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(54) **FLEXIBLE VESSEL**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

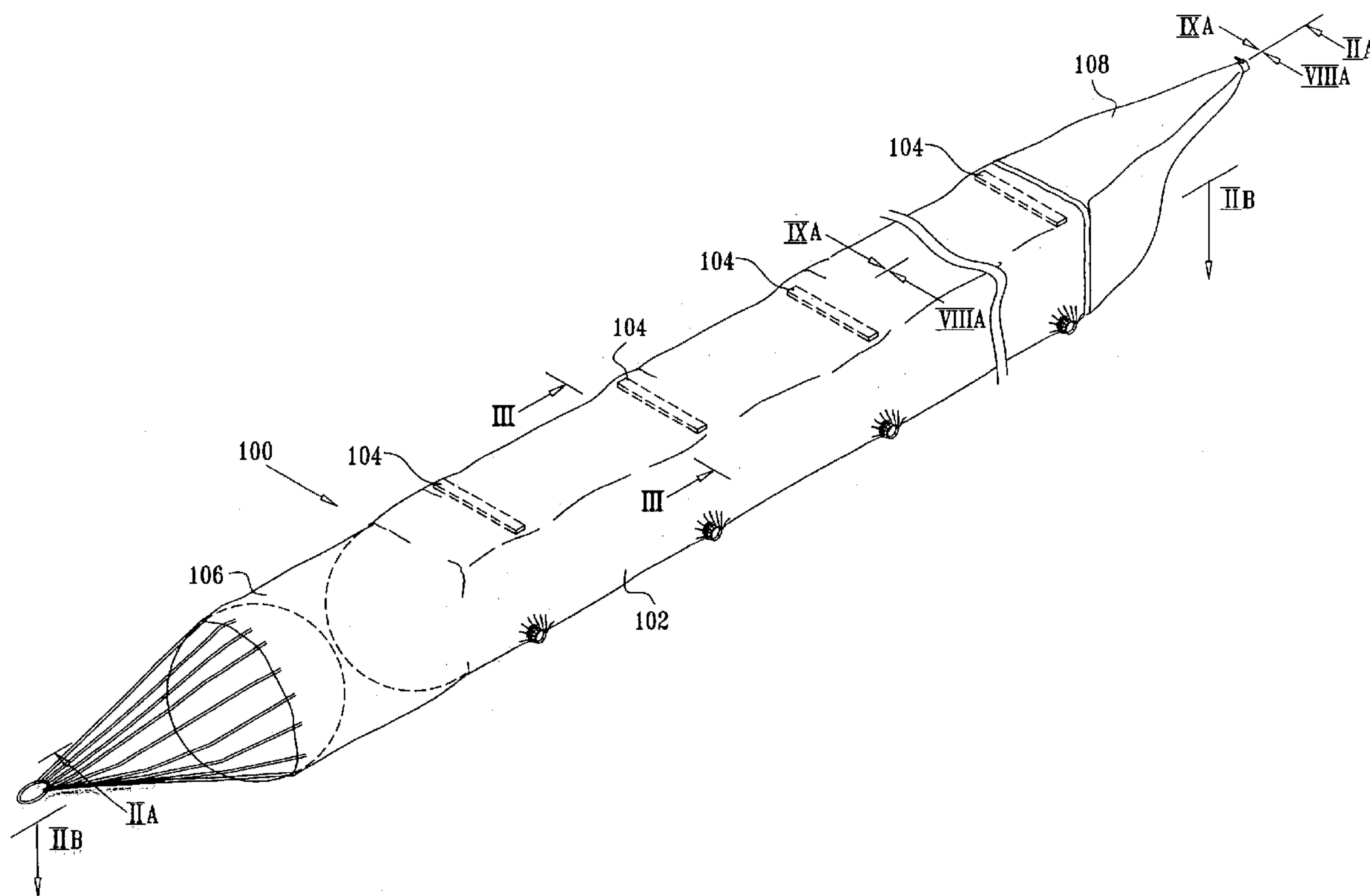
An apparatus for sea transport of fresh water including at least one fresh water enclosure communicating with at least one fresh water loading/unloading valve, a plurality of at least partially flexible, collapsible sea water enclosures disposed within each of the at least one fresh water enclosure and at least one opening communicating with each one of the plurality of sea water enclosures for selectably allowing sea water to fill the plurality of sea water enclosures, thereby causing the fresh water to be expelled against the force of gravity from the at least one fresh water enclosure.

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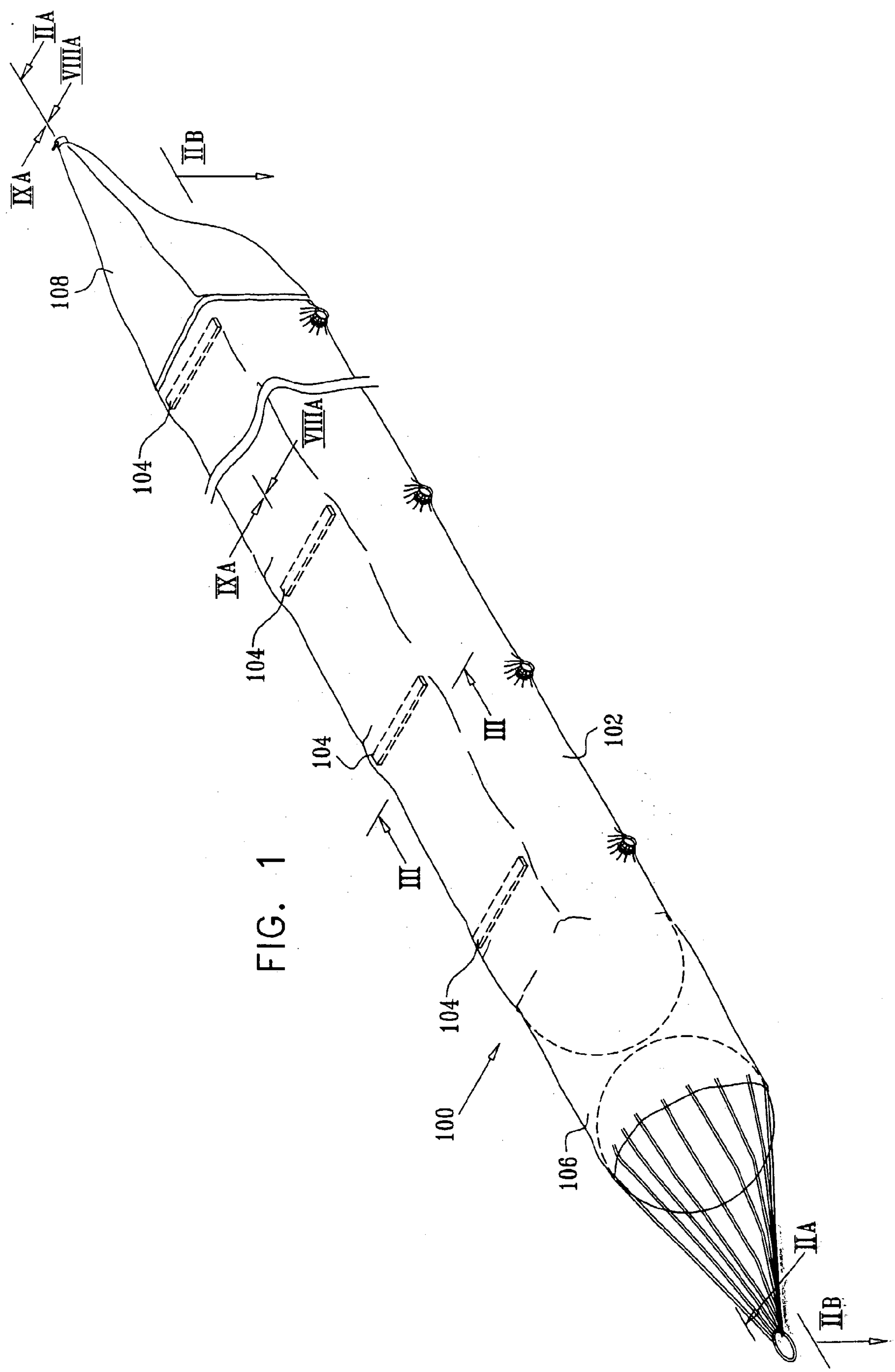


FIG. 2A

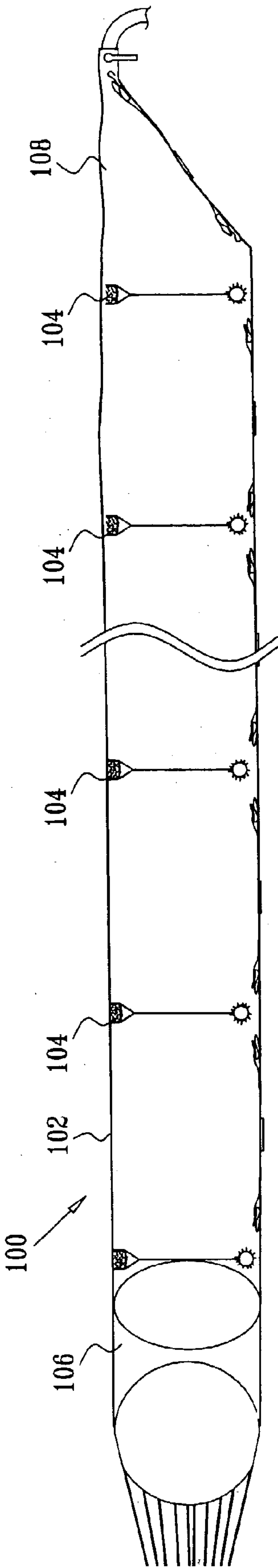
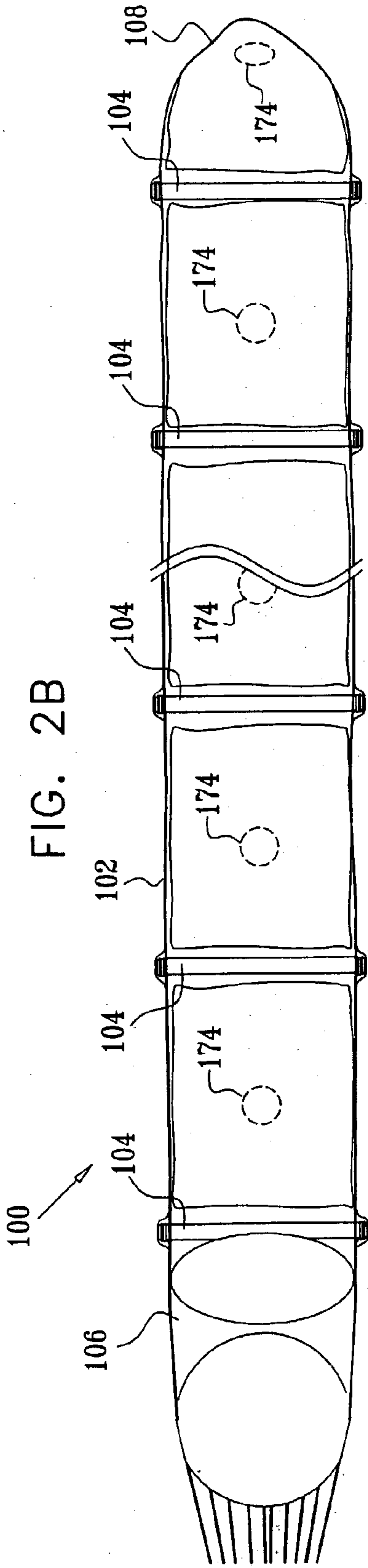


