US00RE39408E

(19) **United States**

(12) **Reissued Patent**

Wang

(10) **Patent Number: US RE39,408 E**

(45) **Date of Reissued Patent: Nov. 28, 2006**

(54) **SELF-INFLATING MATTRESS**

(75) Inventor: **Kenneth Wang**, Taipei (TW)

(73) Assignee: **Team Worldwide Corporation**, Taipei (TW)

(21) Appl. No.: **10/420,163**

(22) Filed: **Apr. 22, 2003**

Related U.S. Patent Documents

Reissue of:

(64) Patent No.: **6,219,868**
Issued: **Apr. 24, 2001**
Appl. No.: **09/593,214**
Filed: **Jun. 14, 2000**

(51) **Int. Cl.**
A47G 9/06 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.** **5/709**; 5/420; 5/656; 5/708

(58) **Field of Classification Search** 5/420, 5/708–710, 713, 656
See application file for complete search history.

(56) **References Cited**

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

5,303,435	A	*	4/1994	Haar et al.	5/709
5,564,143	A	*	10/1996	Pekar et al.	5/708
5,630,237	A	*	5/1997	Ku	5/420
5,632,055	A	*	5/1997	Graf	5/706
5,898,963	A	*	5/1999	Larson	5/644
6,038,722	A	*	3/2000	Giori et al.	5/709

