/diethyl ether (3:2, v/v). Yield = 0.25 g, 93%; mp 234-235 °C (colourless prisms from diethyl ether); $\nu_{\max}(\text{Nujol})/\text{cm}^{-1}$ 1610 (m), 1519 (s), 1461 (vs), 1265 (m), 1120 (w), 1035 (m), 967 (w), 833 (s), 745 (m); $\delta_{\text{H}}(300 \text{ MHz}; \text{CDCl}_3)$ 2.46 (3 H, s), 2.80 (6 H, s), 2.89 (6 H, s), 4.51 (1 H, s), 6.32 (2 H, d, J 7.5), 6.41 (4 H, t, J 8.7), 6.54 (2 H, d, J 8.7), 6.76-6.84 (4 H, m), 6.93-6.98 (2 H, m), 7.11-7.23 (3 H, m), 7.40 (2 H, d, J 9.0), 7.61 (2 H, d, J 7.5); $\delta_{\text{C}}(75 \text{ MHz}; \text{CDCl}_3)$ 17.9, 40.2, 40.7, 55.0, 58.4 (s), 110.3, 112.3, 125.1, 125.6, 125.9, 126.2, 126.8, 127.7 (s), 127.8, 128.5, 129.2 (s), 129.7, 131.1, 131.3, 131.4, 134.8 (s), 142.3 (s), 142.4 (s), 142.5 (s), 149.5 (s), 150.5 (s), 168.6 (s); HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $\text{C}_{38}\text{H}_{38}\text{N}_3$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 536.3060, found 536.3062.

3,3-Diphenyl-8-diphenylmethyl-3,4-dihydroquinoline 22a ($\text{R}^2 = \text{H}$). Reaction time: 21 d. Eluent for column chromatography: hexanes/diethyl ether (9.5:0.5, v/v). Yield = 0.11 g, 51%; mp 159-161 °C (colourless prisms from diethyl ether); $\nu_{\max}(\text{Nujol})/\text{cm}^{-1}$ 1599 (m), 1581 (m), 1493 (vs), 1444 (s), 1265 (w), 1078 (w), 1032 (w), 895 (w), 781 (w), 742 (s), 698 (vs), 621 (m); $\delta_{\text{H}}(400 \text{ MHz}; \text{CDCl}_3)$ 3.47 (2 H, s), 6.55 (1 H, s), 6.81 (1 H, d, J 7.6), 6.95 (1 H, d, J 7.6), 7.00-7.07 (9 H, m), 7.17-7.28 (12 H, m), 8.22 (1 H, s); $\delta_{\text{C}}(100 \text{ MHz}; \text{CDCl}_3)$ 38.1, 48.7 (s), 50.4, 125.9, 126.1, 126.5 (s), 127.4, 127.7, 127.8, 128.1, 128.7, 129.8, 140.0 (s), 140.8 (s), 143.8 (s), 144.3 (s), 166.7; HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $\text{C}_{34}\text{H}_{28}\text{N}$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 450.2216, found 450.2222.

8-Bis(4-methoxyphenyl)methyl-3,3-diphenyl-3,4-dihydroquinoline 22b ($R^2 = OCH_3$).

Reaction time: 14 d. Eluent for column chromatography: hexanes/diethyl ether (9:1, v/v). Yield = 0.13 g, 50%; mp 147-149 °C (colourless prisms from diethyl ether/hexane); ν_{\max} (Nujol)/ cm^{-1} 1610 (s), 1578 (m), 1519 (vs), 1494 (vs), 1456 (s), 1367 (w), 1327 (m), 1284 (s), 1248 (vs), 1176 (s), 1070 (w), 1031 (s), 835 (m), 738 (s), 702 (m); δ_H (400 MHz; $CDCl_3$) 3.43 (2 H, s), 3.78 (6 H, s), 6.39 (1 H, s), 6.75-6.78 (4 H, m), 6.90-6.95 (5 H, m), 6.99 (1 H, d, J 7.6), 7.01-7.04 (5 H, m), 7.16-7.24 (6 H, m), 8.21 (1 H, s); δ_C (100 MHz; $CDCl_3$) 38.1, 48.6 (s), 48.7, 55.3, 113.5, 125.9, 126.4 (s), 126.7, 127.3, 127.8, 128.4, 128.5, 130.6, 136.9 (s), 140.6 (s), 140.7 (s), 143.8 (s), 157.7 (s), 166.6; HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $C_{36}H_{32}NO_2$ $[M+H]^+$ 510.2428, found 510.2433.

Preparation of Quinazolines 25

To a solution of iminophosphorane **11** (1 mmol) in anhydrous dichloromethane (15 mL) a solution of the aryl isocyanate (1 mmol) in the same solvent (5 mL) was added. The reaction mixture was stirred at room temperature for 30 min. The solvent was removed under reduced pressure, and the oily residue was chromatographed on a silica gel column using hexanes/diethyl ether (7:3, v/v) as eluent to give the corresponding carbodiimides **23**.

A solution of the carbodiimide **23** (0.5 mmol) in anhydrous *o*-xylene (20 mL) was heated at 180 °C, in a sealed tube, for 2-5 d. After cooling at room temperature, the solvent was removed under reduced pressure and the resulting material was purified by silica gel column chromatography.

3-(4-Bromophenyl)-4,4-bis[4-(*N,N*-dimethylamino)phenyl]-3,4-dihydroquinazoline 25a

($R^1 = H$; $R^2 = N(CH_3)_2$; $R^3 = Br$). Eluent for column chromatography: hexanes/diethyl ether (1:9, v/v). Yield = 0.22 g, 82%; mp 193-194 °C (colourless prisms from diethyl ether/hexane); ν_{\max} (Nujol)/ cm^{-1} 1608 (s), 1564 (s), 1517 (s), 1355 (m), 1263 (m), 1190 (m), 1008 (w), 947 (w), 808 (w), 737 (m); δ_H (400 MHz; $CDCl_3$) 2.89 (12 H, s), 6.54-6.56 (4 H, m), 6.76-6.79 (3 H, m), 6.98-7.01 (1 H, m), 7.13-7.24 (8 H, m), 7.64 (1 H, s); δ_C (100 MHz; $CDCl_3$) 40.3, 71.9 (s), 111.3, 118.5 (s), 124.1, 125.3, 127.1, 127.2, 127.6, 129.0, 130.4, 131.2, 133.0 (s), 140.7 (s), 142.0 (s), 147.4, 149.3 (s); HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $C_{30}H_{30}BrN_4$ $[M+H]^+$ 525.1648, found 525.1655

3-(4-Chlorophenyl)-4,4-bis[4-(*N,N*-dimethylamino)phenyl]-8-methyl-3,4-dihydroquinazoline 25b ($R^1 = \text{CH}_3$, $R^2 = \text{N}(\text{CH}_3)_2$, $R^3 = \text{Cl}$). Eluent for column chromatography: hexanes/ethyl acetate (7:3, v/v). Yield = 0.21 g, 84%; mp 230-231 °C (colourless prisms from diethyl ether); $\nu_{\text{max}}(\text{Nujol})/\text{cm}^{-1}$ 1614 (vs), 1574 (vs), 1516 (s), 1489 (s), 1356 (s), 1292 (s), 1252 (m), 1092 (w), 948 (w), 816 (m), 737 (s); $\delta_{\text{H}}(300 \text{ MHz}; \text{CDCl}_3)$ 2.41 (3 H, s), 2.90 (12 H, s), 6.52-6.57 (4 H, m), 6.61 (1 H, d, J 7.8), 6.83-6.87 (2 H, m), 6.91 (1 H, d, J 7.8), 7.00-7.04 (3 H, m), 7.11-7.16 (4 H, m), 7.70 (1 H, s); $\delta_{\text{C}}(75 \text{ MHz}; \text{CDCl}_3)$ 17.8, 40.4, 71.9 (s), 111.3, 124.7, 125.1, 126.6, 128.3, 129.0, 129.2 (s), 130.3 (s), 130.4, 131.9 (s), 133.0 (s), 139.1 (s), 141.7 (s), 146.5, 149.3 (s); HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $\text{C}_{31}\text{H}_{32}\text{ClN}_4$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 495.2310, found 495.2317.

4,4-Bis[4-(*N,N*-dimethylamino)phenyl]-8-methyl-3-(4-methylphenyl)-3,4-dihydroquinazoline 25c ($R^1 = \text{CH}_3$, $R^2 = \text{N}(\text{CH}_3)_2$, $R^3 = \text{CH}_3$). Eluent for column chromatography: hexanes/diethyl ether (7:3, v/v). Yield = 0.18 g, 76%; mp 255-257 °C (yellow prisms from diethyl ether); $\nu_{\text{max}}(\text{Nujol})/\text{cm}^{-1}$ 1713 (w), 1606 (vs), 1573 (vs), 1516 (vs), 1356 (s), 1300 (s), 1252 (s), 1224 (m), 1057 (w), 947 (w), 814 (m), 802 (m), 735 (m); $\delta_{\text{H}}(400 \text{ MHz}; \text{CDCl}_3)$ 2.19 (3 H, s), 2.42 (3 H, s), 2.88 (12 H, s), 6.53-6.56 (4 H, m), 6.59 (1 H, d, J 7.6), 6.79-6.81 (2 H, m), 6.85-6.89 (3 H, m), 7.01 (1 H, d, J 7.6), 7.14-7.18 (4 H, m), 7.73 (1 H, s); $\delta_{\text{C}}(75 \text{ MHz}; \text{CDCl}_3)$ 17.9, 20.8, 40.5, 71.8 (s), 111.3, 124.3, 125.1, 125.5, 128.8, 128.9, 129.9 (s), 130.6, 131.7 (s), 133.0 (s), 134.4 (s), 139.5 (s), 140.6 (s), 147.3, 149.2 (s); HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $\text{C}_{32}\text{H}_{35}\text{N}_4$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 475.2856, found 475.2860.

3-(4-Chlorophenyl)-4,4-bis(4-methoxyphenyl)-3,4-dihydroquinazoline 25d ($R^1 = \text{H}$, $R^2 = \text{OCH}_3$, $R^3 = \text{Cl}$). Eluent for column chromatography: hexanes/diethyl ether (1:9, v/v). Yield = 0.18 g, 78%; mp 96-97 °C (colourless prisms from diethyl ether/hexane); $\nu_{\text{max}}(\text{Nujol})/\text{cm}^{-1}$ 1608 (s), 1585 (s), 1562 (s), 1510 (vs), 1491 (s), 1309 (m), 1296 (m), 1253 (vs), 1176 (s), 1033 (m), 822 (w), 771 (w); $\delta_{\text{H}}(300 \text{ MHz}; \text{CDCl}_3)$ 3.71 (6 H, s), 6.72-6.82 (7 H, m), 7.01-7.06 (3 H, m), 7.19-7.26 (6 H, m), 7.66 (1 H, s); $\delta_{\text{C}}(75 \text{ MHz}; \text{CDCl}_3)$ 55.3, 71.9 (s), 113.2, 124.4, 125.7, 126.9, 127.0, 128.1, 128.5, 130.8, 131.1 (s), 132.3 (s), 133.4 (s), 140.6 (s), 141.1 (s), 147.4, 158.8 (s); HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $\text{C}_{28}\text{H}_{24}\text{ClN}_2\text{O}_2$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 455.1521, found 455.1527.

3-(4-Bromophenyl)-4,4-bis(4-methoxyphenyl)-8-methyl-3,4-dihydroquinazoline 25e ($R^1 = \text{CH}_3$, $R^2 = \text{OCH}_3$, $R^3 = \text{Br}$). Eluent for column chromatography: hexanes/diethyl ether (1:1,

v/v). Yield = 0.16 g, 61%; mp 83-85 °C (colourless prisms from diethyl ether); $\nu_{\max}(\text{Nujol})/\text{cm}^{-1}$ 1608 (vs), 1568 (s), 1542 (w), 1508 (s), 1488 (s), 1292 (s), 1253 (m), 1178 (m), 1074 (w), 1033 (s), 937 (m), 892 (w), 812 (s), 737 (vs); $\delta_{\text{H}}(400 \text{ MHz}; \text{CDCl}_3)$ 2.42 (3 H, s), 3.76 (6 H, s), 6.55 (1 H, d, J 7.6), 6.73-6.77 (6 H, m), 6.93 (1 H, t, J 7.6), 7.06 (1 H, d, J 7.6), 7.17-7.22 (6 H, m), 7.70 (1 H, s); $\delta_{\text{C}}(100 \text{ MHz}; \text{CDCl}_3)$ 15.3, 55.3, 71.9 (s), 113.2, 118.6 (s), 124.9, 125.1, 126.8, 129.5, 130.8, 131.4, 132.3 (s), 132.4 (s), 133.4 (s), 139.1 (s), 141.8 (s), 146.3, 158.8 (s); HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $\text{C}_{29}\text{H}_{26}\text{BrN}_2\text{O}_2$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 513.1172, found 513.1174.

Preparation of 4-chloro-2-[1-(4-methoxyphenyl)vinyl]-*N*-(2,2-diphenylvinyl)aniline 30

To a solution of 4-chloro-2-[1-(4-methoxyphenyl)ethyl]aniline **26** (5 g, 19 mmol) in a mixture of water (30 mL) and concentrated sulfuric acid (5 mL), cooled at 0 °C a solution of sodium nitrite (1.6 g, 23 mmol) in water (10 mL) was added dropwise. The resulting mixture was stirred at 0 °C for 30 min, and then a solution of sodium azide (1.5 g, 23 mmol) in water (10 mL) was added dropwise during 10 min. The reaction mixture was stirred at room temperature for 16 h, and then extracted with diethyl ether (3 x 50 mL). The organic phase was dried over anhydrous magnesium sulfate. The solvent was removed under reduced pressure, and the resulting material was purified by column chromatography on silica gel, using hexanes as eluent, to give **1-azido-4-chloro-2-[1-(4-methoxyphenyl)ethyl]benzene** (4.15 g, yield 76%).

To a solution of 1-azido-4-chloro-2-[1-(4-methoxyphenyl)ethyl]benzene (1.9 g, 6.7 mmol) in anhydrous diethyl ether (20 mL) triphenylphosphine (1.9 g, 7.4 mmol) was added in five portions. The reaction mixture was stirred at room temperature under nitrogen for 16 h. The solvent was removed under reduced pressure, and the crude iminophosphorane **27** was purified by column chromatography on silica gel deactivated with triethylamine, using hexanes/diethyl ether (1:1, v/v) as eluent.

Iminophosphorane 27. Yield = 3.43 g, 98%; mp 51-52 °C (colourless prisms from diethyl ether); $\nu_{\max}(\text{Nujol})/\text{cm}^{-1}$ 1610 (m), 1581 (s), 1510 (vs), 1475 (vs), 1437 (s), 1348 (vs), 1244

(vs), 1178 (s), 1034 (s), 999 (w), 908 (s), 860 (w), 831 (m), 812 (m), 846 (m); δ_{H} (400 MHz; CDCl_3) 1.57 (3 H, d, J 7.2), 3.70 (3 H, s), 5.06 (1 H, q, J 7.2), 6.35 (1 H, dd, J 8.4 and 1.2), 6.66 (1 H, dd, J 8.4 and 2.8), 6.68-6.72 (2 H, m), 6.99 (1 H, t, J 2.8), 7.11 (2 H, m), 7.35-7.40 (6 H, m), 7.44-7.49 (3 H, m), 7.59-7.64 (6 H, m); δ_{C} (100 MHz; CDCl_3) 21.1, 38.3, 55.2, 113.3, 121.9 (d, J 9.9), 122.0 (s), 125.6, 127.1, 128.5 (d, J 11.9), 128.8, 128.9 (d, J 89.2) (s), 131.5 (d, J 3.0), 132.5 (d, J 9.7), 139.4 (s), 142.6 (d, J 21.5) (s), 147.4 (s), 157.4 (s); δ_{P} (121.4 MHz; CDCl_3 , H_3PO_4) 2.2; HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $\text{C}_{33}\text{H}_{30}\text{ClNOP}$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 522.1748, found 522.1748.

To a solution of iminophosphorane **27** (0.8 g, 1.5 mmol) in anhydrous dichloromethane (15 mL) a solution of diphenylketene (0.24 g, 1.5 mmol) in the same solvent (5 mL) was added. The reaction mixture was stirred at room temperature under nitrogen for 30 min. Next the solvent was removed under reduced pressure and the resulting material was purified by column chromatography on silica gel, using hexanes/diethyl ether (9.5:0.5; v/v) as eluent, to provide the ketenimine **28** (81% yield).

A solution of the ketenimine **28** (0.33 g, 0.75 mmol) in anhydrous *ortho*-xylene (20 mL) was heated at reflux temperature under nitrogen for 3 h. After cooling, the solvent was removed under reduced pressure and the resulting material was purified by column chromatography on silica gel, using hexanes/diethyl ether (9:1, v/v) as eluent.

4-Chloro-2-[1-(4-methoxyphenyl)vinyl]-*N*-(2,2-diphenylvinyl)aniline 30. Yield = 0.30 g, 91%; orange oil; ν_{max} (neat)/ cm^{-1} 1659 (vs), 1578 (s), 1554 (w), 1510 (vs), 1446 (s), 1408 (m), 1176 (s), 1030 (m), 837 (m), 702 (vs), 638 (vs); δ_{H} (300 MHz; CDCl_3) 3.79 (3 H, s), 5.07 (1 H, d, J 0.9), 5.53 (1 H, d, J 0.9), 6.10 (1 H, d, J 12.0), 6.71-6.75 (2 H, m), 6.88-6.96 (3 H, m), 6.99-7.04 (2 H, m), 7.08-7.13 (3 H, m), 7.18-7.25 (7 H, m), 7.29-7.38 (1 H, m); δ_{C} (75 MHz; CDCl_3) 55.3, 112.7, 114.1, 115.4, 118.4 (s), 123.9, 124.0 (s), 125.6, 126.2, 126.8, 127.6, 128.3, 128.8, 129.0, 129.8, 130.5, 130.7 (s), 137.9 (s), 138.7 (s), 141.6 (s), 144.5 (s), 159.8 (s); HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $\text{C}_{29}\text{H}_{25}\text{ClNO}$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 438.1619, found 438.1619.

Preparation of 3,4-dihydroquinolines **34**

To a solution of the azide **31** (2.2 g, 10 mmol) in anhydrous diethyl ether (20 mL) triphenylphosphine (2.75 g, 10 mmol) was added in five portions. The reaction mixture was stirred at room temperature under nitrogen for 16 h. Then, the precipitated 1-phenylmethyl-2-triphenylphosphoranylideneaminobenzene **32** was isolated by filtration and washed with anhydrous diethyl ether (15 mL).

This compound was used in the following step without further purification.

For an analytical sample this iminophosphorane was recrystallized from diethyl ether.

1-Phenylmethyl-2-triphenylphosphoranylideneaminobenzene 32. Yield = 4.26 g, 96%; mp 114-116 °C (colourless prisms from diethyl ether); ν_{\max} (Nujol)/ cm^{-1} 1587 (s), 1445 (vs), 1377 (s), 1309 (s), 1259 (m), 1180 (w), 1157 (w), 1107 (vs), 1072 (w), 1053 (m), 1022 (m), 999 (w), 748 (s), 715 (vs), 700 (vs); δ_{H} (400 MHz; CDCl_3) 4.37 (2 H, s), 6.57 (1 H, d, J 7.6), 6.67 (1 H, t, J 7.6), 6.84 (1 H, t, J 7.6), 7.06 (1 H, d, J 7.6), 7.15-7.18 (1 H, m), 7.22-7.26 (2 H, m), 7.31-7.33 (2 H, m), 7.43-7.47 (6 H, m), 7.52-7.56 (3 H, m), 7.73-7.78 (6 H, m); δ_{C} (100 MHz; CDCl_3) 38.6, 117.4, 121.1 (d, J 9.7), 125.2, 126.3, 128.0, 128.5 (d, J 11.9), 129.2, 130.0 (d, J 1.7), 131.5 (d, J 97.4) (s), 131.6 (d, J 2.6), 132.6 (d, J 9.7), 135.6 (d, J 21.9) (s), 142.9 (s), 149.1 (s); δ_{P} (161.9 MHz; CDCl_3 , H_3PO_4) 0.7; HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $\text{C}_{31}\text{H}_{27}\text{NP}$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 444.1876, found 444.1875.

To a solution of 1-phenylmethyl-2-triphenylphosphoranylideneaminobenzene **32** (0.5 g, 1.1 mmol) in anhydrous dichloromethane (15 mL) a solution of diphenylketene (1.1 mmol) or methylphenylketene (1.1 mmol) in the same solvent (5 mL) was added. The reaction mixture was stirred at room temperature under nitrogen for 30 min. Next the solvent was removed under reduced pressure and the resulting material was purified by column chromatography on silica gel, using hexanes/diethyl ether (9.5:0.5; v/v) as eluent, to provide ketenimine **33a** (91% yield) or ketenimine **33b** (70% yield), respectively.

A deoxygenated solution of ketenimine **33** (0.5 mmol) in anhydrous toluene (20 mL) was heated in a sealed tube at 160 °C during 36 h. After cooling, the solvent was removed under reduced pressure. The resulting material was purified by column chromatography on silica gel, using hexanes/diethyl ether (4:1) as eluent.

3,3,4-Triphenyl-3,4-dihydroquinoline 34a. Yield = 0.17 g, 97%; mp 192-194 °C (colourless prisms from diethyl ether); $\nu_{\max}(\text{Nujol})/\text{cm}^{-1}$ 1614 (s), 1595 (s), 1495 (vs), 1244 (w), 1180 (w), 1155 (w), 1103 (s), 1103 (s), 1034 (m), 972 (m), 908 (vs), 883 (w), 750 (vs), 735 (s), 698 (vs), 607 (s); $\delta_{\text{H}}(400 \text{ MHz}; \text{CDCl}_3)$ 4.75 (1 H, s), 6.56 (2 H, d, J 7.2), 6.76-6.78 (2 H, m), 6.92-7.00 (3 H, m), 7.03-7.06 (3 H, m), 7.21-7.23 (4 H, m), 7.25-7.29 (2 H, m), 7.30-7.34 (2 H, m), 7.45 (1 H, d, J 7.2), 8.54 (1 H, s); $\delta_{\text{C}}(100 \text{ MHz}; \text{CDCl}_3)$ 50.8, 54.2 (s), 126.3, 126.4, 127.0, 127.6, 127.7, 127.8, 127.9, 128.2, 128.4, 128.5, 128.9, 129.1, 130.1 (s), 139.6 (s), 141.8 (s), 143.1 (s), 144.3 (s), 165.5; HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $\text{C}_{27}\text{H}_{22}\text{N}$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 360.1747, found 360.1751.

3-Methyl-3,4-diphenyl-3,4-dihydroquinoline 34b. Yield = 0.10 g, 70%; colorless oil; $\nu_{\max}(\text{neat})/\text{cm}^{-1}$ 1622 (s), 1599 (s), 1494 (vs), 1477 (s), 1219 (w), 1106 (w), 1029 (m), 919 (w), 758 (vs), 732 (m), 698 (vs); $\delta_{\text{H}}(300 \text{ MHz}; \text{CDCl}_3)$ 1.30 (3 H, s, minor isomer), 1.62 (3 H, s, major isomer), 4.02 (1 H, s, major isomer), 4.28 (1 H, s, minor isomer), 6.47-6.49 (3 H, m), 6.89-7.36 (23 H, m), 7.49 (1 H, d, J 7.5, minor isomer), 7.56 (1 H, d, J 7.8, major isomer), 7.90 (1 H, s, minor isomer), 8.05 (1 H, s, major isomer); $\delta_{\text{C}}(75 \text{ MHz}; \text{CDCl}_3)$ 20.5 (minor isomer), 23.2 (major isomer), 45.4 (s, minor isomer), 46.3 (s, major isomer), 54.0 (minor isomer), 54.7 (major isomer), 126.6, 126.9, 127.0, 127.1, 127.3, 127.4, 127.6, 127.7, 127.89, 127.94, 128.0, 128.1, 128.4, 128.5, 128.8, 129.6, 129.8, 138.5 (s), 139.1 (s), 140.7 (s), 142.1 (s), 142.2 (s), 144.1 (s), 168.8; HRMS (ESI): Calcd for $\text{C}_{22}\text{H}_{20}\text{N}$ $[\text{M}+\text{H}]^+$ 298.1590, found 298.1594.

Figure S1: ORTEP representation of the crystal structure of **13e**

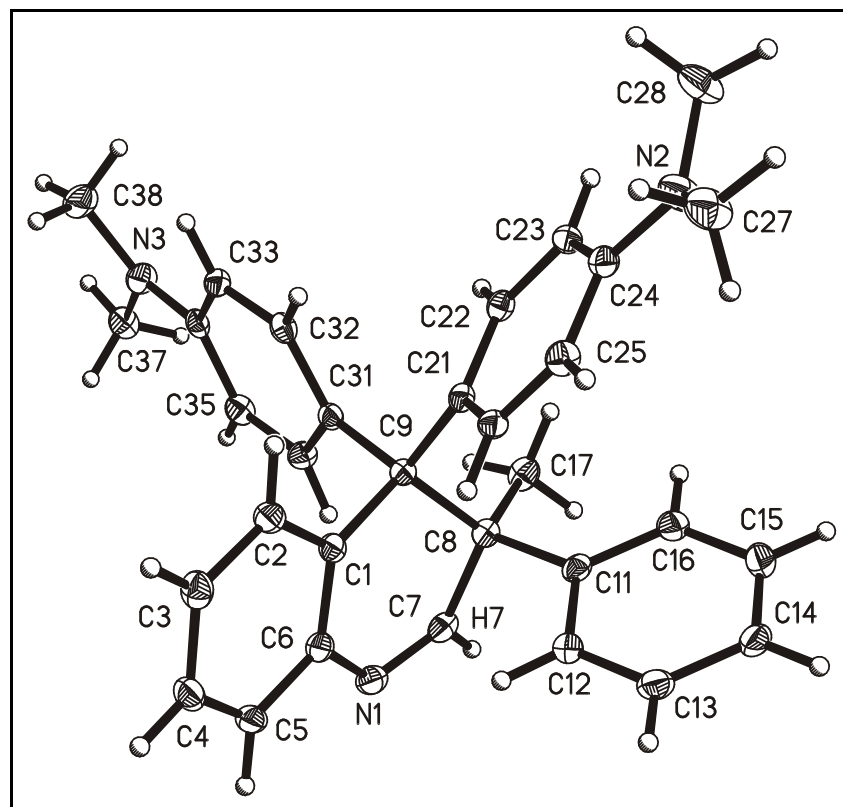


Figure S2: ORTEP representation of the crystal structure of **13k**

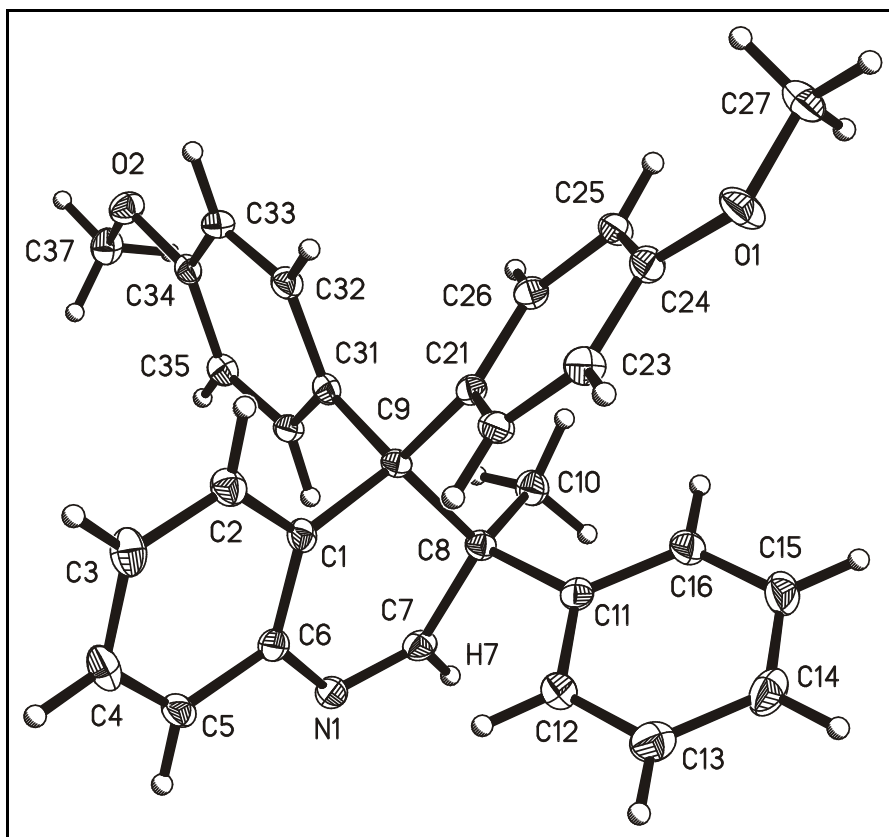


Figure S3: ORTEP representation of the crystal structure of **18a**

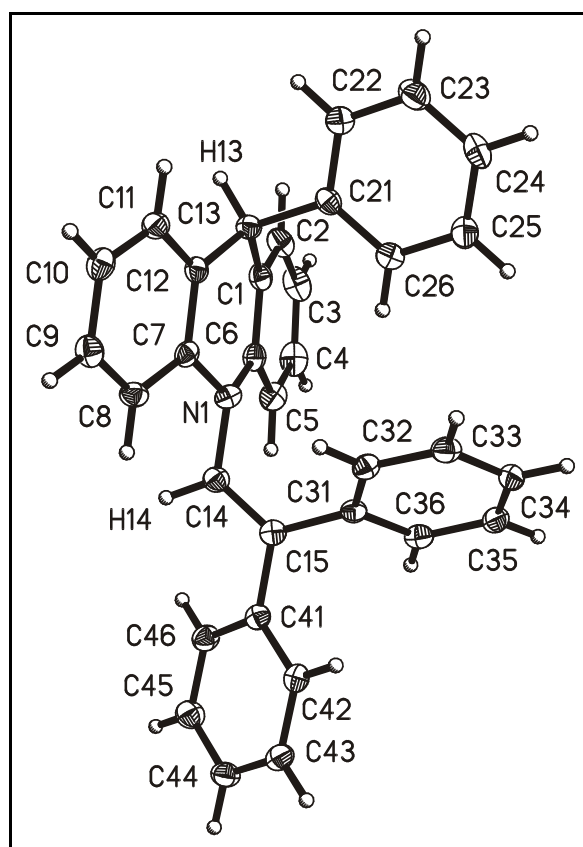
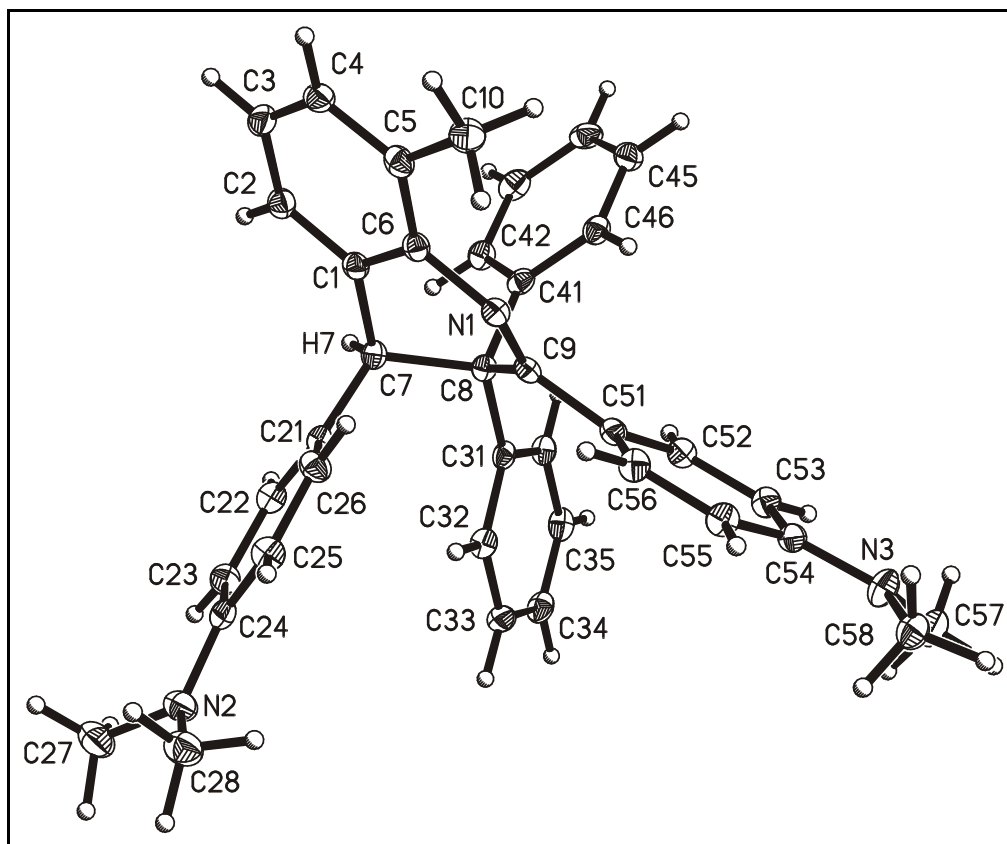


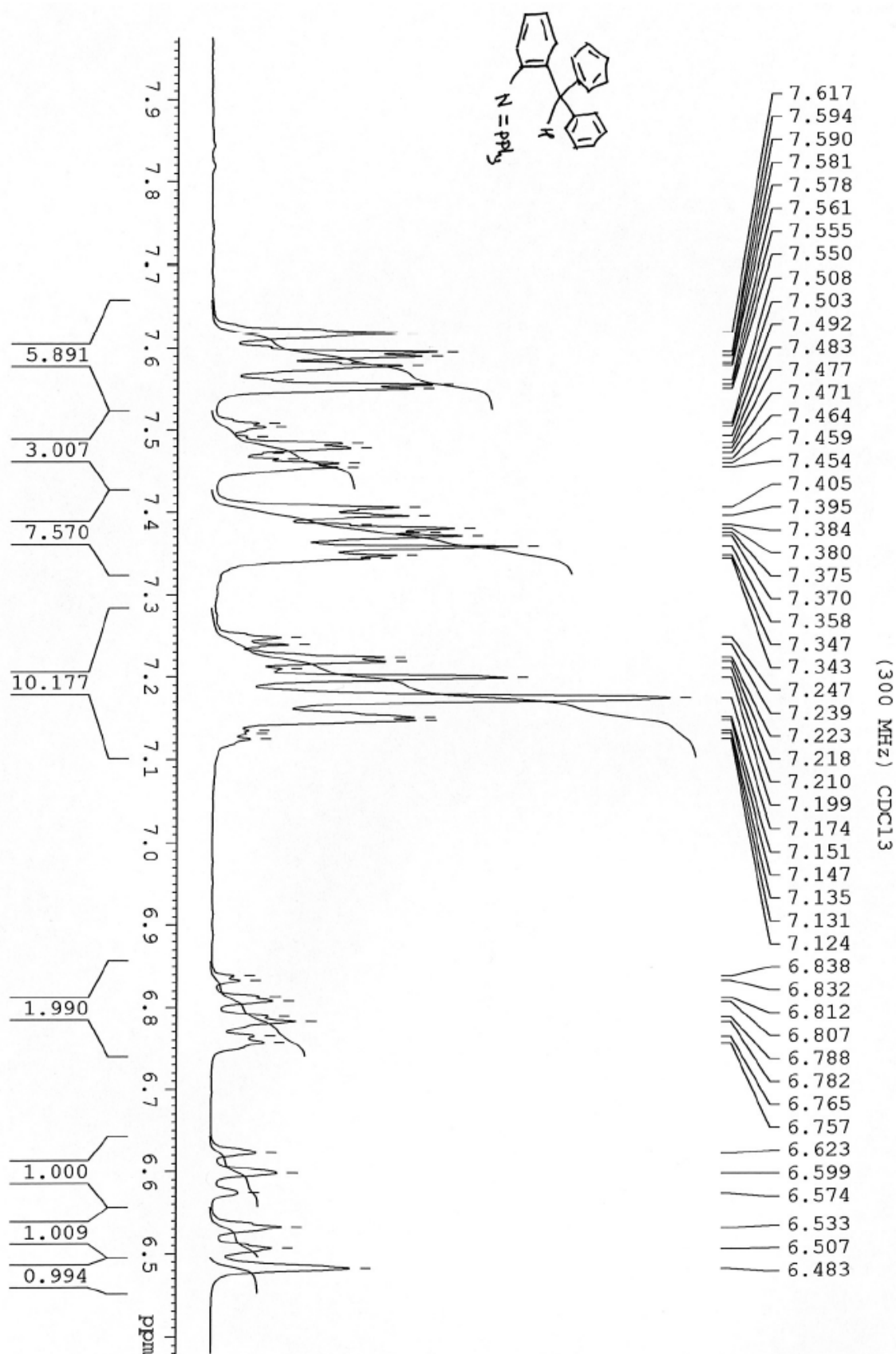
Figure S4: ORTEP representation of the crystal structure of **20b**



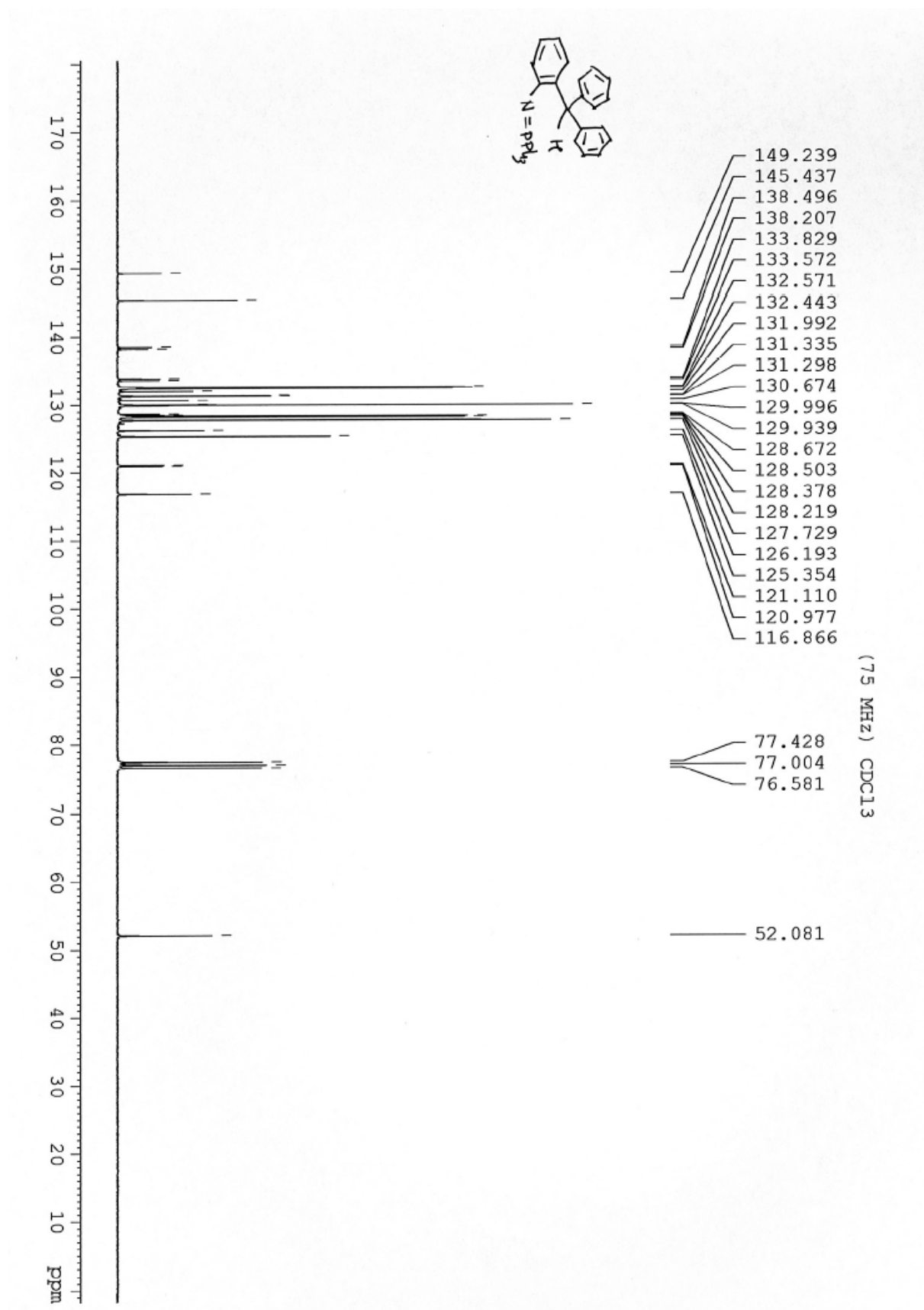
Copy of ^1H and ^{13}C NMR Spectra of Compounds 11, 13, 18, 20, 22, 25, 27, 30, 32 and 34.