FIG. 2B



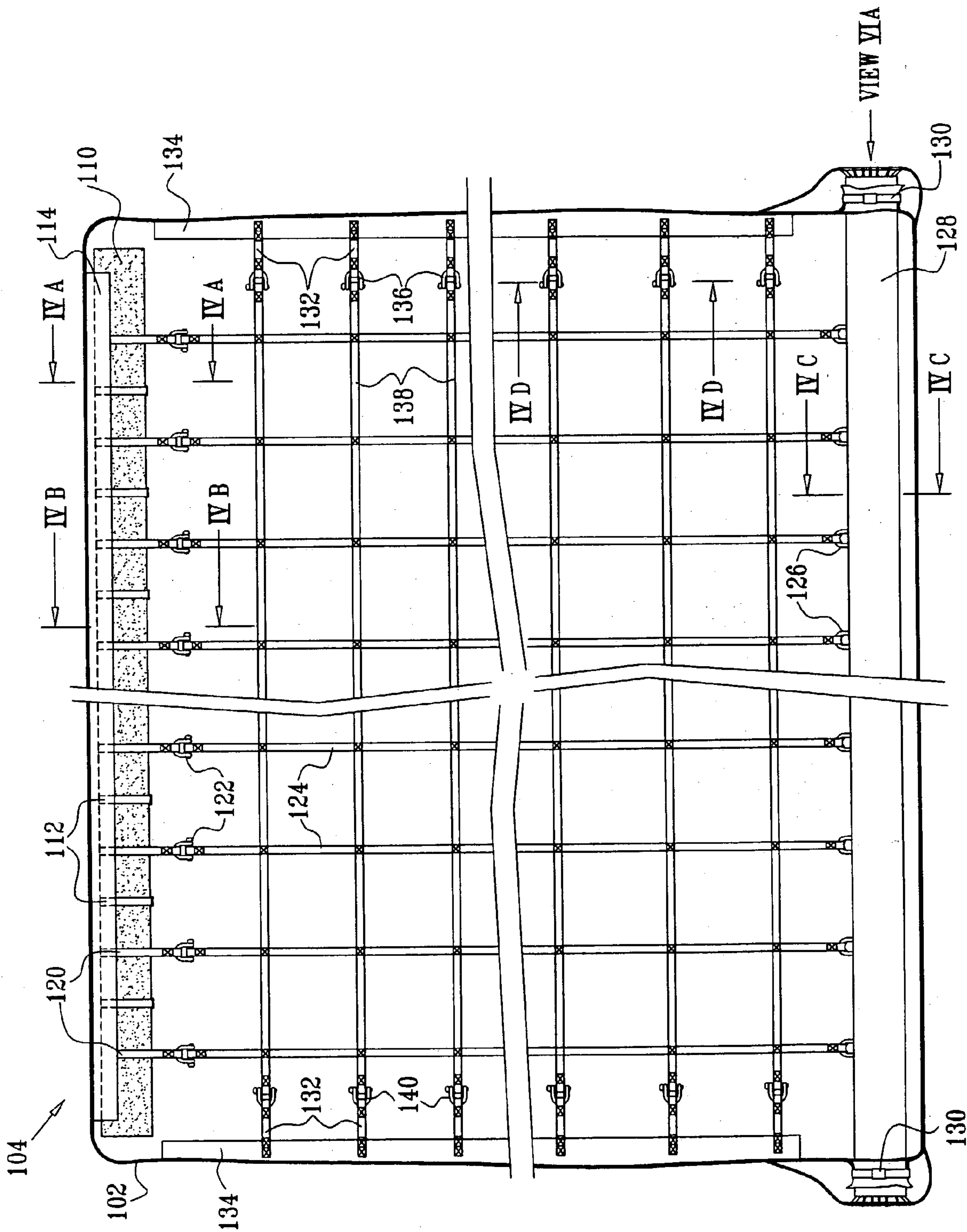
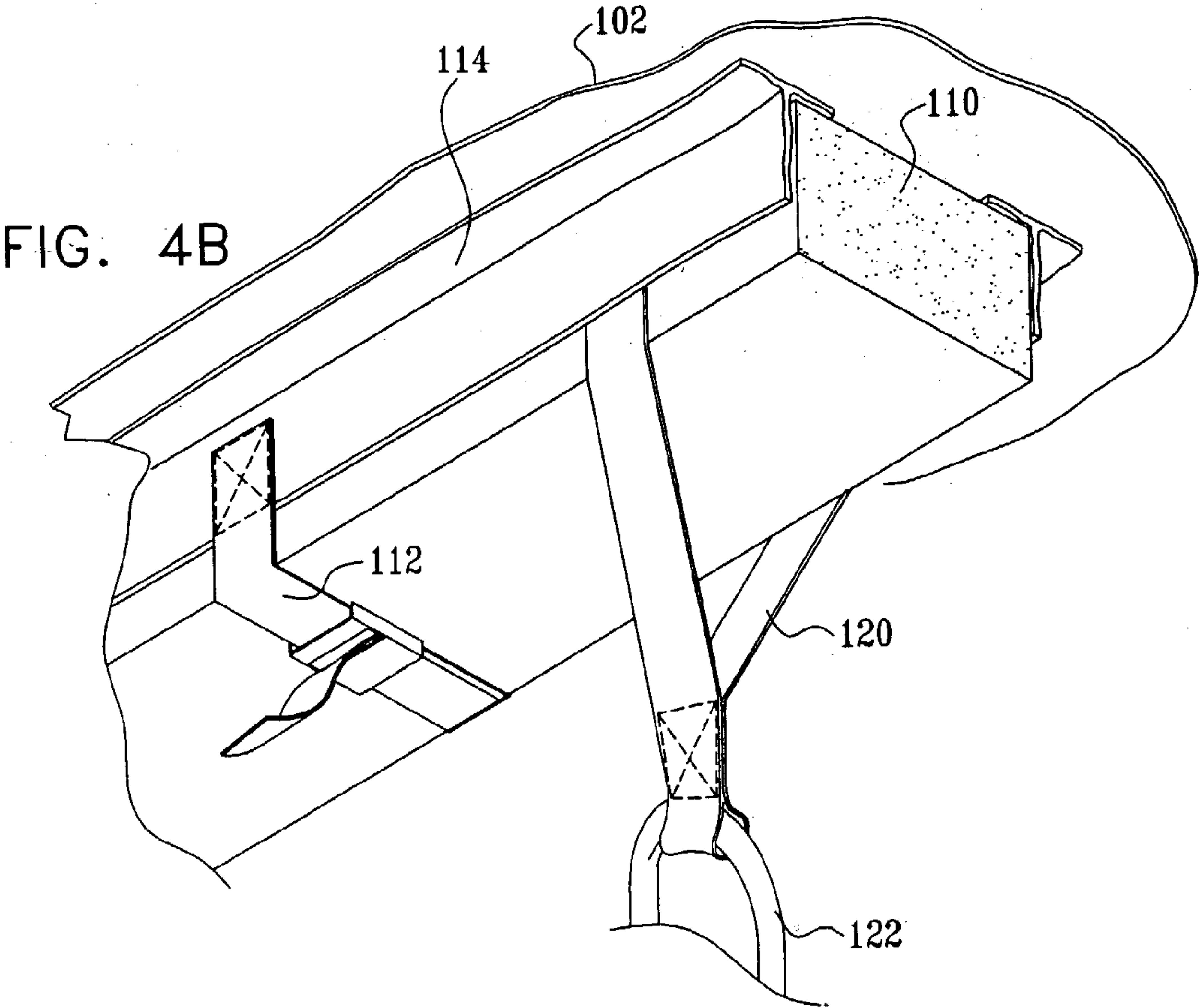
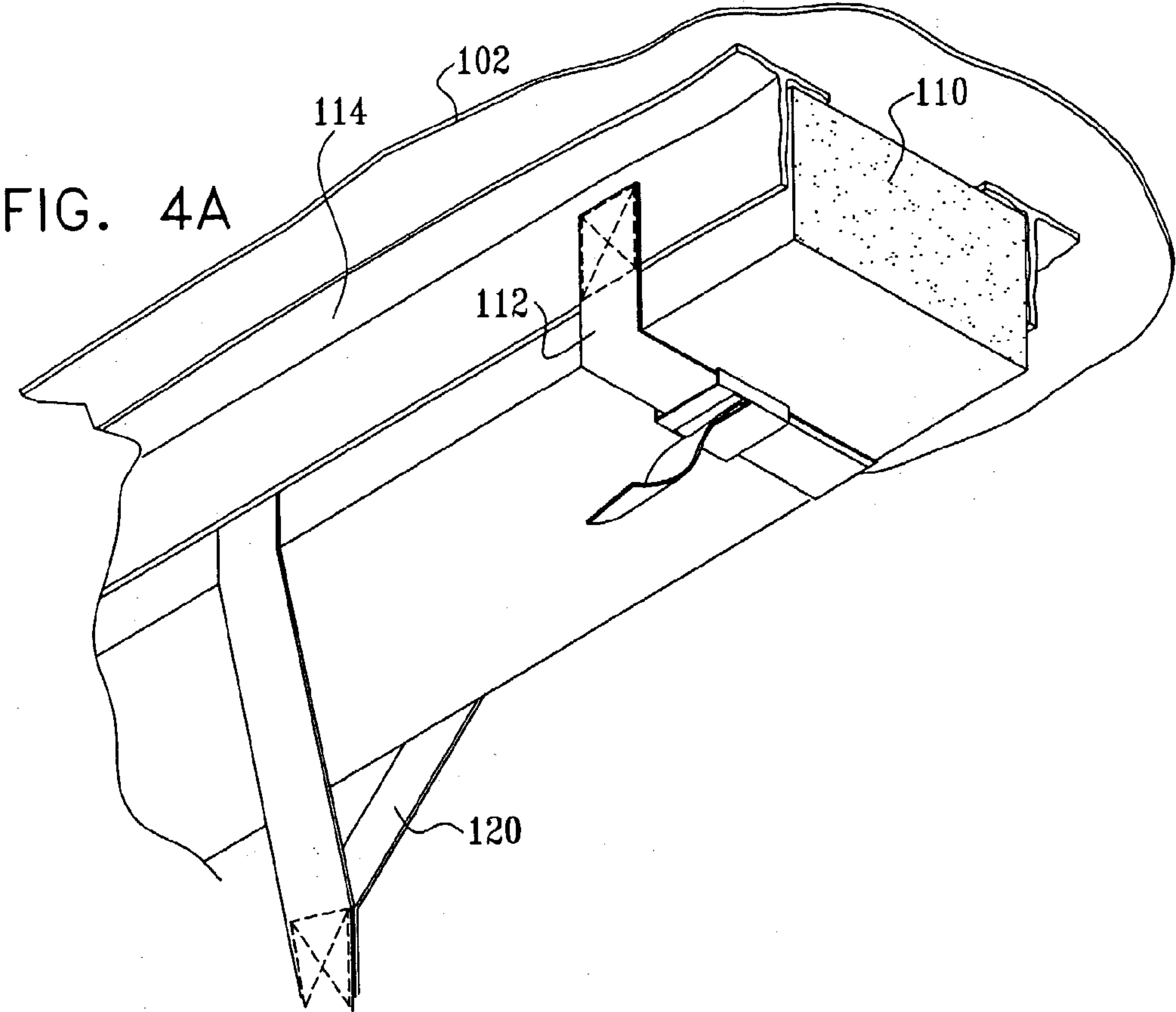