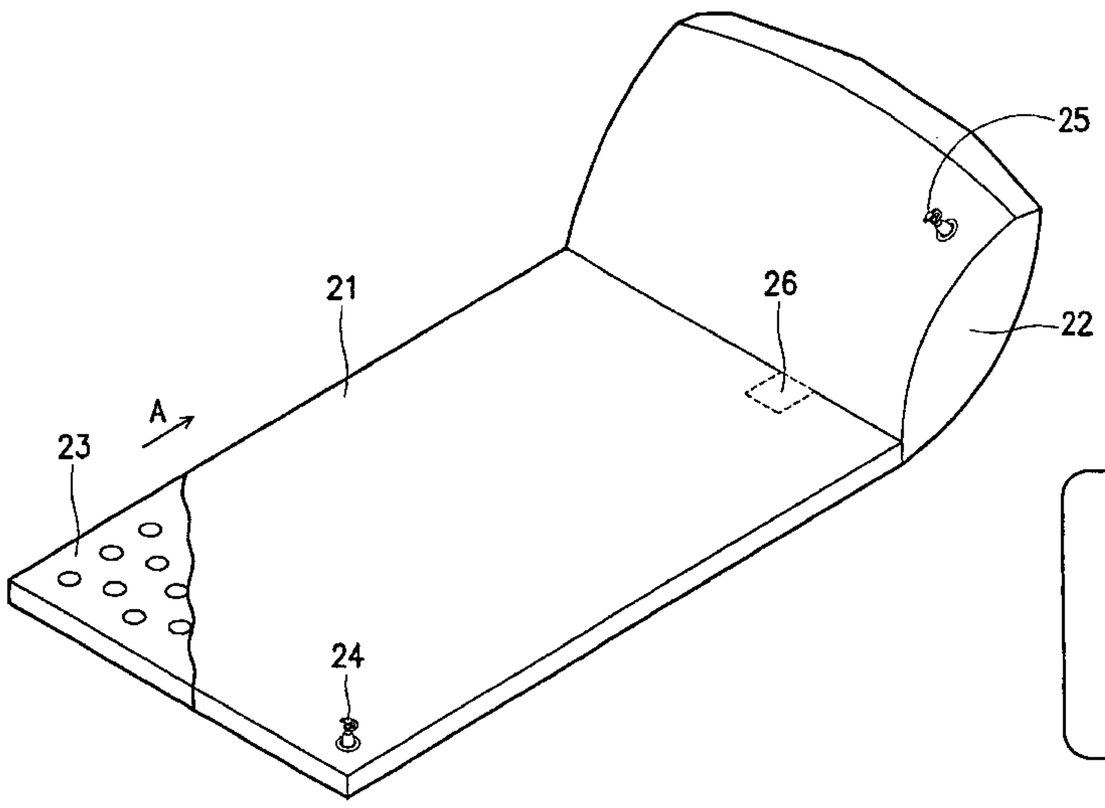
* cited by examiner

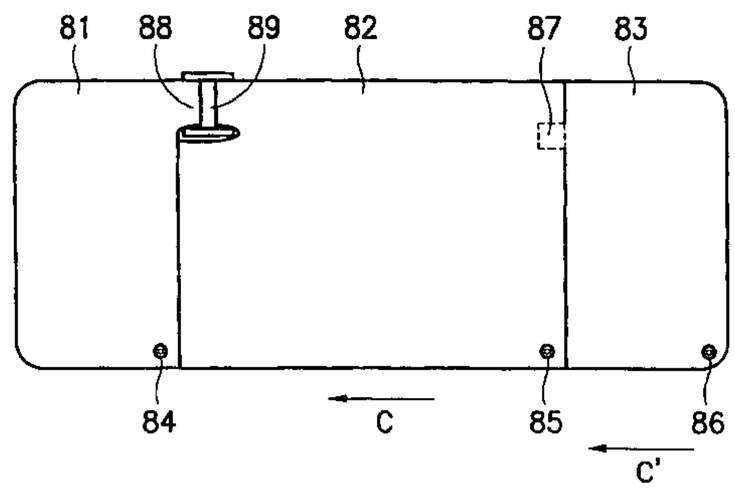
Primary Examiner—Michael Trettel
(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm*—Quintero Law Office

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A self-inflating mattress which comprises a first chamber, a second chamber, a foam and a check valve, wherein, the foam is disposed inside the first chamber. The check valve is provided between the first chamber and the second chamber, and air is allowed to flow only from the first chamber to the second chamber.