Copy of ^{31}P NMR Spectra of Compounds 11, 27 and 32

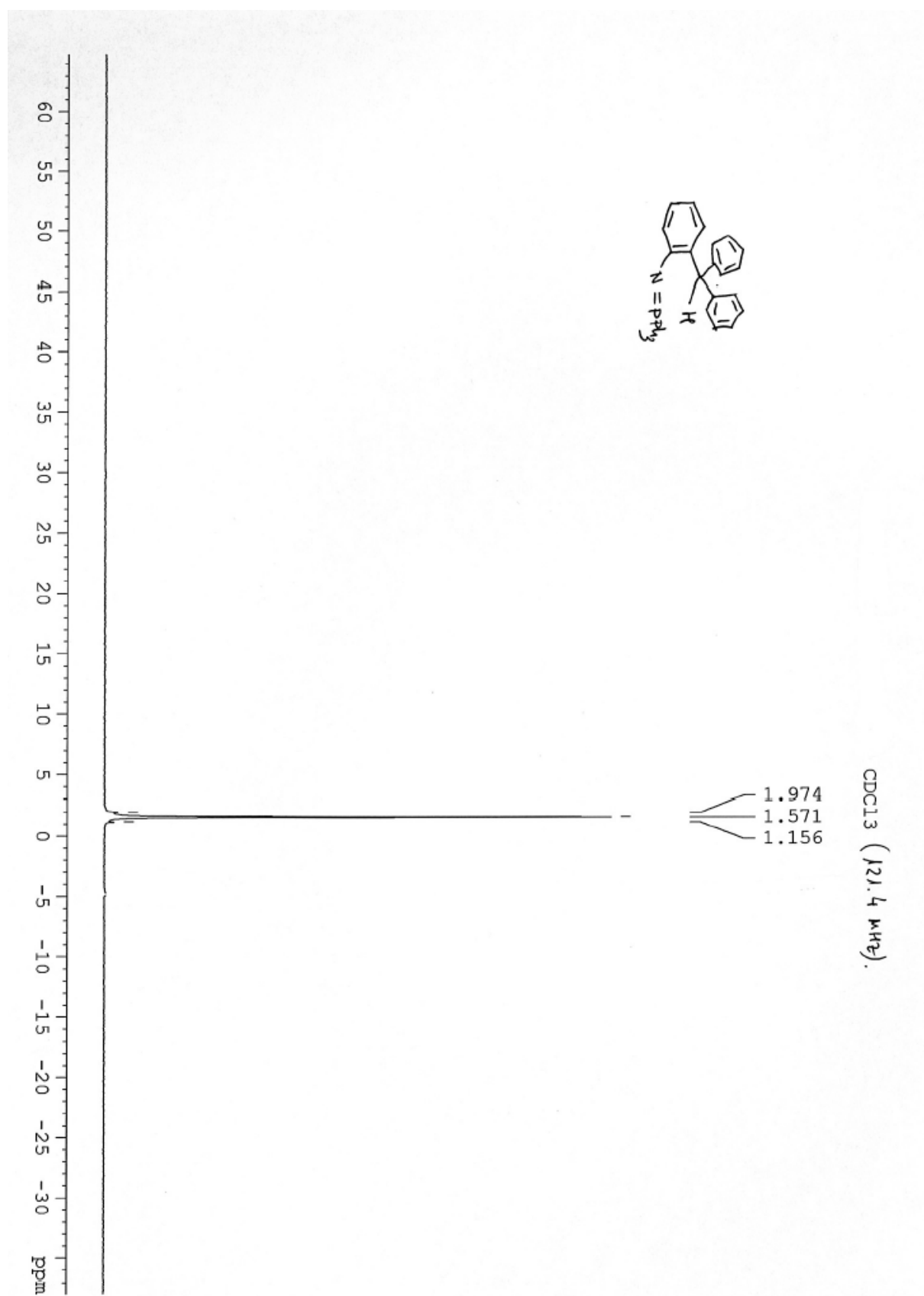
^1H NMR of 11a



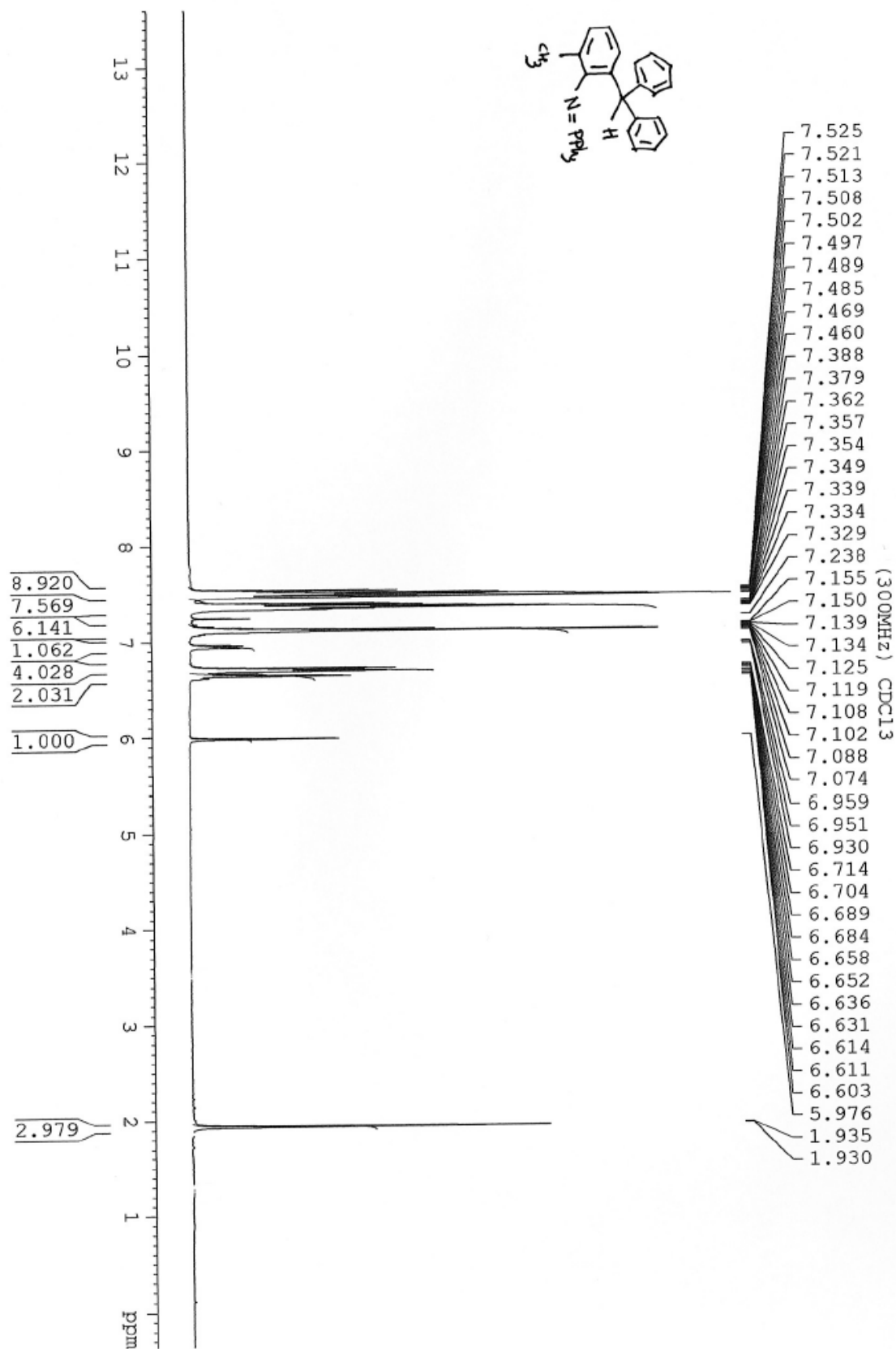
^{13}C NMR of **11a**



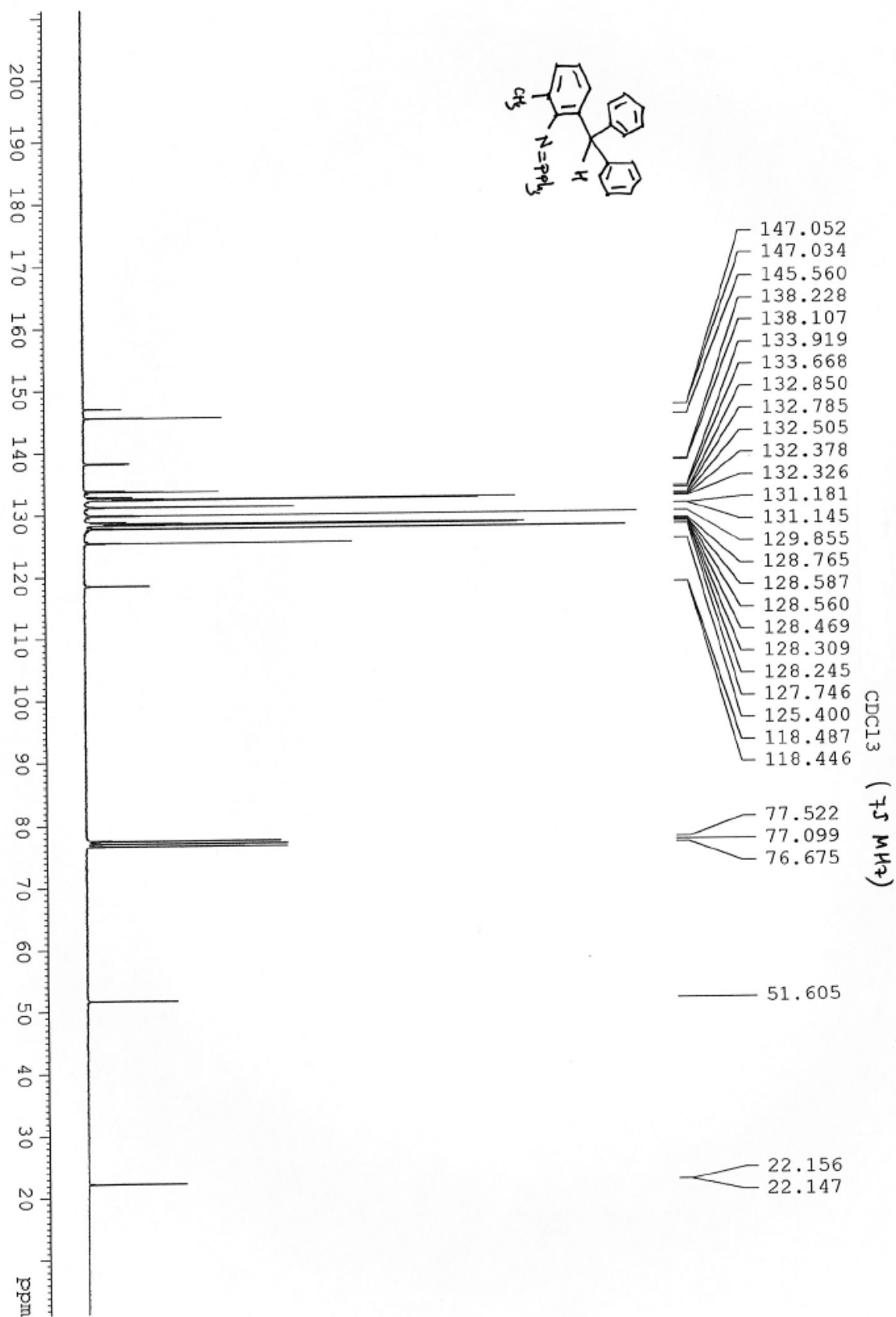
^{31}P NMR of **11a**



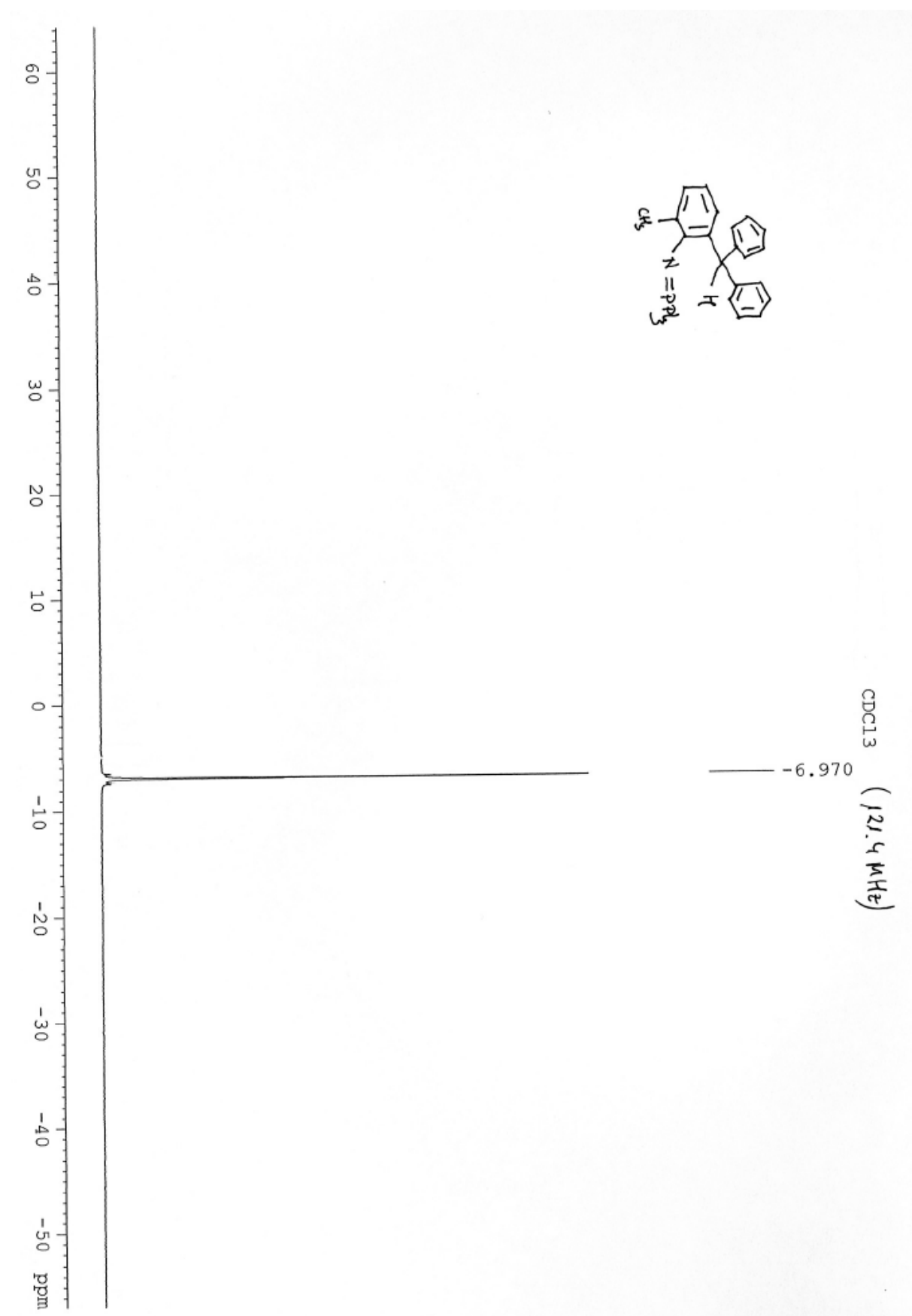
^1H NMR 11b



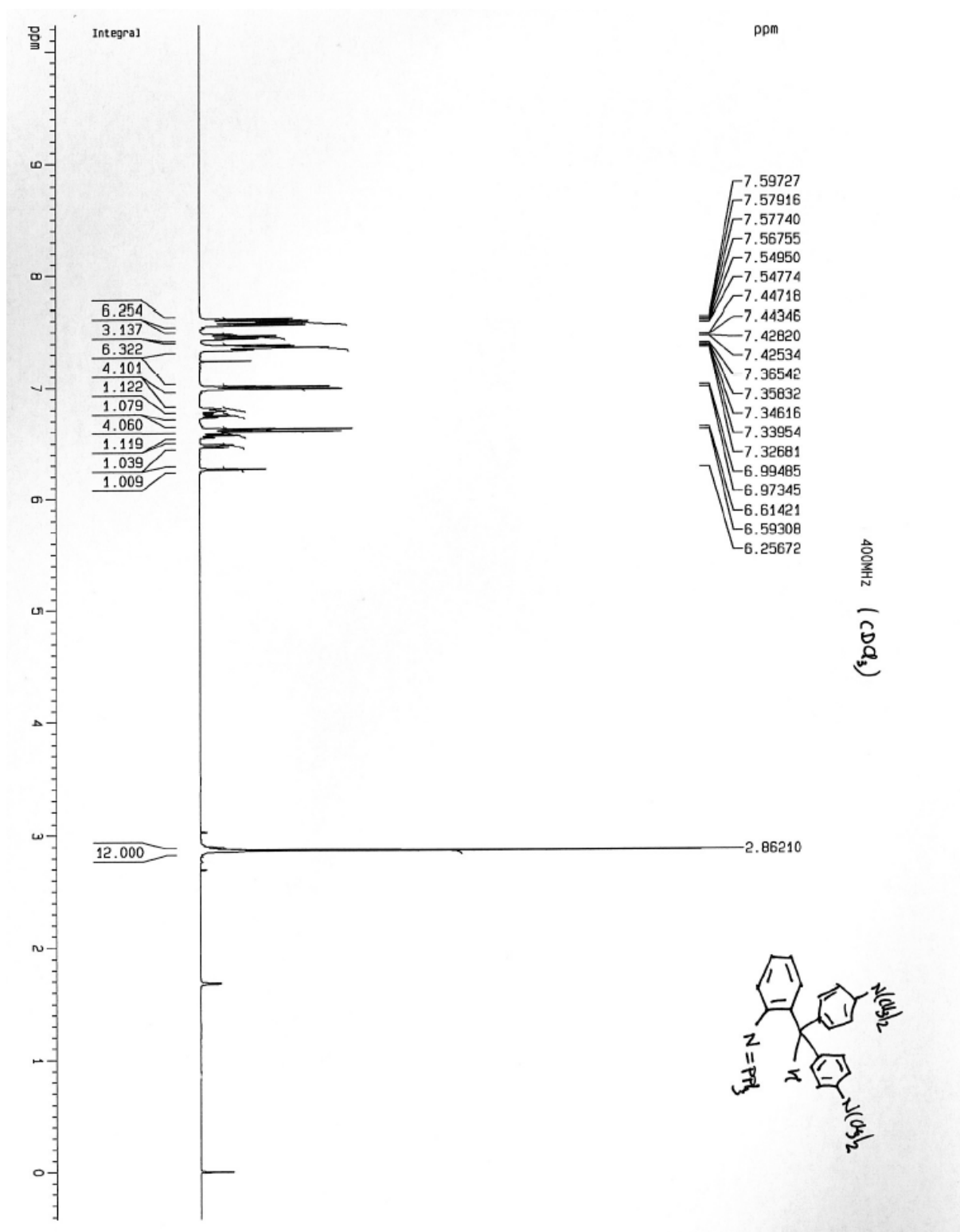
^{13}C NMR **11b**



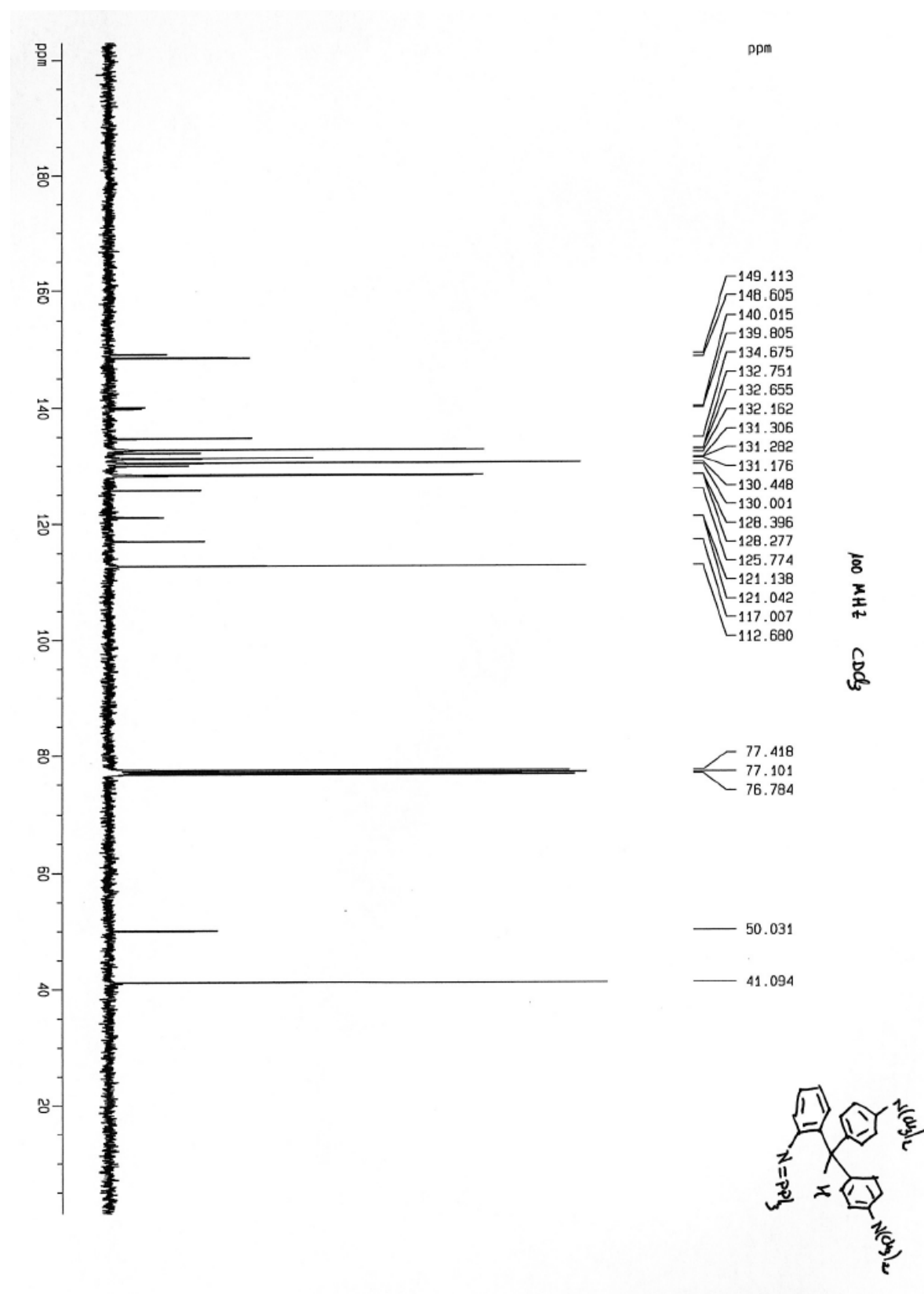
^{31}P NMR 11b



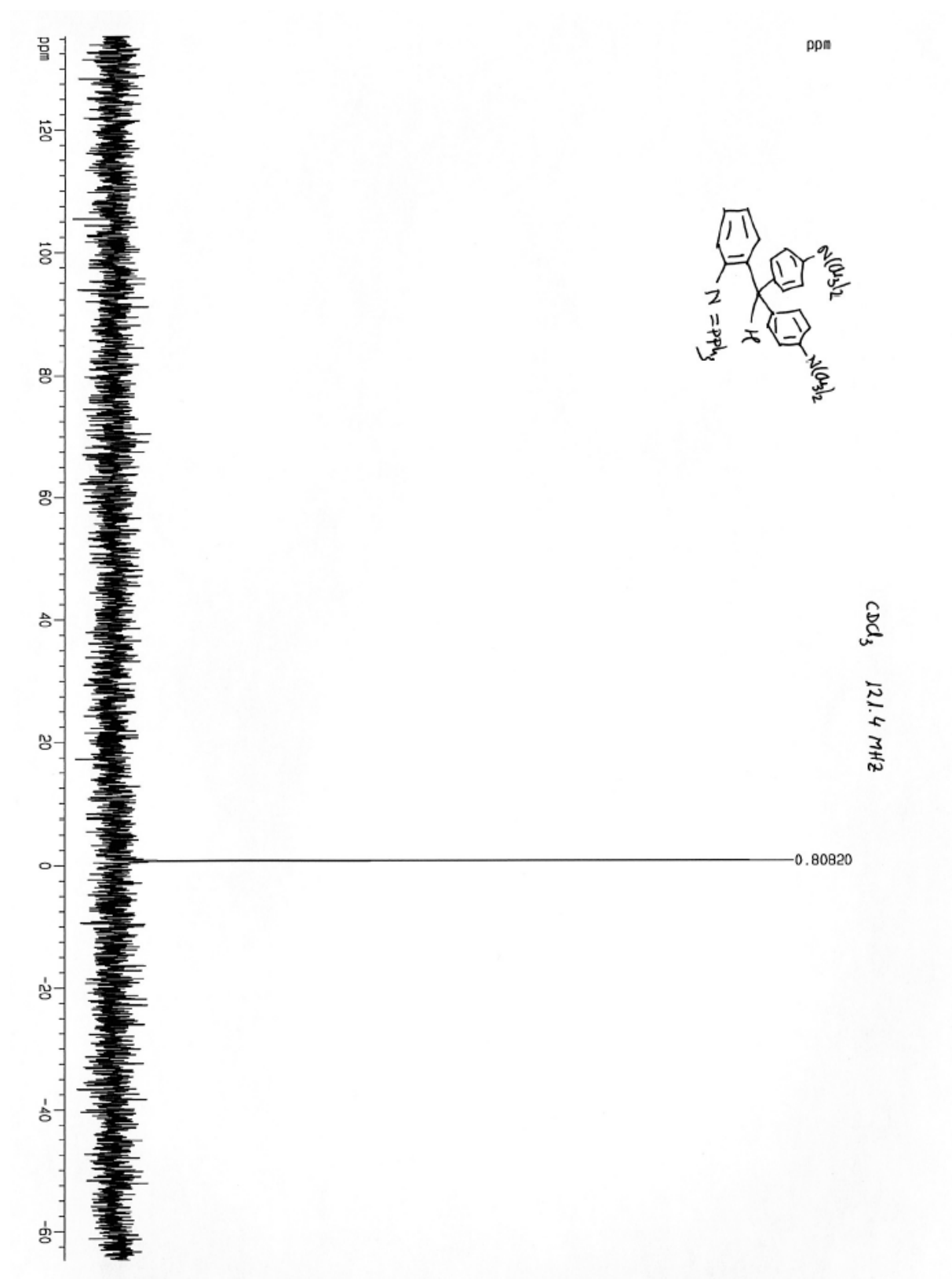
^1H NMR 11c



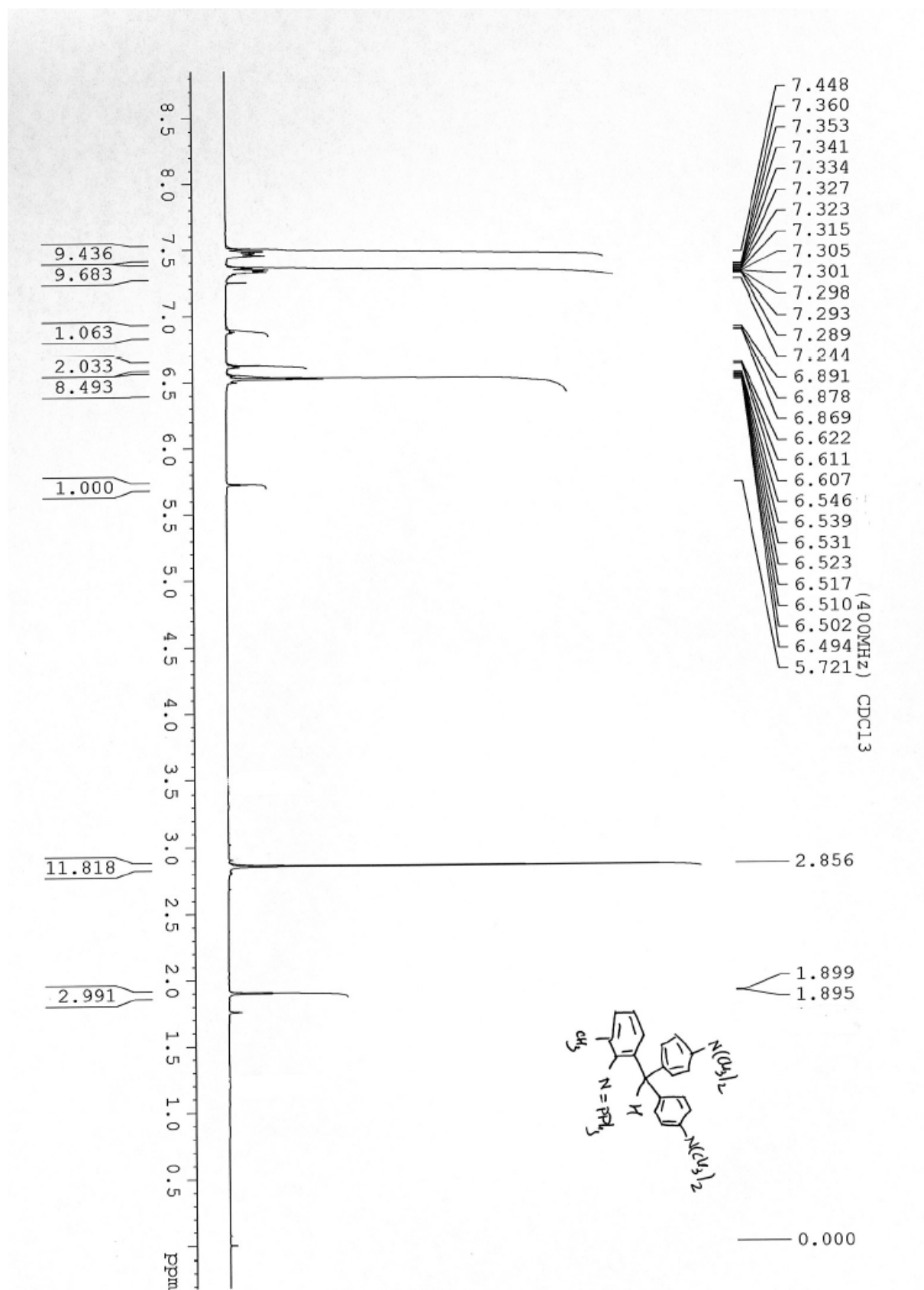
^{13}C NMR 11c



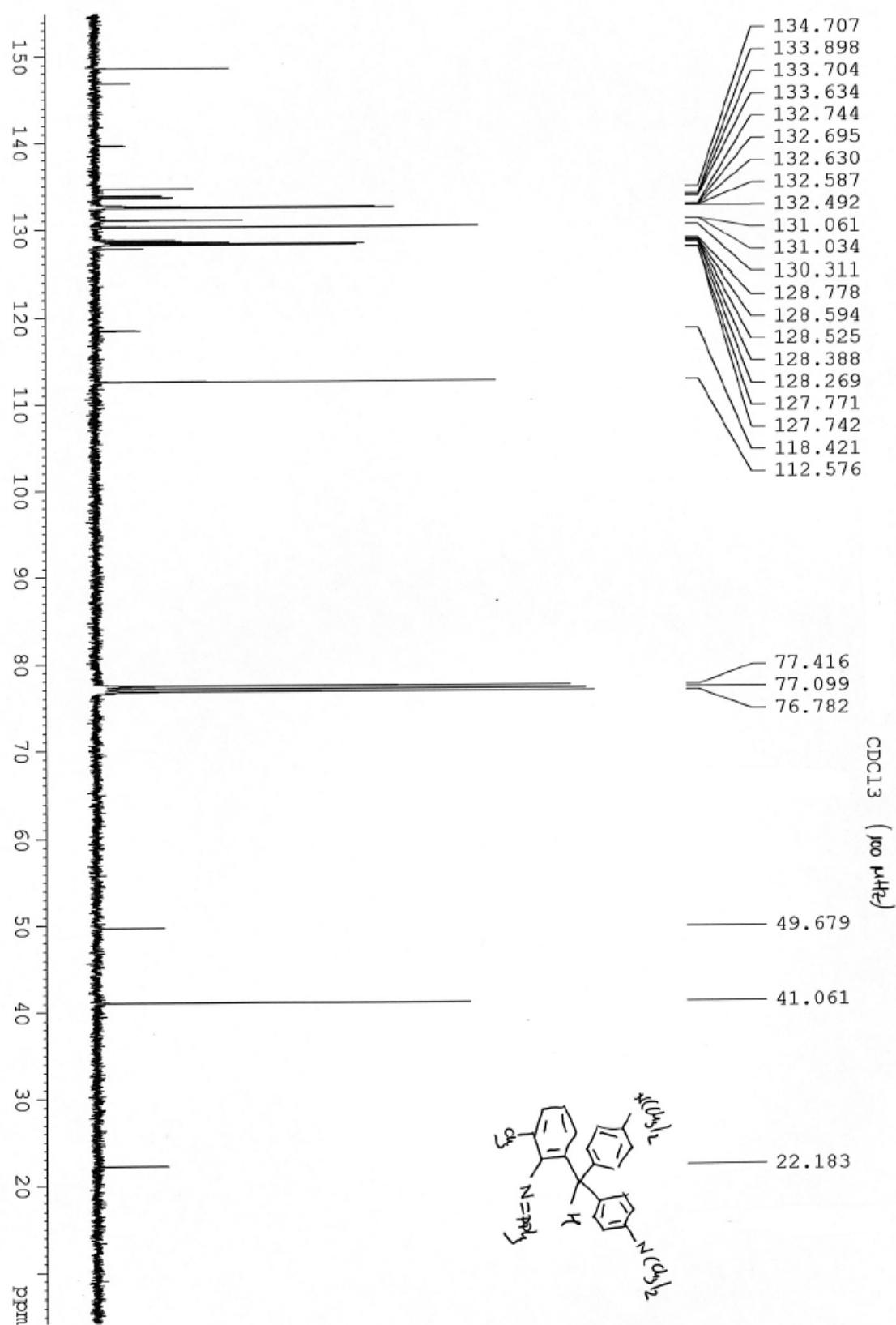
^{31}P NMR 11c



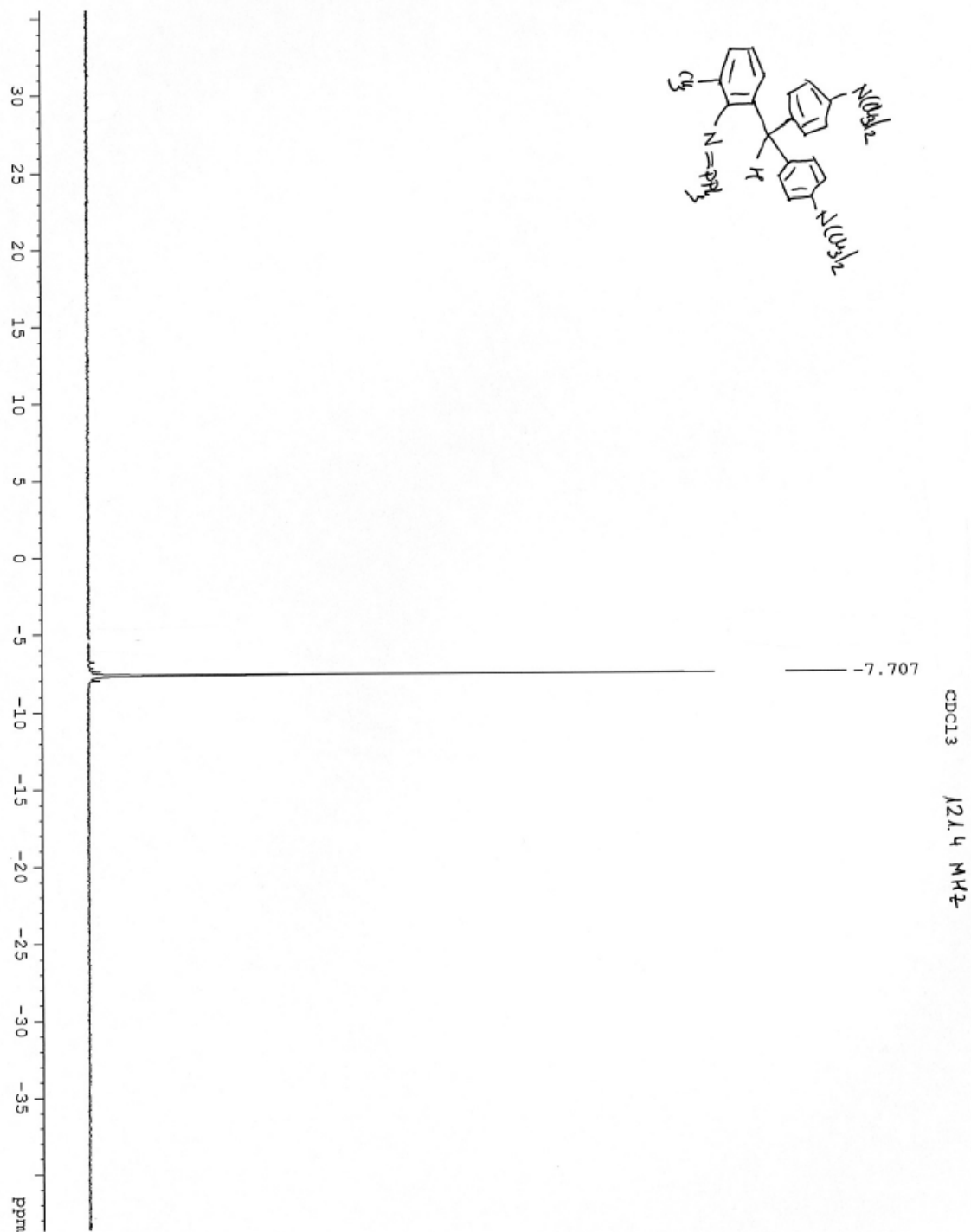
^1H NMR 11d



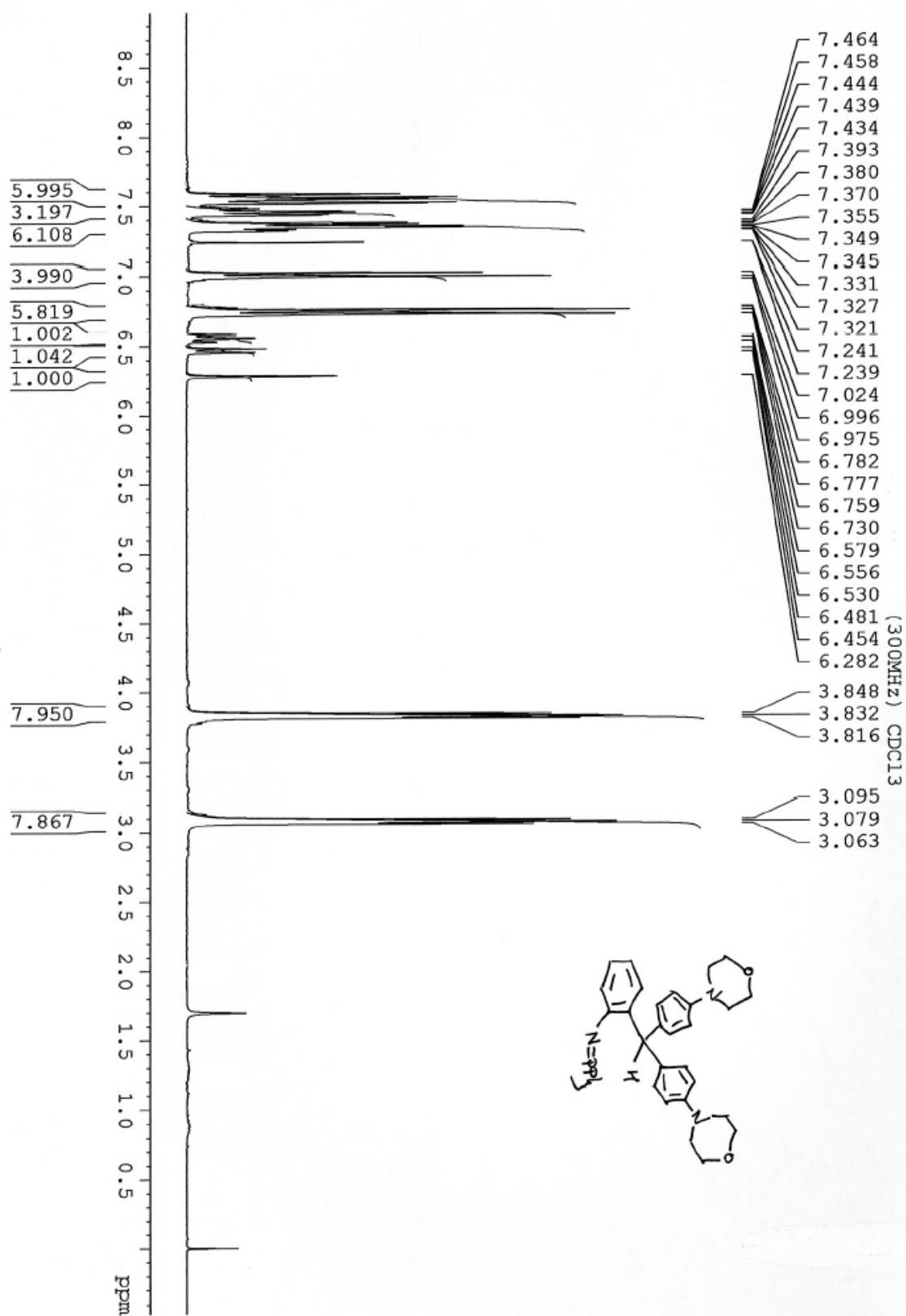
¹³C NMR 11d



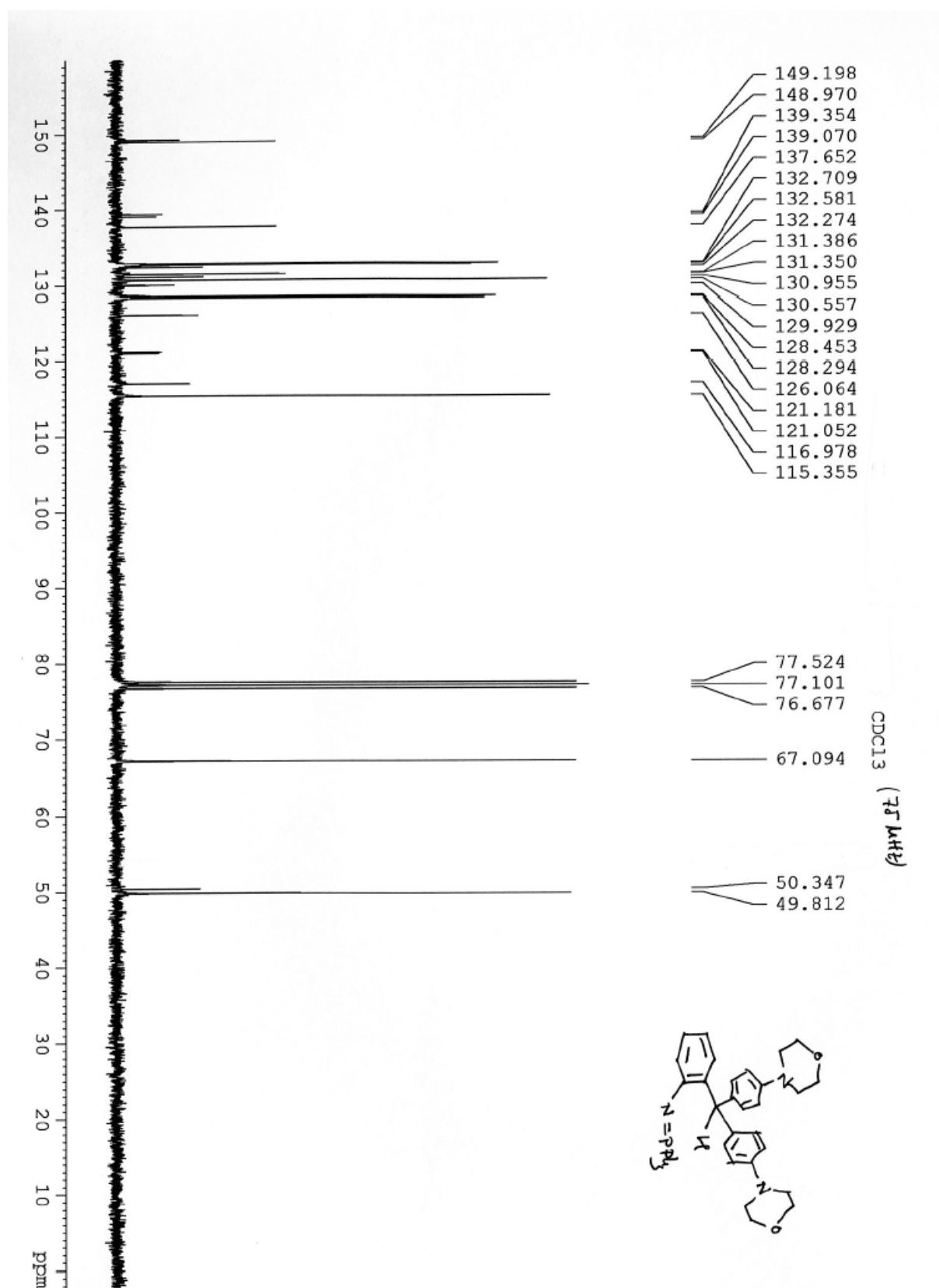
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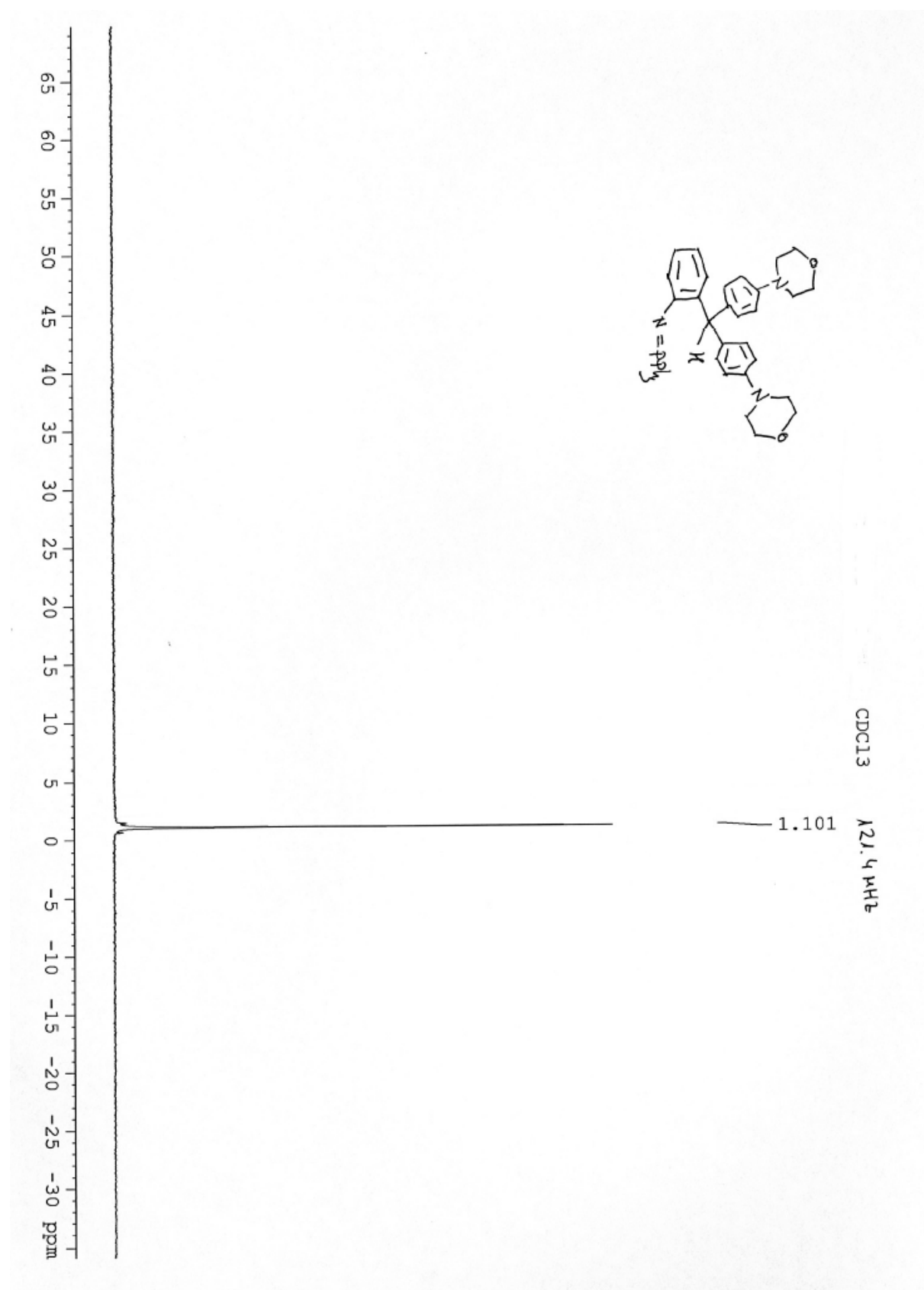
^1H NMR 11e