FIG. 3



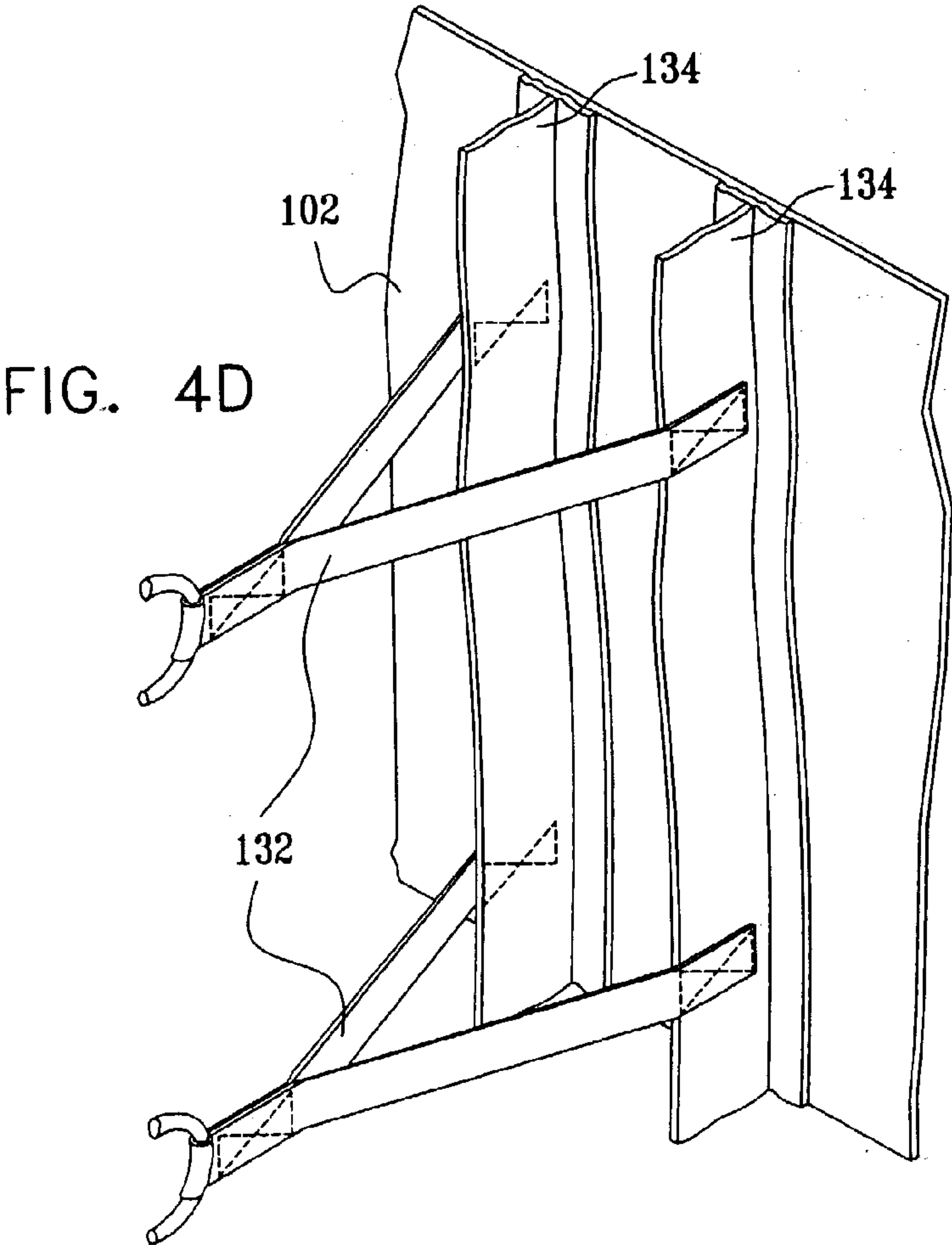
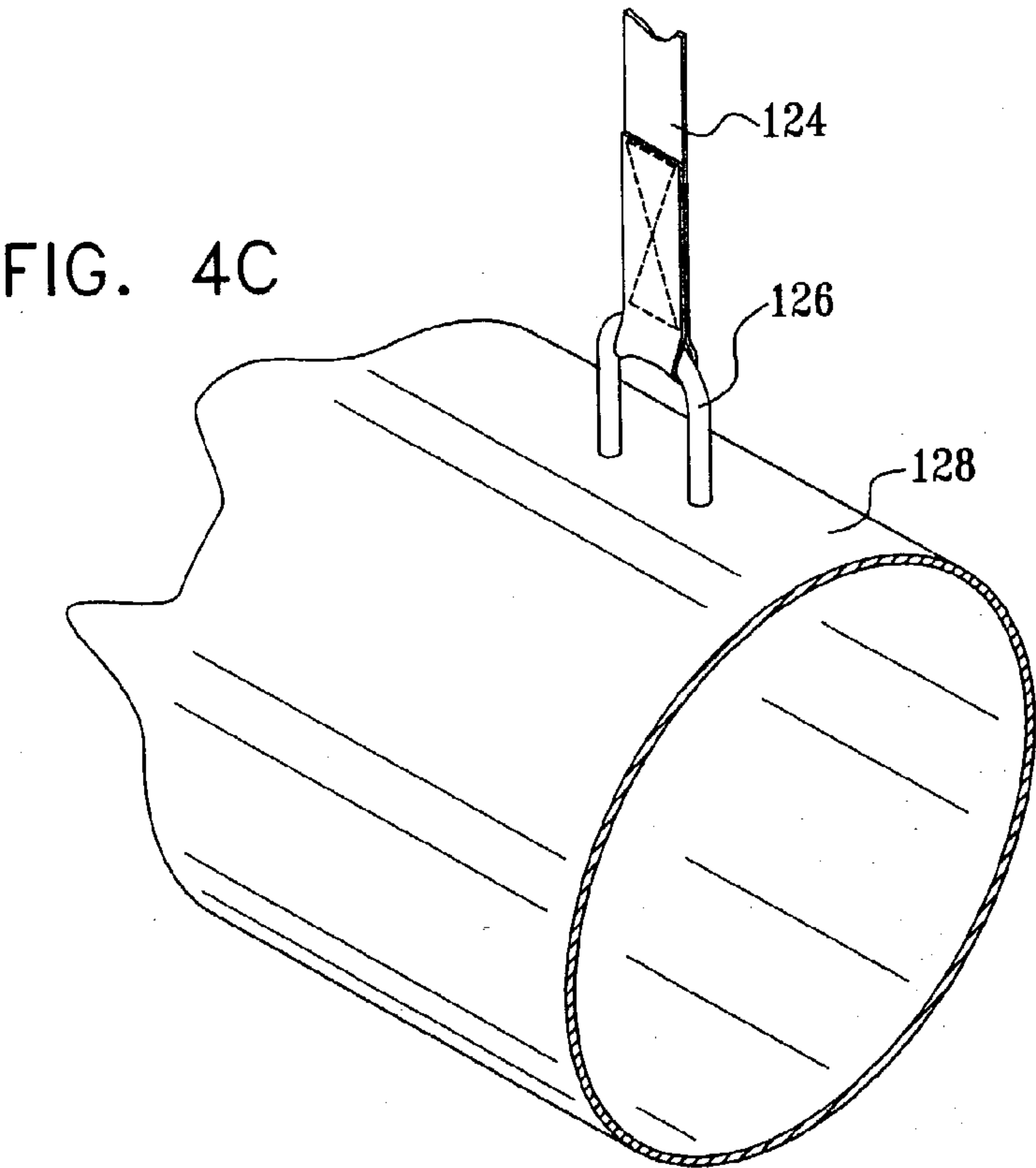