13 Claims, 9 Drawing Sheets





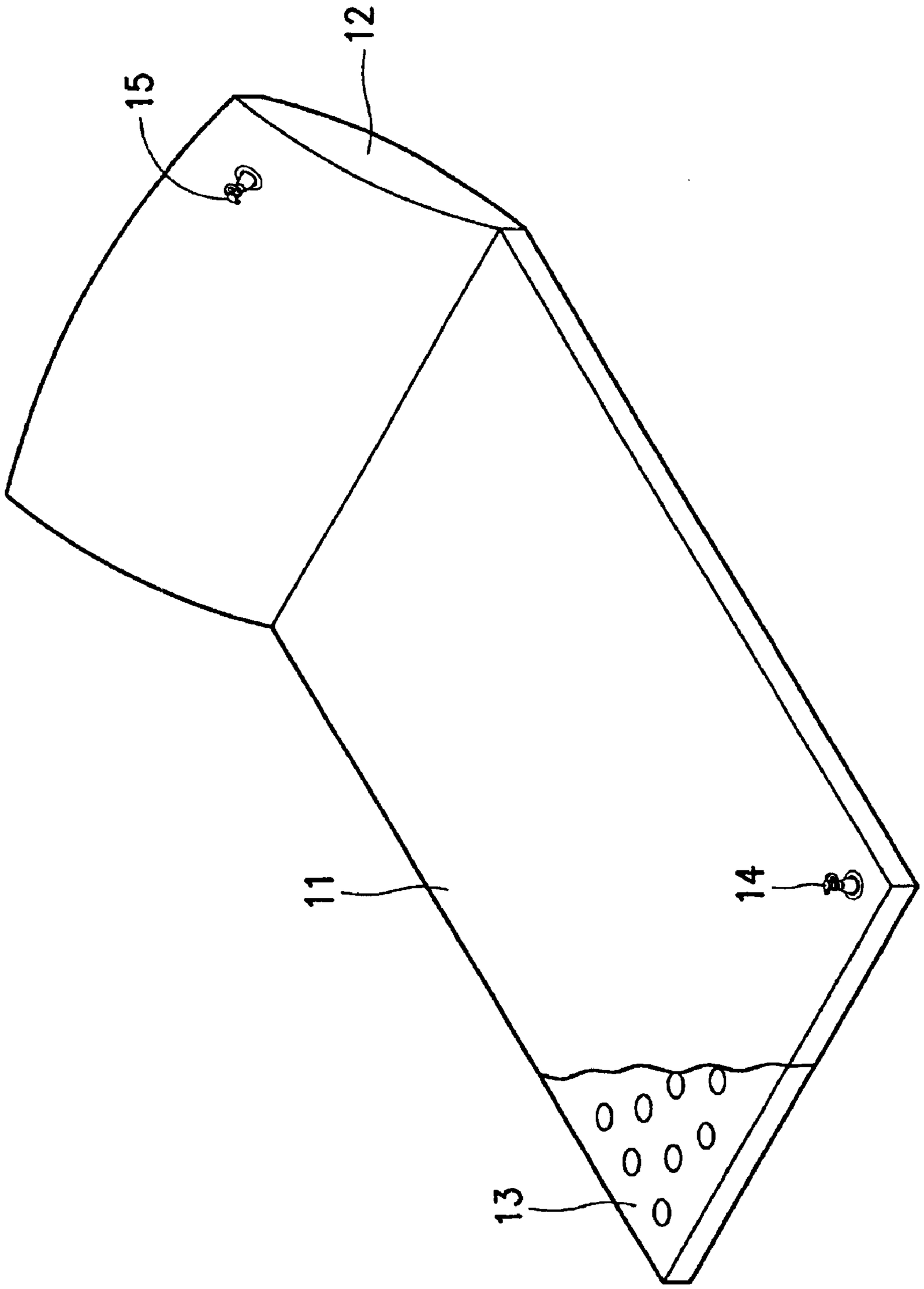


Fig. 1 (PRIOR ART)