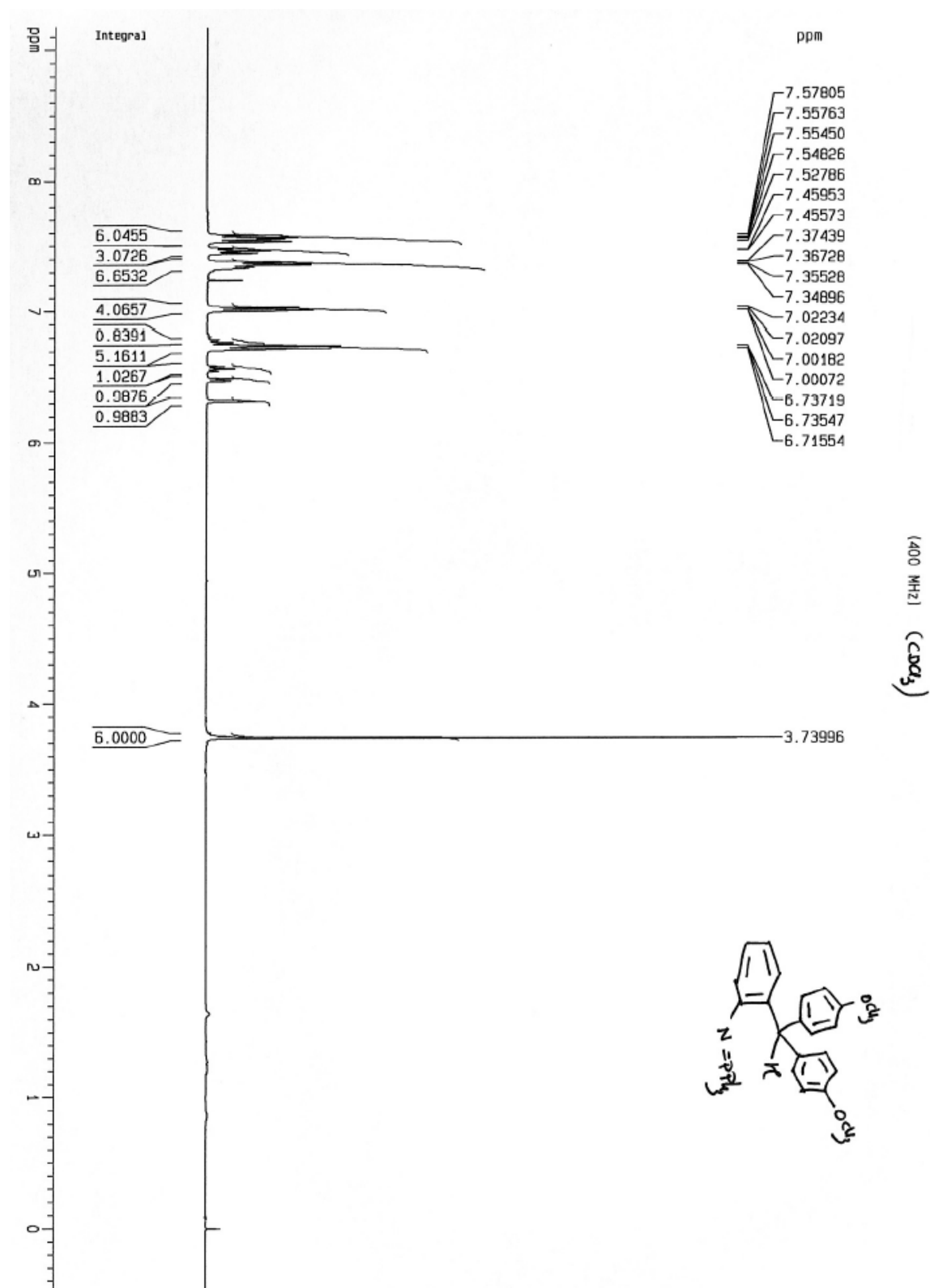
^{13}C NMR 11e



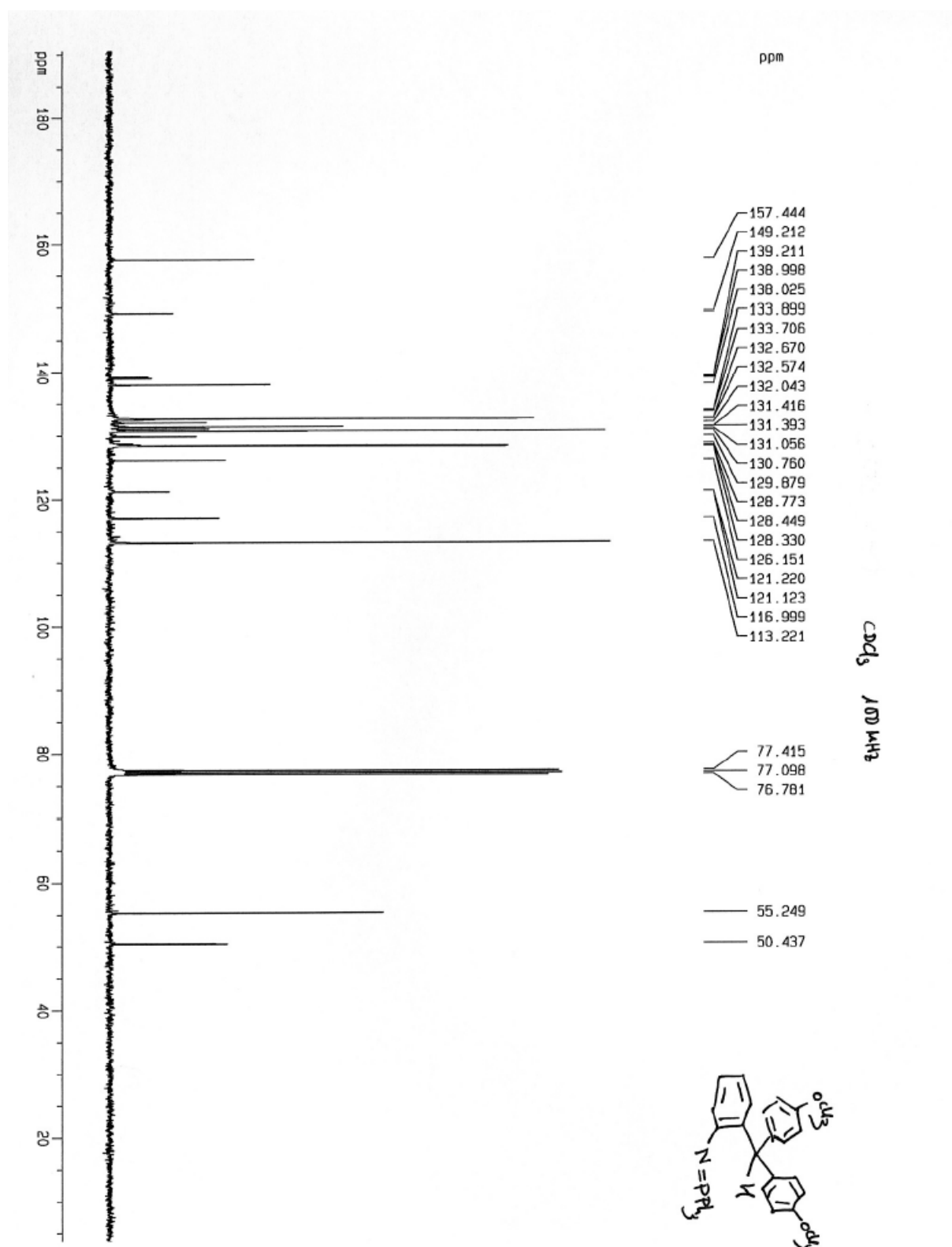
^{31}P NMR 11e



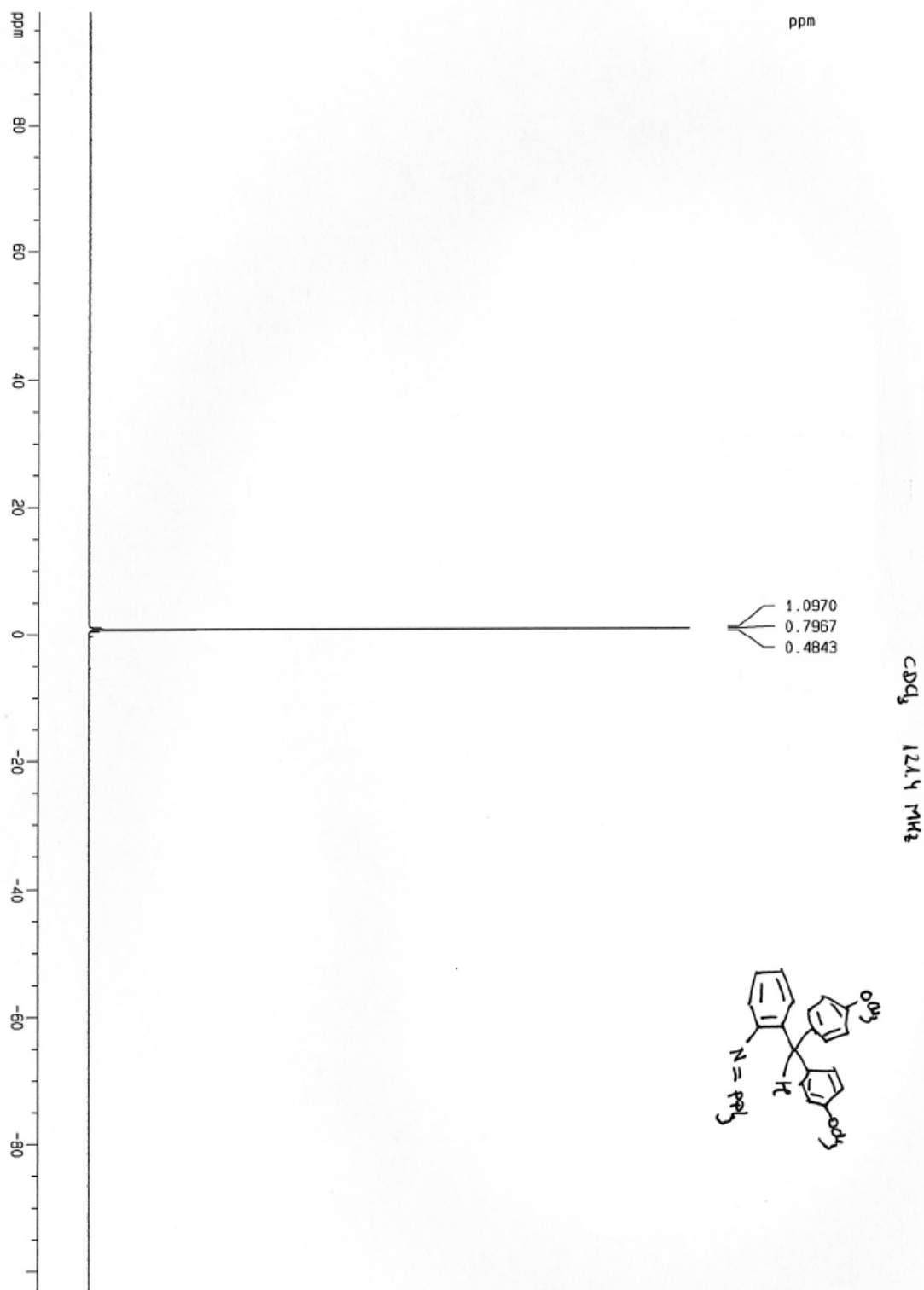
^1H NMR 11f



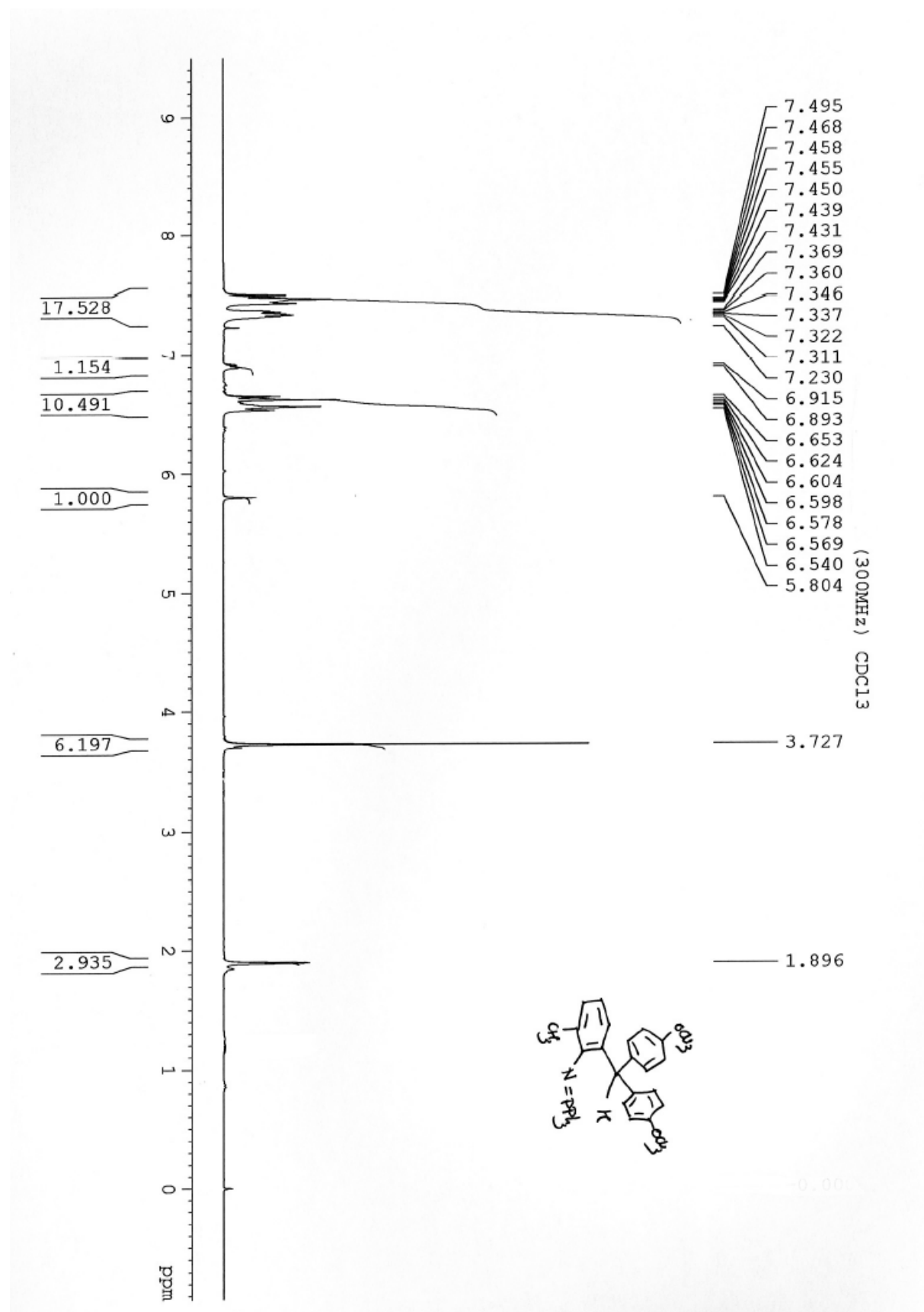
^{13}C NMR 11f



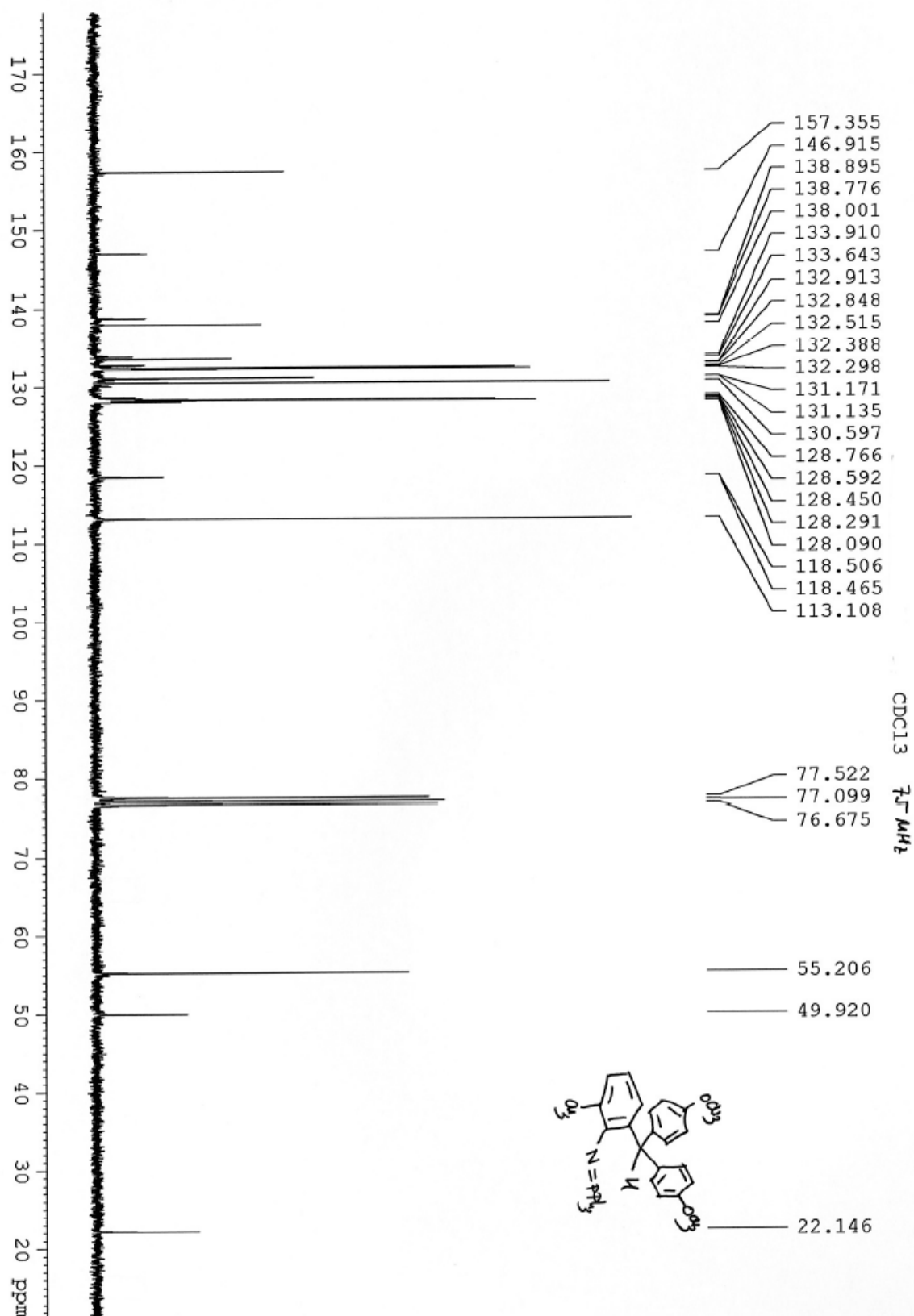
^{31}P NMR 11f



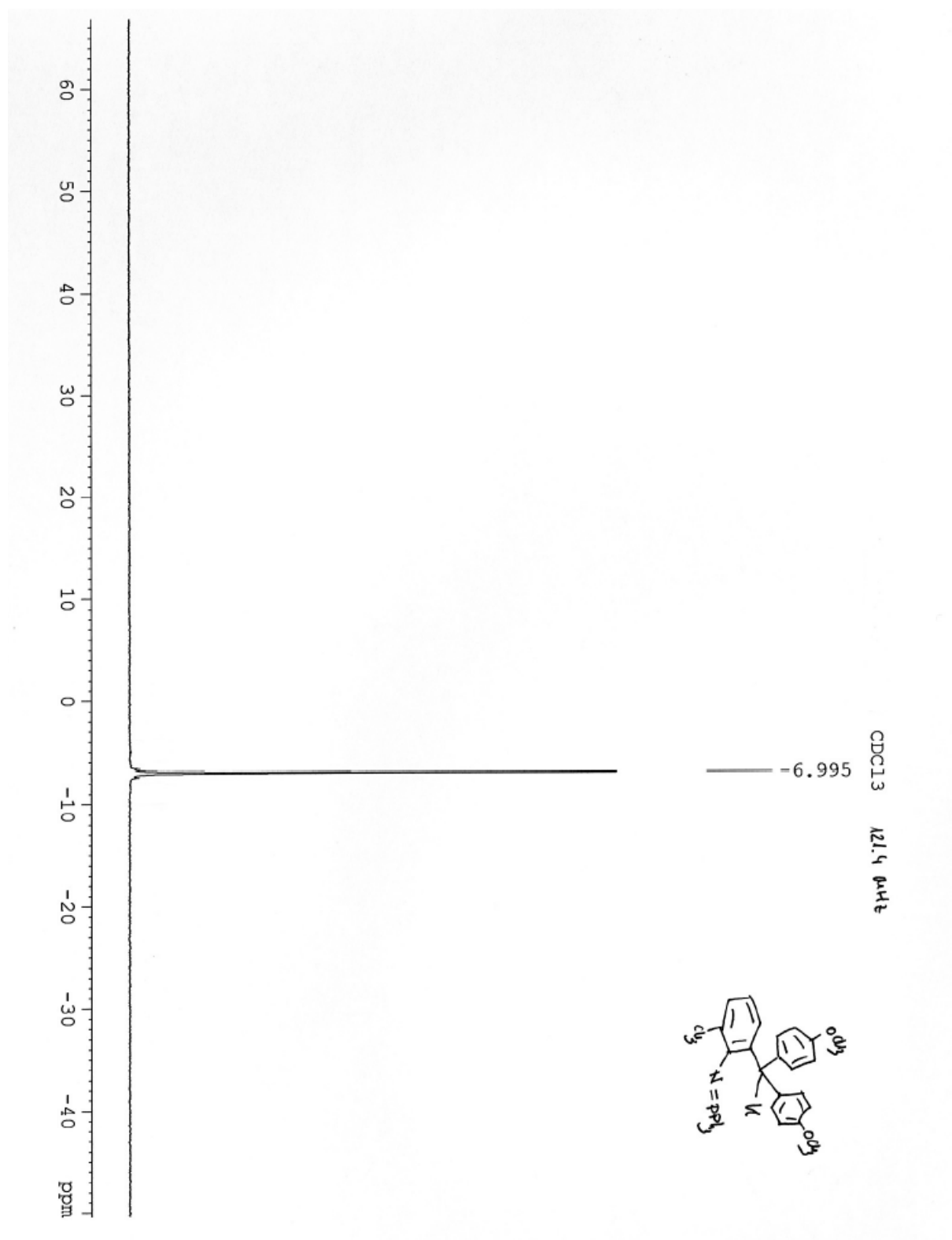
^1H NMR **11g**



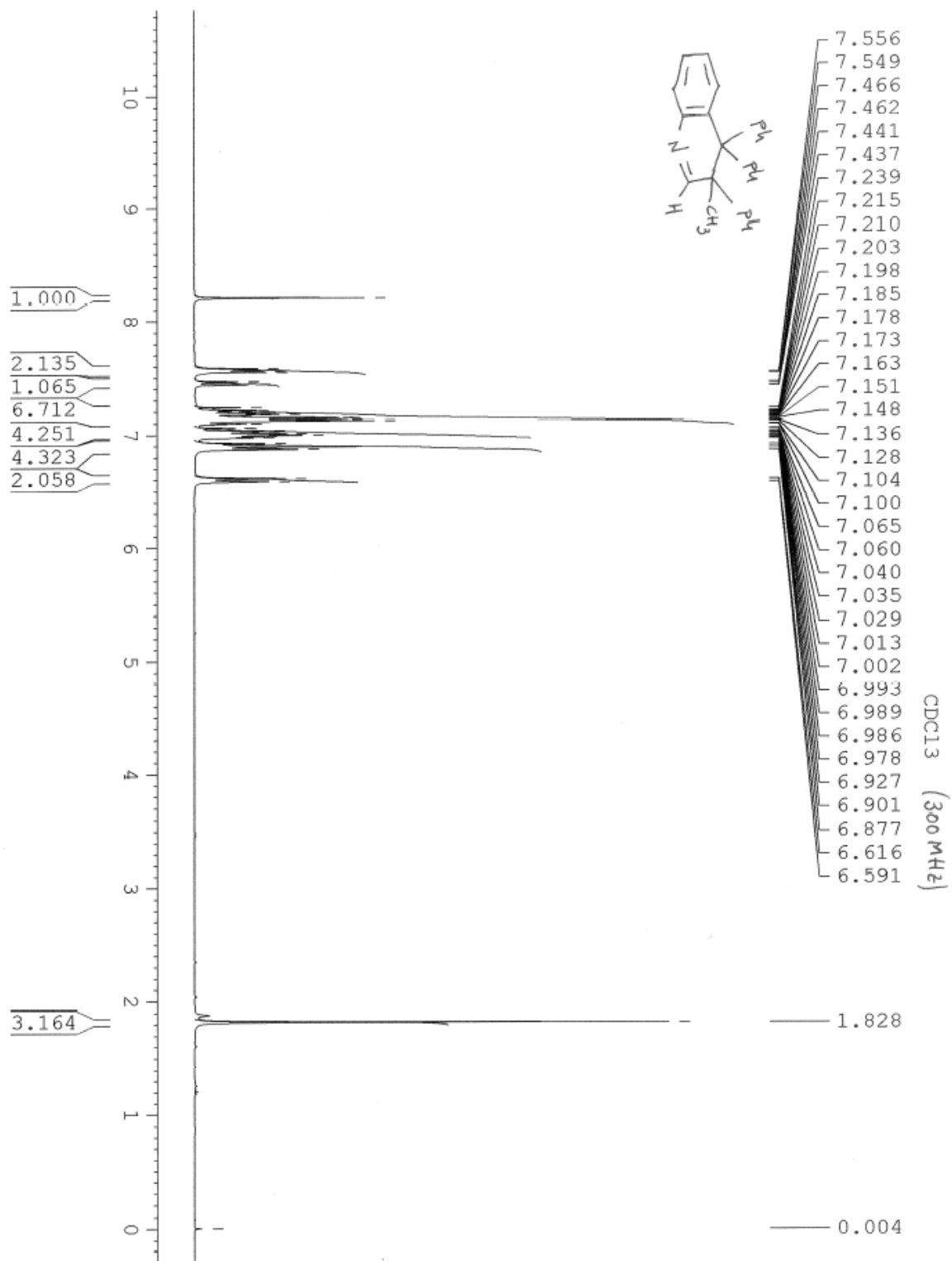
^{13}C NMR 11g



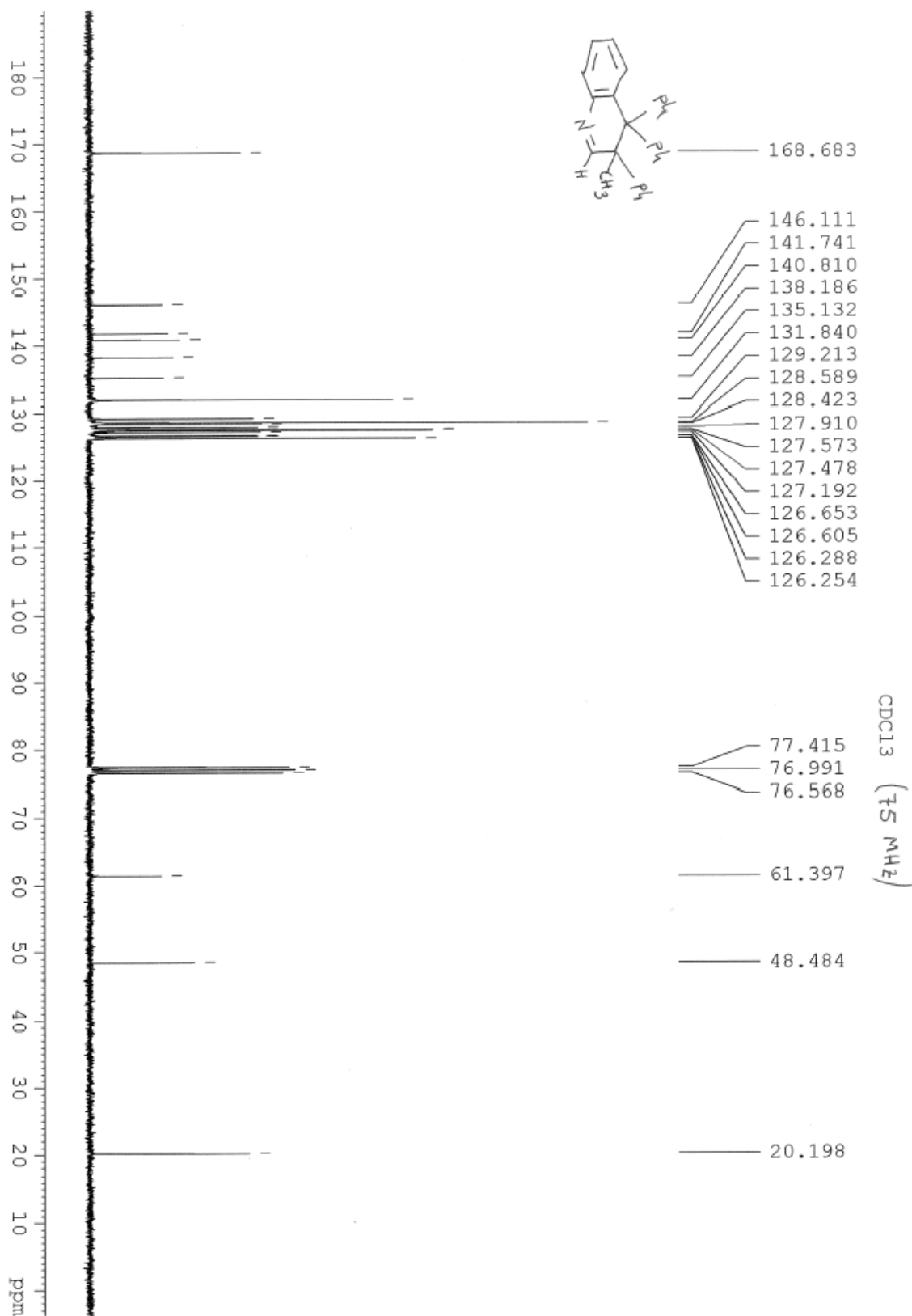
^{31}P NMR **11g**



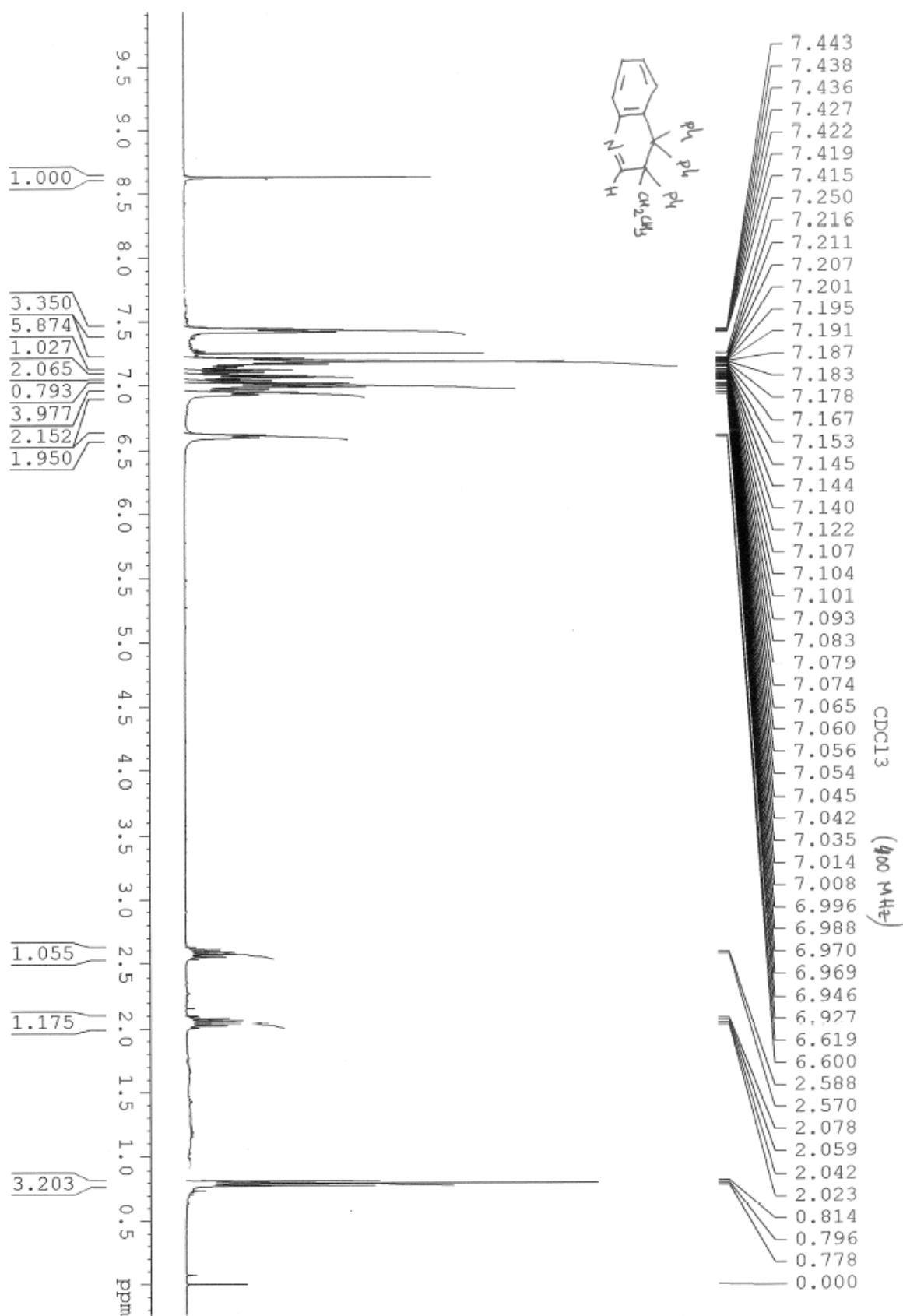
^1H NMR of **13a**



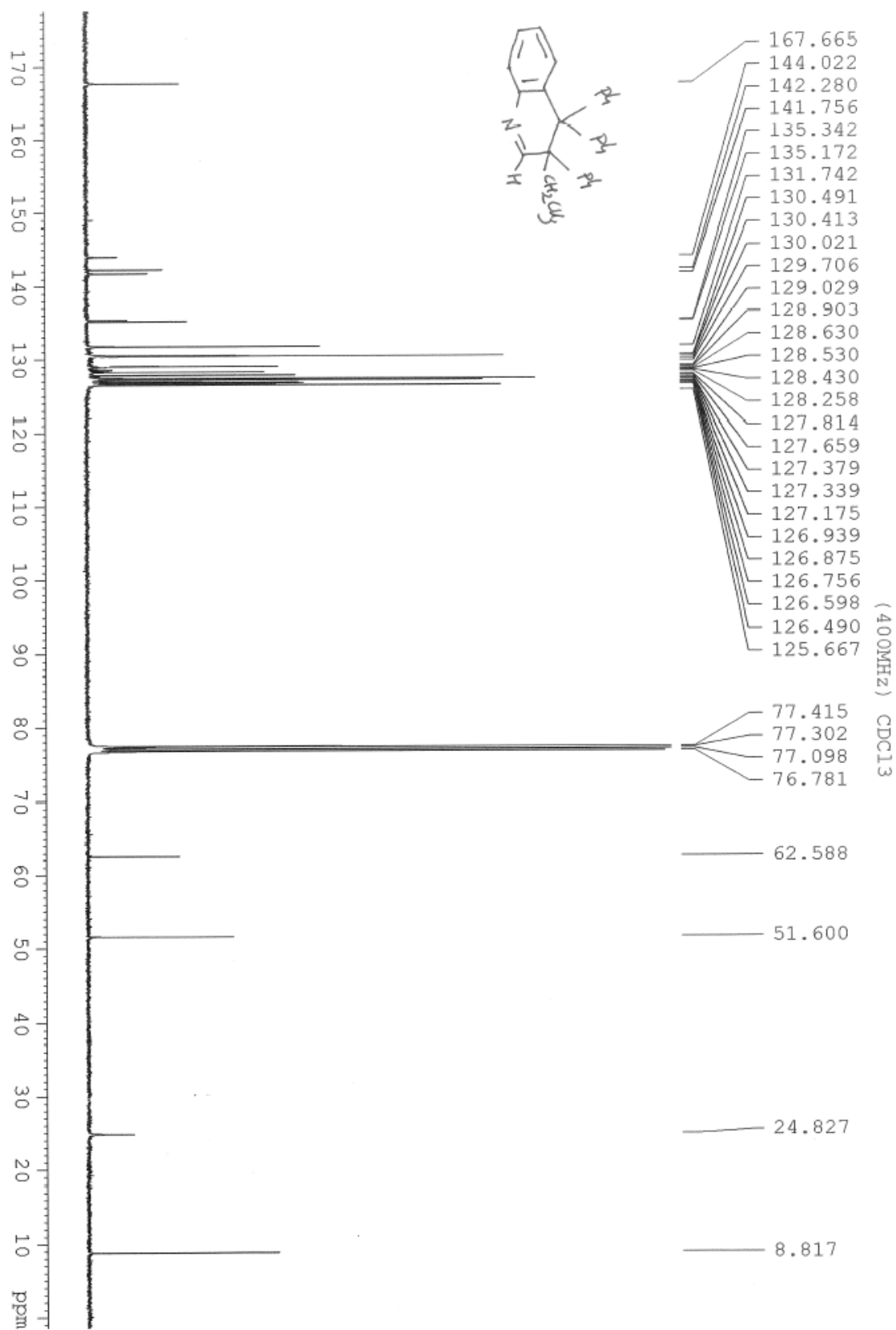
^{13}C NMR of **13a**



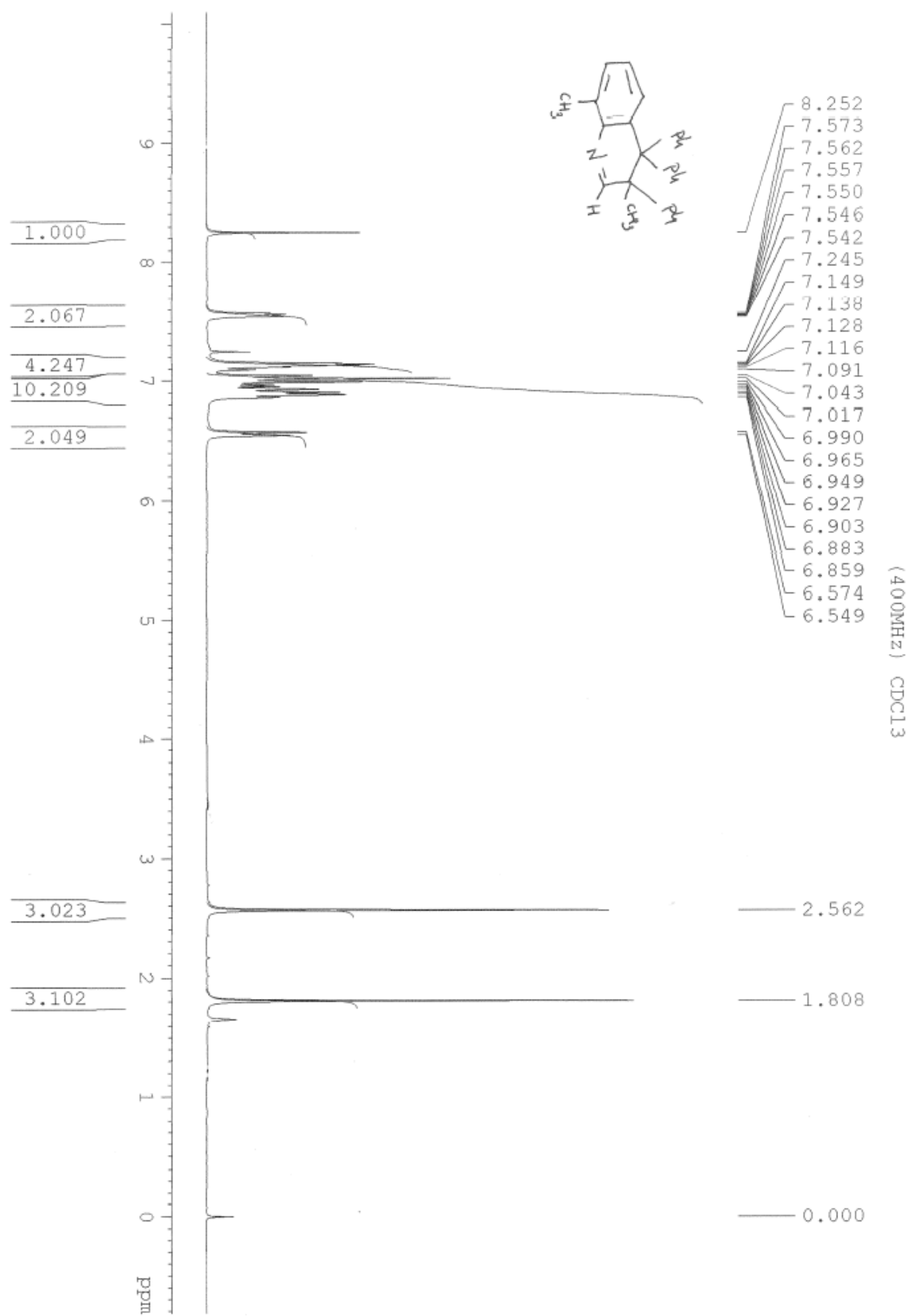
¹H NMR 13b



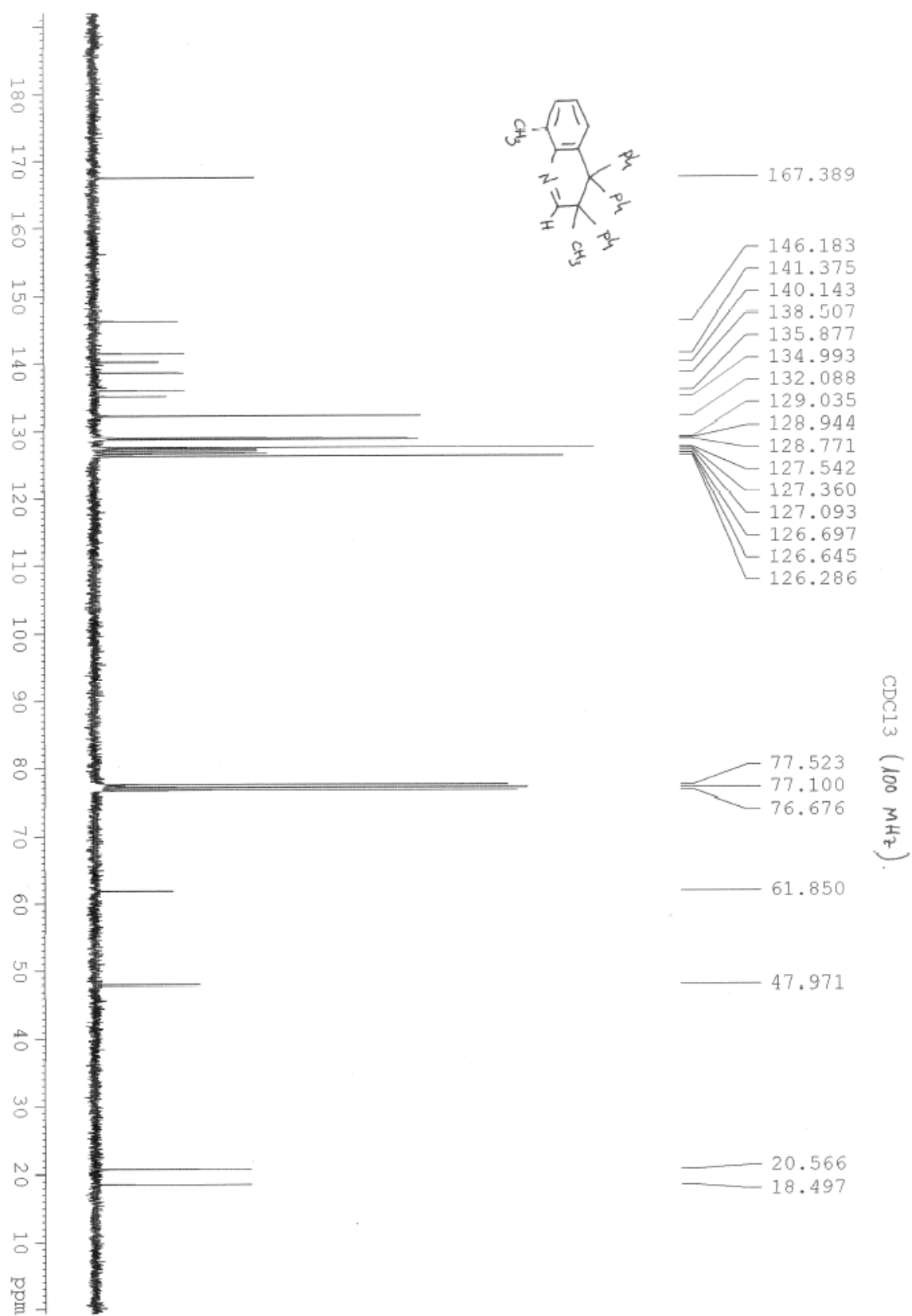
¹³C NMR 13b