FIG. 5

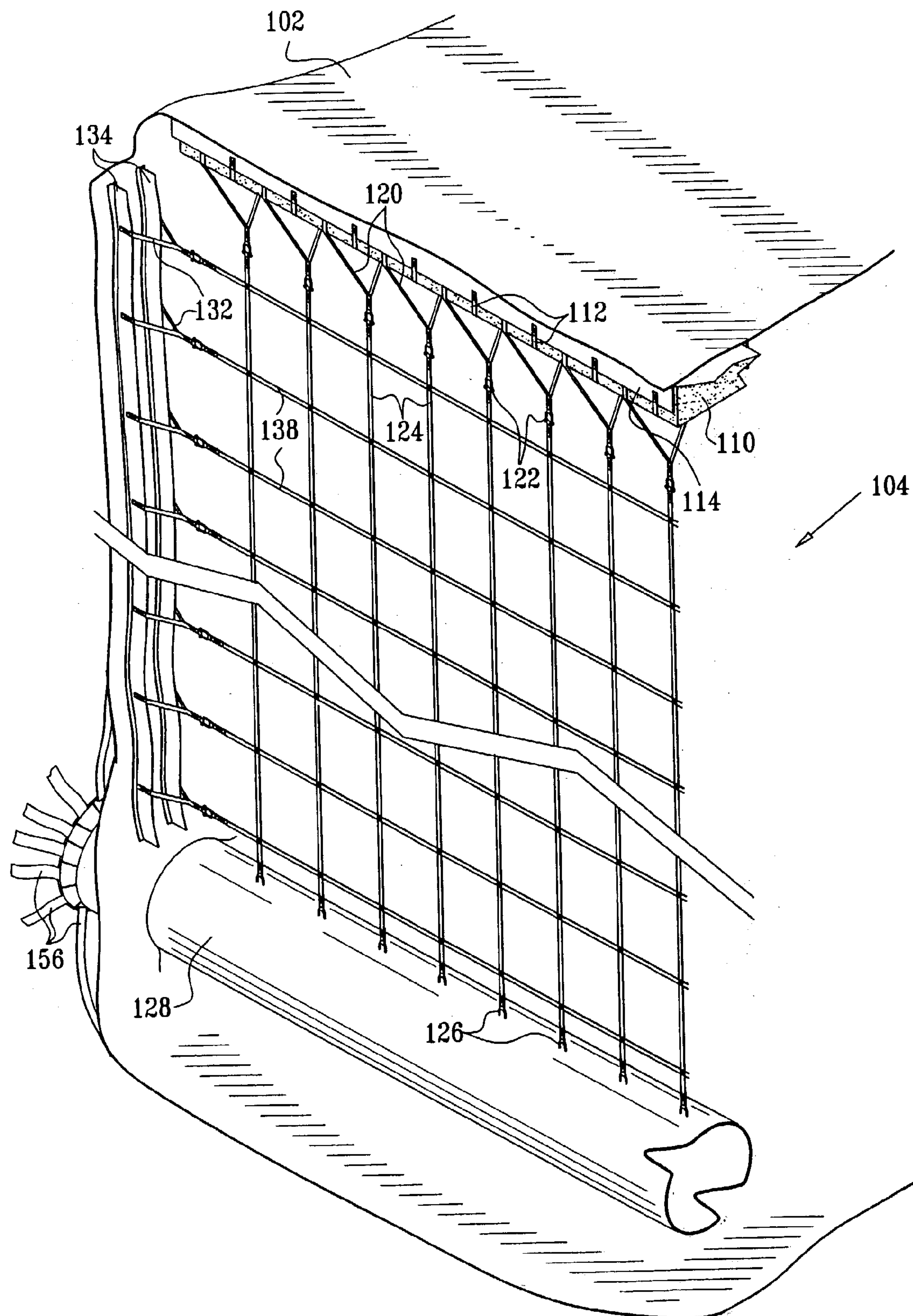


FIG. 6A

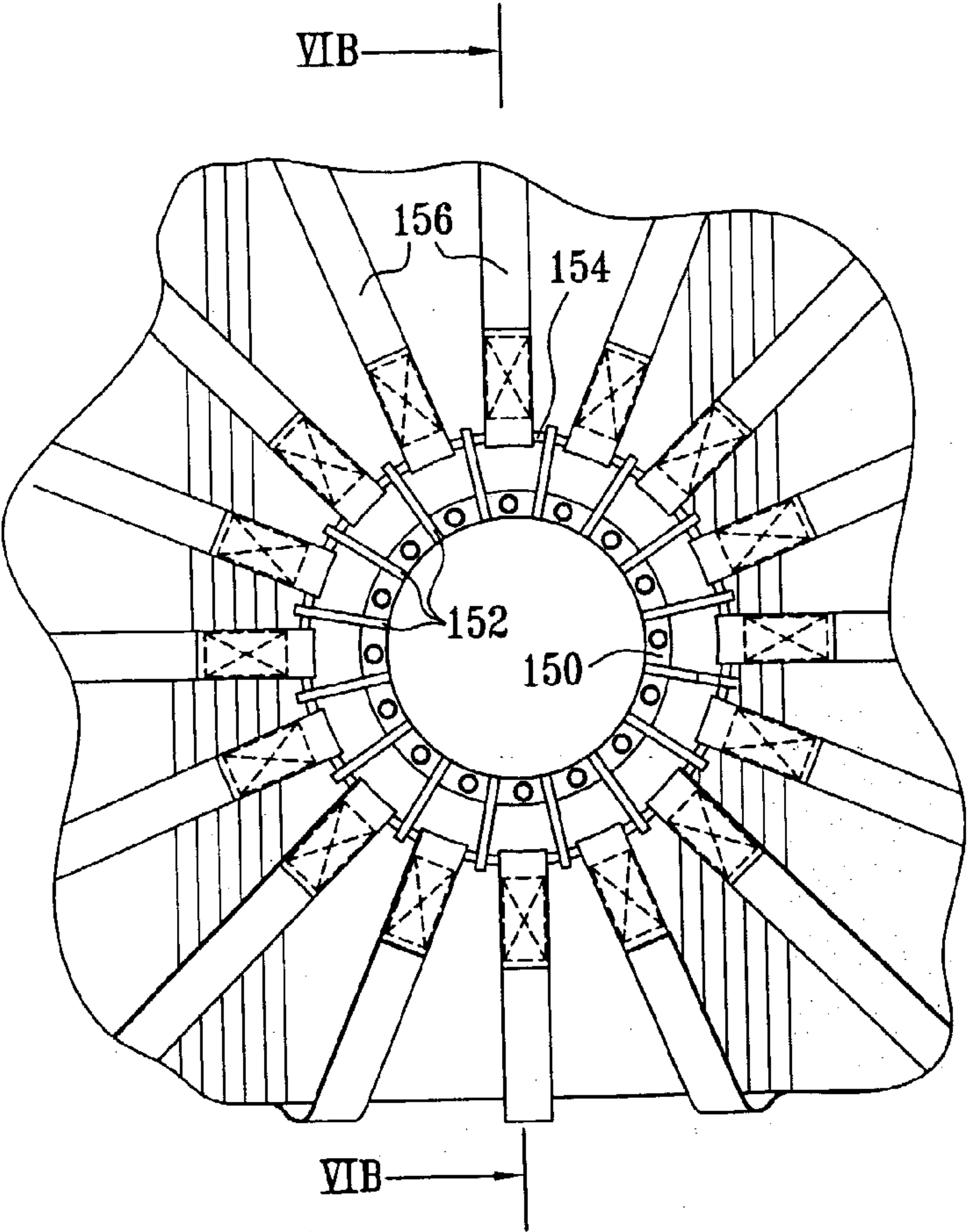
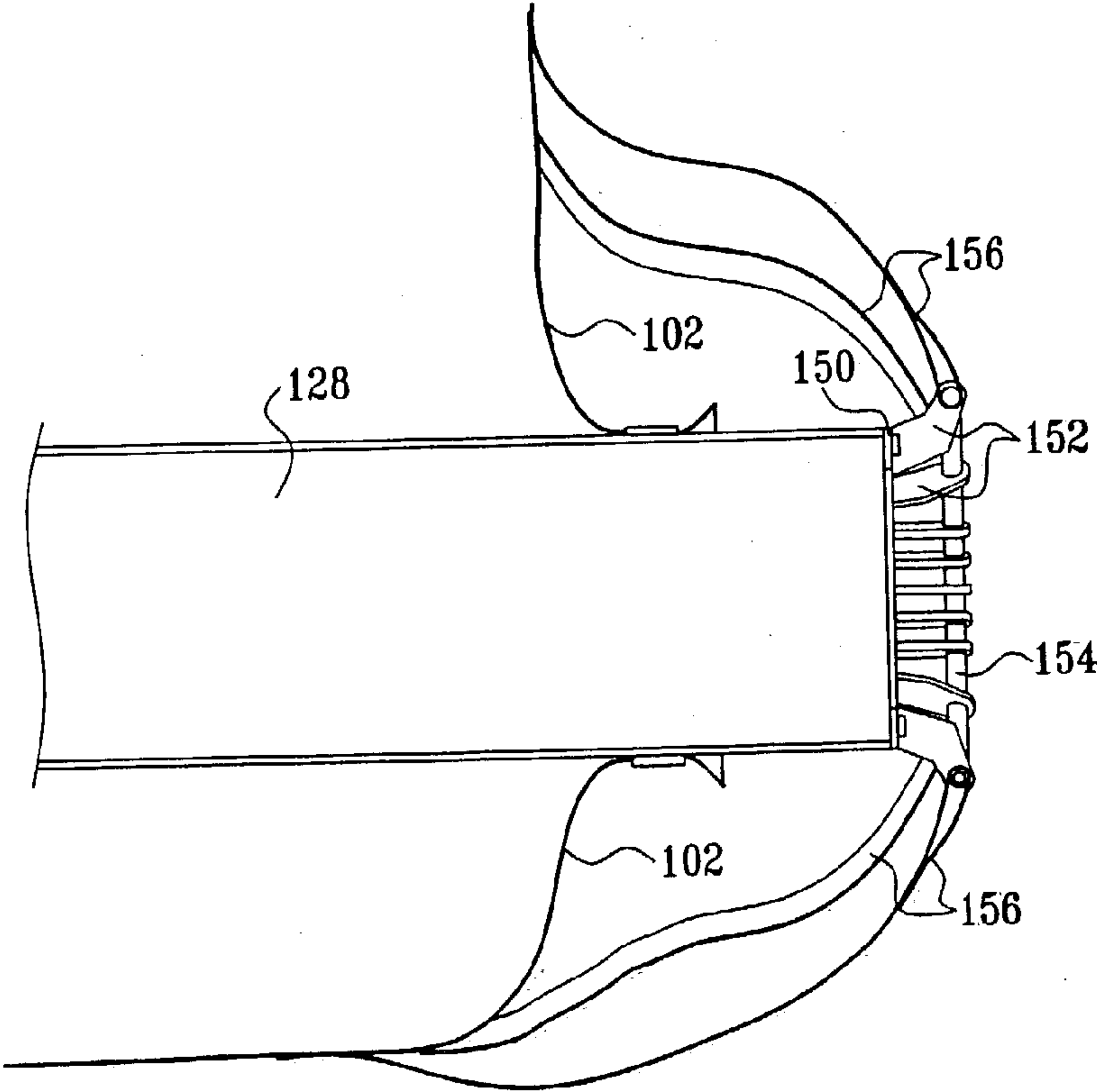
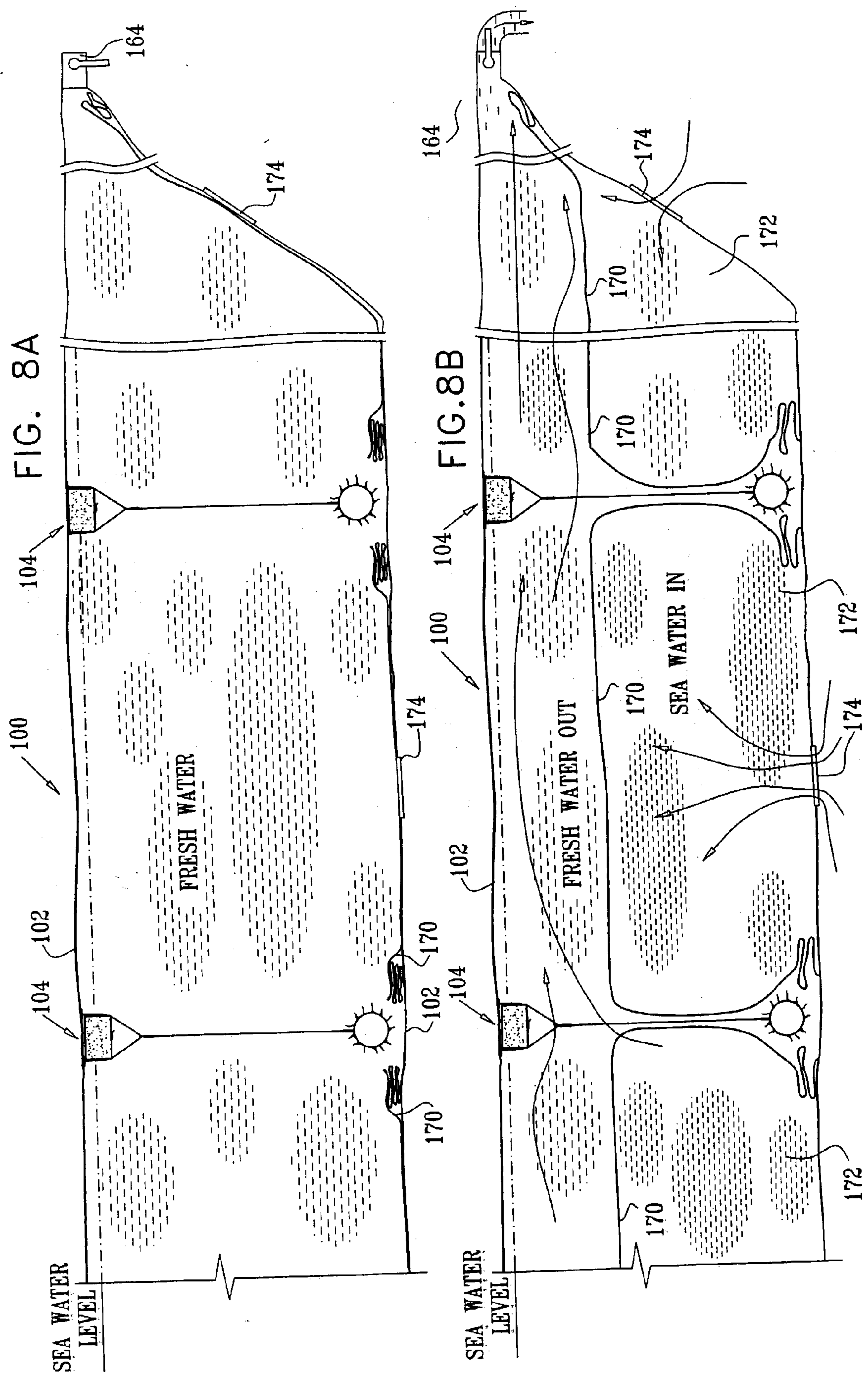
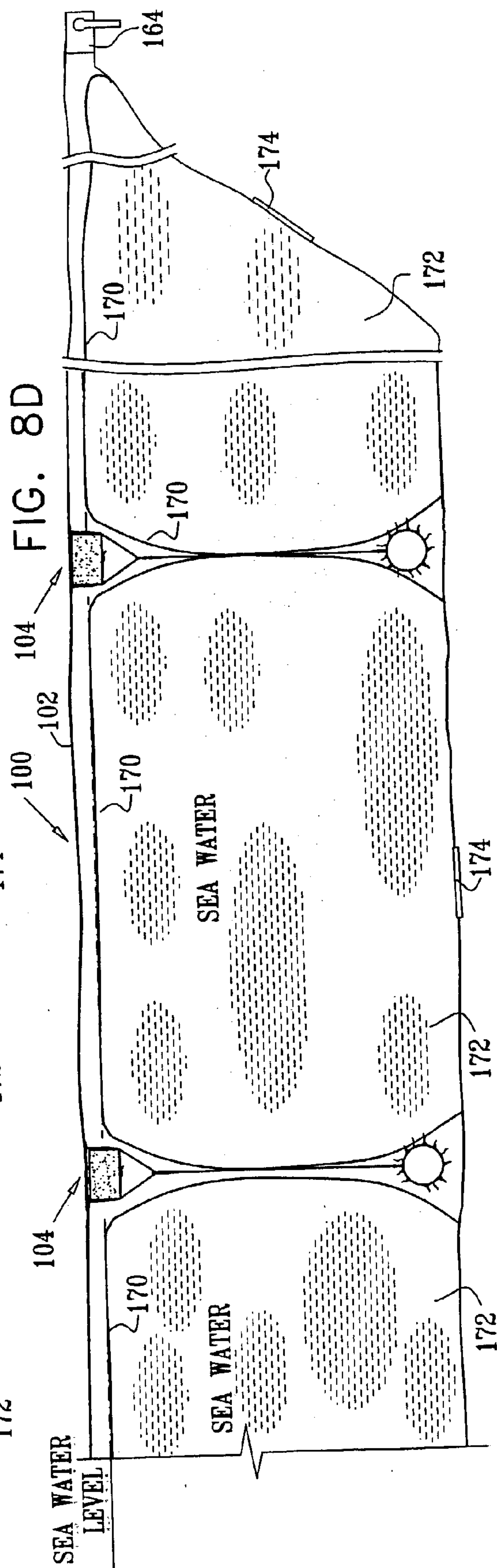
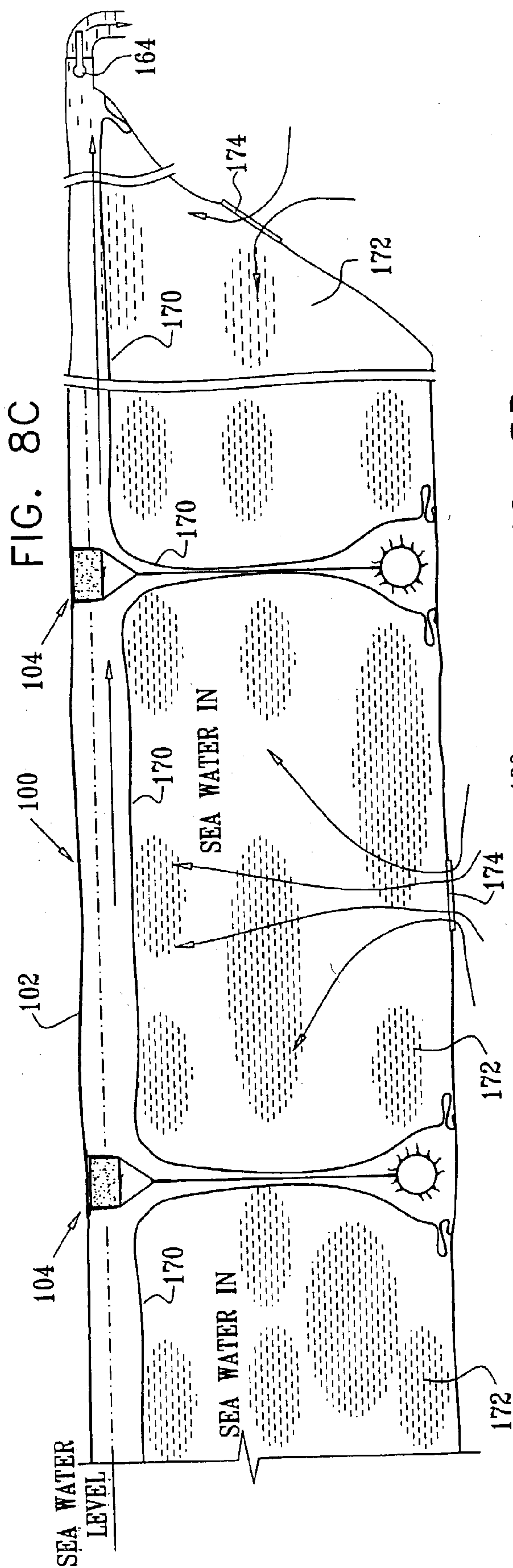