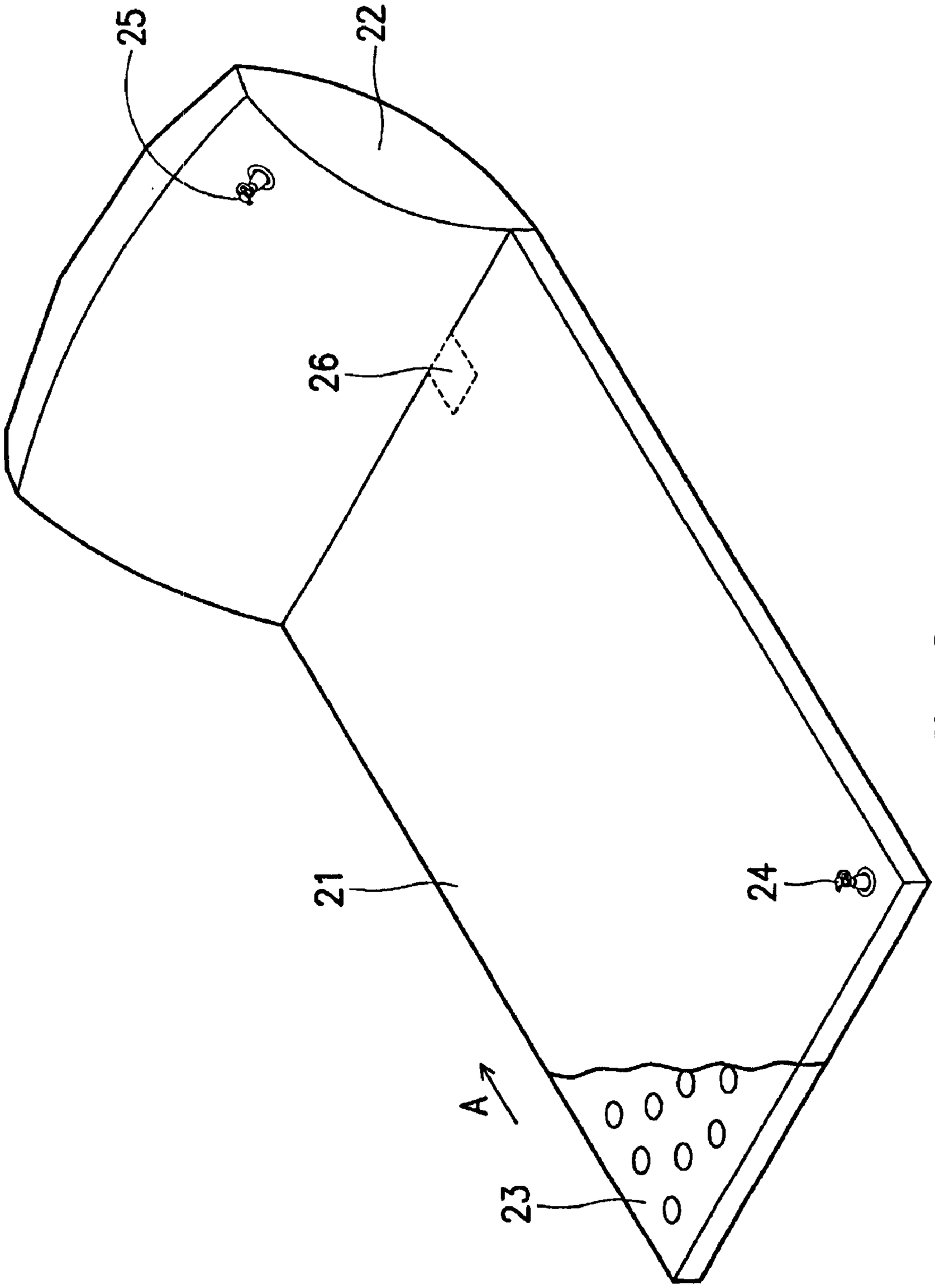


Fig. 2

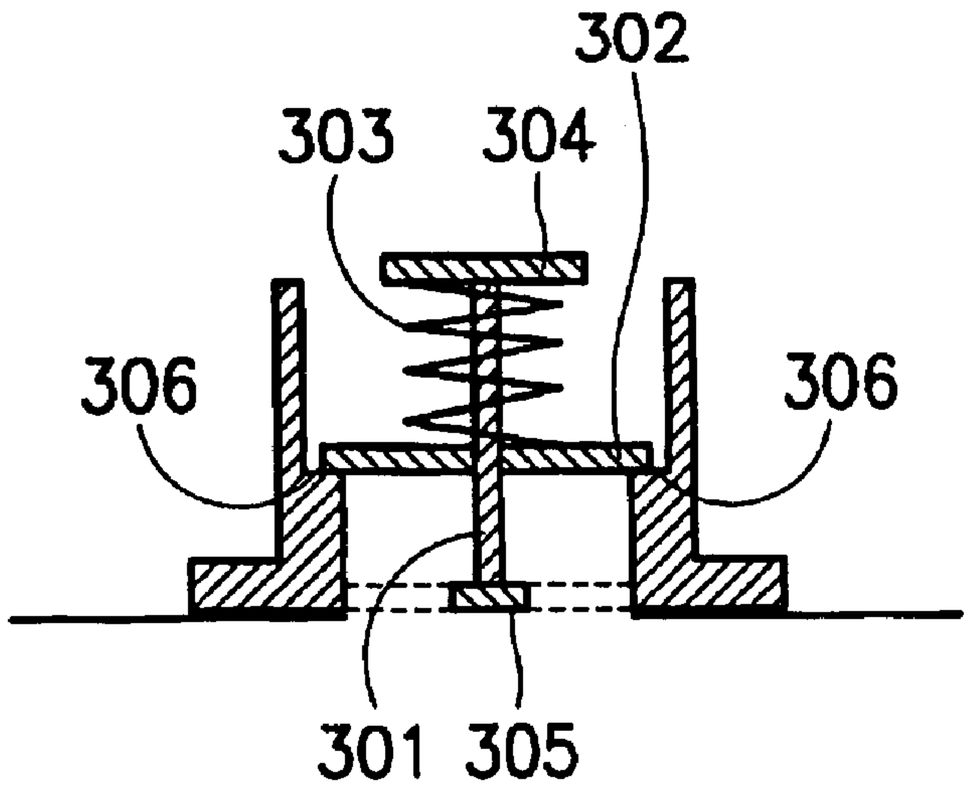