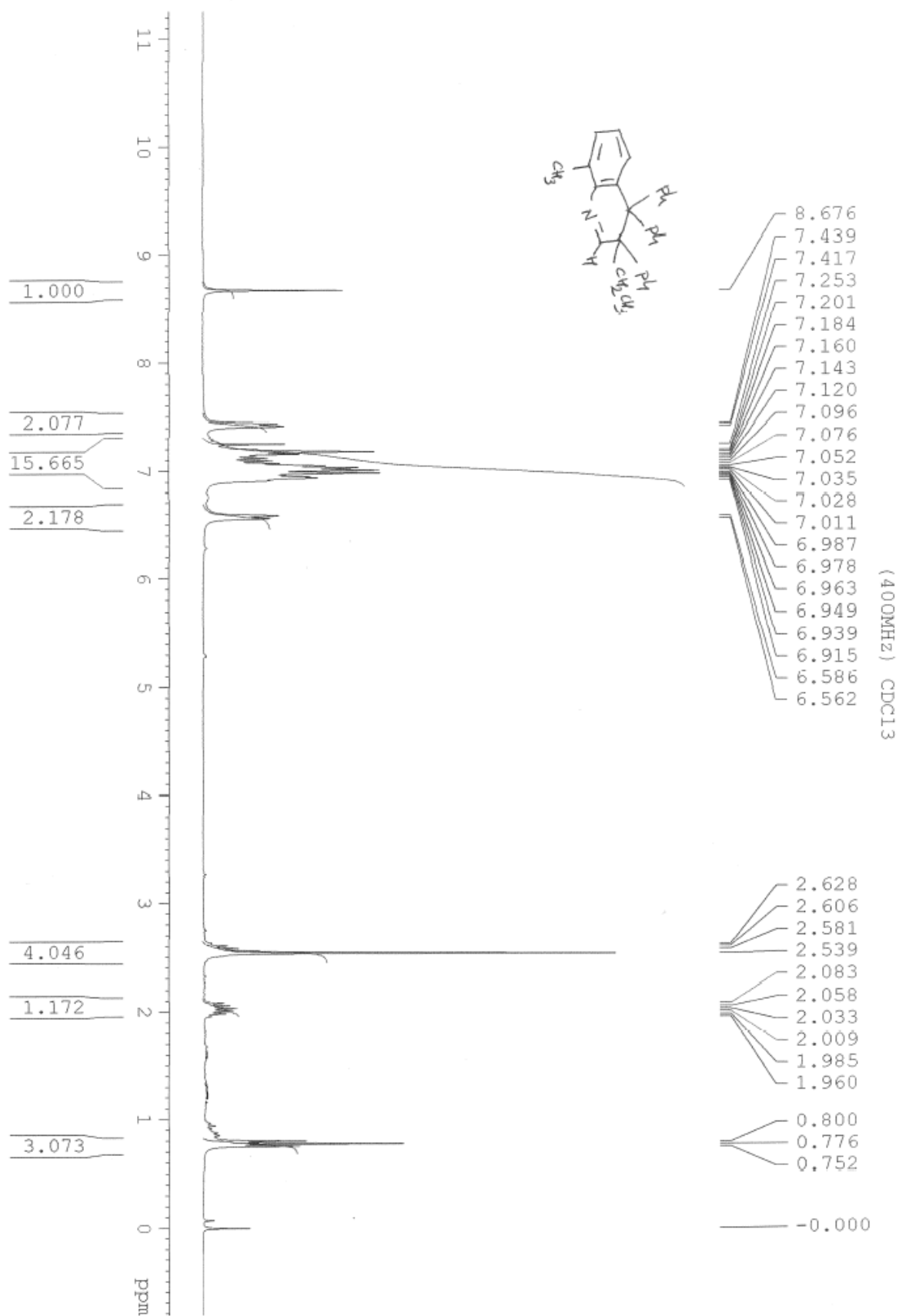
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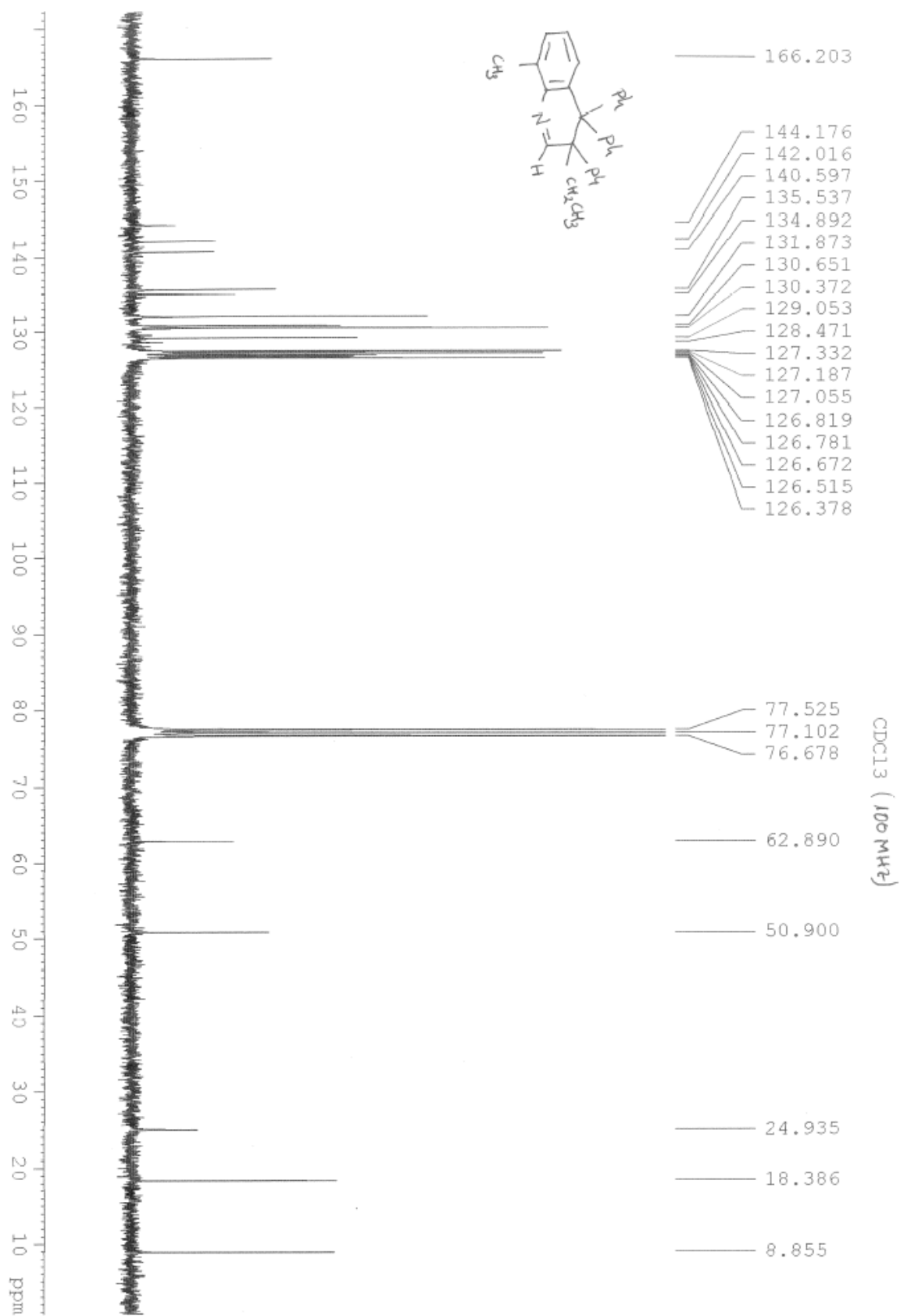
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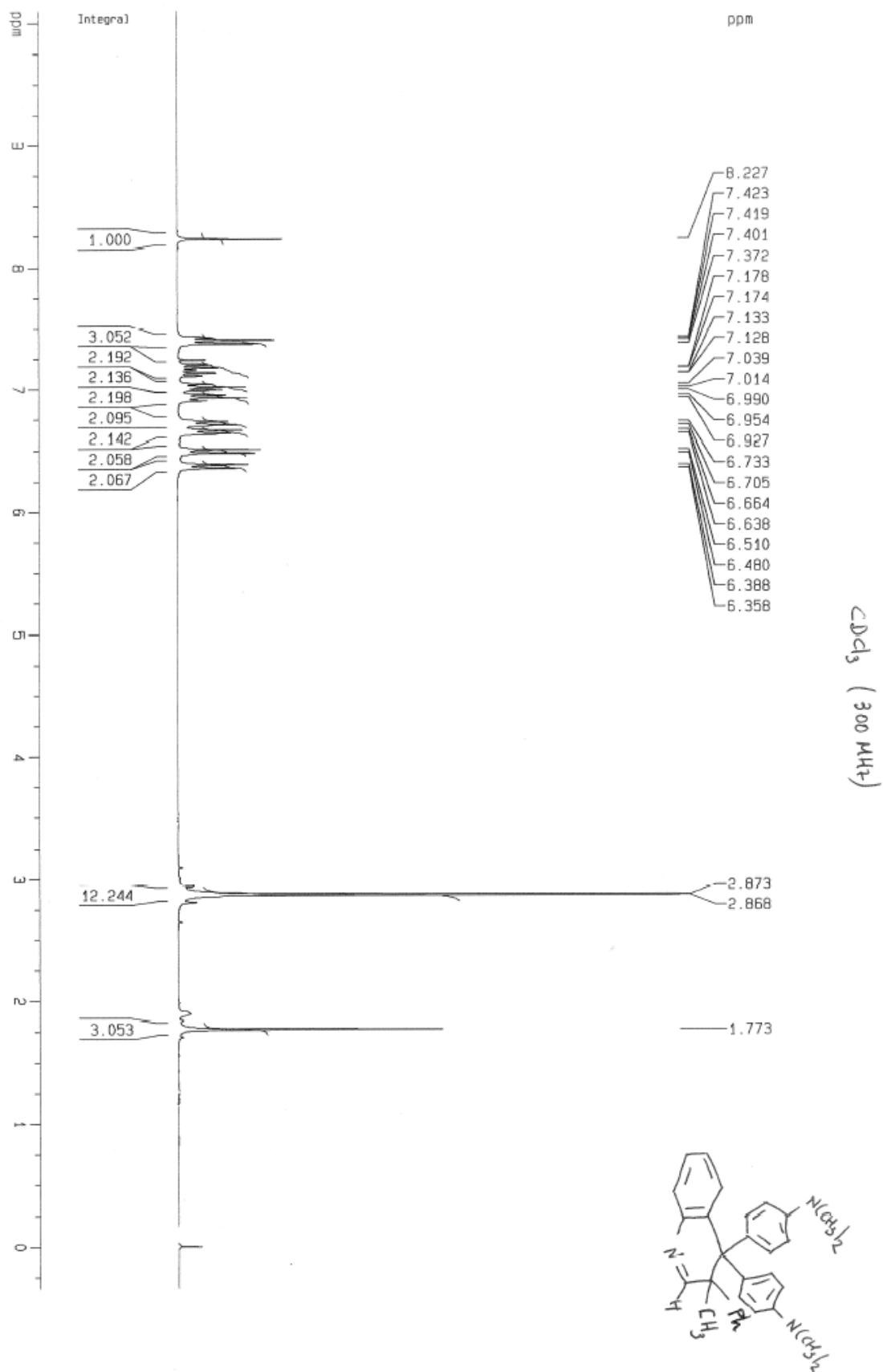
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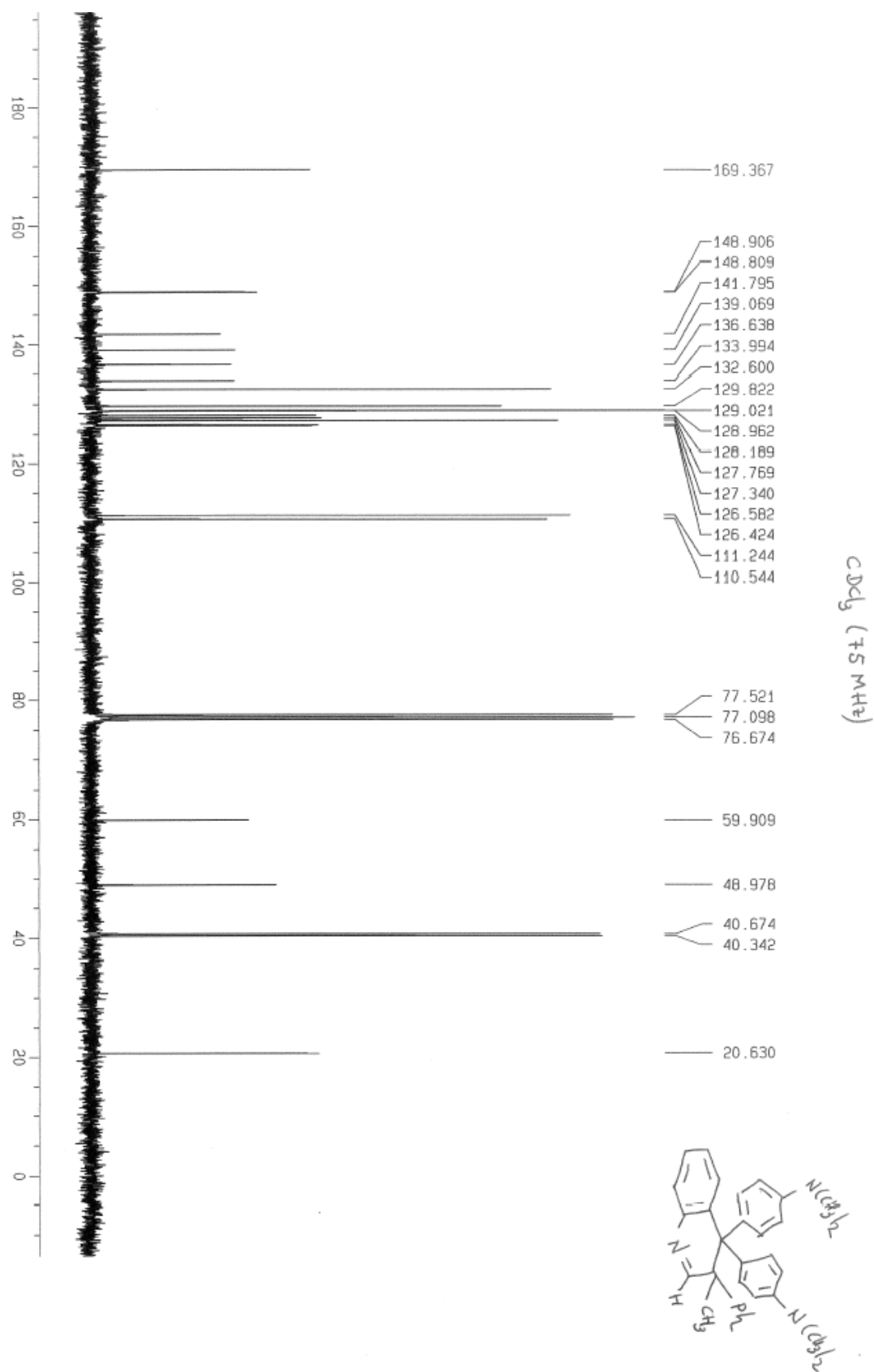
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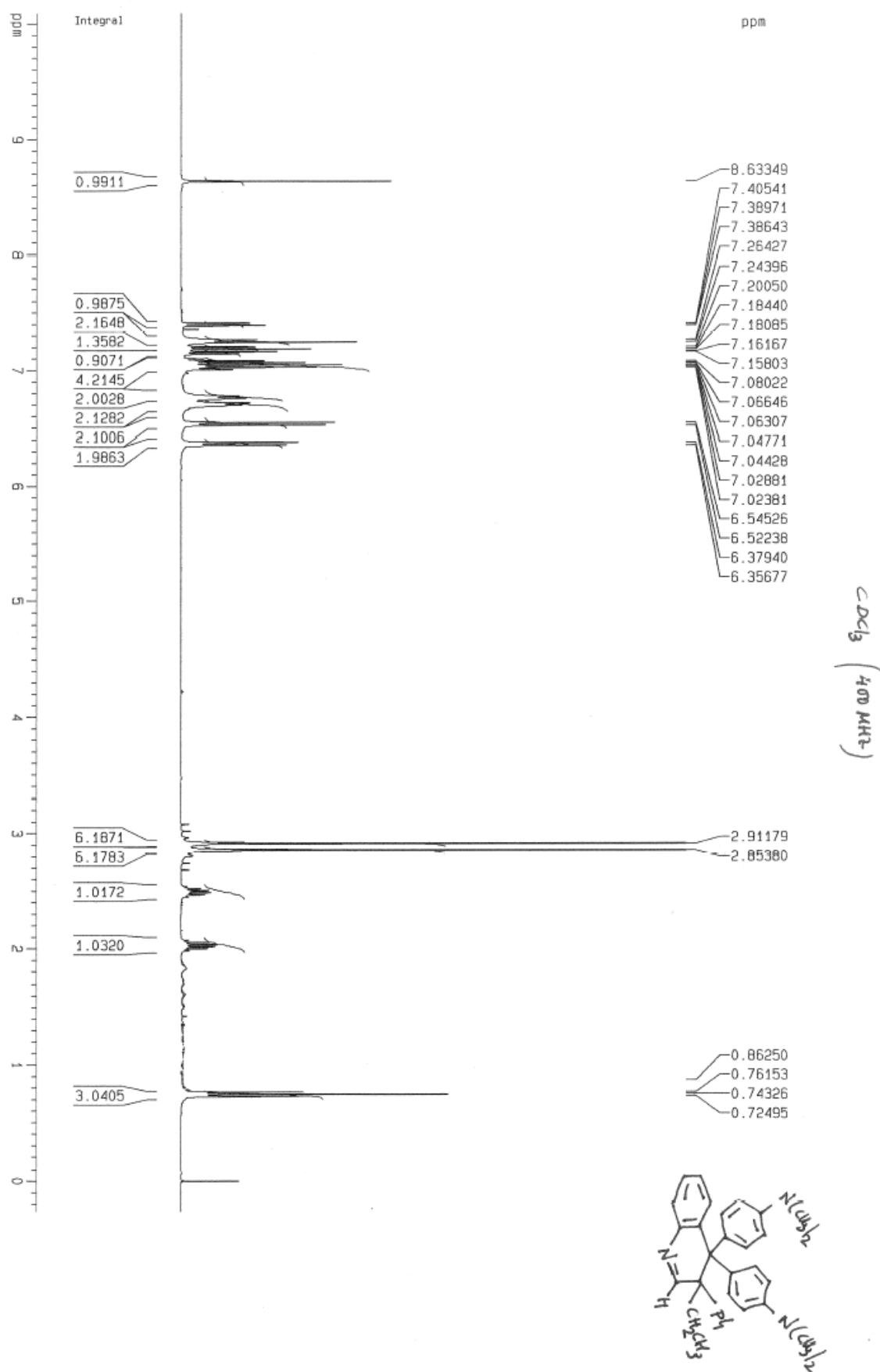
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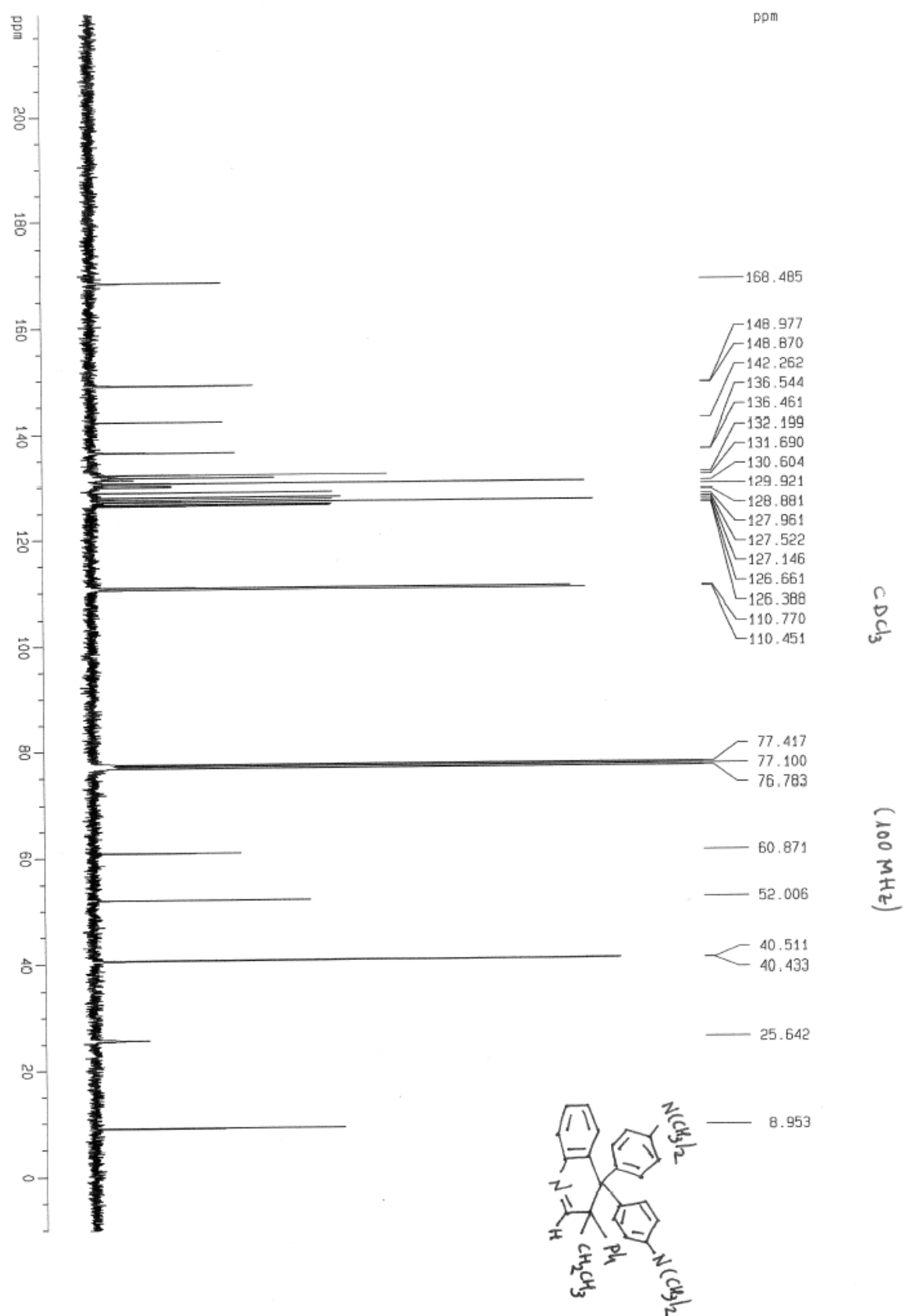
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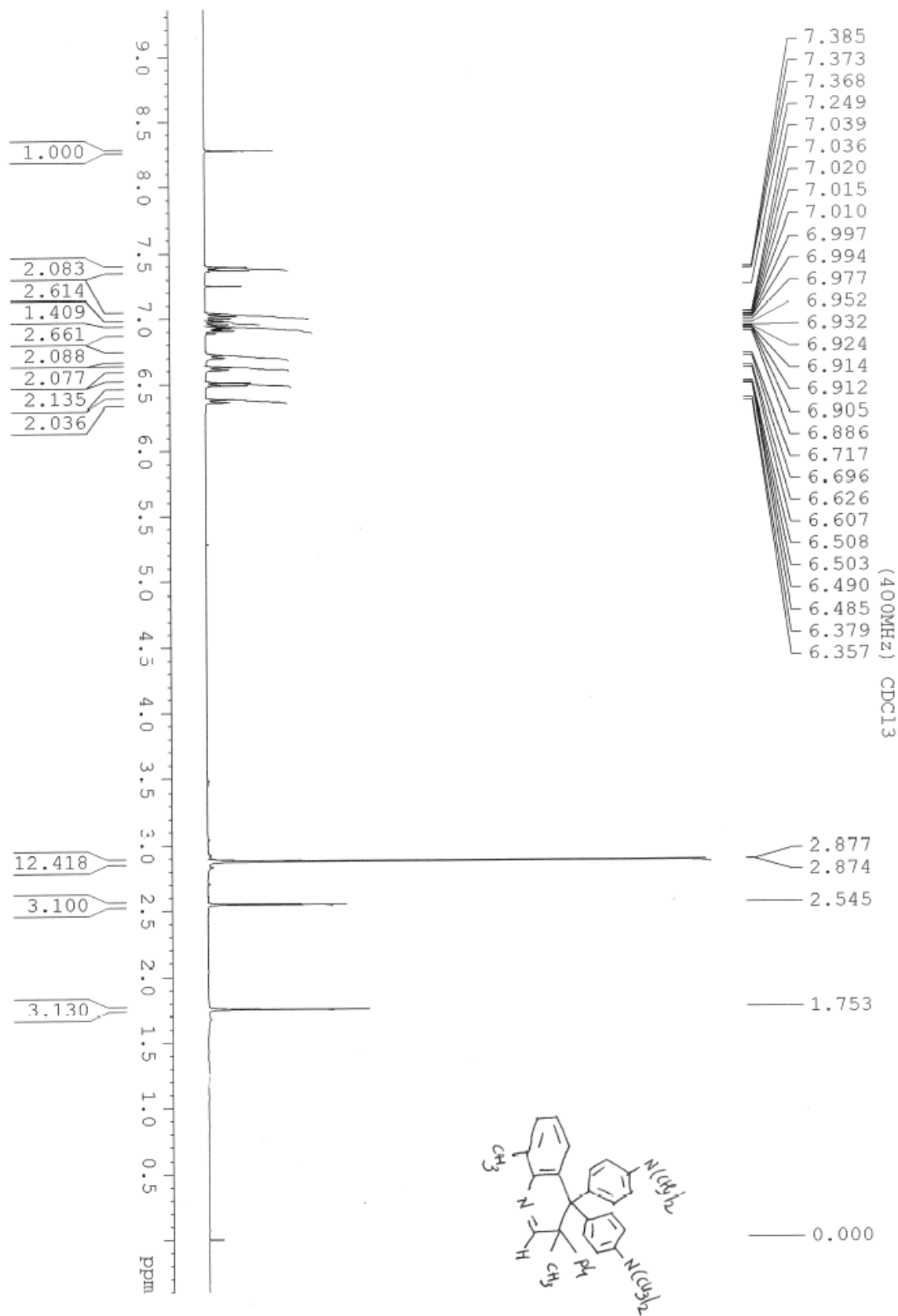
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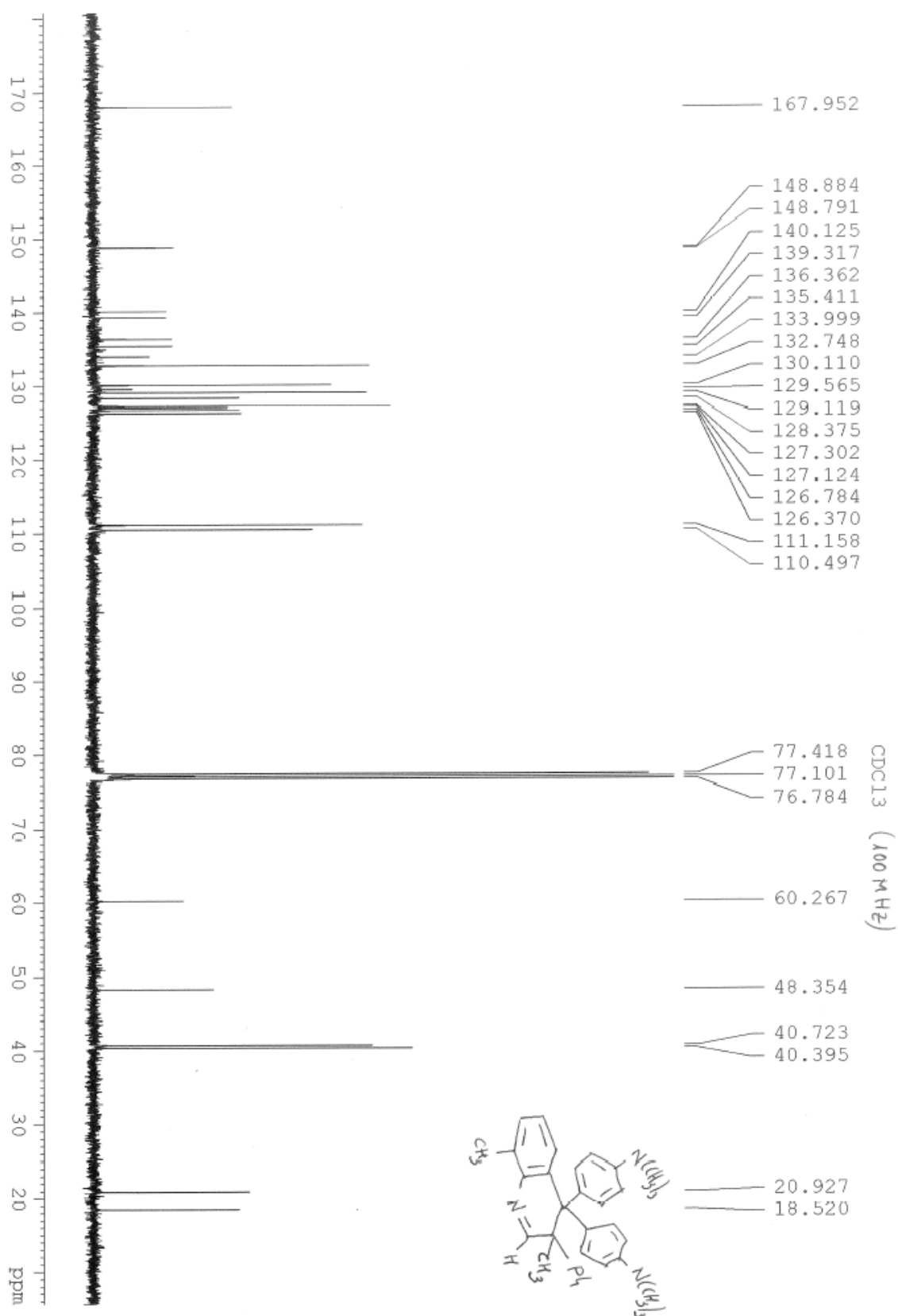
^{13}C NMR 13f