FIG. 6B









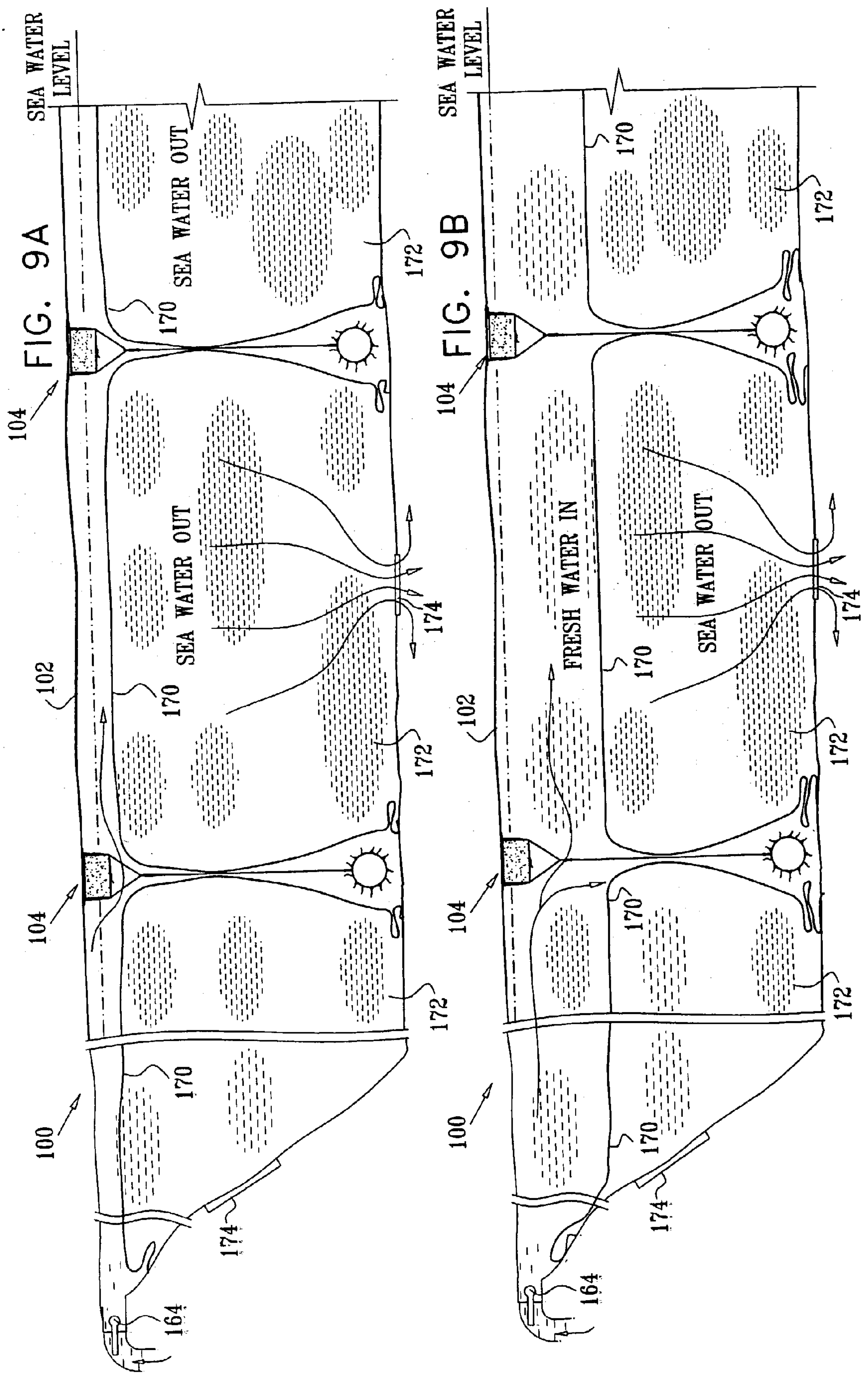
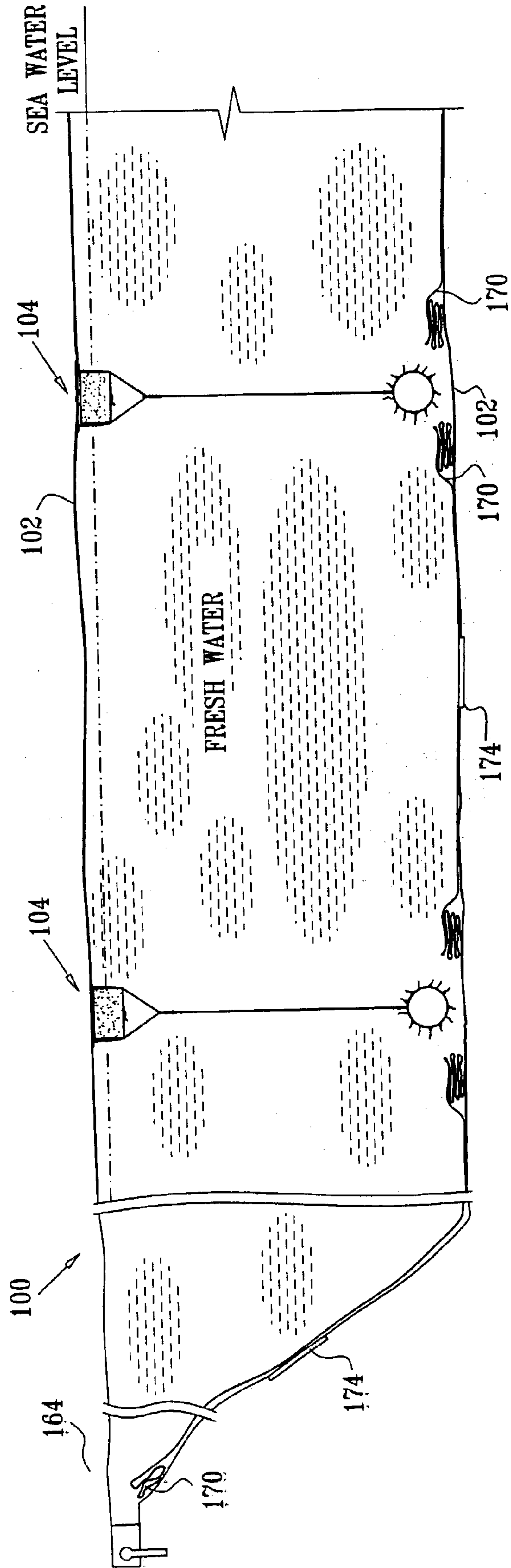