Fig. 3A

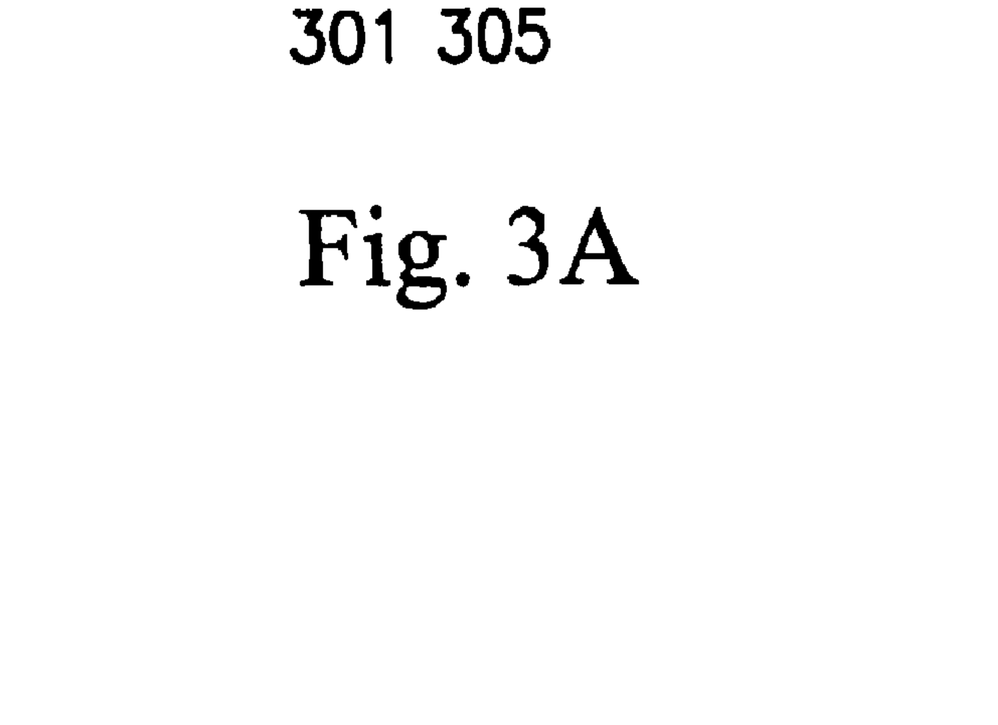


Fig. 3B

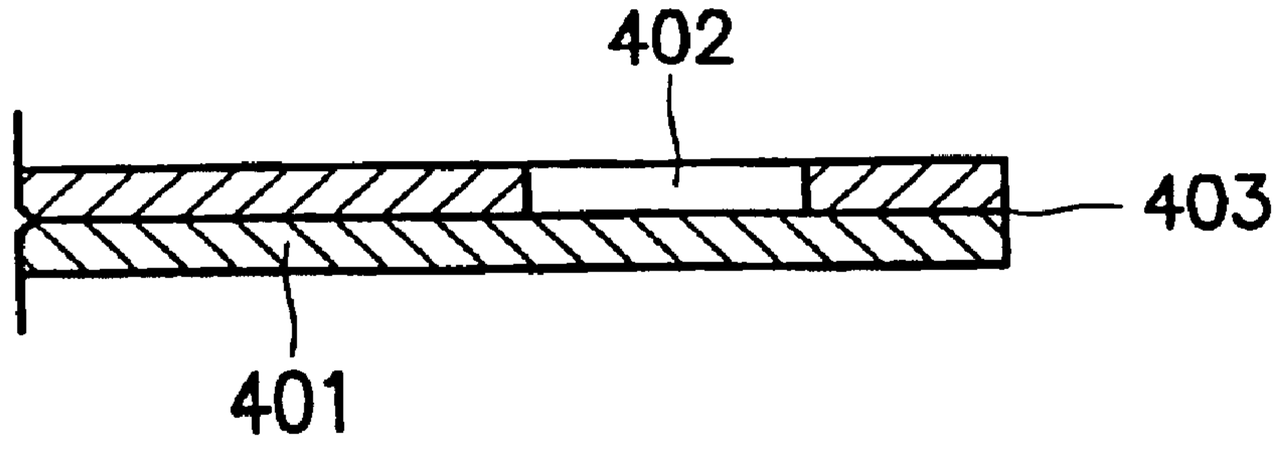