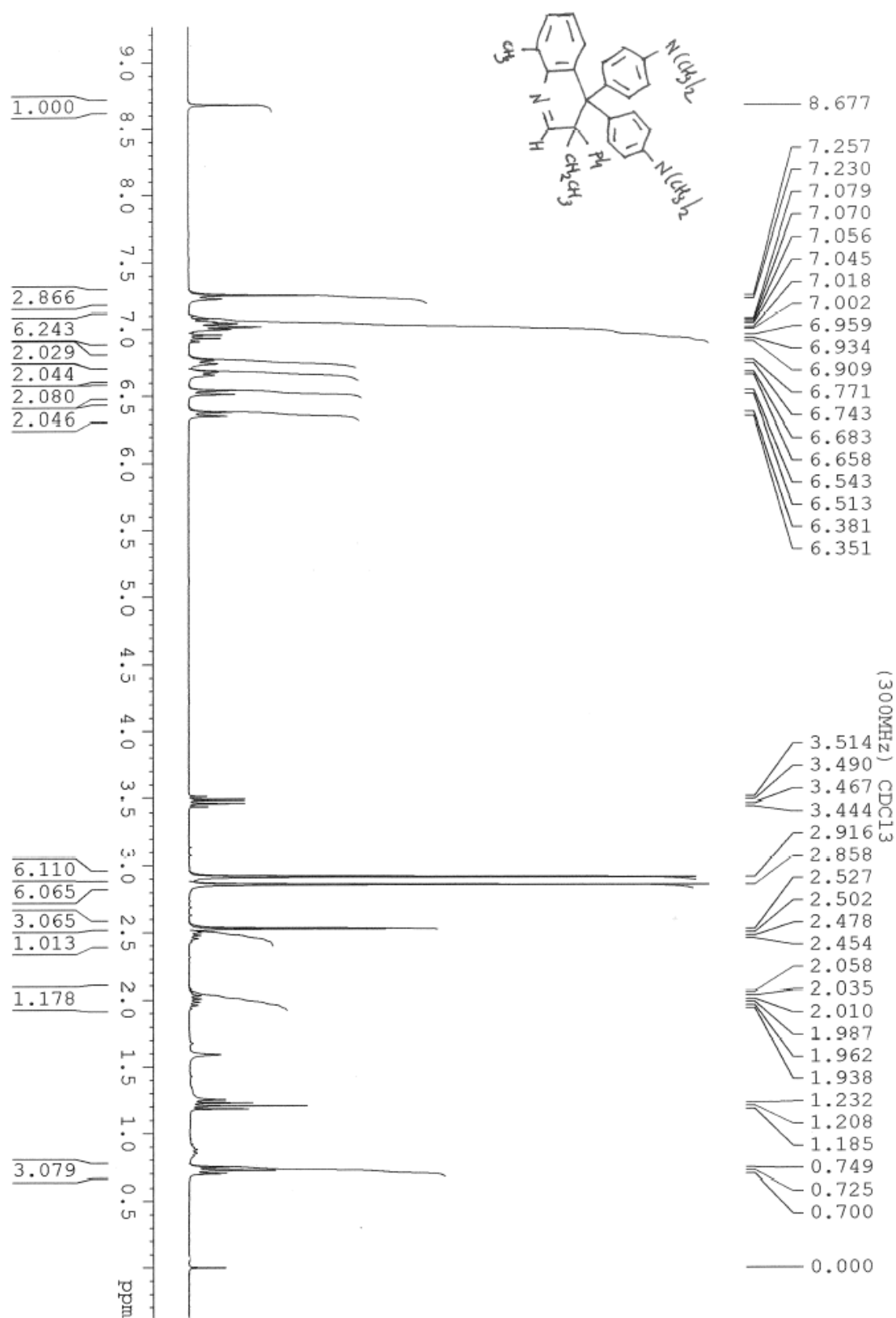
¹H NMR 13g



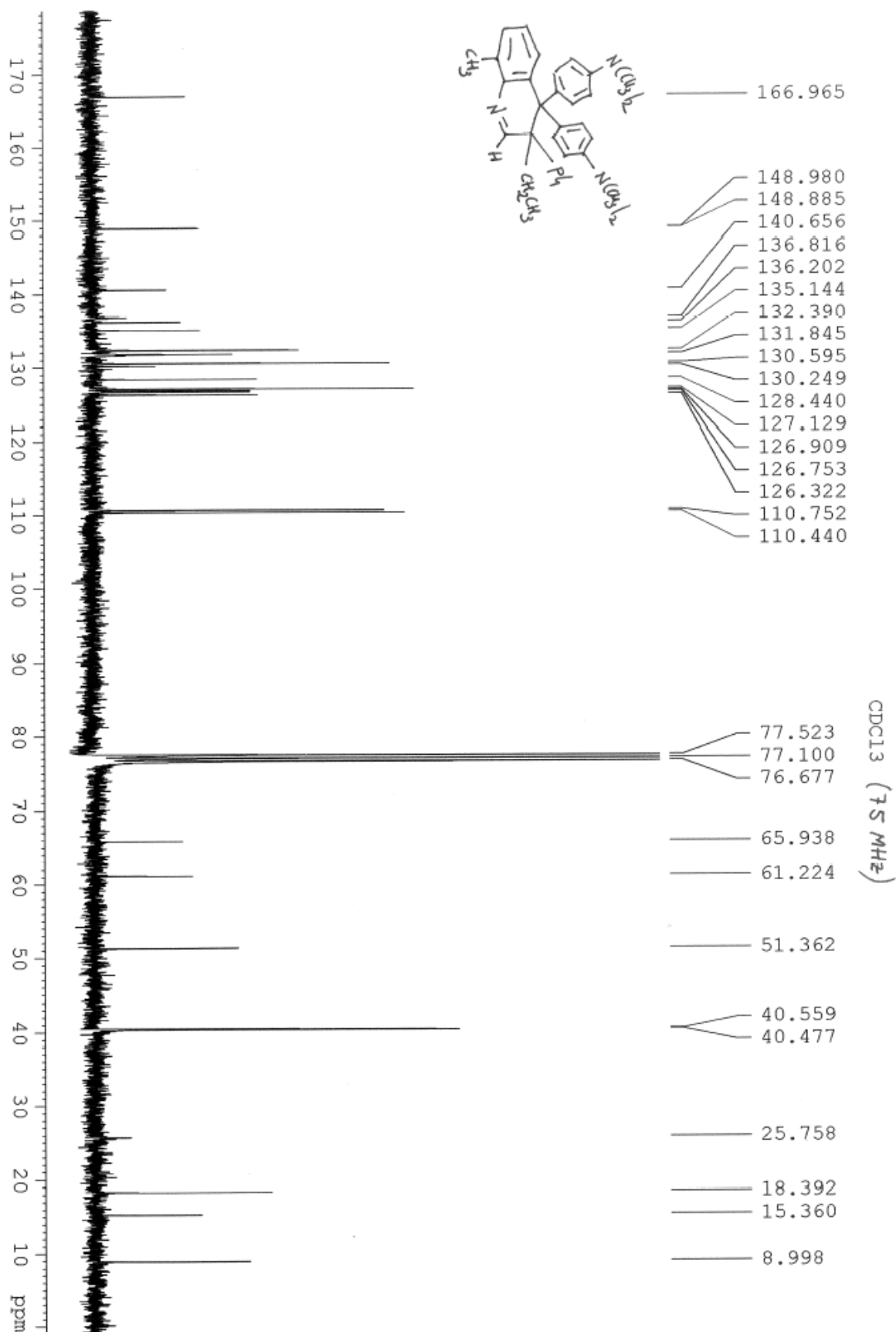
^{13}C NMR 13g



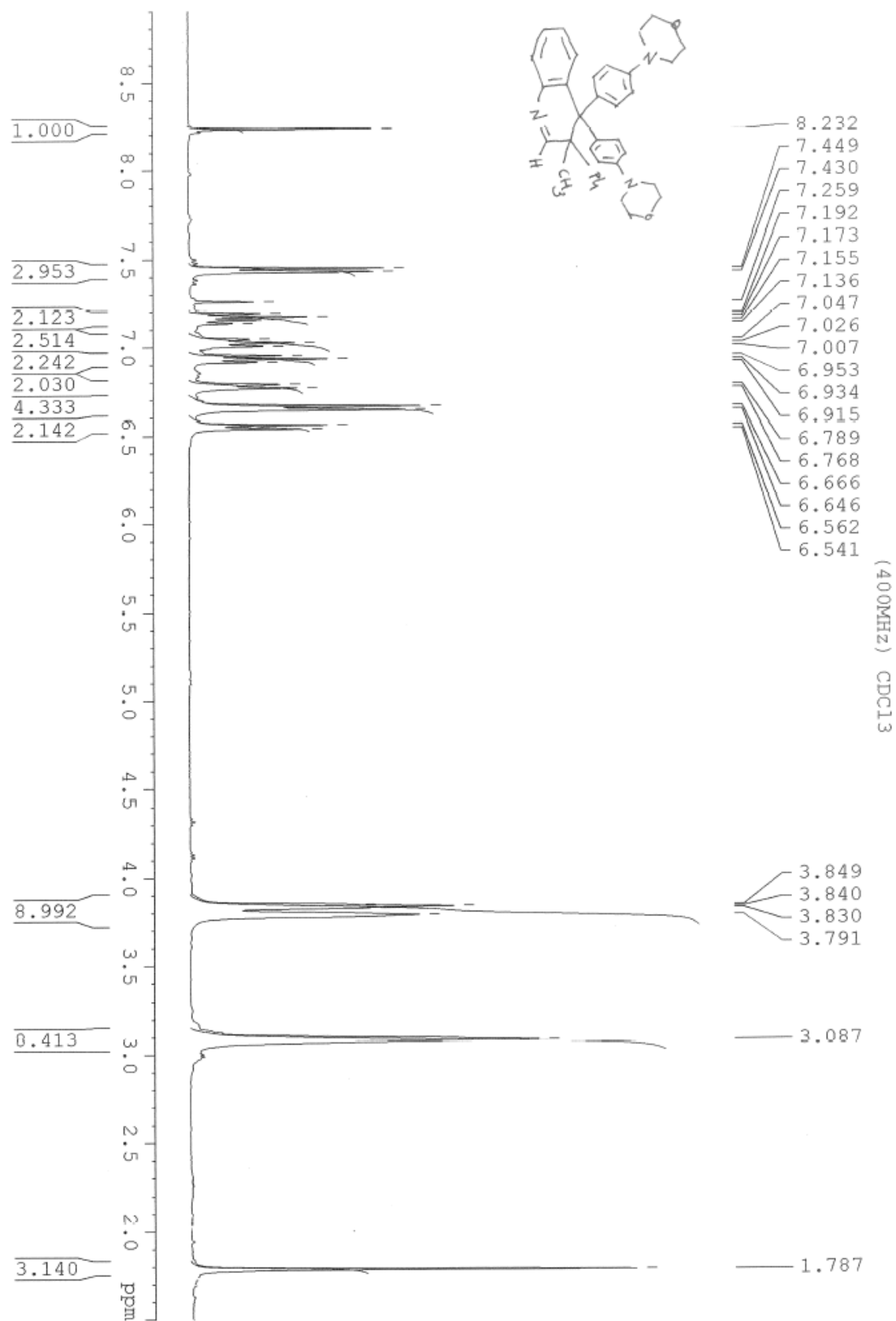
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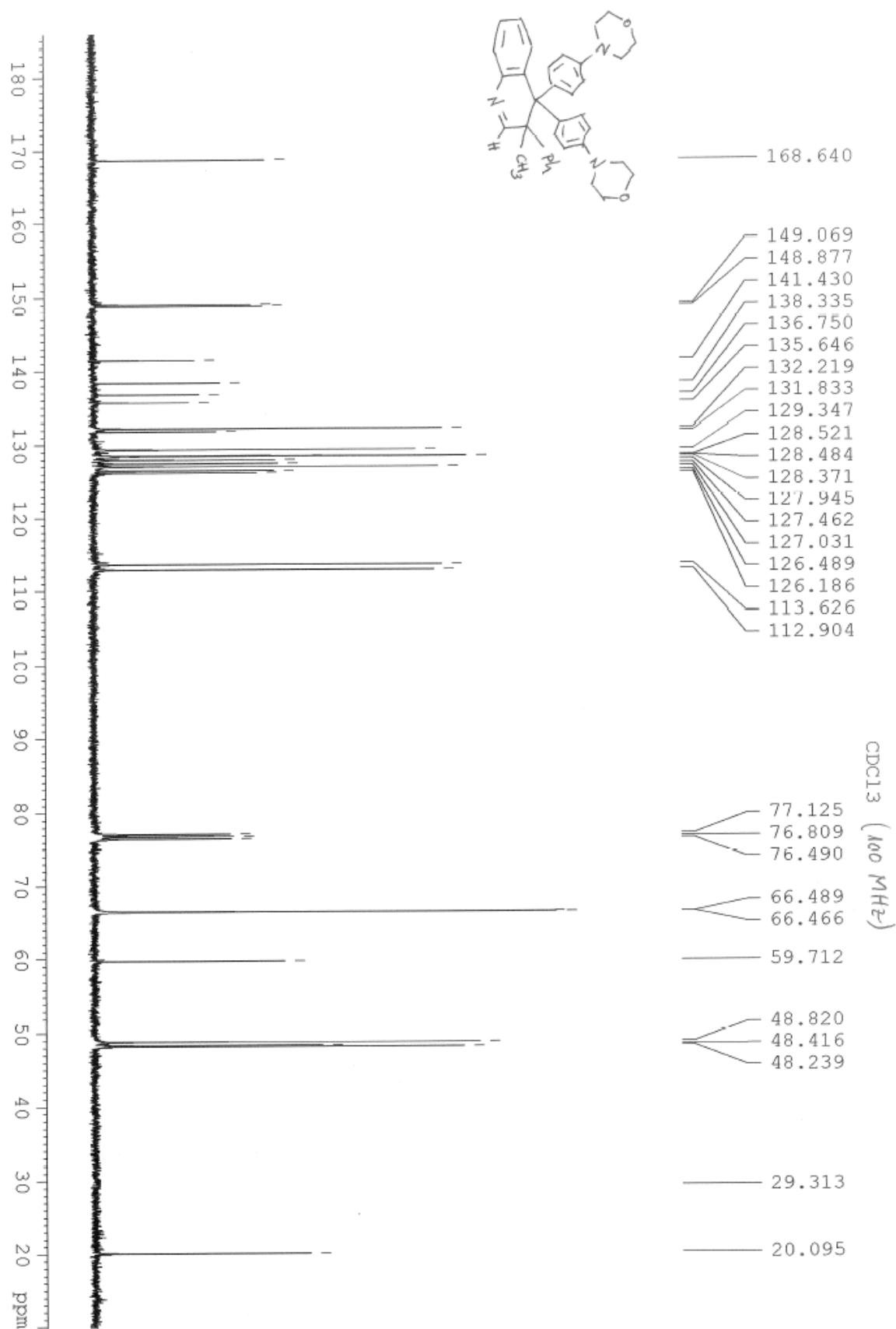
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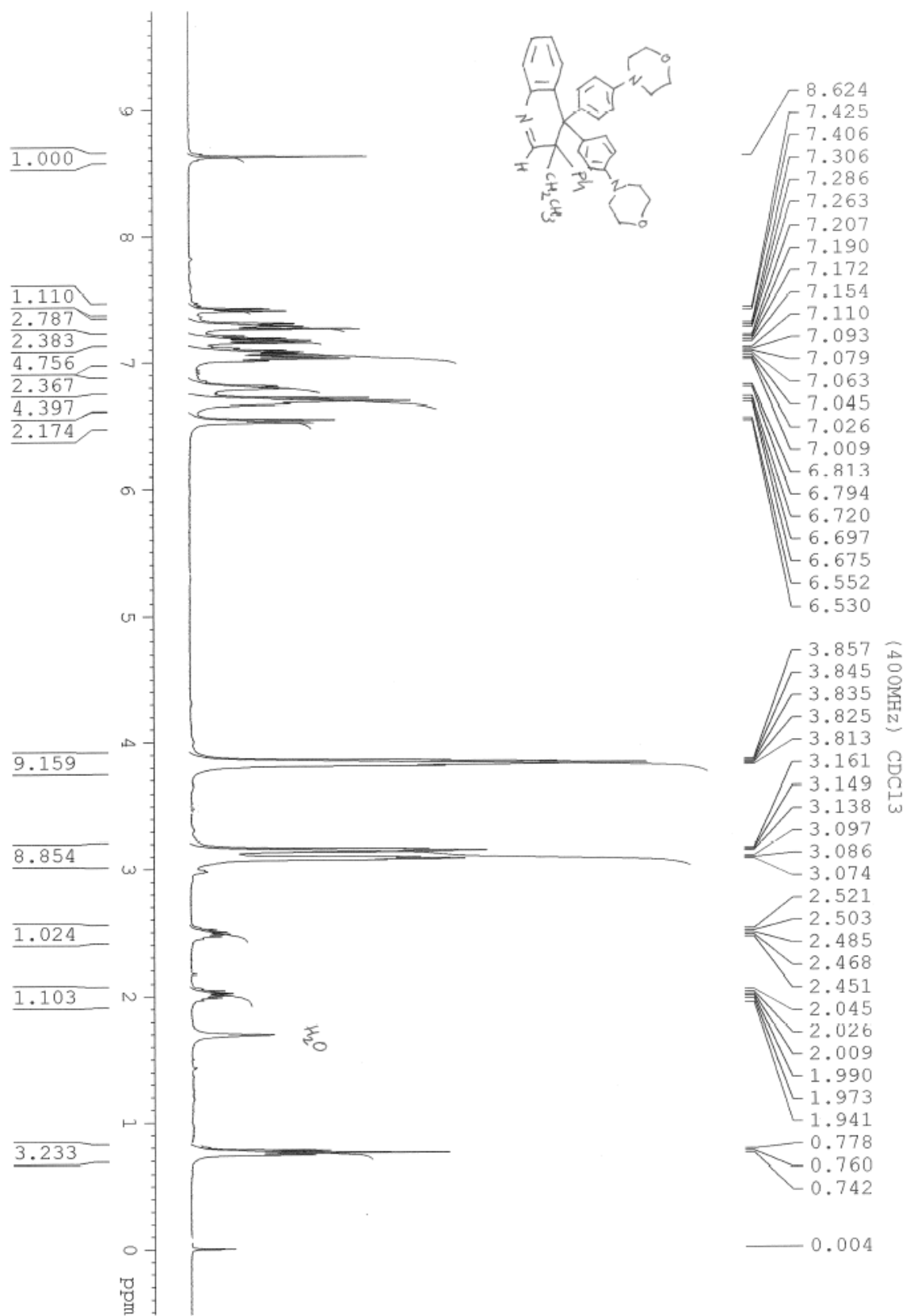
¹H NMR 13i



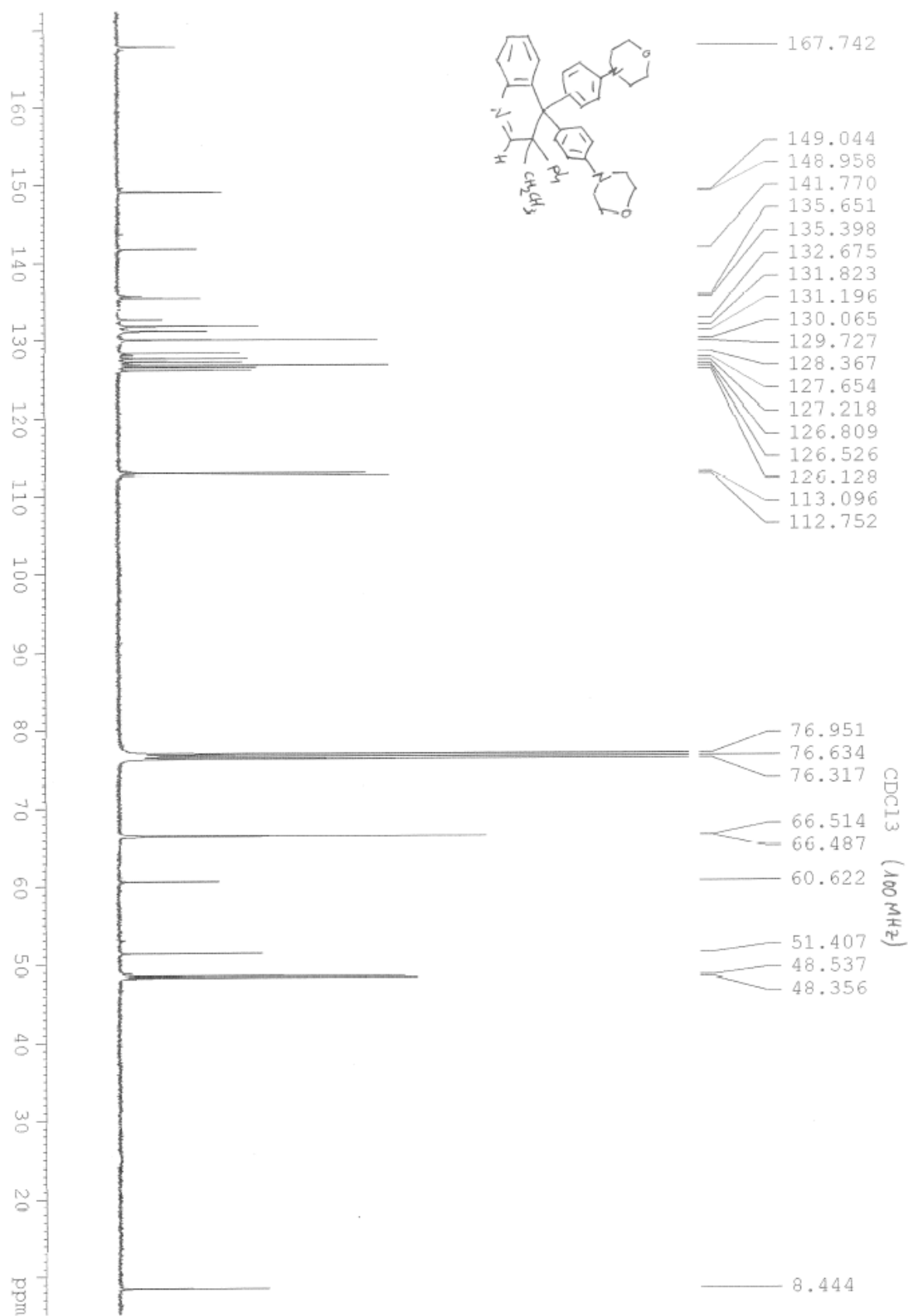
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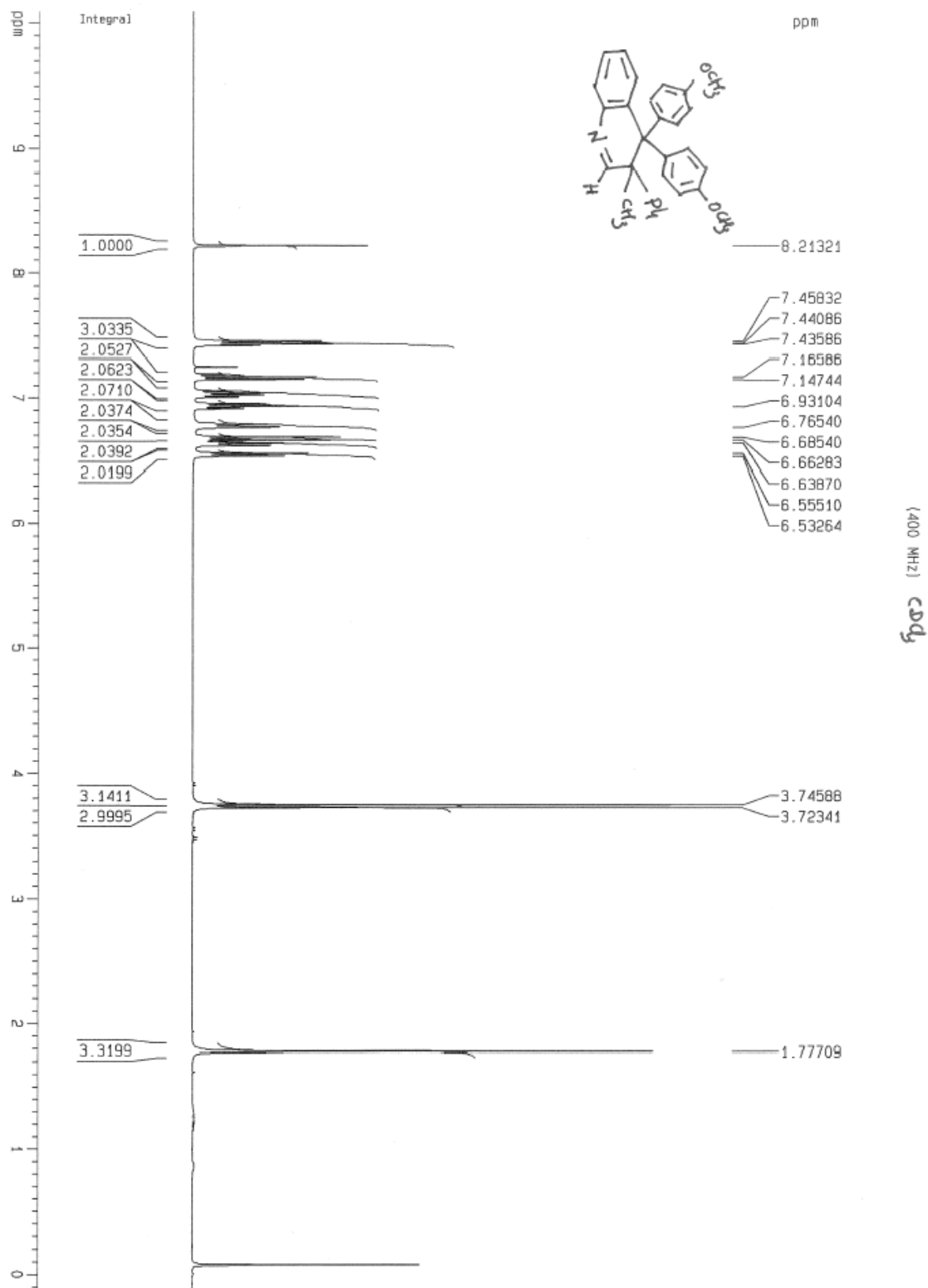
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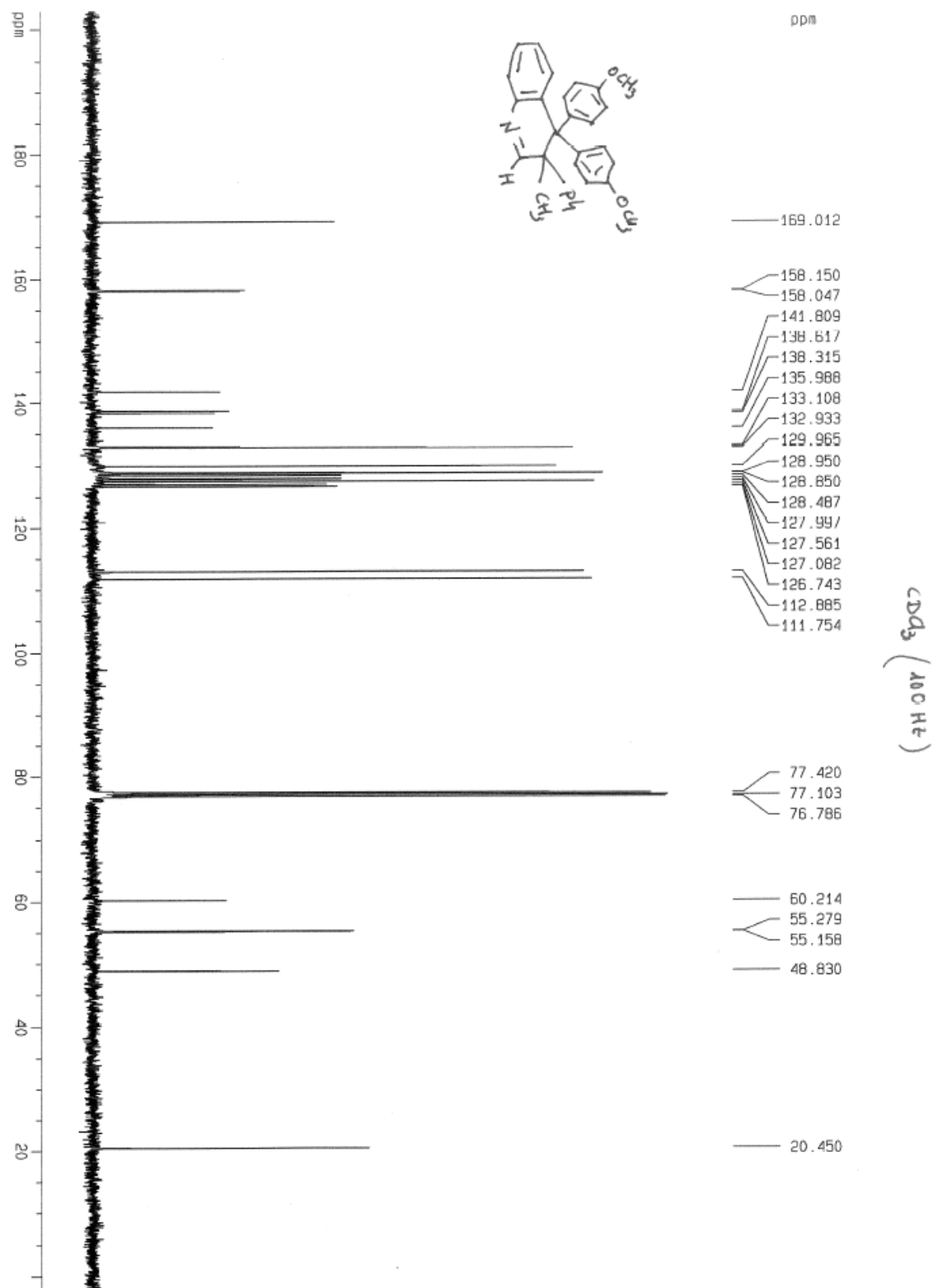
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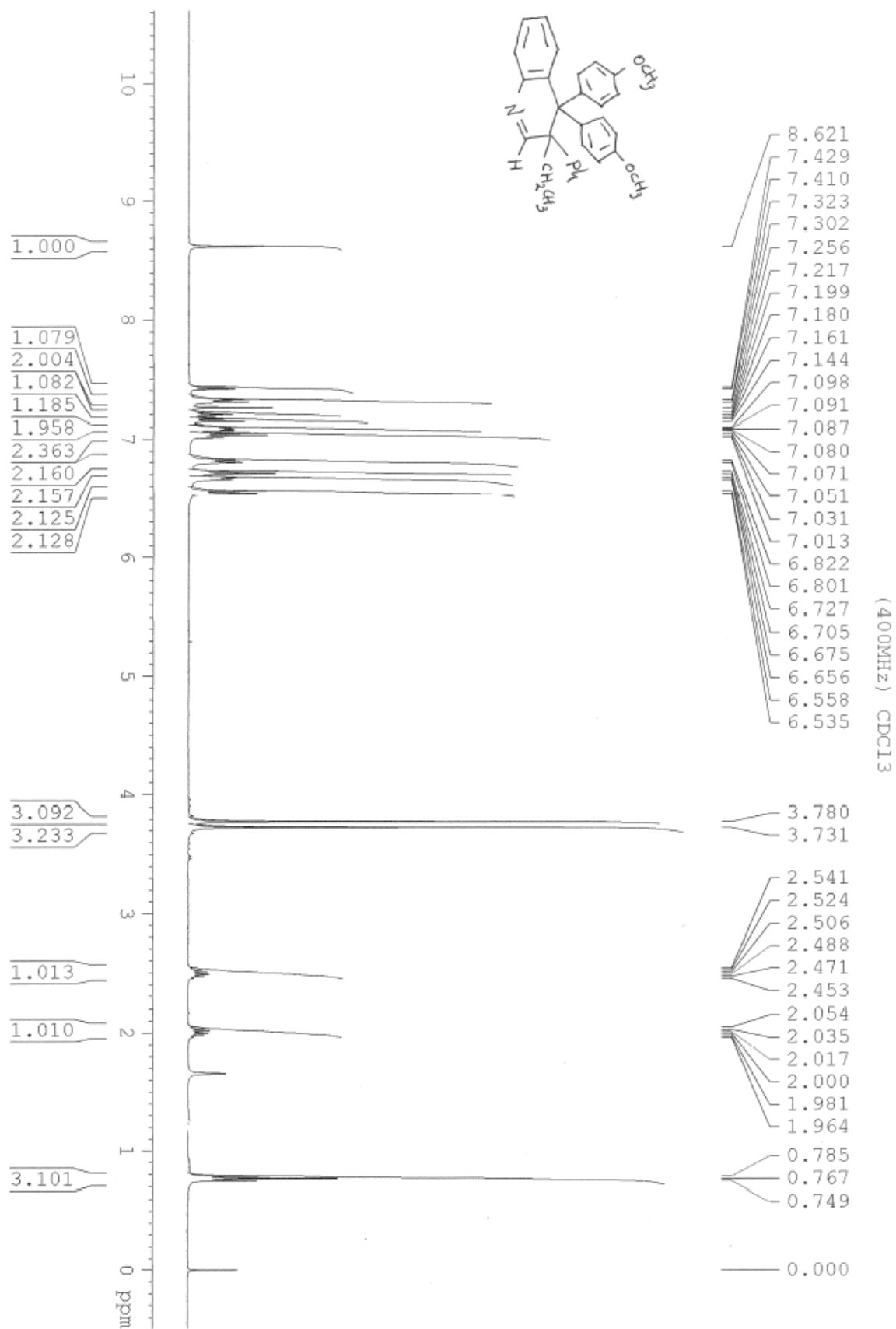
^1H NMR 13k



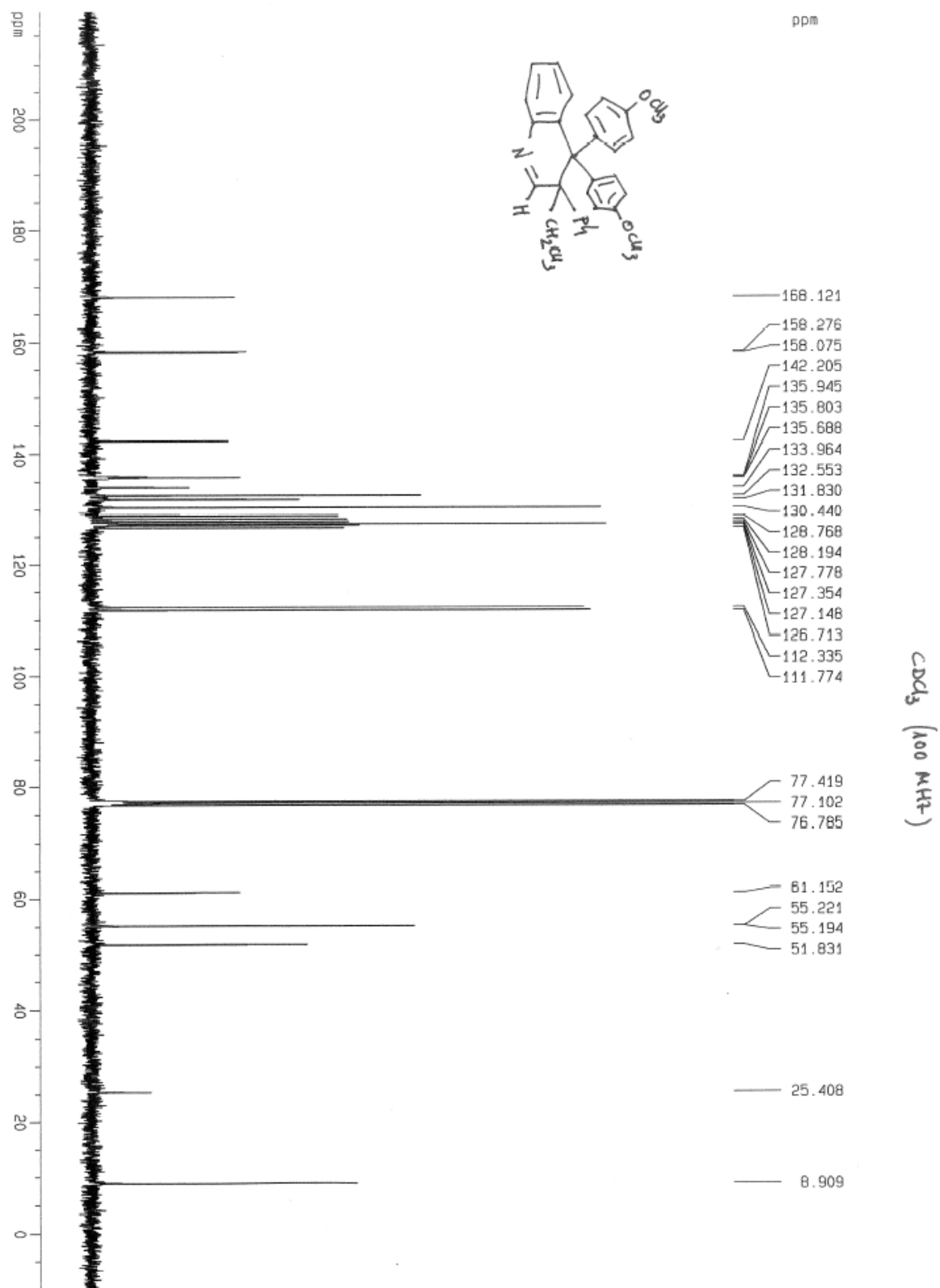
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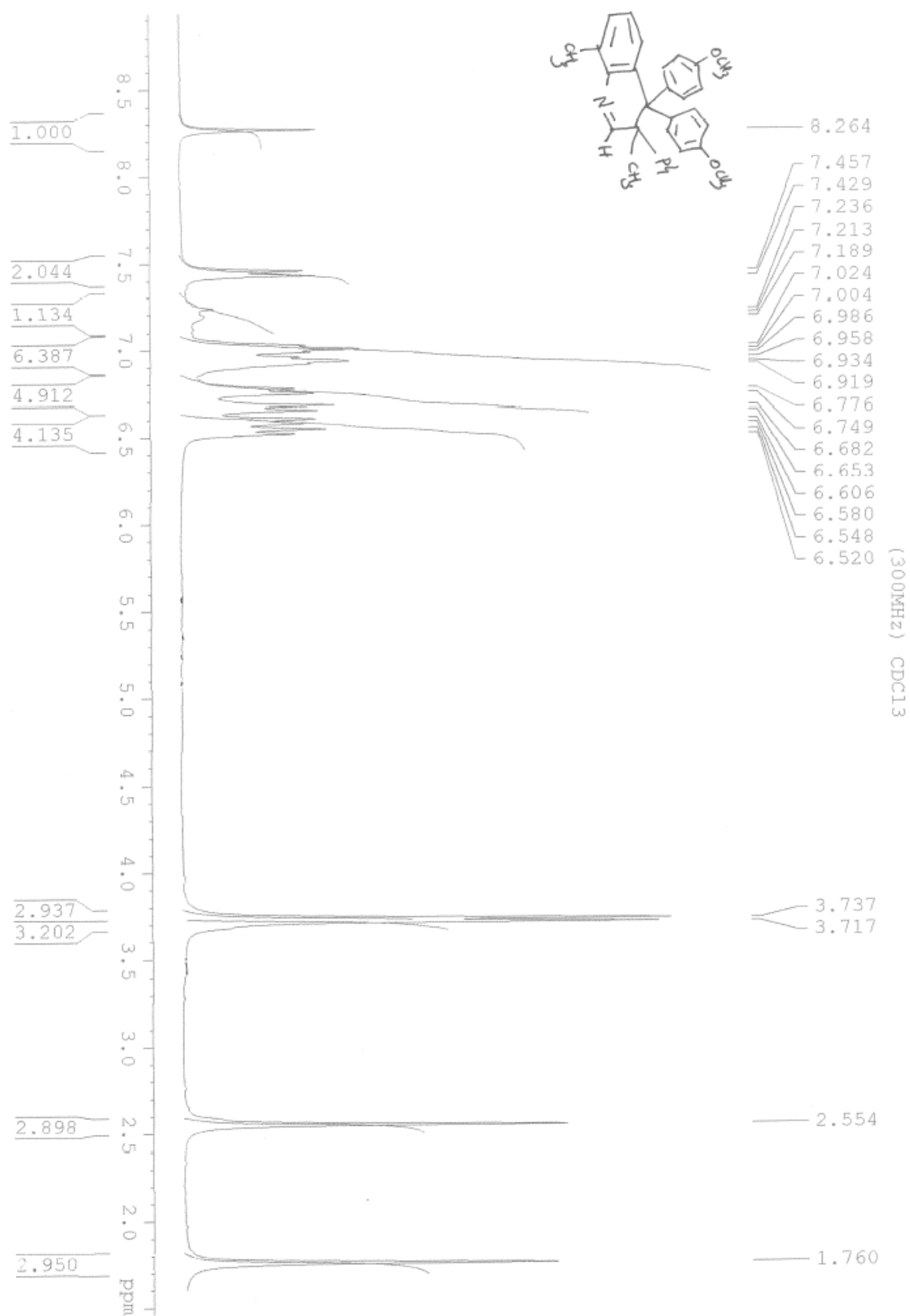
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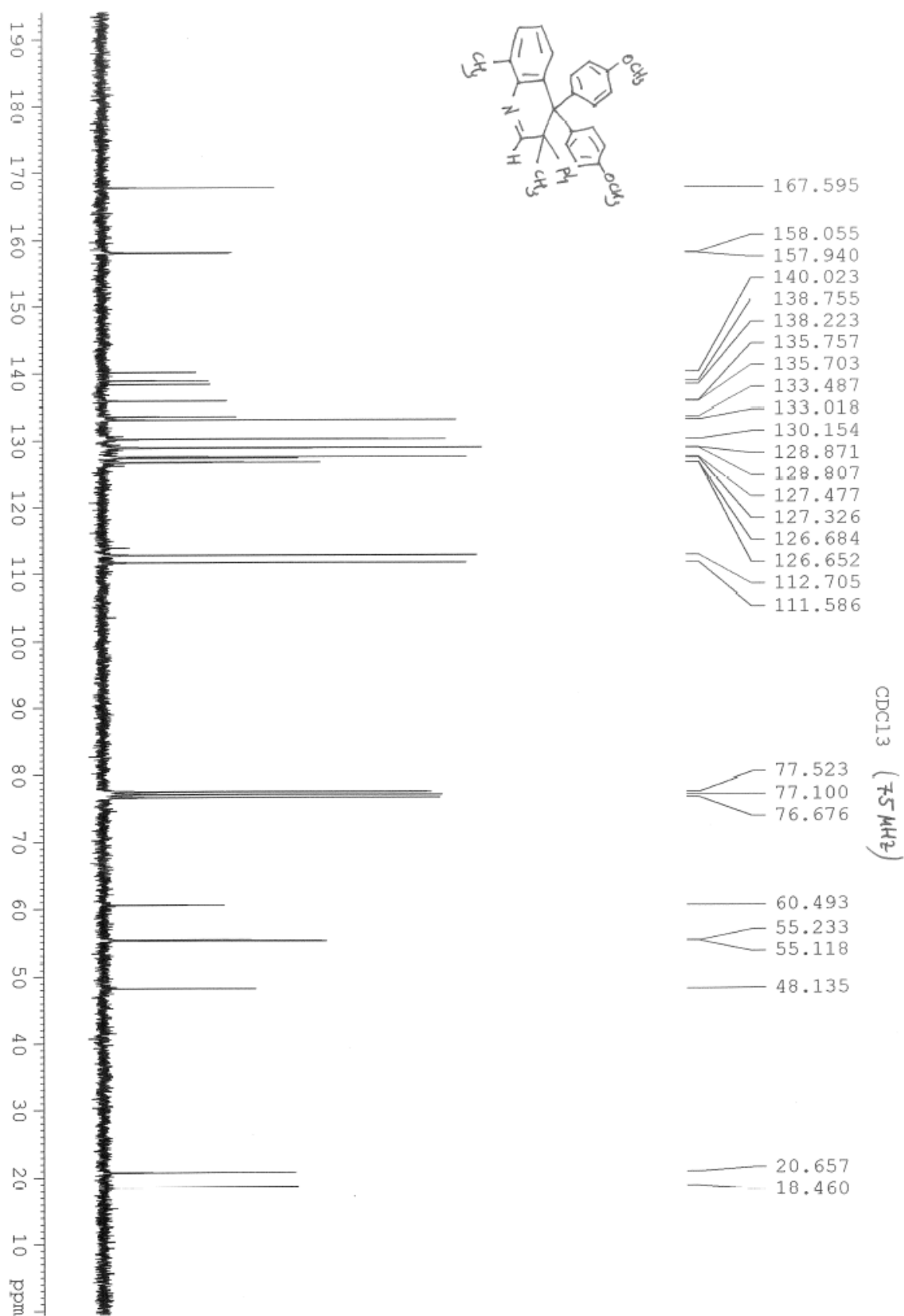
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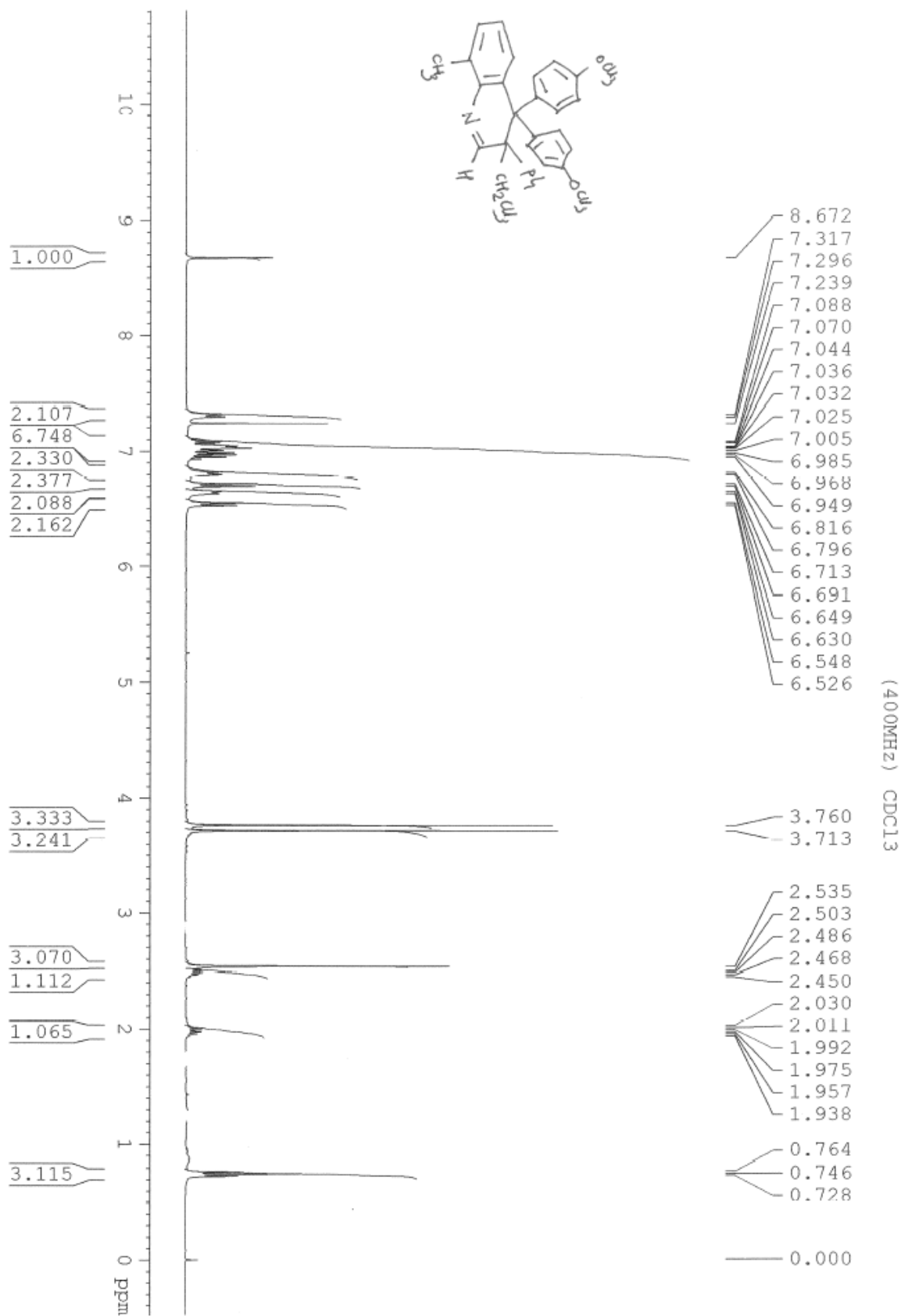
¹H NMR 13m