FIG. 9C



FLEXIBLE VESSEL

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present invention relates to sea transportation vessels and methodologies generally and more particularly to vessels and methodologies for transport of liquids.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] The following published Patent Documents are believed to represent the current state of the art:

[0003] Applicant's Published PCT Application WO 01/92097 A1;

[0004] U.S. Pat. Nos. 6,047,655; 5,971,039; 5,488,921; 5,445,093; 5,413,065; 5,355,819; 5,235,928; 5,010,837; 4,881,482; 4,399,768; 4,227,477; 4,178,868; 3,779,196; 3,750,723; 3,067,712.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0005] The present invention seeks to provide highly efficient and cost effective vessels and methodologies for sea transport of liquids.

[0006] There is thus provided in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention an apparatus for sea transport of fresh water including at least one fresh water enclosure communicating with at least one fresh water loading/unloading valve, a plurality of at least partially flexible, collapsible sea water enclosures disposed within each of the at least one fresh water enclosure and at least one opening communicating with each one of the plurality of sea water enclosures for selectably allowing sea water to fill the plurality of sea water enclosures, thereby causing the fresh water to be expelled against the force of gravity from the at least one fresh water enclosure.

[0007] Preferably, the at least one fresh water enclosure is a flexible enclosure.

[0008] In accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention the apparatus also includes a plurality of mutually spaced enclosure cross-section defining assemblies. Additionally, the sea water enclosures are disposed intermediate adjacent pairs of the enclosure cross-section defining assemblies.

[0009] There is also provided in accordance with another preferred embodiment of the present invention an apparatus for sea transport of fresh water including a flexible enclosure including a plurality of mutually spaced enclosure cross-section defining assemblies and a plurality of at least partially flexible, collapsible sea water enclosures disposed within the flexible enclosure, wherein the sea water enclosures are disposed intermediate adjacent pairs of the enclosure cross-section defining assemblies. Additionally, the flexible enclosure includes at least one fresh water enclosure communicating with at least one fresh water loading/unloading valve. Preferably, the apparatus also includes a plurality of openings communicating with the plurality of sea water enclosures for selectably allowing sea water to fill the plurality of sea water enclosures, thereby causing the fresh water to be expelled against the force of gravity from the at least one fresh water enclosure.

[0010] Preferably, the enclosure cross-section defining assembly includes an elongate float element. Additionally, the elongate float element is attached to an interior top surface of the fresh water enclosure. Additionally, the elongate float element is attached to an interior top surface of the fresh water enclosure by a plurality of mutually spaced straps.

[0011] Preferably, the elongate float element floats on sea water.

[0012] In accordance with another preferred embodiment of the present invention, the enclosure cross-section defining assembly also includes an elongate weighted spreader element. Preferably, the elongate weighted spreader element includes an elongate tube.

[0013] In accordance with yet another preferred embodiment of the present invention the enclosure cross-section defining assembly also includes a first plurality of straps attached to the elongate float element at a plurality of locations, a second plurality of vertically extending straps, a first plurality of rings, attaching each of the first plurality of straps to a corresponding one of the second plurality of straps and a second plurality of rings formed on the elongate weighted spreader element, each of the second plurality of rings attached to a corresponding one of the second plurality of straps.

[0014] In accordance with still another preferred embodiment of the present invention the enclosure cross-section defining assembly also includes a first and a second generally vertically extending side supports, attached to interior side surfaces of the fresh water enclosure, a third plurality of side-to-side extending straps, attached to the first generally vertically extending side support, a fourth plurality of side-to-side extending straps, attached to the second generally vertically extending side support, a fifth plurality of horizontally extending straps, a third plurality of rings, connecting each of the third plurality of straps to a corresponding one of the fifth plurality of straps and a fourth plurality of rings, connecting each of the fourth plurality of straps to a corresponding one of the fifth plurality of straps.

[0015] Additionally, in accordance with a further preferred embodiment, the second plurality of vertically extending straps and the fifth plurality of horizontally extending straps are joined at at least one junction point therebetween.

[0016] Preferably, the sea water enclosures are operative to hold sea water separately from the fresh water enclosure.

[0017] There is further provided in accordance with still another preferred embodiment of the present invention an apparatus for sea transport of light liquid including at least one light liquid enclosure communicating with at least one light liquid loading/unloading valve, a plurality of at least partially flexible, collapsible sea water enclosures disposed within each of the at least one light liquid enclosure and at least one opening communicating with each one of the plurality of sea water enclosures for selectably allowing sea water to fill the plurality of sea water enclosures, thereby causing the light liquid to be expelled against the force of gravity from the at least one light liquid enclosure, wherein the light liquid is lighter than sea water.

[0018] Preferably, the at least one light liquid enclosure is a flexible enclosure.

[0019] In accordance with yet another preferred embodiment of the present invention the apparatus also includes a plurality of mutually spaced enclosure cross-section defining assemblies. Additionally, the sea water enclosures are disposed intermediate adjacent pairs of the enclosure cross-section defining assemblies.

[0020] There is still further provided in accordance with another preferred embodiment of the present invention an apparatus for sea transport of light liquid including a flexible enclosure including a plurality of mutually spaced enclosure cross-section defining assemblies and a plurality of at least partially flexible, collapsible sea water enclosures disposed within the flexible enclosure, wherein the sea water enclosures are disposed intermediate adjacent pairs of the enclosure cross-section defining assemblies. Additionally, the flexible enclosure includes at least one light liquid enclosure communicating with at least one light liquid loading/unloading valve. Preferably, the apparatus also includes a plurality of openings communicating with the plurality of sea water enclosures for selectably allowing sea water to fill the plurality of sea water enclosures, thereby causing the light liquid to be expelled against the force of gravity from the at least one light liquid enclosure.

[0021] Preferably, the enclosure cross-section defining assembly includes an elongate float element. Additionally, the enclosure cross-section defining assembly also includes an elongate weighted spreader element. Further in accordance with another preferred embodiment of the present invention, the enclosure cross-section defining assembly also includes a first plurality of straps attached to the elongate float element at a plurality of locations, a second plurality of vertically extending straps, a first plurality of rings, attaching each of the first plurality of straps to a corresponding one of the second plurality of straps, a second plurality of rings formed on the elongate weighted spreader element, each of the second plurality of rings attached to a corresponding one of the second plurality of straps, a first and a second generally vertically extending side supports, attached to interior side surfaces of the light liquid enclosure, a third plurality of side-to-side extending straps, attached to the first generally vertically extending side support, a fourth plurality of side-to-side extending straps, attached to the second generally vertically extending side support, a fifth plurality of horizontally extending straps, a third plurality of rings, connecting each of the third plurality of straps to a corresponding one of the fifth plurality of straps and a fourth plurality of rings, connecting each of the fourth plurality of straps to a corresponding one of the fifth plurality of straps.

[0022] Preferably, the sea water enclosures are operative to hold sea water separately from the light liquid enclosure.

[0023] There is also provided in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention a method for sea transport of fresh water including providing a vessel including at least one fresh water enclosure communicating with at least one fresh water loading/unloading valve, a plurality of at least partially flexible, collapsible sea water enclosures disposed within each of the at least one fresh water enclosure and at least one opening communicating with each one of the plurality of sea water enclosures, loading the vessel by selectably filling the freshwater enclosure with fresh water and unloading the vessel by selectably allowing sea water to

fill the plurality of sea water enclosures, thereby causing the fresh water to be expelled against the force of gravity from the at least one fresh water enclosure.

[0024] There is further provided in accordance with another preferred embodiment of the present invention a method for sea transport of fresh water including providing a vessel including a flexible enclosure including a plurality of mutually spaced enclosure cross-section defining assemblies and a plurality of at least partially flexible, collapsible sea water enclosures disposed within the flexible enclosure, wherein the sea water enclosures are disposed intermediate adjacent pairs of the enclosure cross-section defining assemblies, loading the vessel by selectably filling the flexible enclosure with fresh water and unloading the vessel by selectably allowing sea water to fill the plurality of sea water enclosures, thereby causing the fresh water to be expelled against the force of gravity from the flexible enclosure.