Fig. 4A

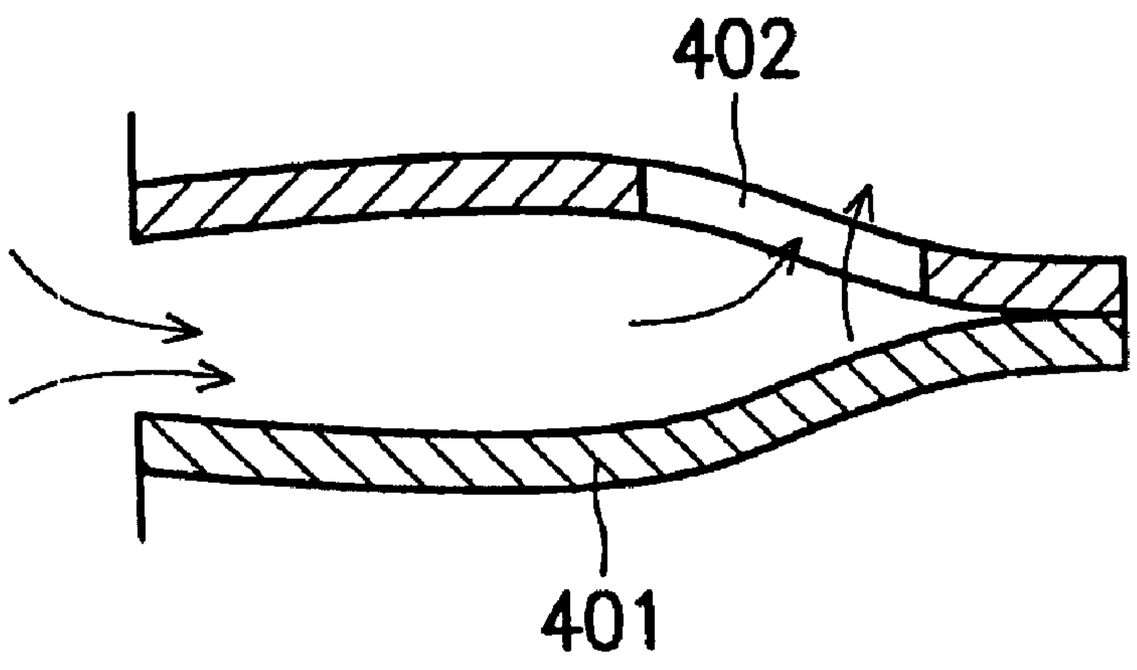


Fig. 4B