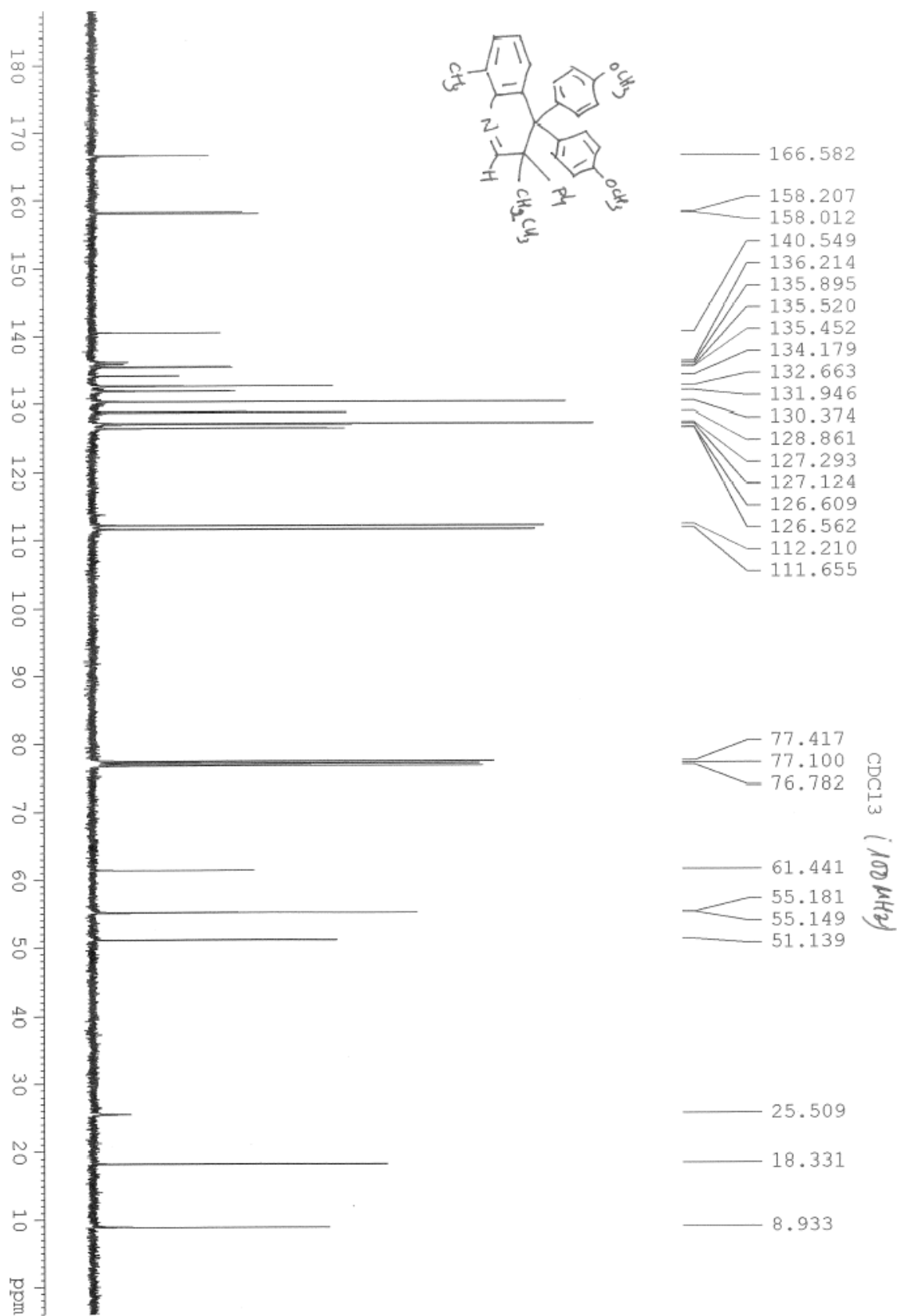
¹³C NMR 13m



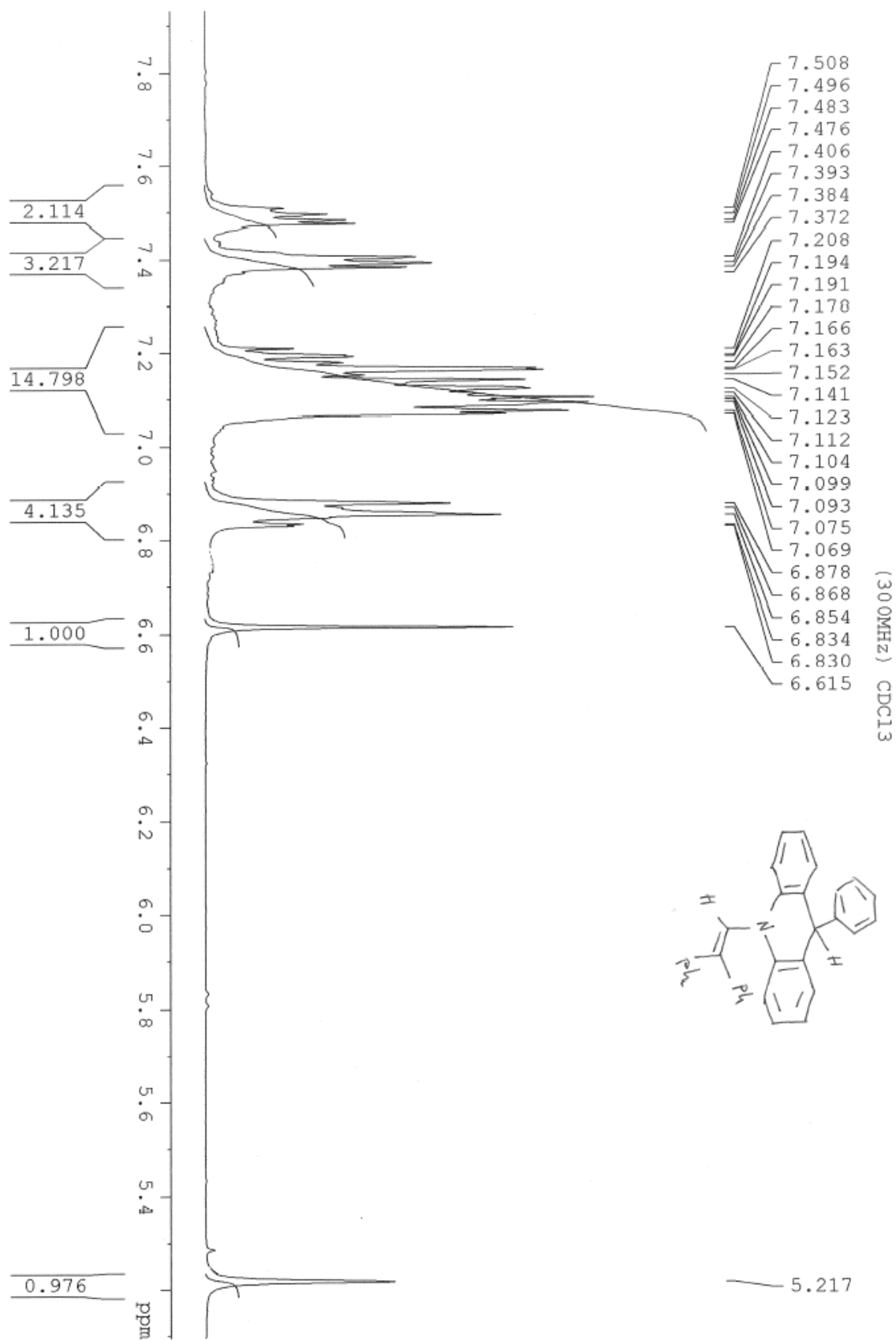
¹H NMR 13n



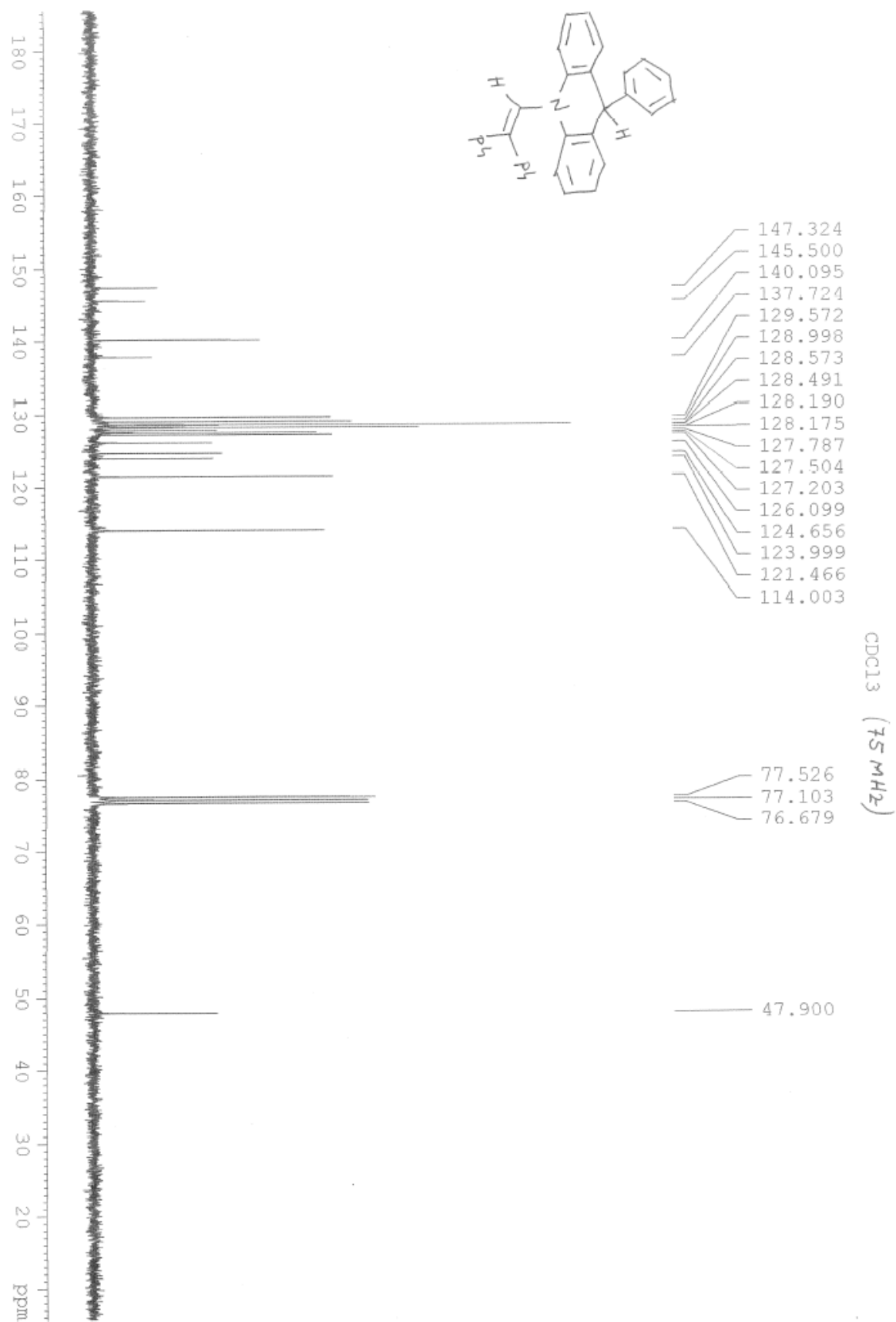
^{13}C NMR **13n**



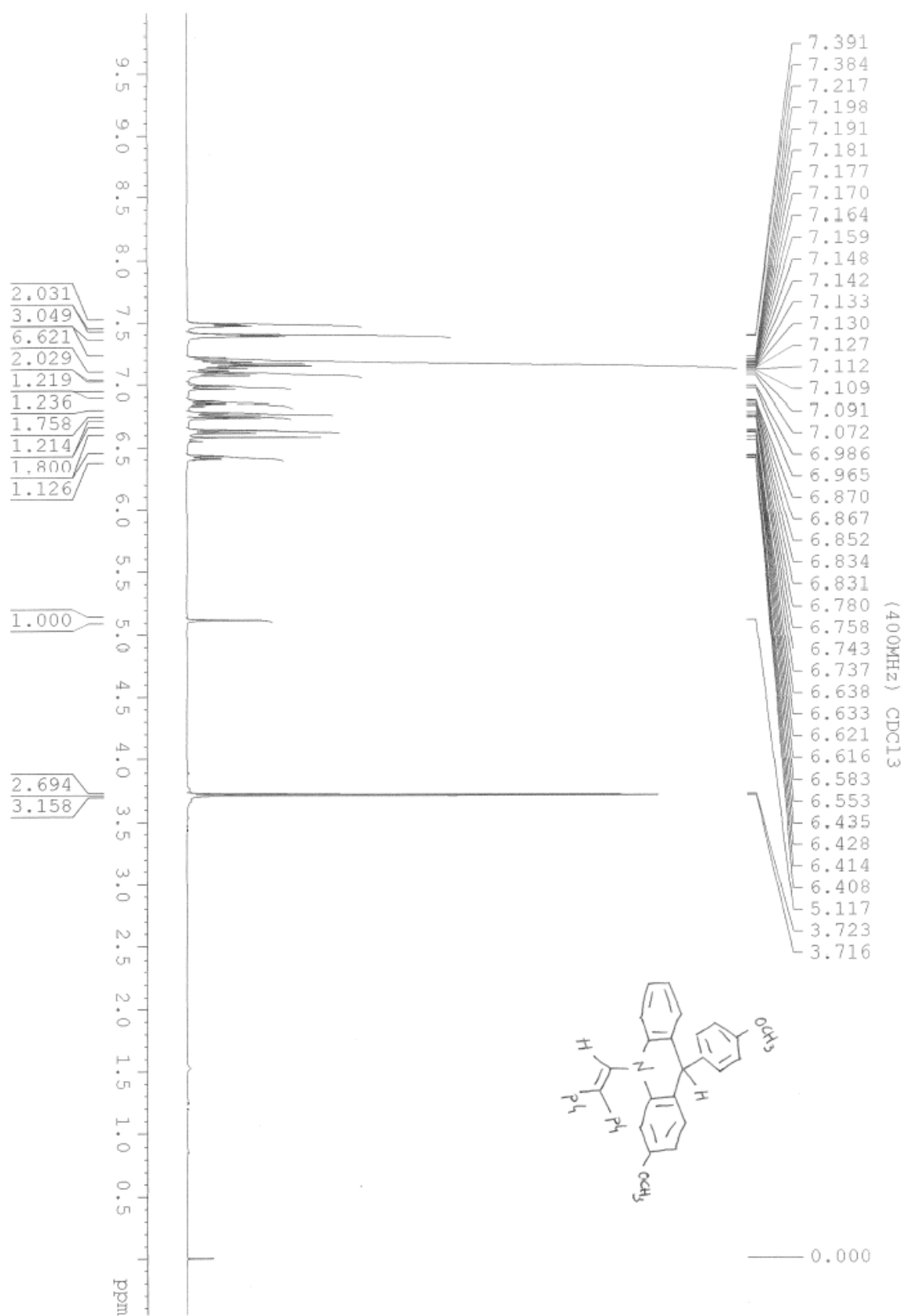
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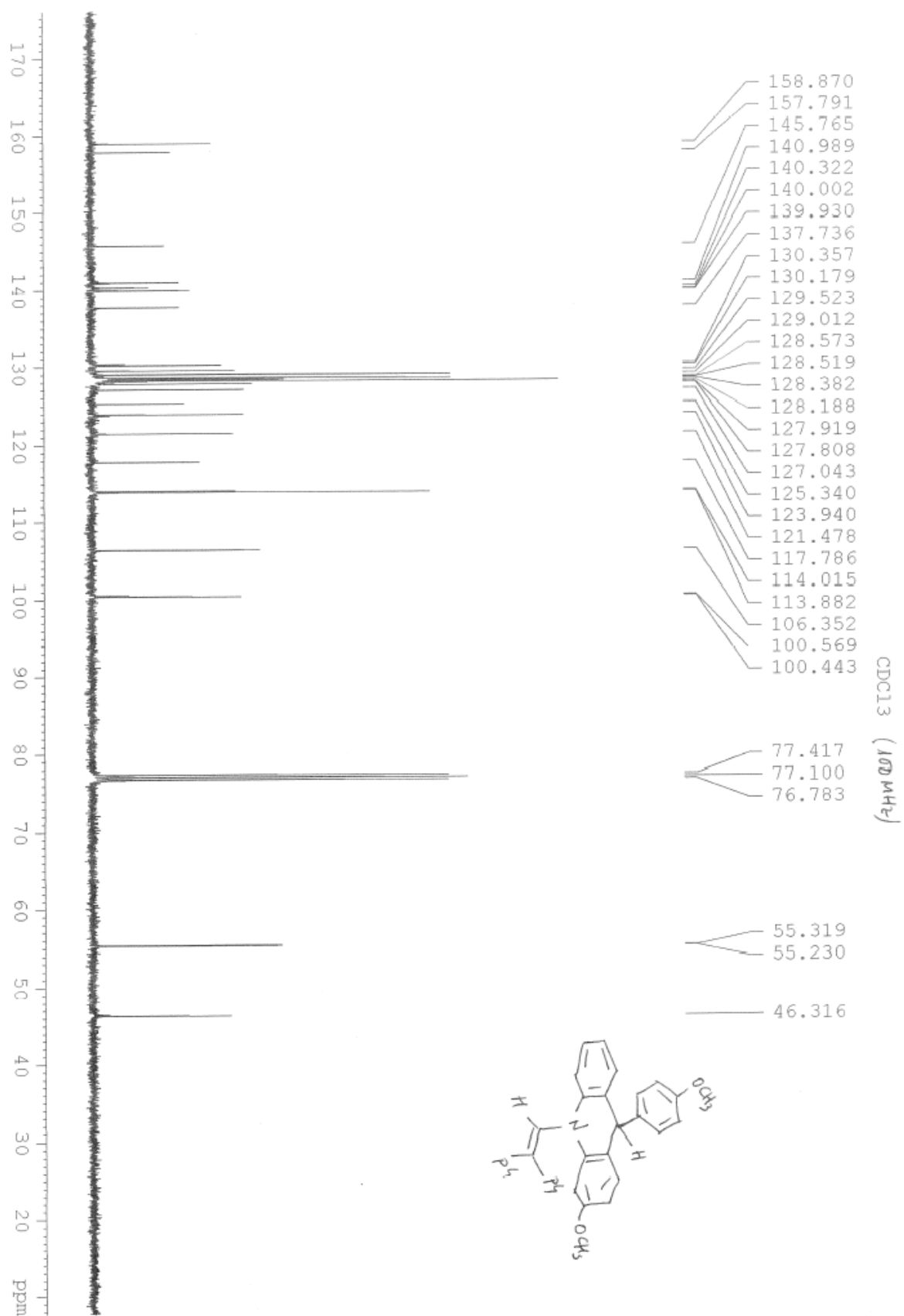
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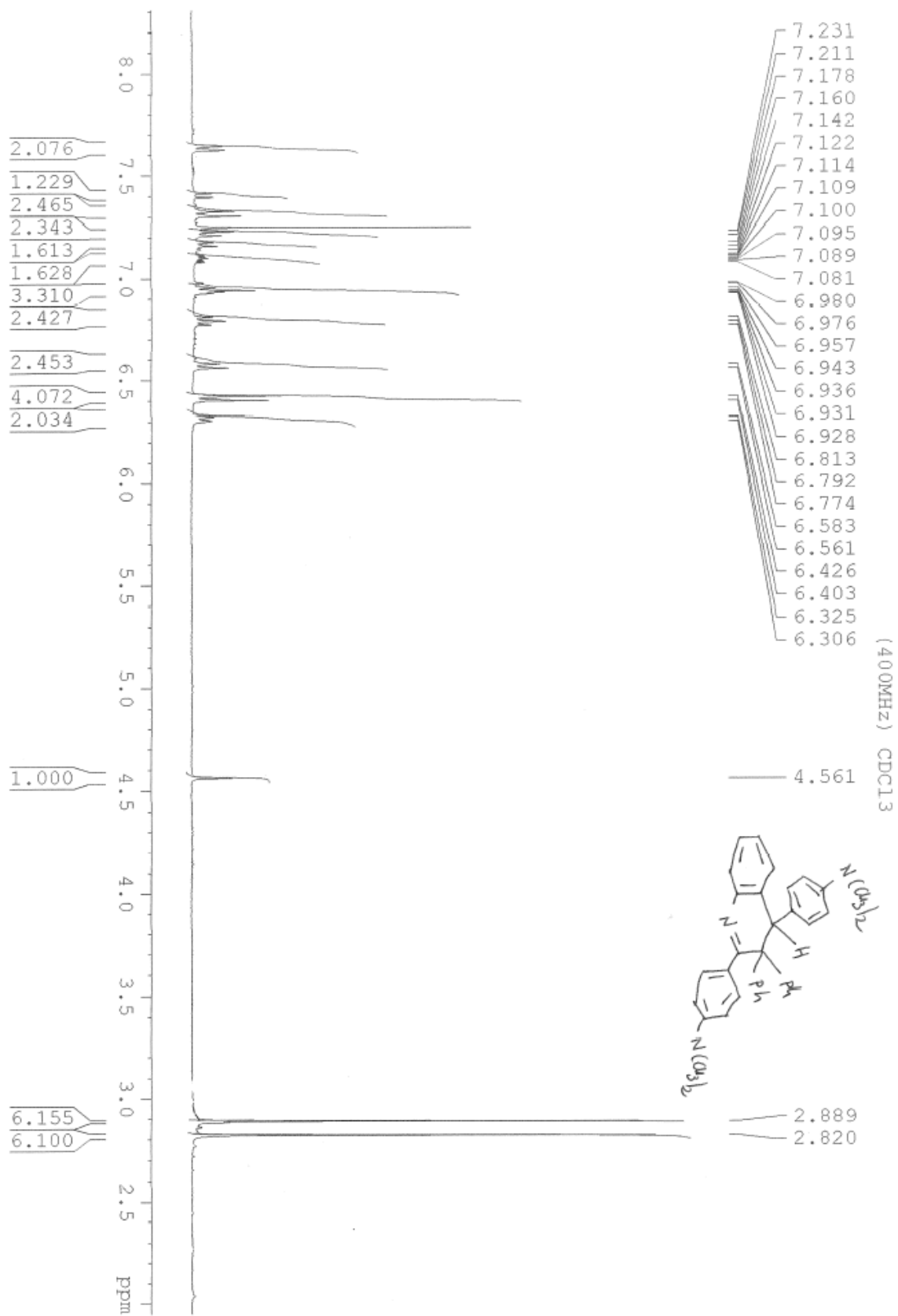
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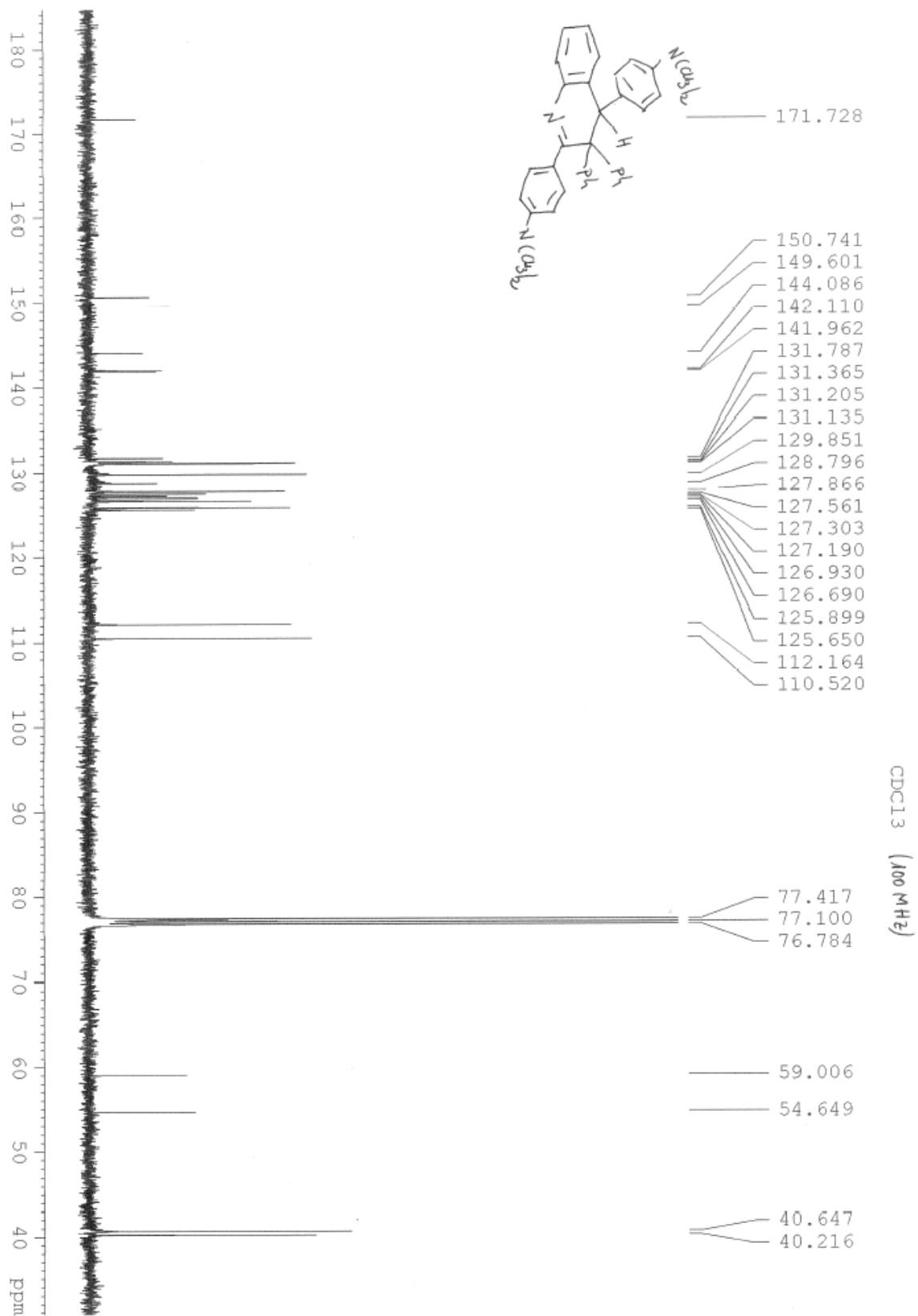
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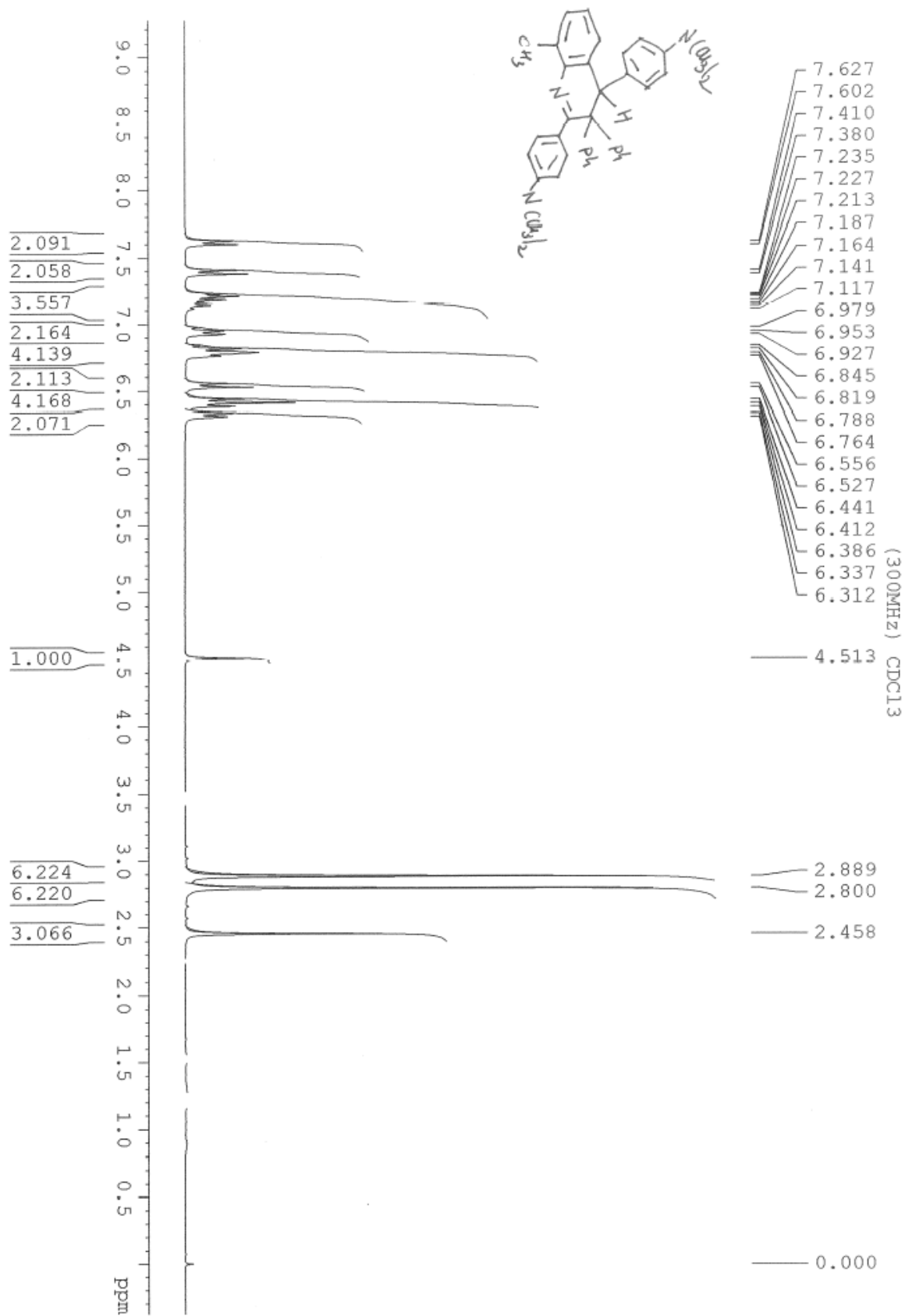
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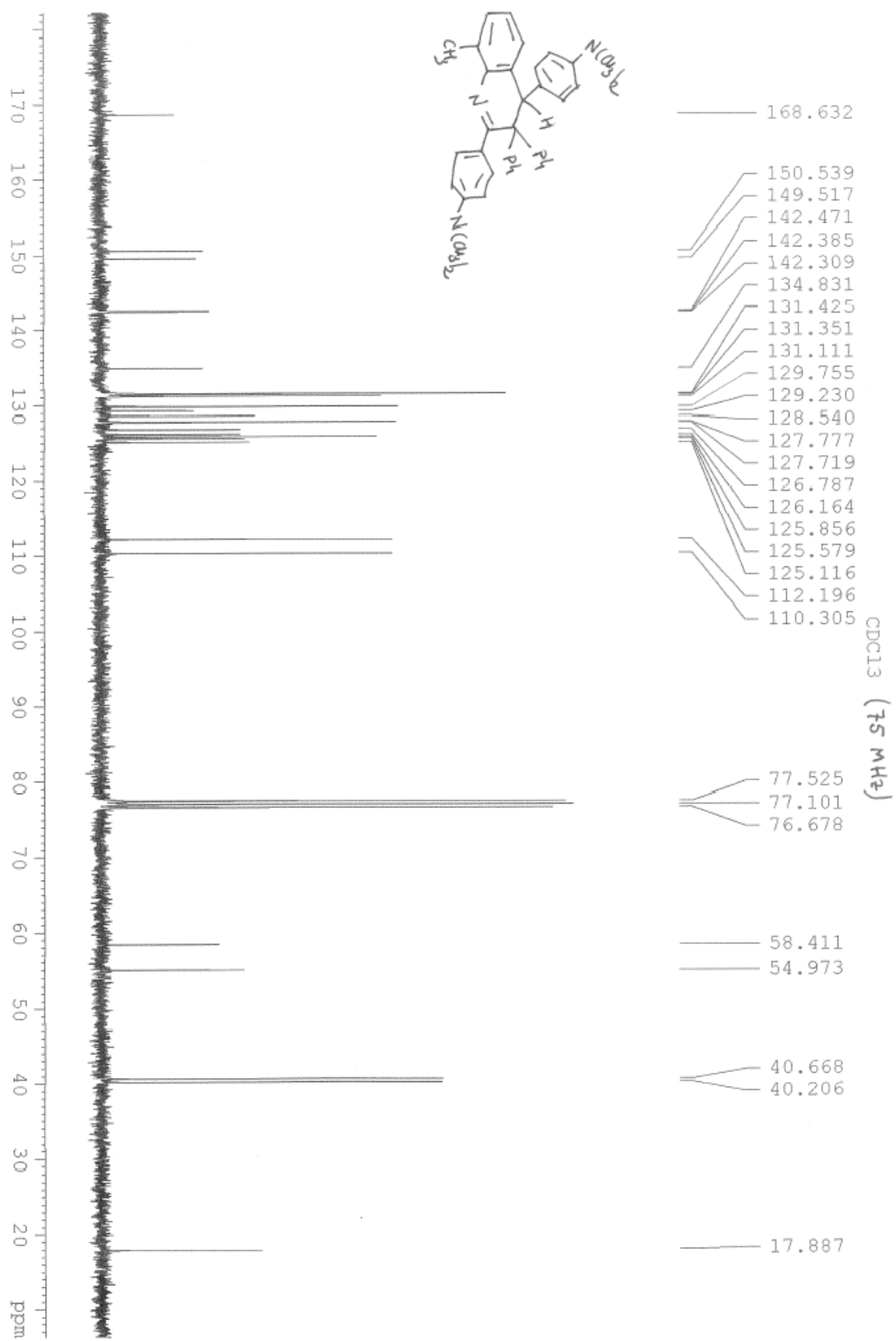
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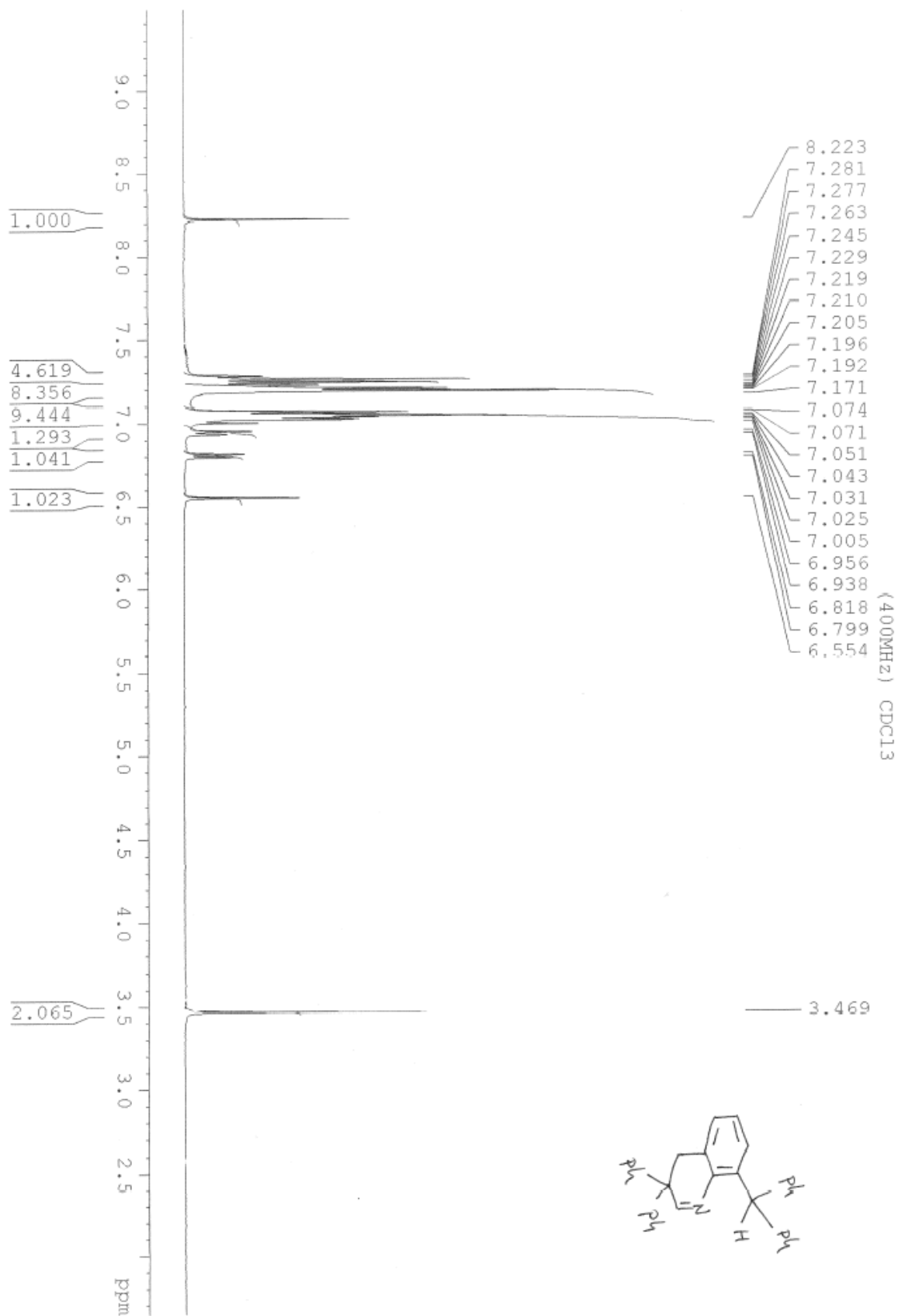
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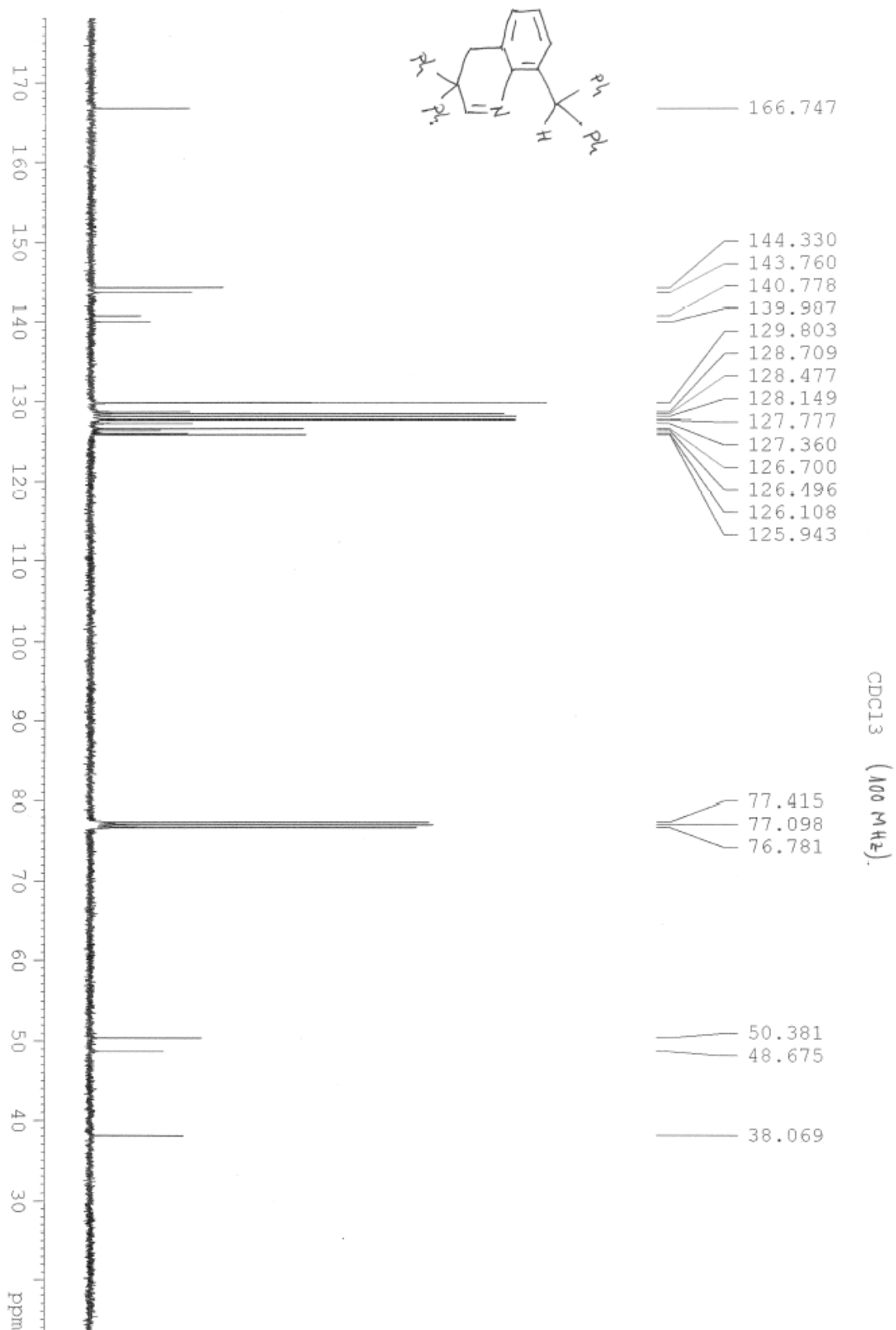
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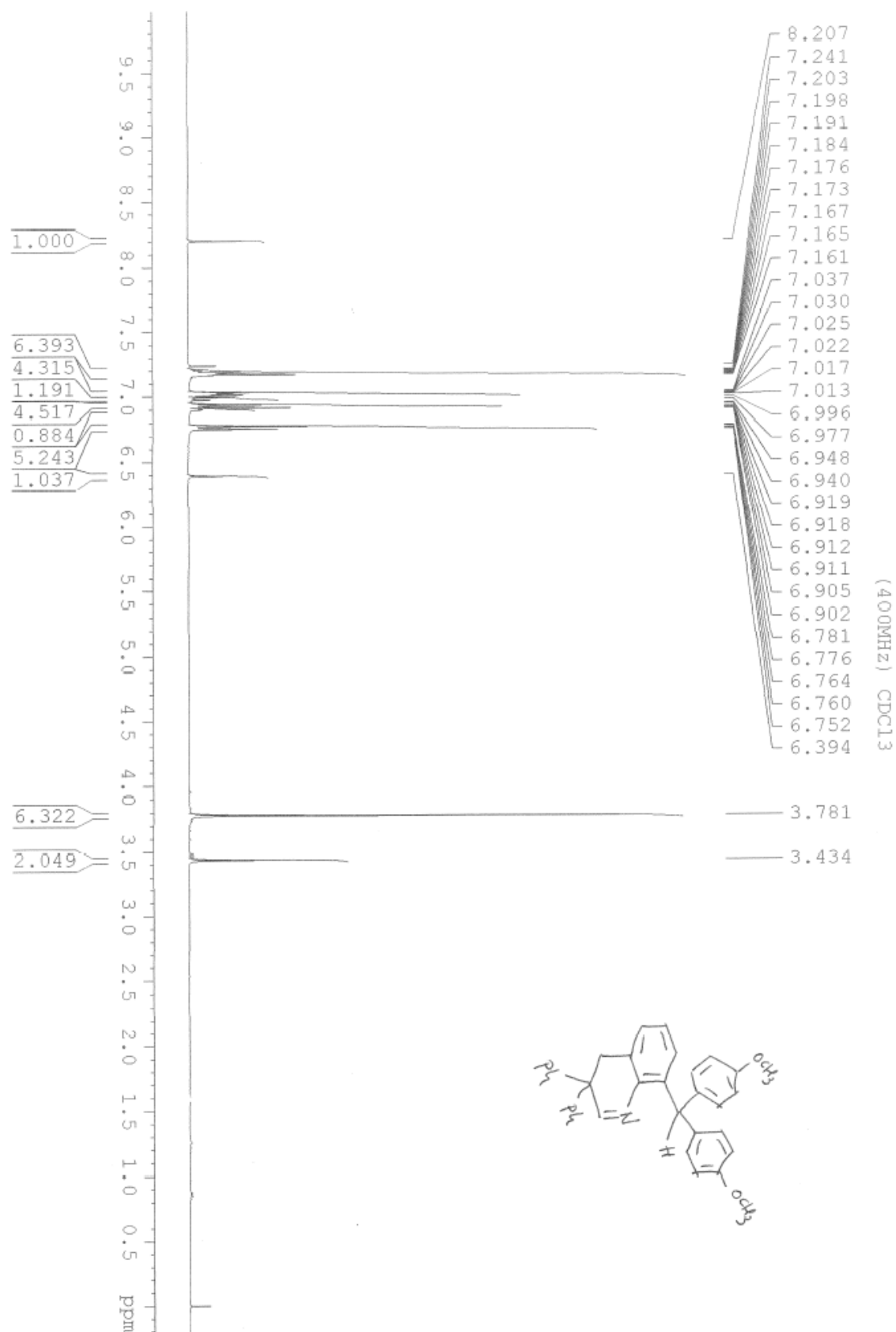
^1H NMR 22a