[0025] There is still further provided in accordance with yet another preferred embodiment of the present invention a method for sea transport of light liquid including providing a vessel including at least one light liquid enclosure communicating with at least one light liquid loading/unloading valve, a plurality of at least partially flexible, collapsible sea water enclosures disposed within each of the at least one light liquid enclosure and at least one opening communicating with each one of the plurality of sea water enclosures, loading the vessel by selectably filling the light liquid enclosure with light liquid and unloading the vessel by selectably allowing sea water to fill the plurality of sea water enclosures, thereby causing the light liquid to be expelled against the force of gravity from the at least one light liquid enclosure.

[0026] There is even further provided in accordance with still another preferred embodiment of the present invention a method for sea transport of light liquid including providing a vessel including a flexible enclosure including a plurality of mutually spaced enclosure cross-section defining assemblies and a plurality of at least partially flexible, collapsible sea water enclosures disposed within the flexible enclosure, wherein the sea water enclosures are disposed intermediate adjacent pairs of the enclosure cross-section defining assemblies, loading the vessel by selectably filling the flexible enclosure with light liquid and unloading the vessel by selectably allowing sea water to fill the plurality of sea water enclosures, thereby causing the light liquid to be expelled against the force of gravity from the flexible enclosure.

[0027] Preferably, the loading takes place principally by gravity and the unloading take place principally without requiring pumping.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0028] The present invention will be understood and appreciated more fully from the following detailed description, taken in conjunction with the drawings in which:

[0029] **FIG. 1** is a simplified pictorial illustration of apparatus for sea transport of liquids constructed and operative in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

[0030] **FIG. 2A** is a simplified sectional illustration of the apparatus of **FIG. 1**, taken along lines IIA-IIA in **FIG. 1**;

[0031] FIG. 2B is a simplified sectional illustration of the apparatus of FIG. 1, taken along lines IIB-IIB in FIG. 1;

[0032] FIG. 3 is a simplified sectional illustration of the apparatus of FIG. 1, taken along the lines III-III in FIG. 1;

[0033] FIGS. 4A, 4B, 4C and 4D are sectional illustrations of portions of the apparatus of FIG. 3, taken along respective lines IVA-IVA, IVB-IVB, IVC-IVC and IVD-IVD in FIG. 3;

[0034] FIG. 5 is a cut away pictorial illustration of the apparatus of FIGS. 3-4D;

[0035] FIG. 6A is a plan view illustration of a portion of the apparatus of FIG. 3, taken along line VIA;

[0036] FIG. 6B is a sectional illustration of a portion of the apparatus of FIGS. 3 and 6A, taken along lines VIB-VIB in FIG. 6A;

[0037] FIG. 7 is a pictorial illustration of a transport network employing the vessels and methodologies of FIGS. 1-6B;

[0038] FIGS. 8A, 8B, 8C and 8D are simplified illustrations of four stages in transport and unloading of fresh water from a vessel of the type illustrated in FIGS. 1-7 in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention; and

[0039] FIGS. 9A, 9B and 9C are simplified illustrations of three stages in loading of fresh water onto a vessel of the type illustrated in FIGS. 1-8D.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0040] Reference is now made to FIGS. 1, 2A & 2B, which illustrate apparatus for sea transport of liquids, constructed and operative in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention. As seen in FIG. 1, there is provided a vessel 100 for transport of liquids comprising a flexible tube-like enclosure 102 including a plurality of spaced, enclosure cross-section defining assemblies 104. Preferably the vessel has a hemispherical forward end 106 and a generally conical rearward end 108. The apparatus as shown in FIGS. 2A and 2B is loaded with liquid ready for transport.

[0041] Referring additionally to FIGS. 3-5, it is seen that the enclosure cross-section defining assemblies 104 preferably each include an elongate float element 110, which is preferably attached to an interior top surface of enclosure 102 by a plurality of mutually spaced straps 112, stitched or otherwise attached to depending supports 114, which are in turn stitched or otherwise attached to an interior top surface of enclosure 102, as seen particularly in FIG. 4A. Float elements 110 are preferably designed to float on sea water.

[0042] A plurality of straps 120 are preferably attached to elongate float element 110 at a plurality of locations, intermediate each pair of adjacent straps 112, as seen in FIG. 4B. These straps 120 are attached, as by snap rings 122, to vertically extending straps 124, which extend downwardly and are connected to corresponding rings 126 on an elongate weighted spreader element, such as an elongate tube 128, as shown in FIG. 4C. Ends of elongate tube 128 are seen to preferably extend through apertures in enclosure 102, and to be sealed to enclosure 102 at the apertures by bands 130.

[0043] A plurality of side-to-side extending straps 132 are stitched or otherwise attached to generally vertically extending side supports 134, which are stitched or otherwise attached to interior side surfaces of enclosure 102, as seen particularly in FIG. 4D. Straps 132 on one side of the enclosure 102 are attached, as by snap rings 136, to horizontally extending straps 138, which extend side-to-side across the interior of enclosure 102 and are connected, such as by corresponding snap rings 140, to corresponding straps 132 on the opposite side of the enclosure 102. At each junction between straps 124 and 138, the straps are preferably joined, as by stitching.

[0044] Reference is now made to FIGS. 6A and 6B, which illustrate an attachment arrangement by which ends of each elongate tube 128 are secured to enclosure 102. A flange 150 is bolted, welded or otherwise attached to each end of elongate tube 128. Fixed to flange 150 are preferably provided a plurality of radially outwardly extending supports 152 which support a strap support ring 154 onto which are mounted, as by stitching, a plurality of radially outward extending straps 156, which are in turn attached, as by stitching, to enclosure 102 at locations spaced from and surrounding the tube 128.

[0045] Reference is now made to FIG. 7, which is a pictorial illustration of a transport network employing the vessels of FIGS. 1-6B. It is seen that typically plural vessels 100 are located at both filling and unloading ports, designated respectively 160 and 162, so that plural vessels may be loaded and unloaded simultaneously and while other vessels travel between ports. It is seen that during both loading and unloading preferably the same fresh water loading/unloading valve 164 (FIGS. 8A-9C) is employed.

[0046] Reference is now made to FIGS. 8A, 8B, 8C and 8D, which are simplified illustrations of four stages in transport and unloading of fresh water from a vessel of the type illustrated in FIGS. 1-7 in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention. As seen in FIGS. 8A-8D, disposed within enclosure 102 are a plurality of flexible, collapsible, sea water enclosure elements 170, which cooperate with a bottom surface of the enclosure 102 to define sea water enclosures 172. The sea water enclosures 172 thus defined are operative to receive and hold sea water separately from fresh water lying thereabove within enclosure 102 and are each preferably open to the sea, permitting free ingress or egress of sea water thereto via an aperture 174 formed in the bottom of enclosure 102. Each one of enclosures 172 is preferably disposed intermediate each pair of adjacent cross-section defining assemblies 104. The size and number of enclosures 172 is designed so that when fully expanded, enclosures 172 are able to fill generally the entire volume of enclosure 102, as seen in FIG. 8D. As is described hereinbelow, filling of the enclosures 172 with sea water is operative to expel fresh water from enclosure 102.

[0047] FIG. 8A shows the enclosure elements 170 in a generally collapsed state. This state continues as long as fresh water is not allowed to egress the enclosure 102, inasmuch as fresh water loading/unloading valve 164 is closed. When fresh water is allowed to egress the enclosure 102, sea water enters enclosures 172 via apertures 174 and forces the fresh water out of the enclosure 102, as shown symbolically in FIG. 8B. FIG. 8C shows further expansion of the enclosures 172 and further egress of fresh water via

fresh water loading/unloading valve **164**. **FIG. 8D** shows a situation where generally all of the fresh water from enclosure **102** has been replaced by sea water in enclosures **172**. It is in this state that the vessels **100** travel from the unloading port **162** (**FIG. 7**) to the filling port **160** (**FIG. 7**).

[0048] Reference is now made to **FIGS. 9A-9C**, which illustrate loading of vessels **100** with fresh water. As seen in **FIG. 9A**, fresh water is forced into enclosure **102** via fresh water loading/unloading valve **164** by gravity or by any other suitable method. As fresh water begins to fill enclosure **102**, it forces enclosures **172** to contract, forcing sea water out through apertures **174**. As seen in **FIG. 9B**, as filling of vessel **100** with fresh water continues, enclosures **172** continue to contract and sea water continues to be forced out through apertures **174**. **FIG. 9C** illustrates the situation where enclosure **102** is generally filled with fresh water and enclosure elements **170** lie in a generally collapsed state. It is in this state that the vessels **100** travel from the filling port **160** (**FIG. 7**) to the unloading port **162** (**FIG. 7**).

[0049] It is appreciated that even though the embodiment of **FIGS. 7-9C** describes an apparatus for transporting fresh water, any suitable liquid lighter than sea water may also be loaded, transported and unloaded using the above apparatus and methodology.

[0050] It will be appreciated by persons skilled in the art that the present invention is not limited by what has been particularly shown and described hereinabove. Rather the scope of the present invention includes both combinations and subcombinations of the various features described hereinabove as well as variations and modifications which would occur to persons skilled in the art upon reading the specification and which are not in the prior art.

1. Apparatus for sea transport of fresh water comprising:
 - at least one fresh water enclosure communicating with at least one fresh water loading/unloading valve;
 - a plurality of at least partially flexible, collapsible sea water enclosures disposed within each of said at least one fresh water enclosure; and
 - at least one opening communicating with each one of said plurality of sea water enclosures for selectably allowing sea water to fill said plurality of sea water enclosures, thereby causing said fresh water to be expelled against the force of gravity from said at least one fresh water enclosure.
2. Apparatus according to claim 1 and wherein said at least one fresh water enclosure is a flexible enclosure.
3. Apparatus according to claim 2 and also comprising a plurality of mutually spaced enclosure cross-section defining assemblies.
4. Apparatus according to claim 3 and wherein said sea water enclosures are disposed intermediate adjacent pairs of said enclosure cross-section defining assemblies.
5. Apparatus according to claim 3 and wherein said enclosure cross-section defining assembly comprises an elongate float element.
6. Apparatus according to claim 5 and wherein said elongate float element is attached to an interior top surface of said fresh water enclosure.

7. Apparatus according to claim 5 and wherein said elongate float element is attached to an interior top surface of said fresh water enclosure by a plurality of mutually spaced straps.

8. Apparatus according to claim 5 and wherein said elongate float element floats on sea water.

9. Apparatus according to claim 5 and wherein said enclosure cross-section defining assembly also comprises an elongate weighted spreader element.

10. Apparatus according to claim 9 and wherein said elongate weighted spreader element comprises an elongate tube.

11. Apparatus according to claim 9 and wherein said enclosure cross-section defining assembly also comprises:

- a first plurality of straps attached to said elongate float element at a plurality of locations;
- a second plurality of vertically extending straps;
- a first plurality of rings, attaching each of said first plurality of straps to a corresponding one of said second plurality of straps; and
- a second plurality of rings formed on said elongate weighted spreader element, each of said second plurality of rings attached to a corresponding one of said second plurality of straps.

12. Apparatus according to claim 11 and wherein said enclosure cross-section defining assembly also comprises:

- a first and a second generally vertically extending side supports, attached to interior side surfaces of said fresh water enclosure;
- a third plurality of side-to-side extending straps, attached to said first generally vertically extending side support;
- a fourth plurality of side-to-side extending straps, attached to said second generally vertically extending side support;
- a fifth plurality of horizontally extending straps;
- a third plurality of rings, connecting each of said third plurality of straps to a corresponding one of said fifth plurality of straps; and
- a fourth plurality of rings, connecting each of said fourth plurality of straps to a corresponding one of said fifth plurality of straps.

13. Apparatus according to claim 12 and wherein said second plurality of vertically extending straps and said fifth plurality of horizontally extending straps are joined at at least one junction point therebetween.

14. Apparatus according to claim 1 and wherein said sea water enclosures are operative to hold sea water separately from said fresh water enclosure.

15. Apparatus for sea transport of fresh water comprising:

- a flexible enclosure including a plurality of mutually spaced enclosure cross-section defining assemblies; and
- a plurality of at least partially flexible, collapsible sea water enclosures disposed within said flexible enclosure,

wherein said sea water enclosures are disposed intermediate adjacent pairs of said enclosure cross-section defining assemblies.

16. Apparatus according to claim 15 and wherein said flexible enclosure comprises at least one fresh water enclosure communicating with at least one fresh water loading/unloading valve.

17. Apparatus according to claim 16 and also comprising a plurality of openings communicating with said plurality of sea water enclosures for selectably allowing sea water to fill said plurality of sea water enclosures, thereby causing said fresh water to be expelled against the force of gravity from said at least one fresh water enclosure.

18. Apparatus according to claim 16 and wherein said enclosure cross-section defining assembly comprises an elongate float element.

19. Apparatus according to claim 18 and wherein said elongate float element is attached to an interior top surface of said fresh water enclosure.

20. Apparatus according to claim 18 and wherein said elongate float element is attached to an interior top surface of said fresh water enclosure by a plurality of mutually spaced straps.

21. Apparatus according to claim 18 and wherein said elongate float element floats on sea water.

22. Apparatus according to claim 18 and wherein said enclosure cross-section defining assembly also comprises an elongate weighted spreader element.

23. Apparatus according to claim 22 and wherein said elongate weighted spreader element comprises an elongate tube.

24. Apparatus according to claim 22 and also comprising:

a first plurality of straps attached to said elongate float element at a plurality of locations;

a second plurality of vertically extending straps;

a first plurality of rings, attaching each of said first plurality of straps to a corresponding one of said second plurality of straps; and

a second plurality of rings formed on said elongate weighted spreader element, each of said second plurality of rings attached to a corresponding one of said second plurality of straps.

25. Apparatus according to claim 24 and also comprising:

a first and a second generally vertically extending side supports, attached to interior side surfaces of said fresh water enclosure;

a third plurality of side-to-side extending straps, attached to said first generally vertically extending side support;

a fourth plurality of side-to-side extending straps, attached to said second generally vertically extending side support;

a fifth plurality of horizontally extending straps;

a third plurality of rings, connecting each of said third plurality of straps to a corresponding one of said fifth plurality of straps; and

a fourth plurality of rings, connecting each of said fourth plurality of straps to a corresponding one of said fifth plurality of straps.

26. Apparatus according to claim 25 and wherein said second plurality of vertically extending straps and said fifth plurality of horizontally extending straps are joined at at least one junction point therebetween.

27. Apparatus according to claim 16 and wherein said sea water enclosures are operative to hold sea water separately from said fresh water enclosure.

28. Apparatus for sea transport of light liquid comprising:

at least one light liquid enclosure communicating with at least one light liquid loading/unloading valve;

a plurality of at least partially flexible, collapsible sea water enclosures disposed within each of said at least one light liquid enclosure; and

at least one opening communicating with each one of said plurality of sea water enclosures for selectably allowing sea water to fill said plurality of sea water enclosures, thereby causing said light liquid to be expelled against the force of gravity from said at least one light liquid enclosure,

wherein said light liquid is lighter than sea water.

29. Apparatus according to claim 28 and wherein said at least one light liquid enclosure is a flexible enclosure.

30. Apparatus according to claim 29 and also comprising a plurality of mutually spaced enclosure cross-section defining assemblies.

31. Apparatus according to claim 30 and wherein said sea water enclosures are disposed intermediate adjacent pairs of said enclosure cross-section defining assemblies.

32. Apparatus according to claim 30 and wherein said enclosure cross-section defining assembly comprises an elongate float element.

33. Apparatus according to claim 32 and wherein said enclosure cross-section defining assembly also comprises an elongate weighted spreader element.

34. Apparatus according to claim 33 and wherein said enclosure cross-section defining assembly also comprises:

a first plurality of straps attached to said elongate float element at a plurality of locations;

a second plurality of vertically extending straps;

a first plurality of rings, attaching each of said first plurality of straps to a corresponding one of said second plurality of straps;

a second plurality of rings formed on said elongate weighted spreader element, each of said second plurality of rings attached to a corresponding one of said second plurality of straps;

a first and a second generally vertically extending side supports, attached to interior side surfaces of said light liquid enclosure;

a third plurality of side-to-side extending straps, attached to said first generally vertically extending side support;

a fourth plurality of side-to-side extending straps, attached to said second generally vertically extending side support;

a fifth plurality of horizontally extending straps;

a third plurality of rings, connecting each of said third plurality of straps to a corresponding one of said fifth plurality of straps; and

a fourth plurality of rings, connecting each of said fourth plurality of straps to a corresponding one of said fifth plurality of straps.

35. Apparatus according to claim 28 and wherein said sea water enclosures are operative to hold sea water separately from said light liquid enclosure.

36. Apparatus for sea transport of light liquid comprising:

- a flexible enclosure including a plurality of mutually spaced enclosure cross-section defining assemblies; and
- a plurality of at least partially flexible, collapsible sea water enclosures disposed within said flexible enclosure,

wherein said sea water enclosures are disposed intermediate adjacent pairs of said enclosure cross-section defining assemblies.

37. Apparatus according to claim 36 and wherein said flexible enclosure comprises at least one light liquid enclosure communicating with at least one light liquid loading/unloading valve.

38. Apparatus according to claim 37 and also comprising a plurality of openings communicating with said plurality of sea water enclosures for selectably allowing sea water to fill said plurality of sea water enclosures, thereby causing said light liquid to be expelled against the force of gravity from said at least one light liquid enclosure.

39. Apparatus according to claim 37 and wherein said enclosure cross-section defining assembly comprises an elongate float element.

40. Apparatus according to claim 39 and wherein said enclosure cross-section defining assembly also comprises an elongate weighted spreader element.

41. Apparatus according to claim 40 and also comprising:

- a first plurality of straps attached to said elongate float element at a plurality of locations;
- a second plurality of vertically extending straps;
- a first plurality of rings, attaching each of said first plurality of straps to a corresponding one of said second plurality of straps;
- a second plurality of rings formed on said elongate weighted spreader element, each of said second plurality of rings attached to a corresponding one of said second plurality of straps;
- a first and a second generally vertically extending side supports, attached to interior side surfaces of said light liquid enclosure;
- a third plurality of side-to-side extending straps, attached to said first generally vertically extending side support;
- a fourth plurality of side-to-side extending straps, attached to said second generally vertically extending side support;
- a fifth plurality of horizontally extending straps;
- a third plurality of rings, connecting each of said third plurality of straps to a corresponding one of said fifth plurality of straps; and
- a fourth plurality of rings, connecting each of said fourth plurality of straps to a corresponding one of said fifth plurality of straps.

42. Apparatus according to claim 37 and wherein said sea water enclosures are operative to hold sea water separately from said light liquid enclosure.

43. A method for sea transport of fresh water comprising: providing a vessel including:

- at least one fresh water enclosure communicating with at least one fresh water loading/unloading valve;
- a plurality of at least partially flexible, collapsible sea water enclosures disposed within each of said at least one fresh water enclosure; and
- at least one opening communicating with each one of said plurality of sea water enclosures;

loading said vessel by selectably filling said fresh water enclosure with fresh water; and

unloading said vessel by selectably allowing sea water to fill said plurality of sea water enclosures, thereby causing said fresh water to be expelled against the force of gravity from said at least one fresh water enclosure.

44. A method according to claim 43 and wherein said loading takes place principally by gravity and said unloading take place principally without requiring pumping.

45. A method for sea transport of fresh water comprising: providing a vessel including:

- a flexible enclosure including a plurality of mutually spaced enclosure cross-section defining assemblies; and
- a plurality of at least partially flexible, collapsible sea water enclosures disposed within said flexible enclosure,

wherein said sea water enclosures are disposed intermediate adjacent pairs of said enclosure cross-section defining assemblies;

loading said vessel by selectably filling said flexible enclosure with fresh water; and

unloading said vessel by selectably allowing sea water to fill said plurality of sea water enclosures, thereby causing said fresh water to be expelled against the force of gravity from said flexible enclosure.

46. A method according to claim 45 and wherein said loading takes place principally by gravity and said unloading take place principally without requiring pumping.

47. A method for sea transport of light liquid comprising: providing a vessel including:

- at least one light liquid enclosure communicating with at least one light liquid loading/unloading valve;
- a plurality of at least partially flexible, collapsible sea water enclosures disposed within each of said at least one light liquid enclosure; and
- at least one opening communicating with each one of said plurality of sea water enclosures;

loading said vessel by selectably filling said light liquid enclosure with light liquid; and

unloading said vessel by selectably allowing sea water to fill said plurality of sea water enclosures, thereby causing said light liquid to be expelled against the force of gravity from said at least one light liquid enclosure.

48. A method according to claim 47 and wherein said loading takes place principally by gravity and said unloading take place principally without requiring pumping.

49. A method for sea transport of light liquid comprising:
providing a vessel including:

a flexible enclosure including a plurality of mutually spaced enclosure cross-section defining assemblies;
and

a plurality of at least partially flexible, collapsible sea water enclosures disposed within said flexible enclosure,

wherein said sea water enclosures are disposed intermediate adjacent pairs of said enclosure cross-section defining assemblies;

loading said vessel by selectably filling said flexible enclosure with light liquid; and

unloading said vessel by selectably allowing sea water to fill said plurality of sea water enclosures, thereby causing said light liquid to be expelled against the force of gravity from said flexible enclosure.

50. A method according to claim 49 and wherein said loading takes place principally by gravity and said unloading take place principally without requiring pumping.

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