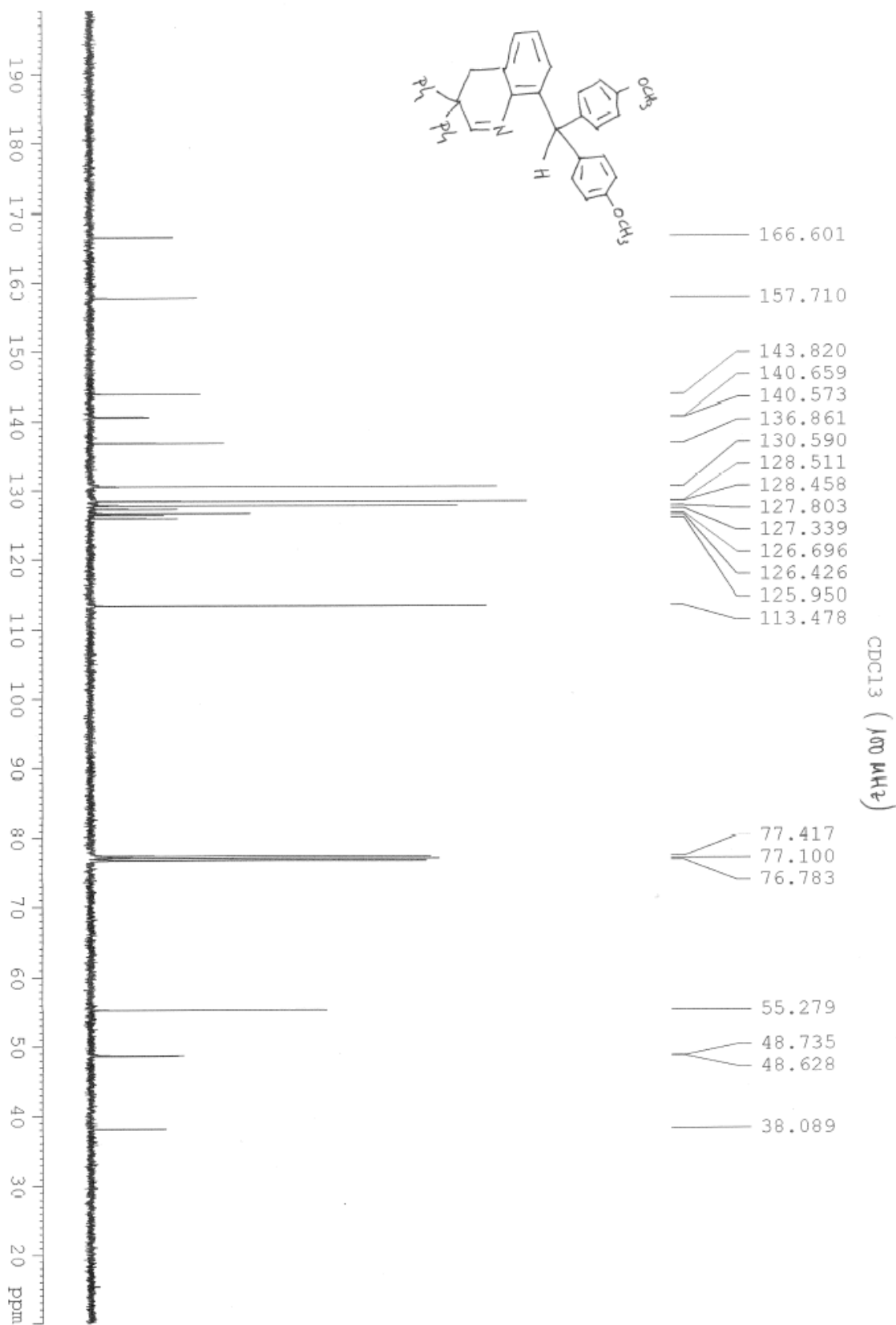
^{13}C NMR 22a



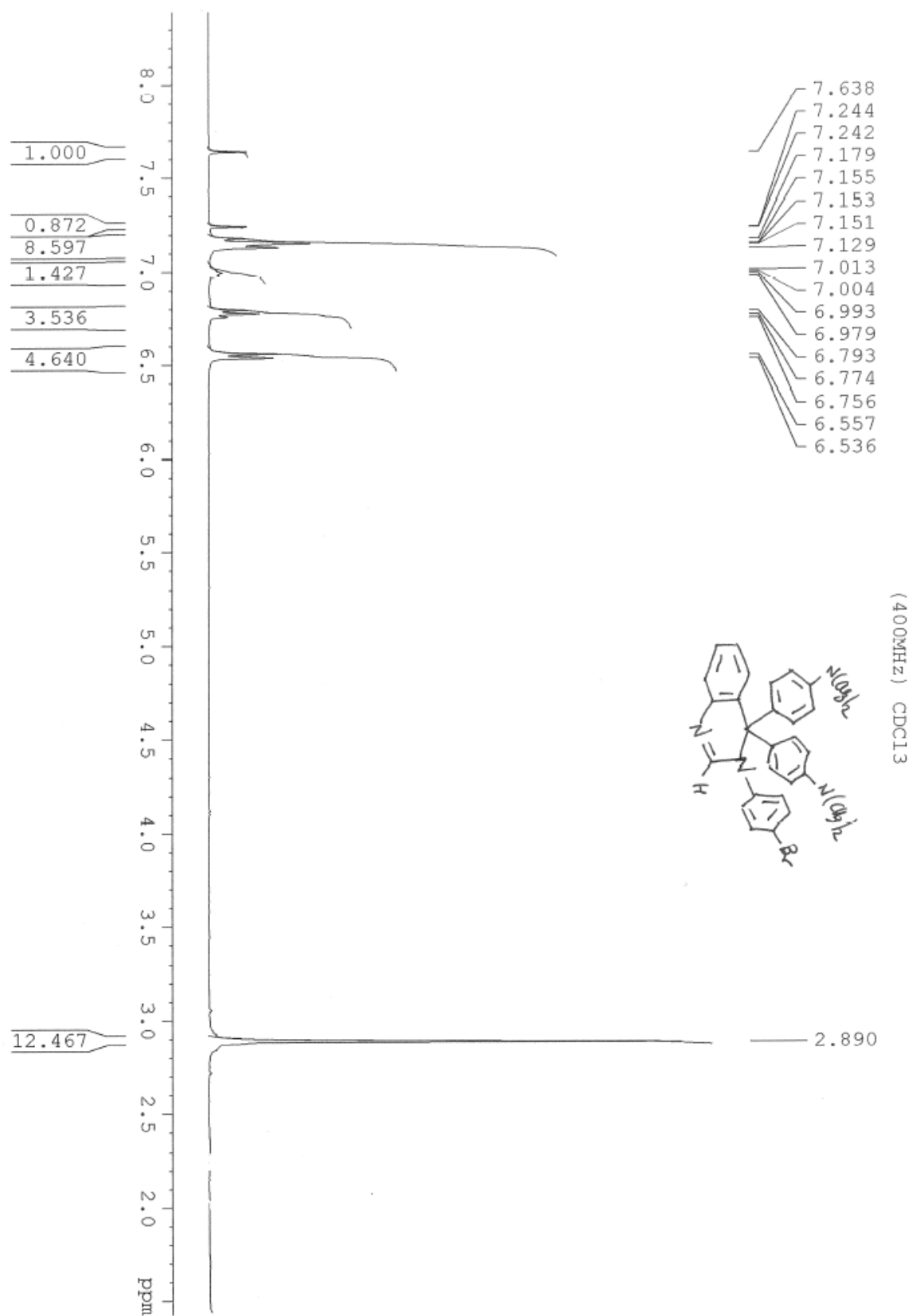
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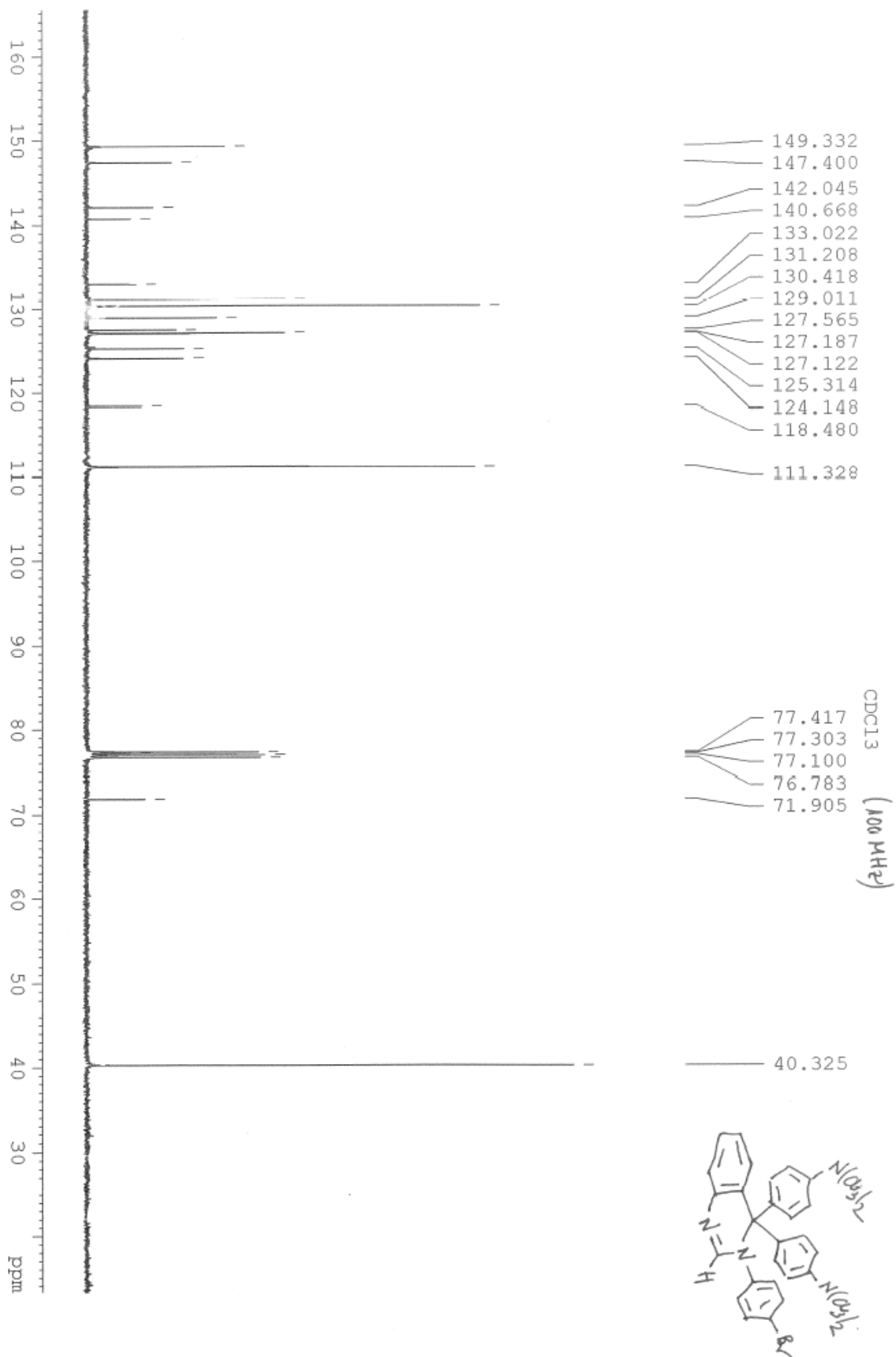
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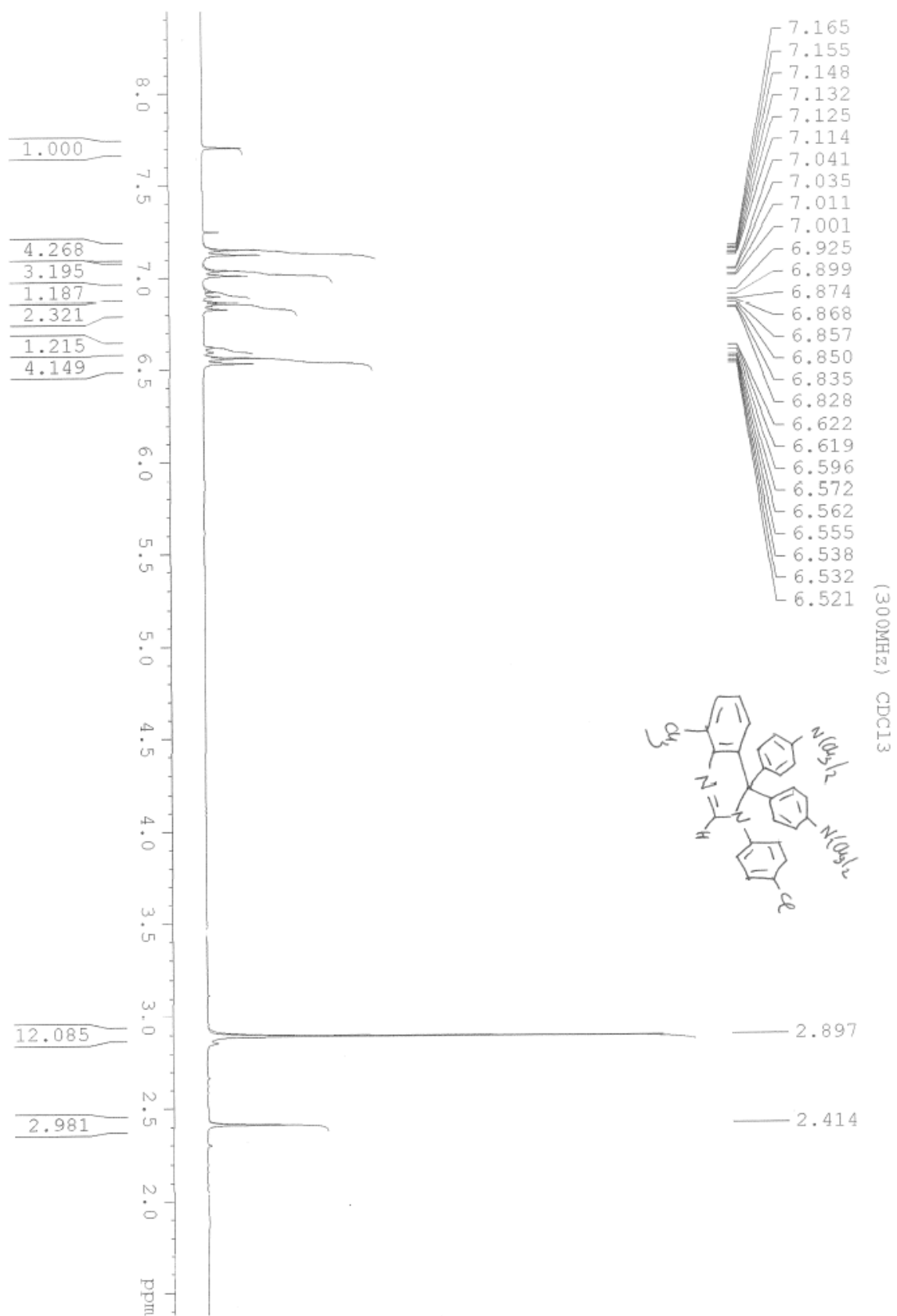
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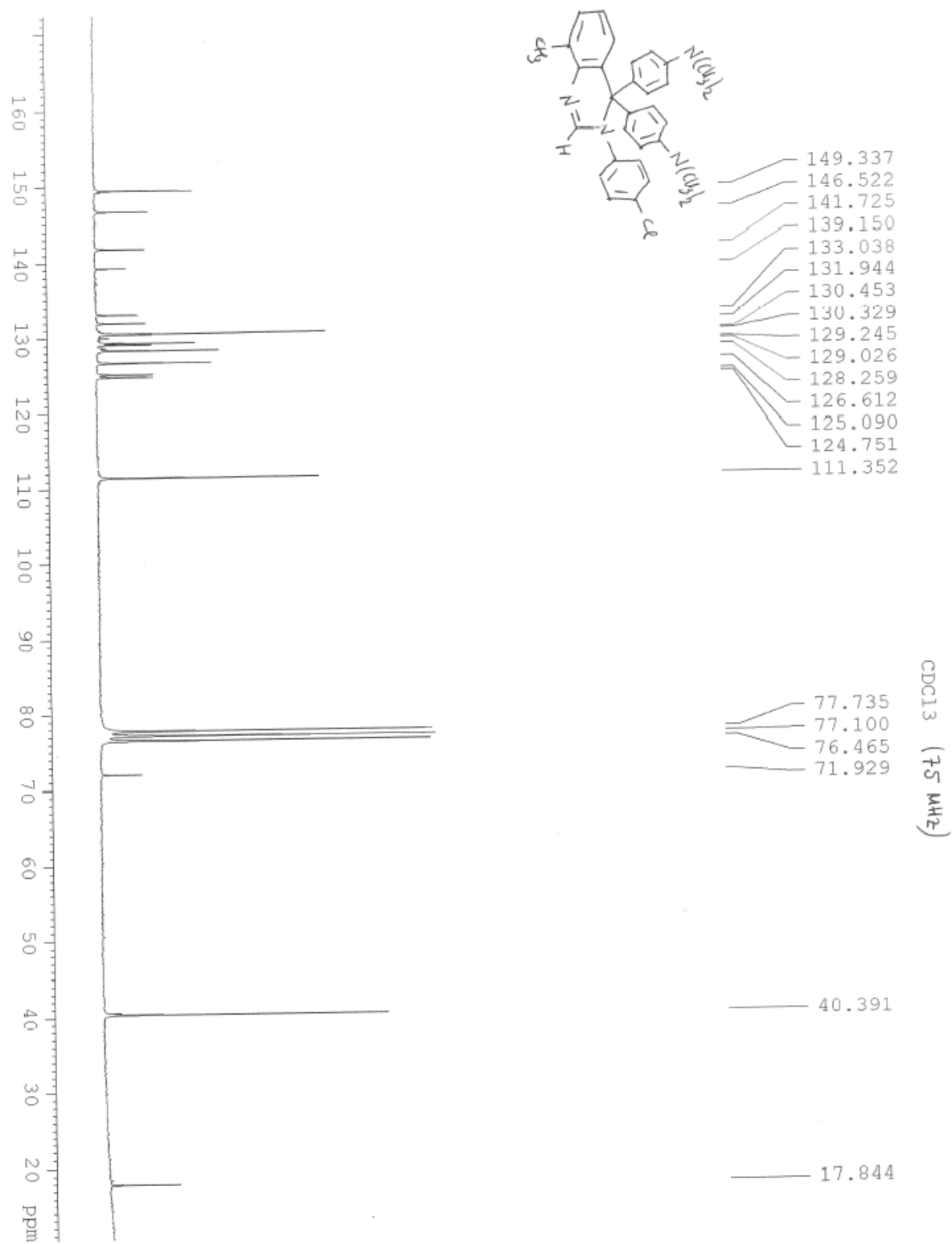
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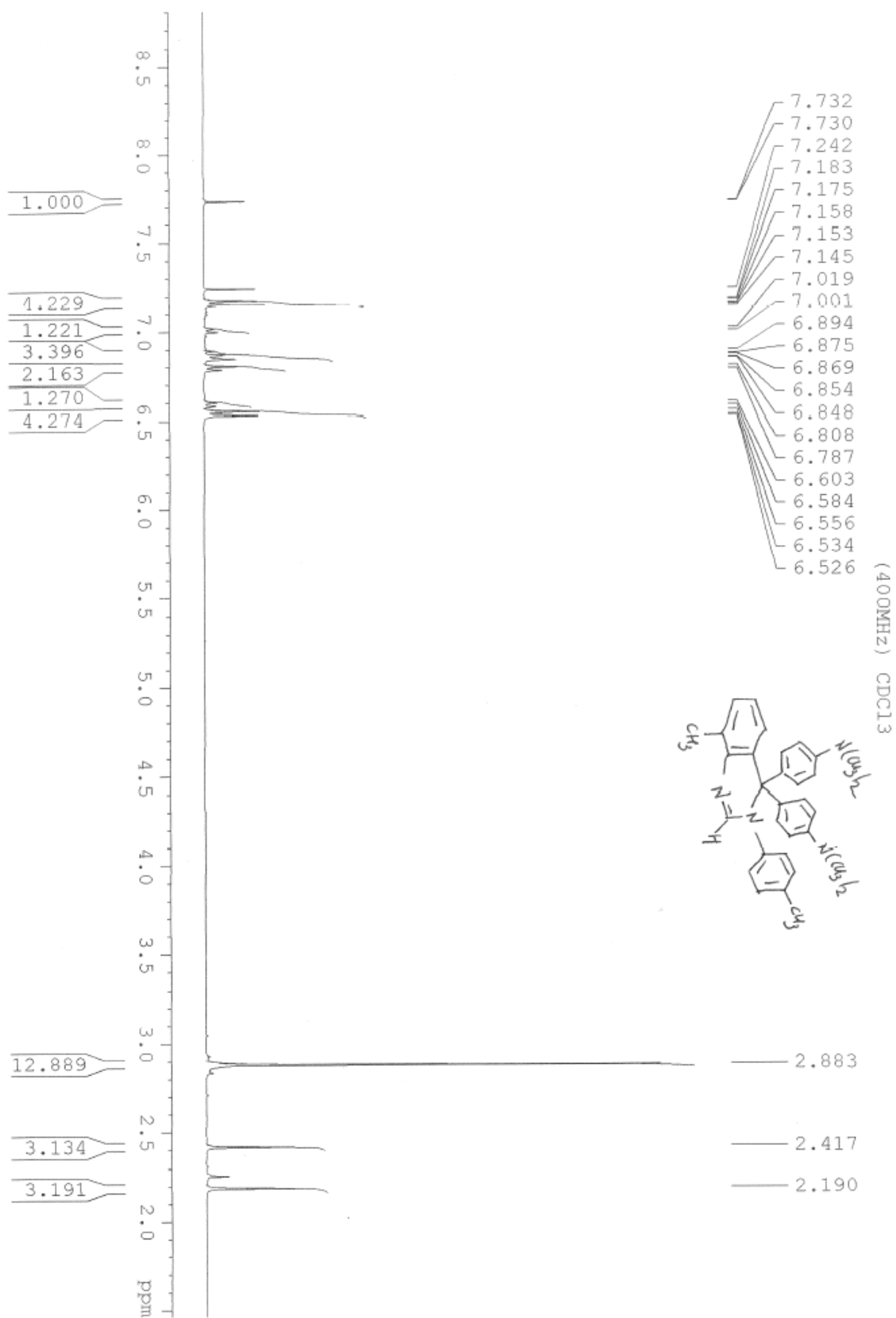
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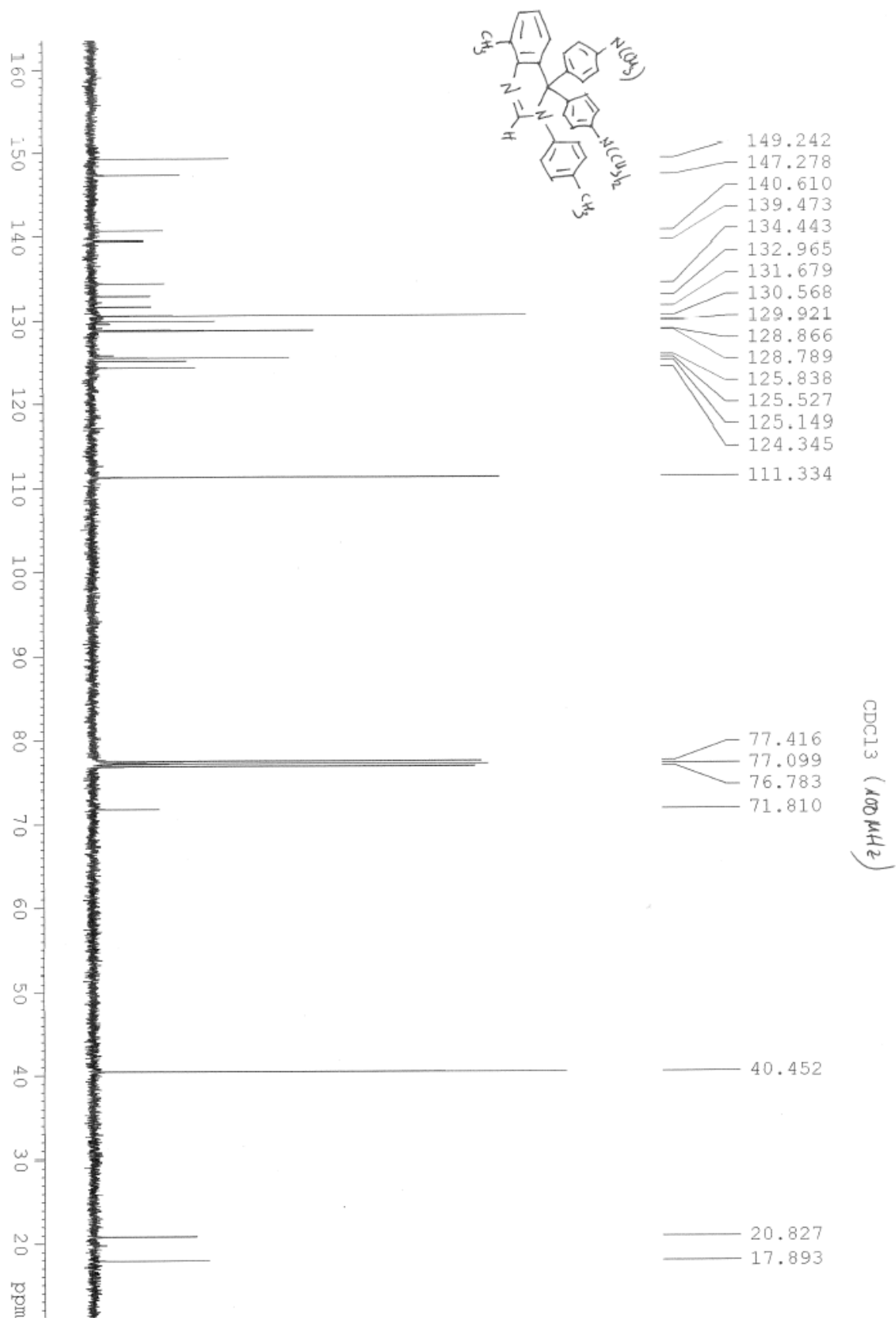
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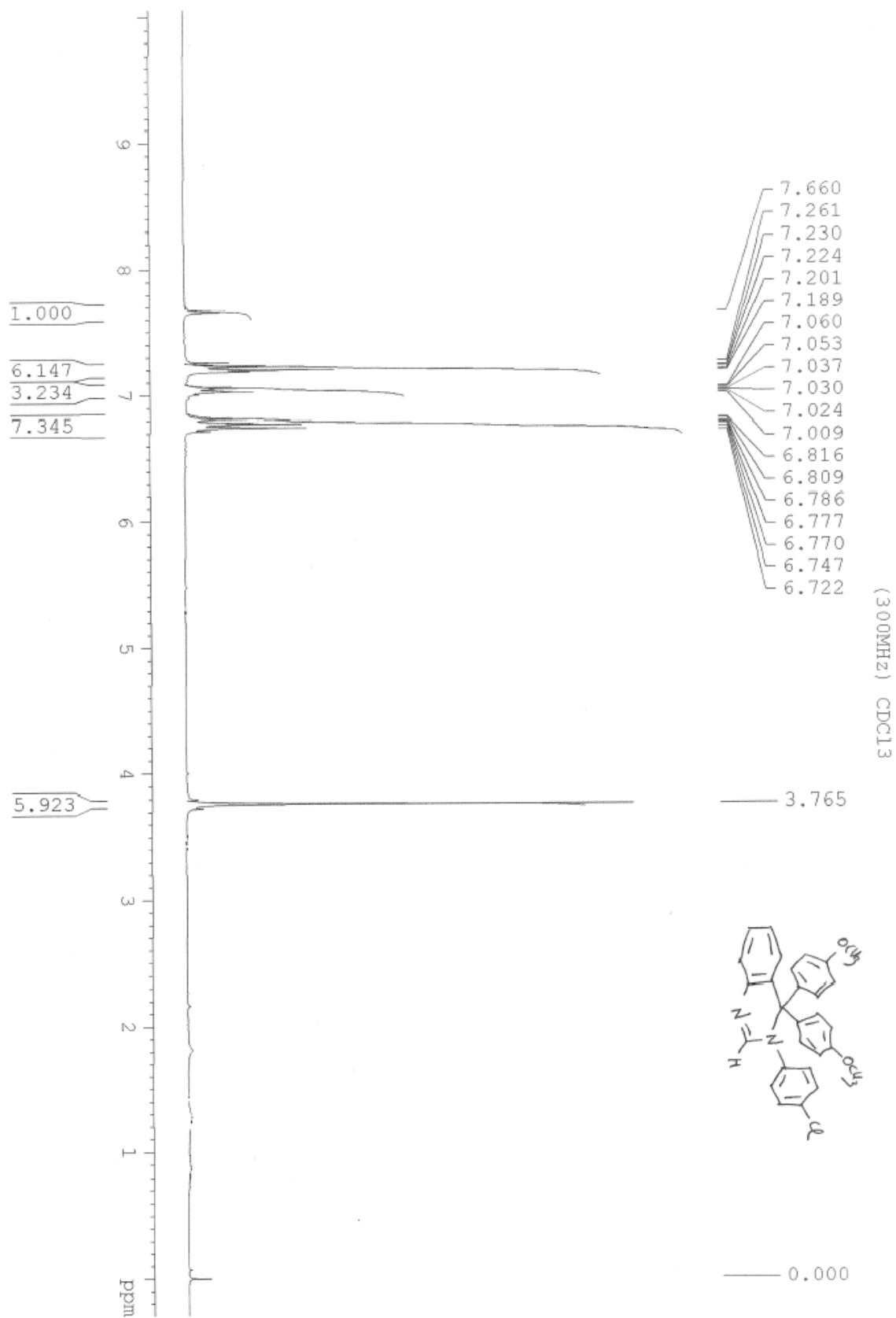
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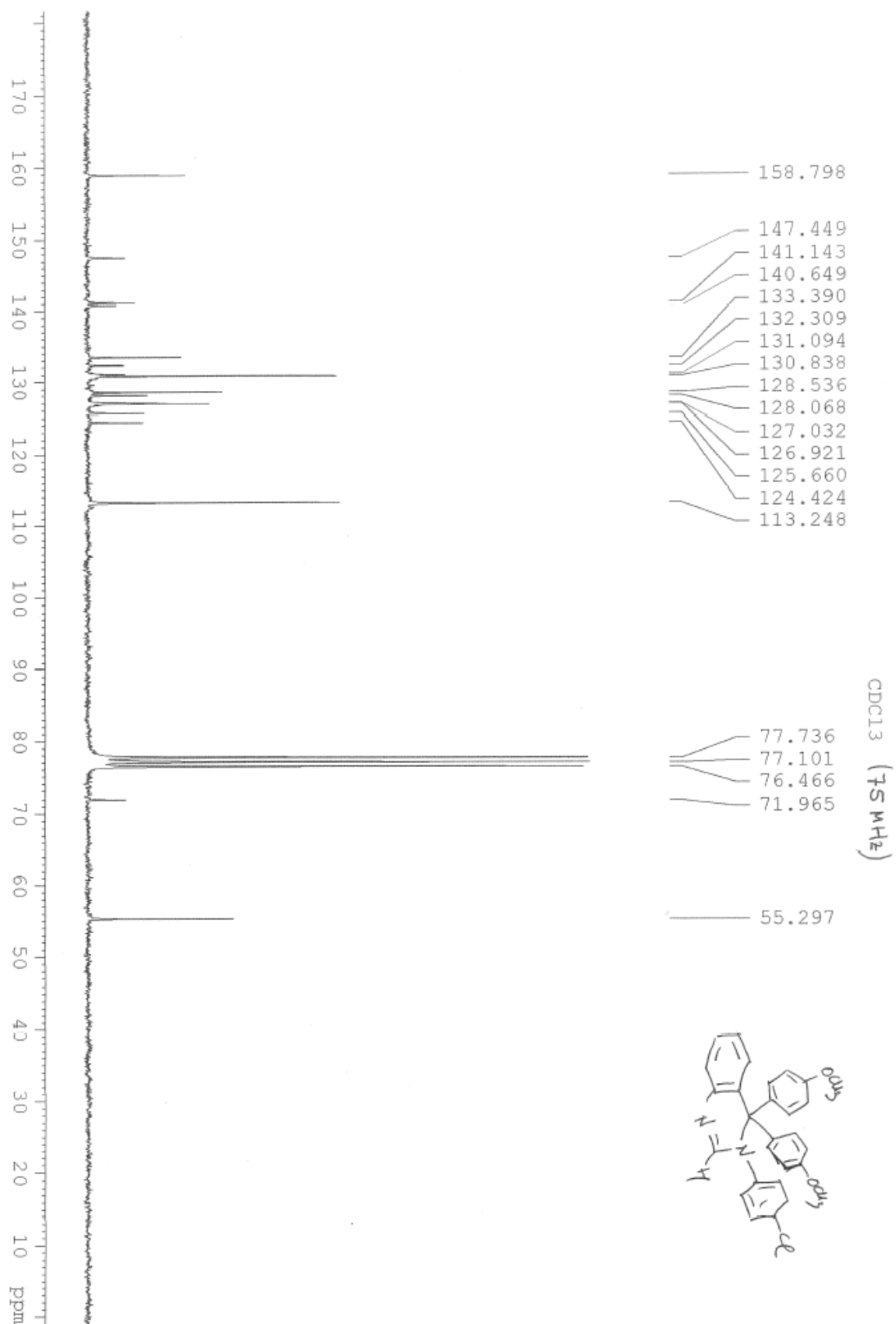
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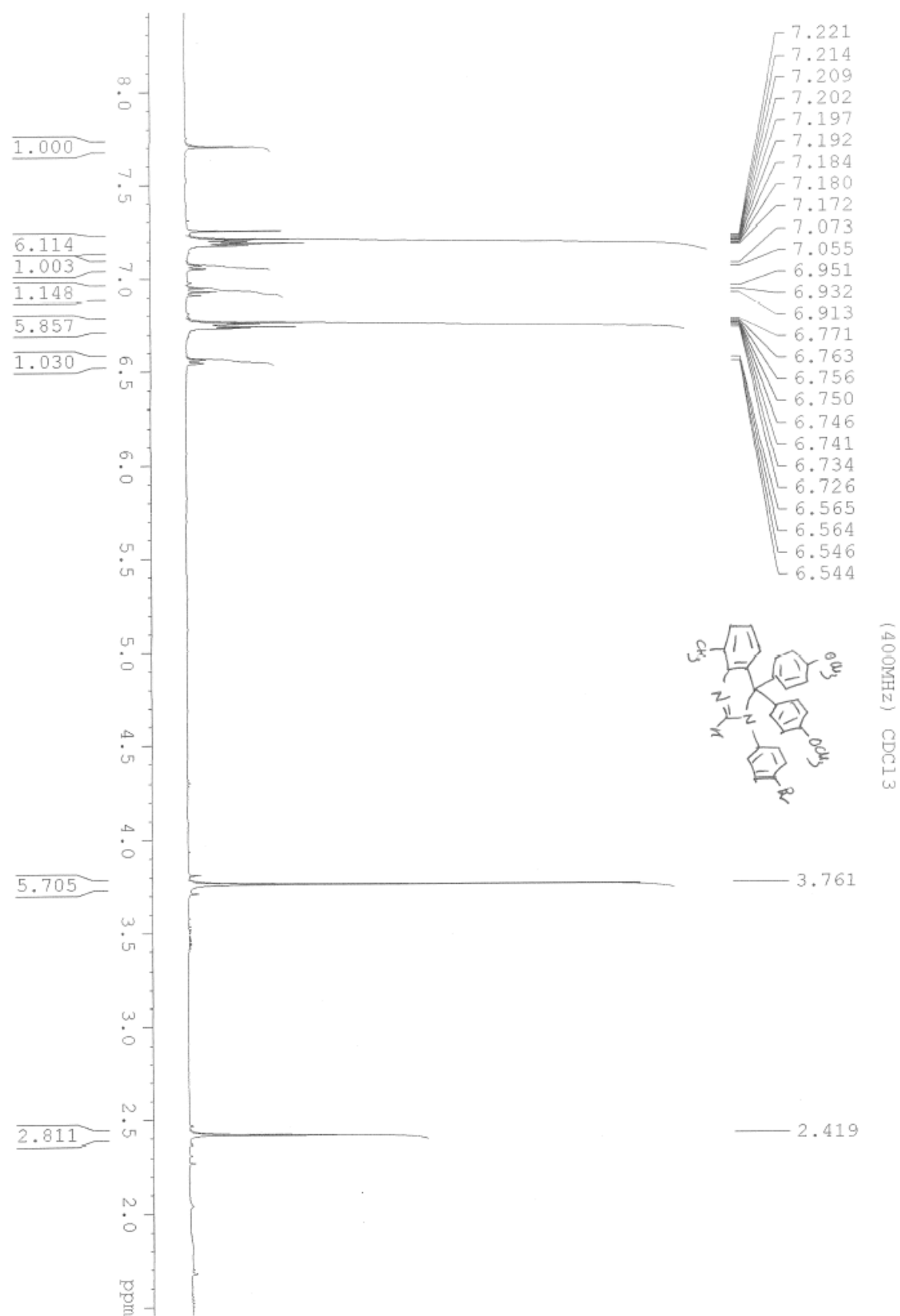
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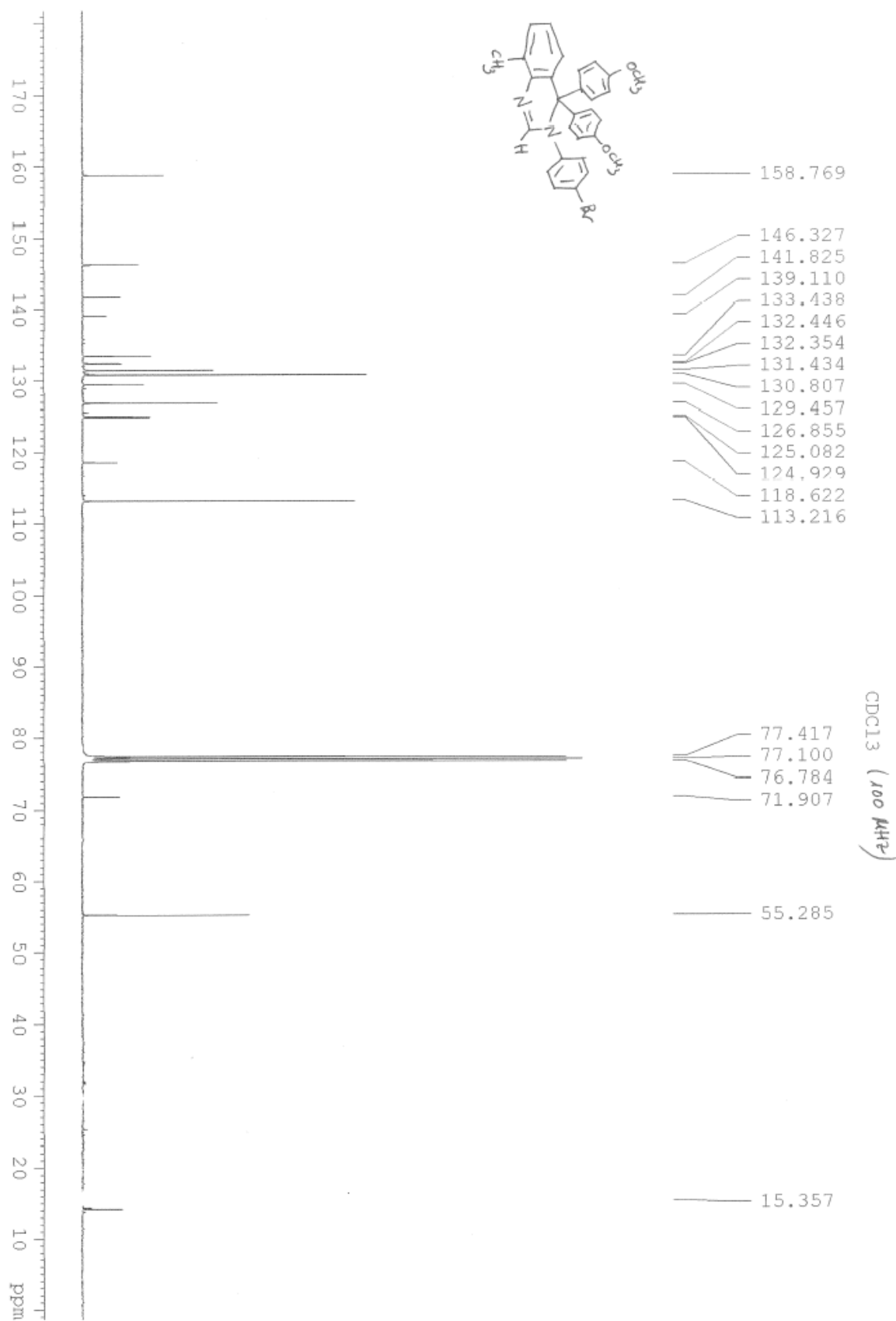
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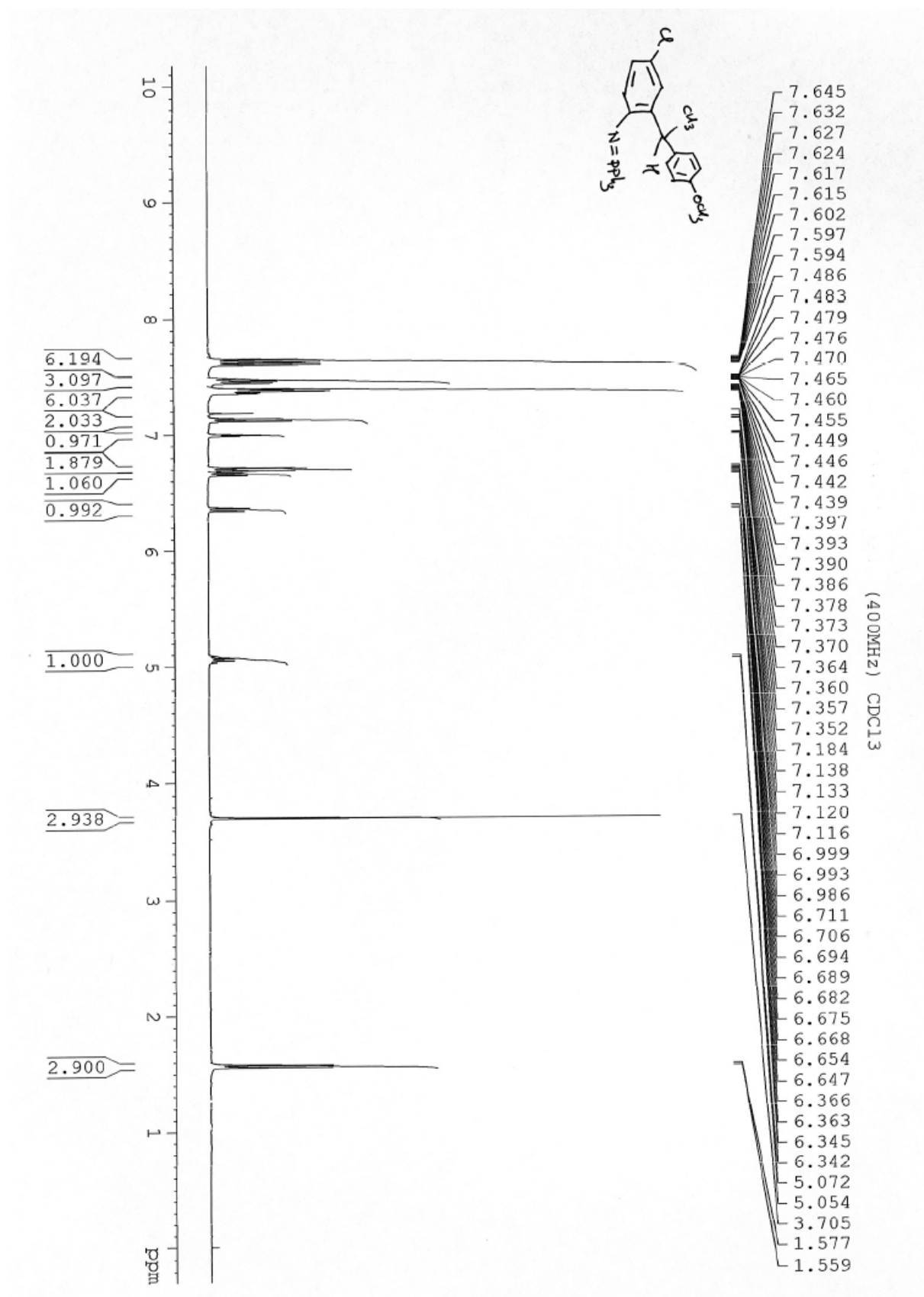
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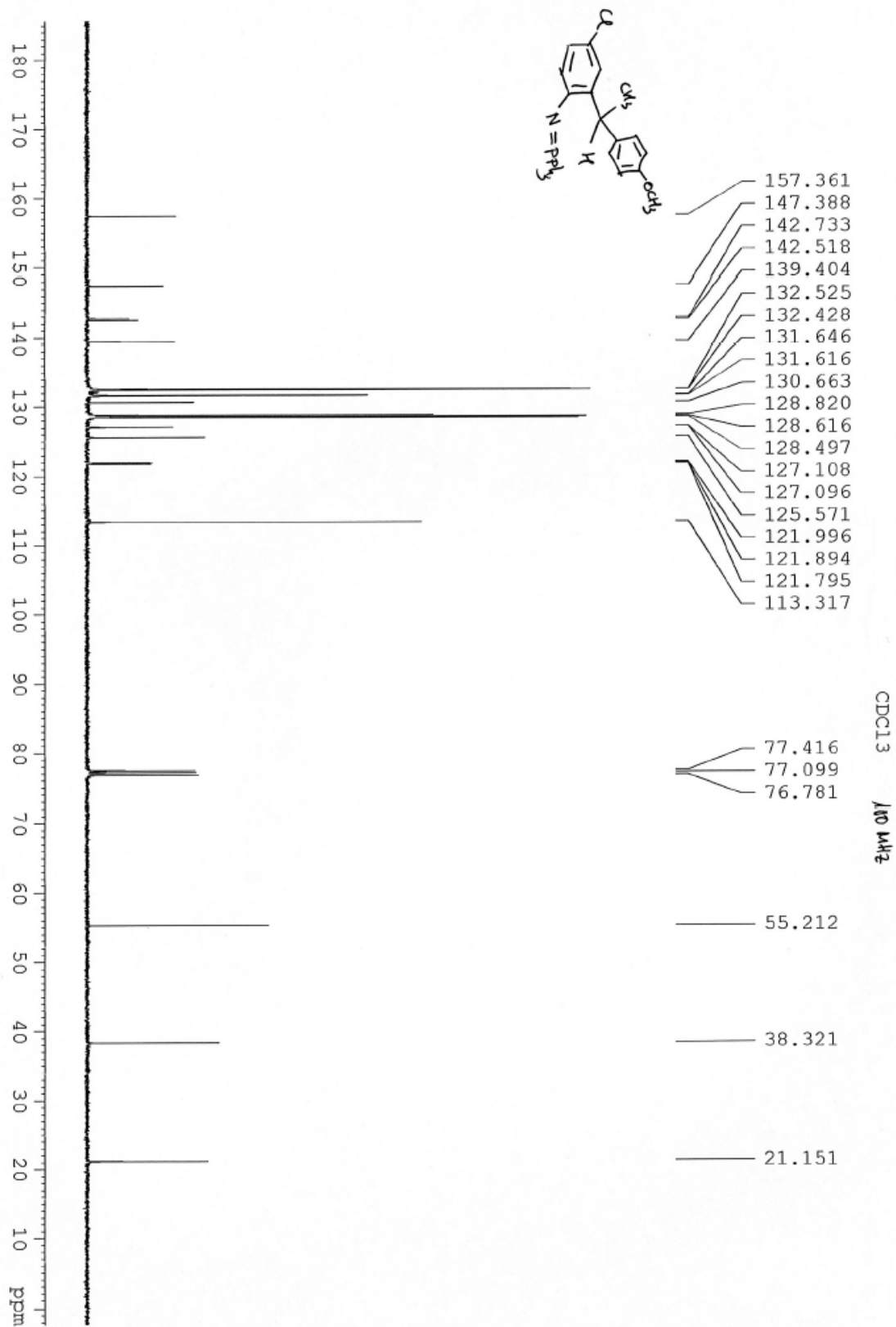
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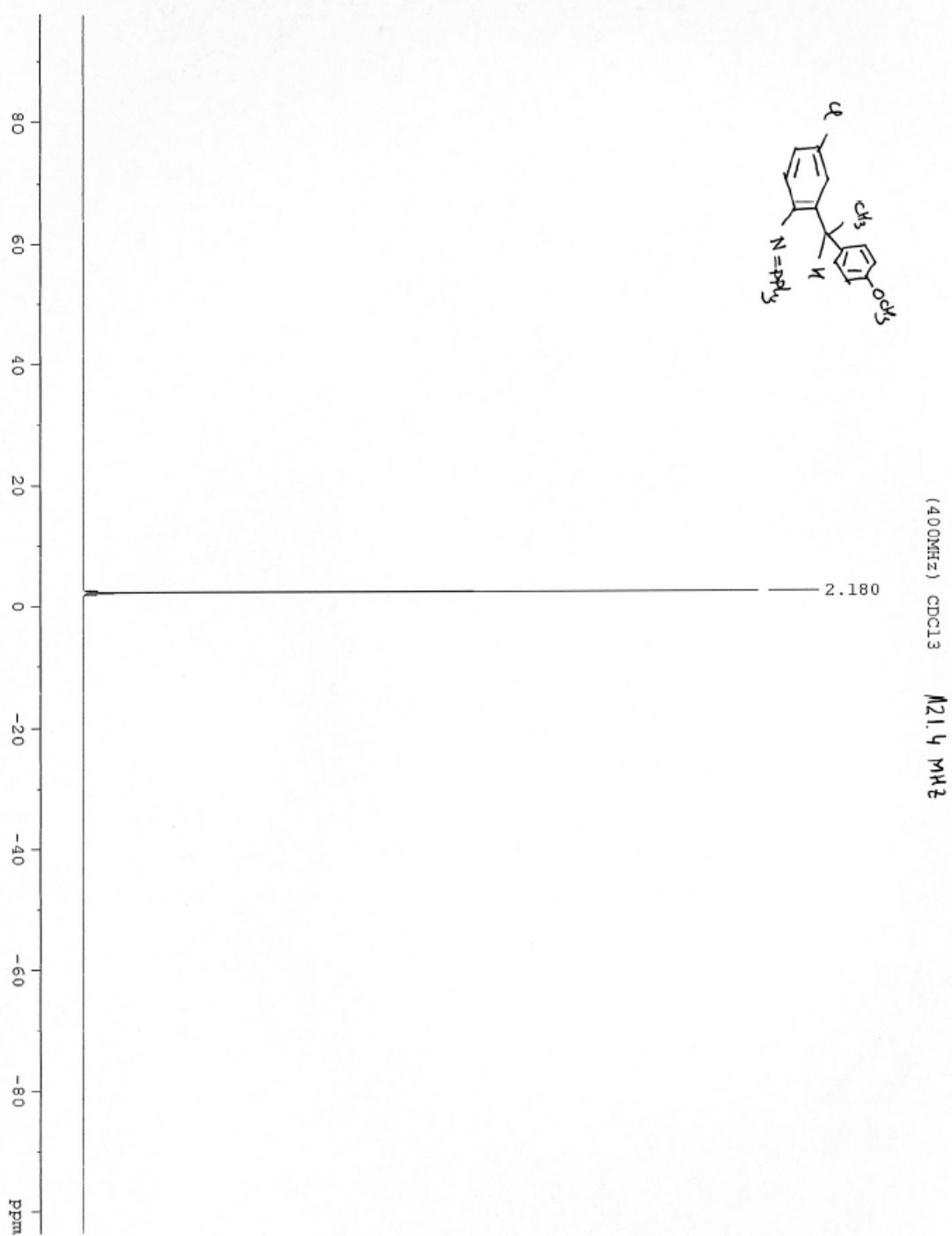
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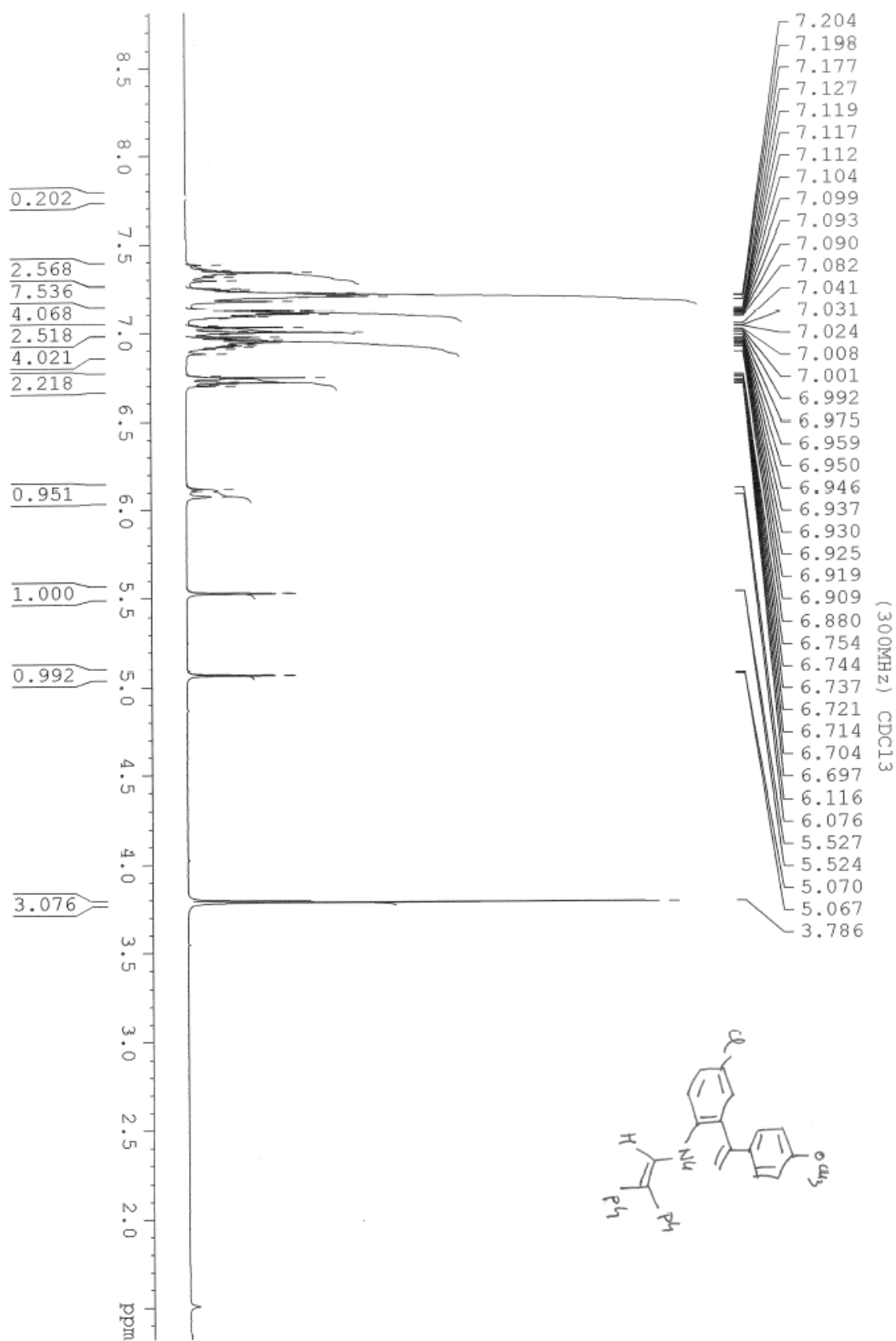
¹³C NMR 27



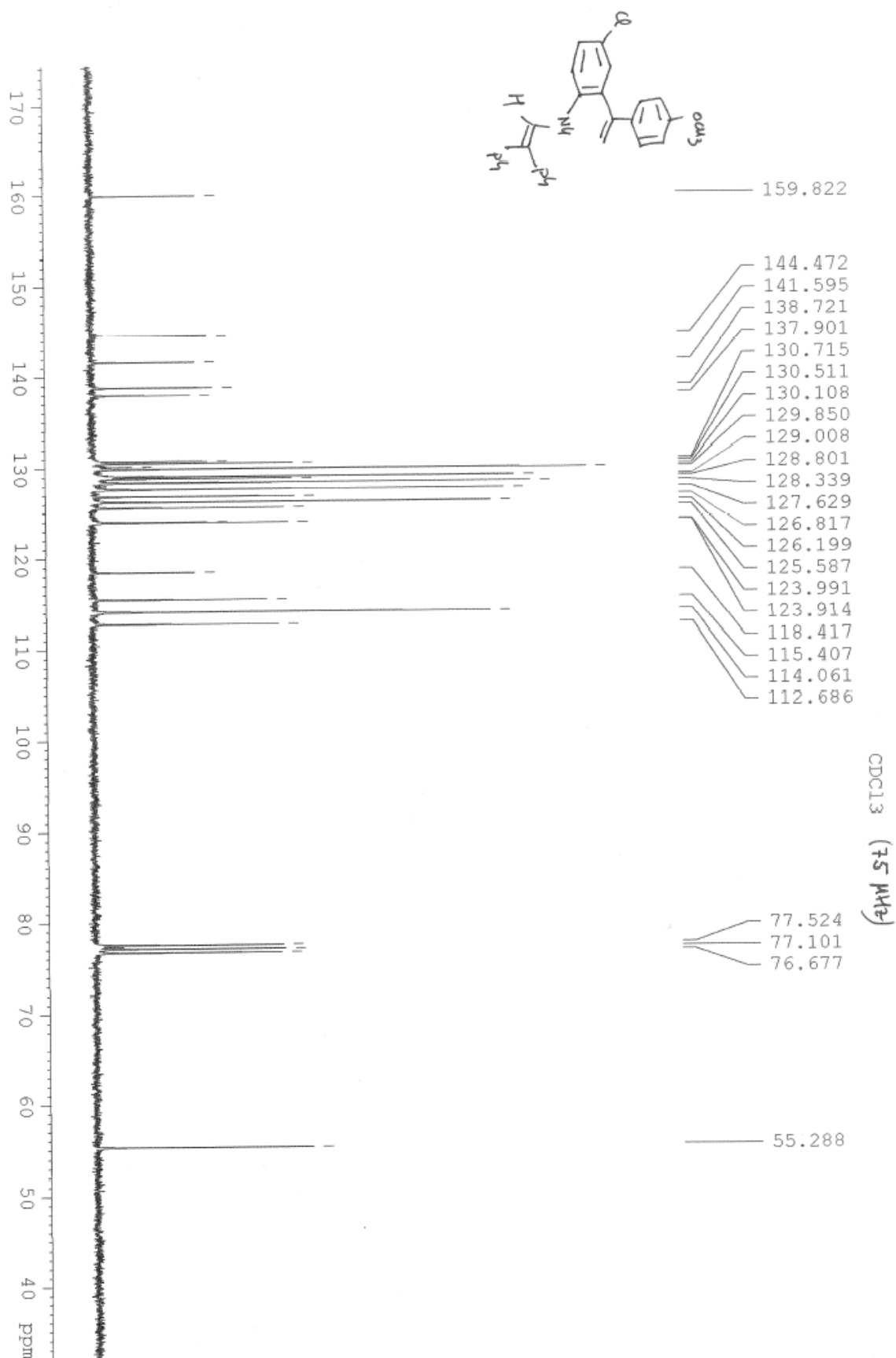
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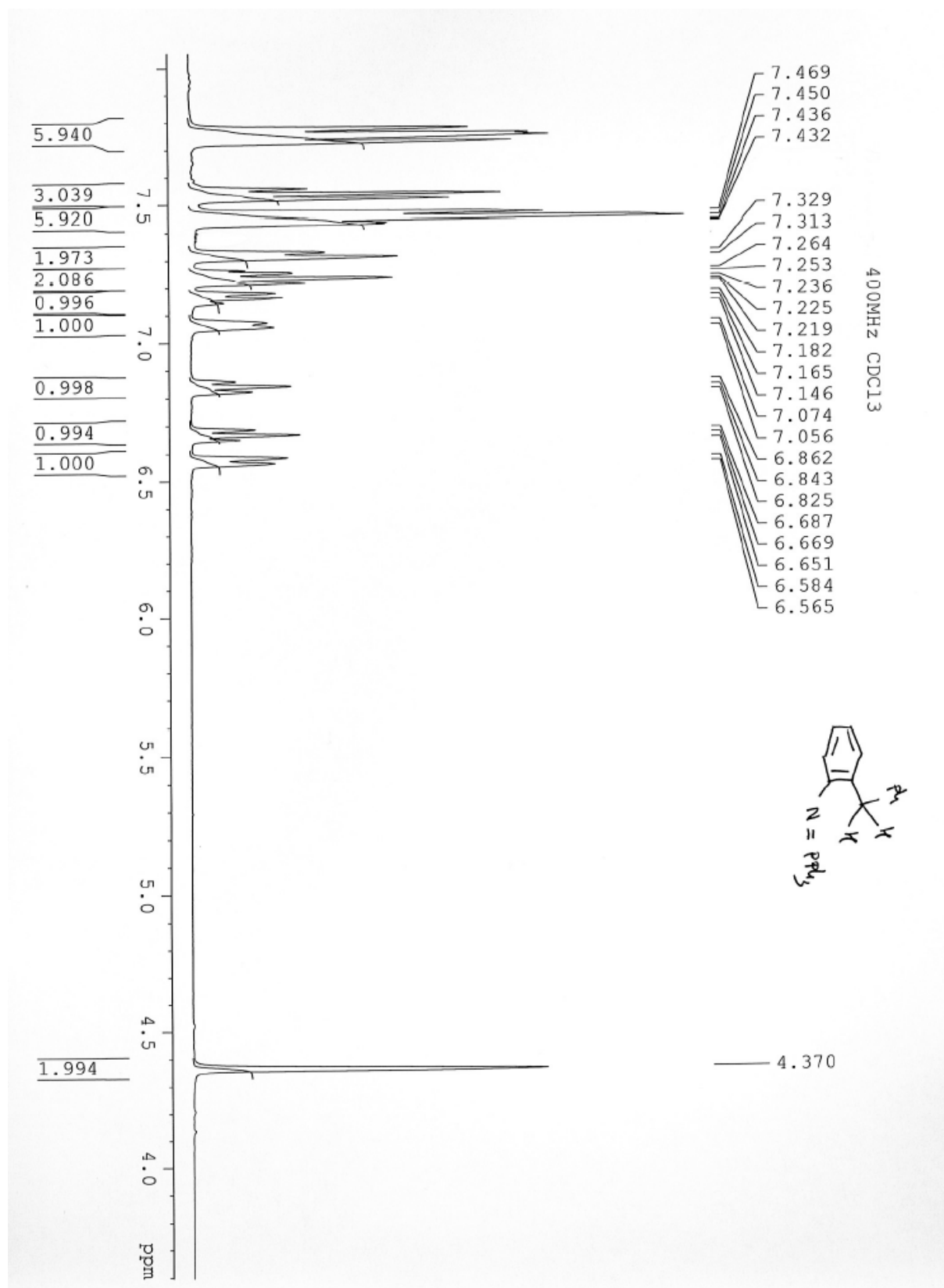
¹H NMR 30



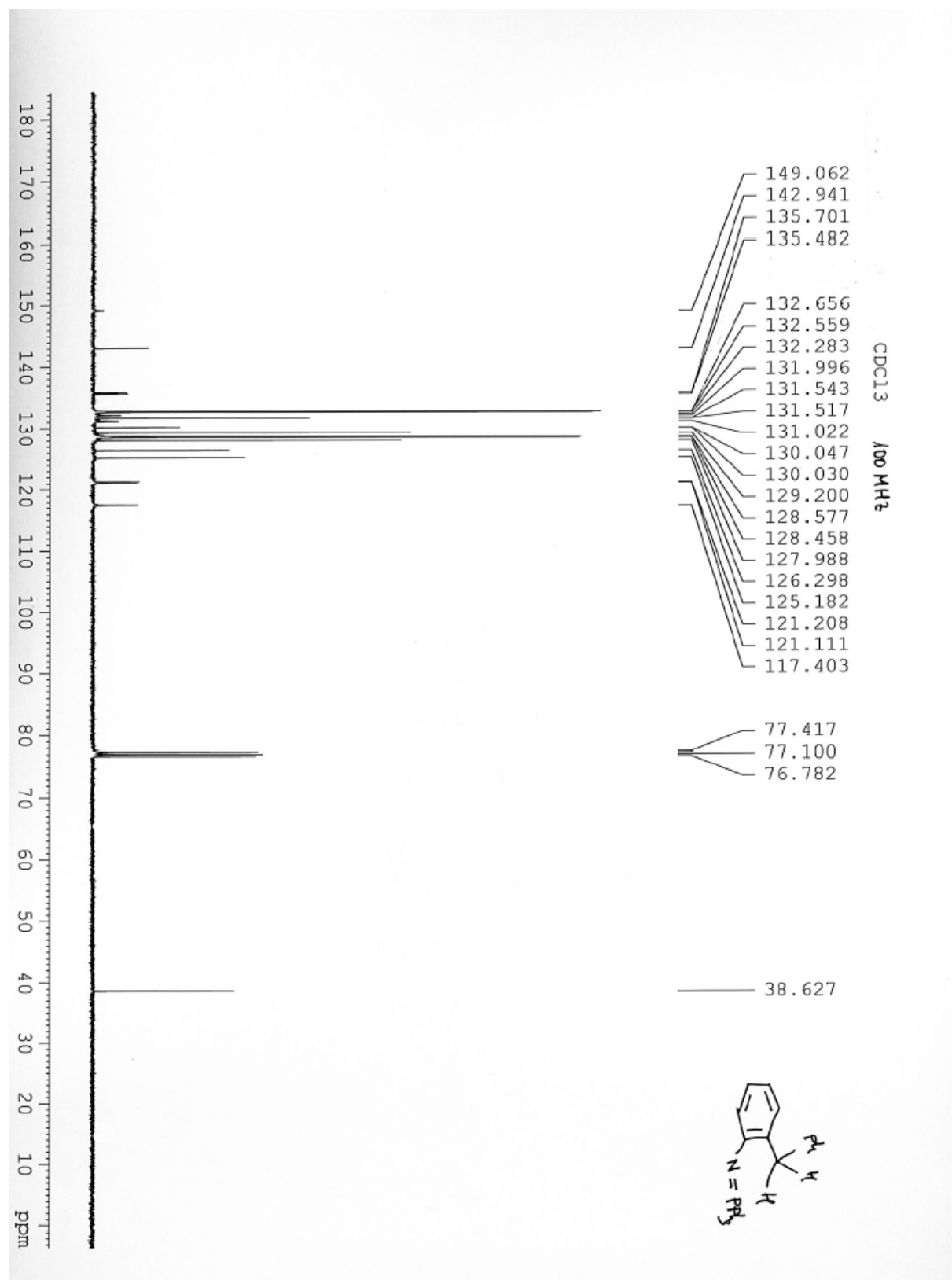
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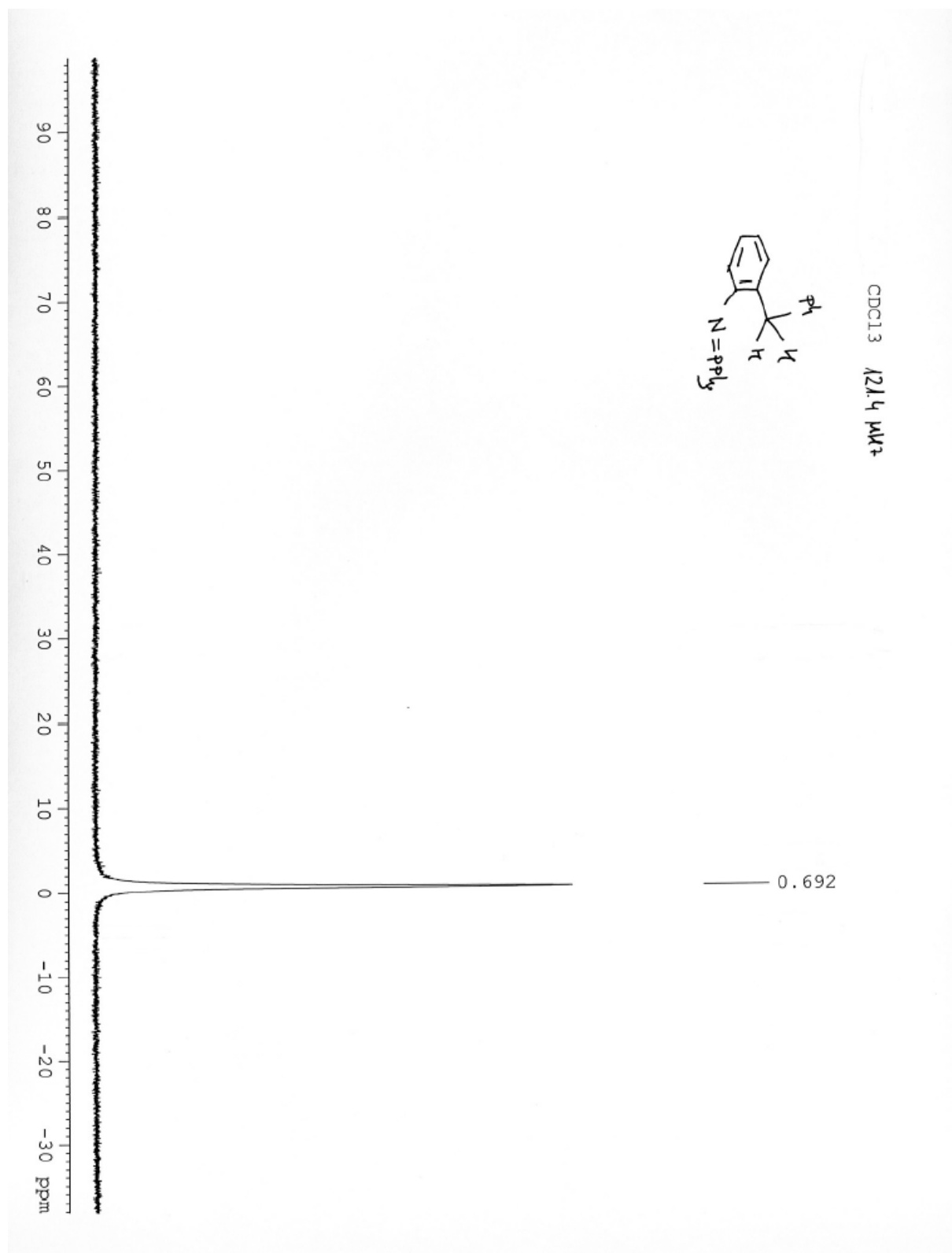
^1H NMR 32



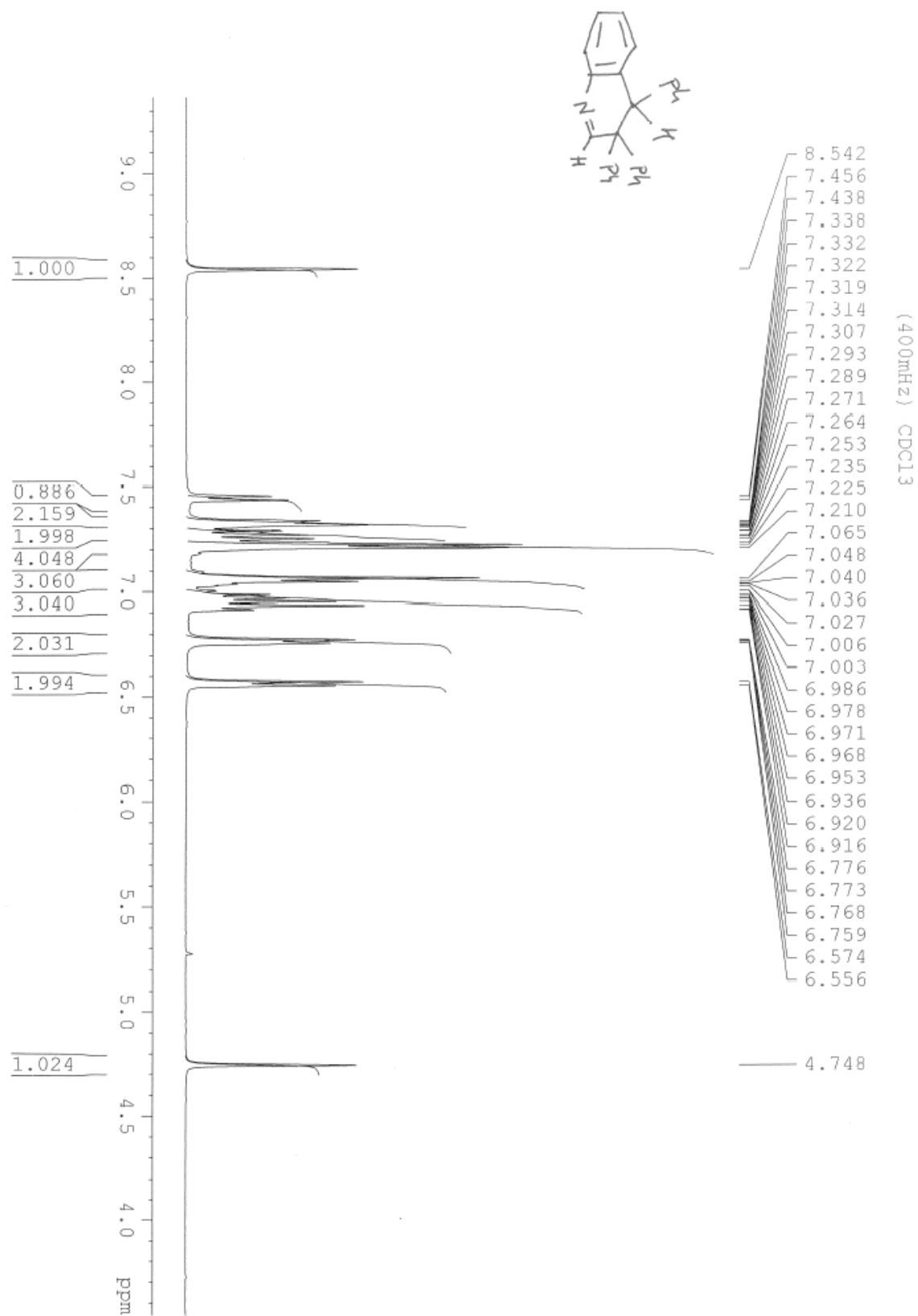
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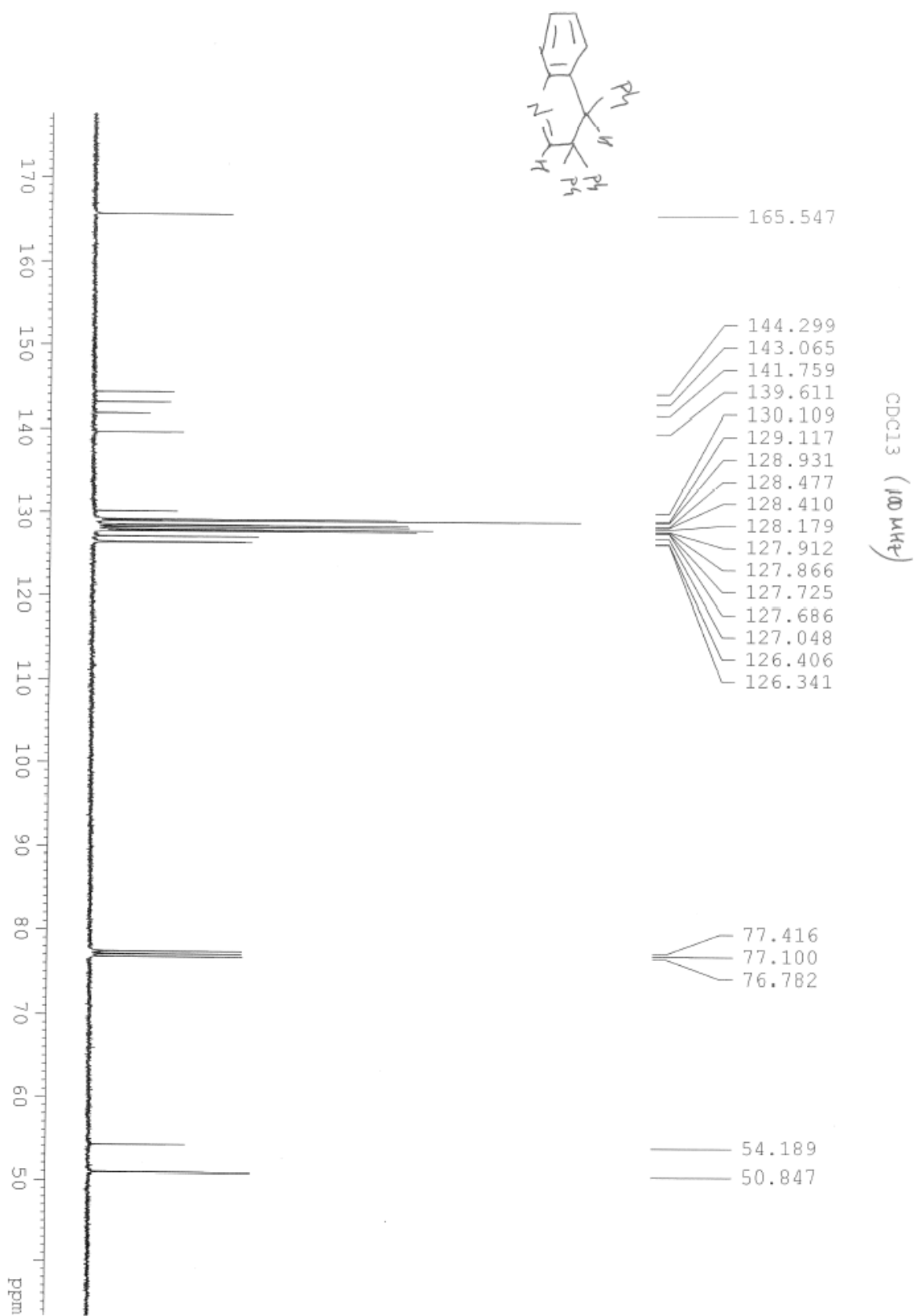
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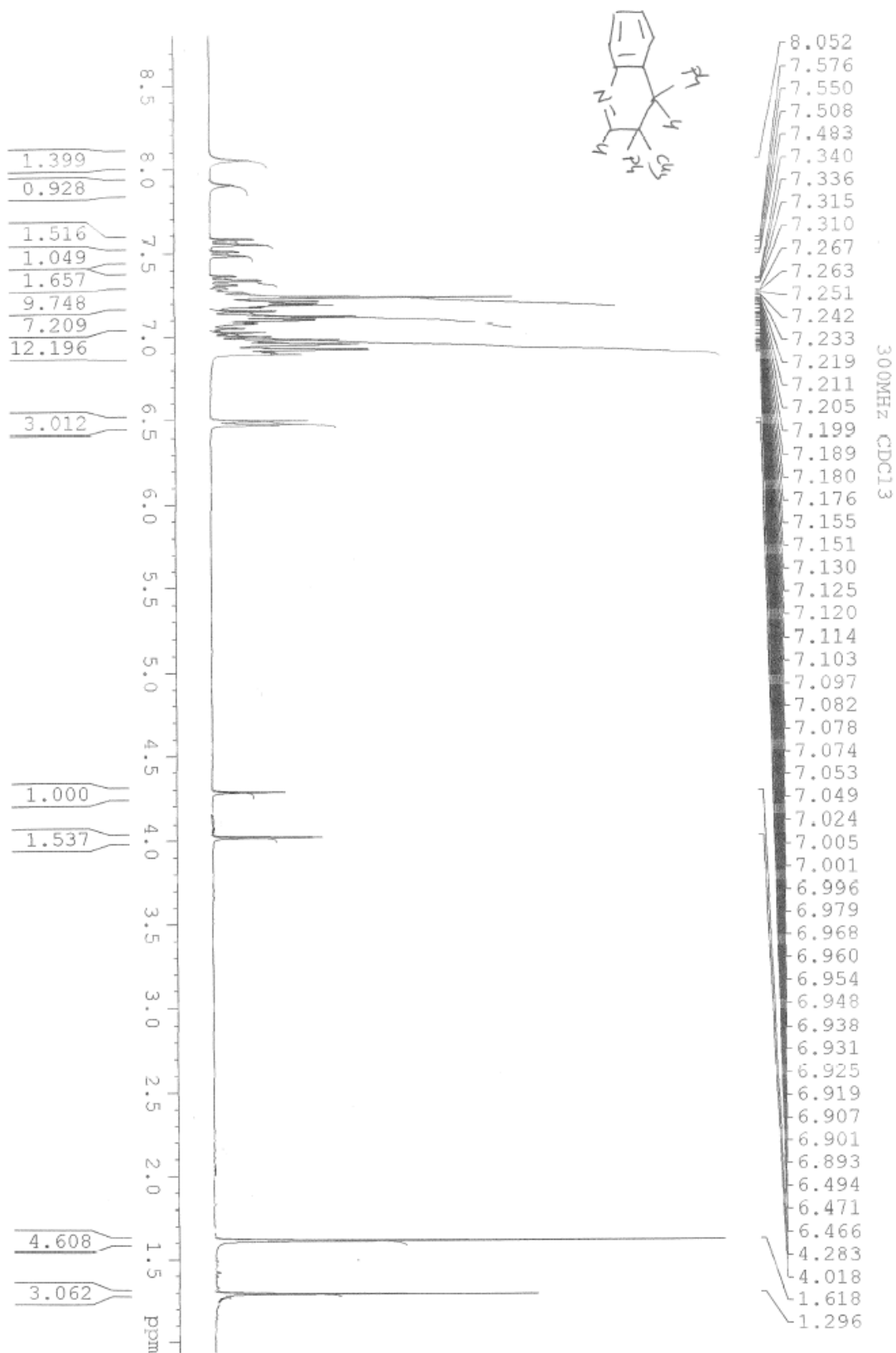
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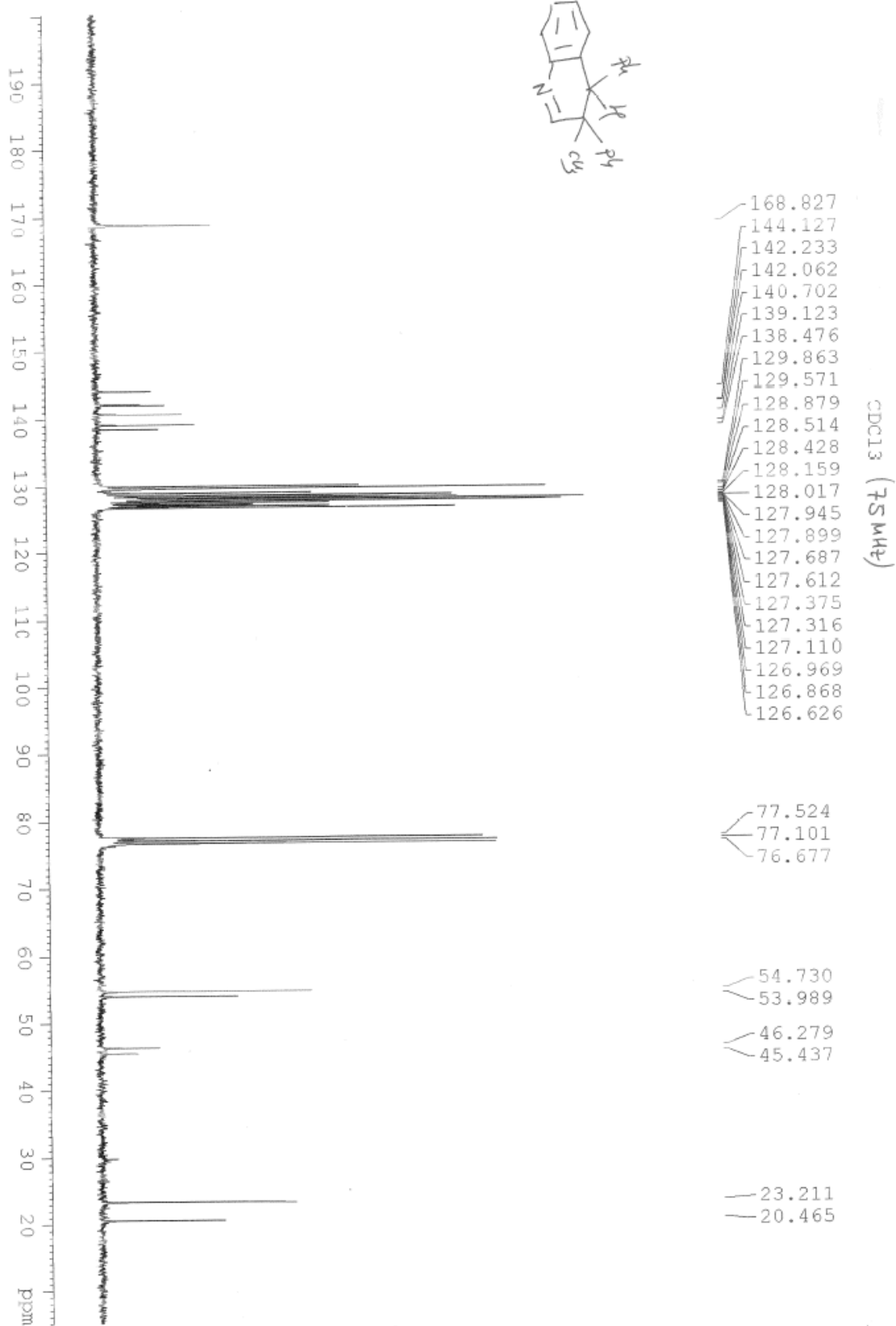
^{13}C NMR 34a



¹H NMR 34b



^{13}C NMR 34b



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