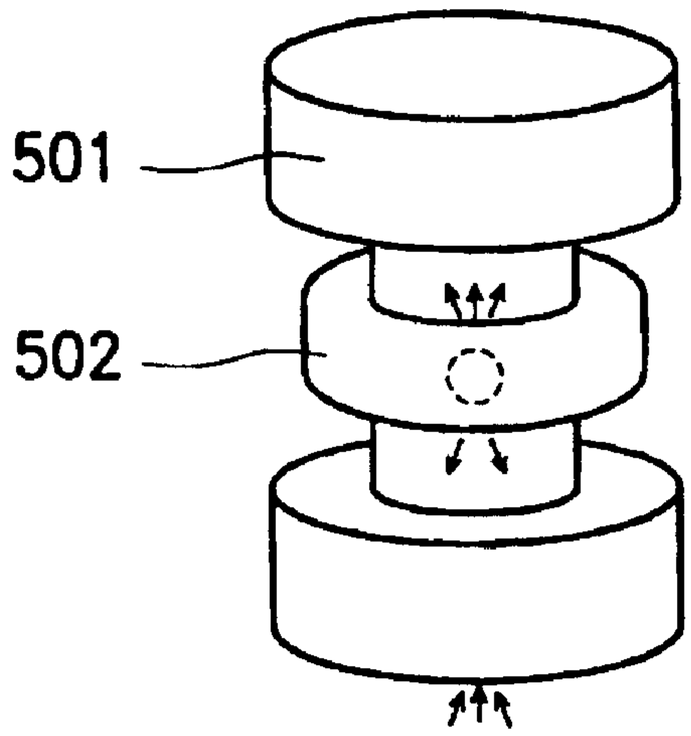


Fig. 5A

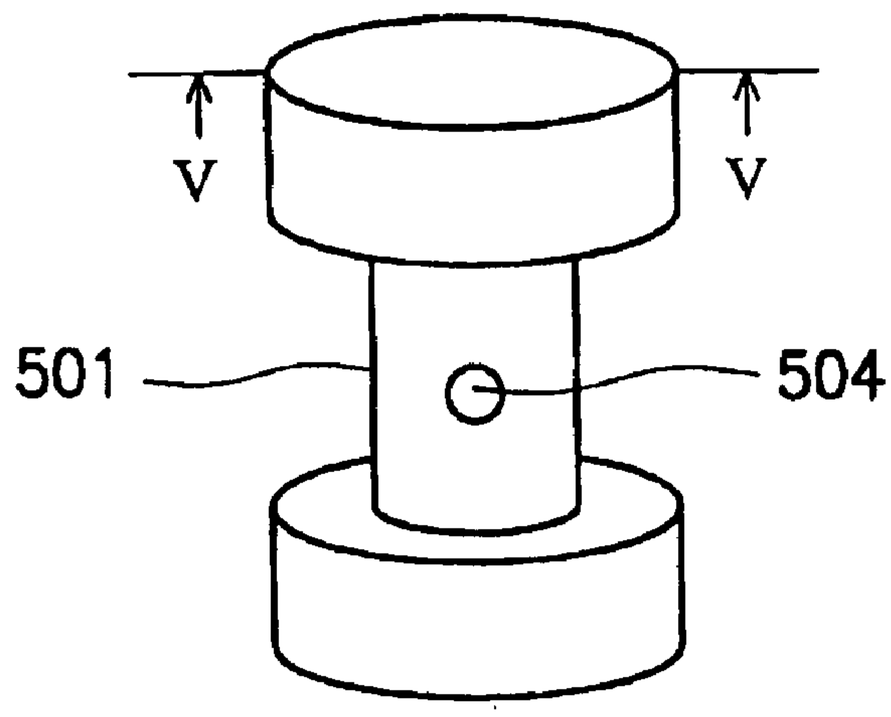


Fig. 5B

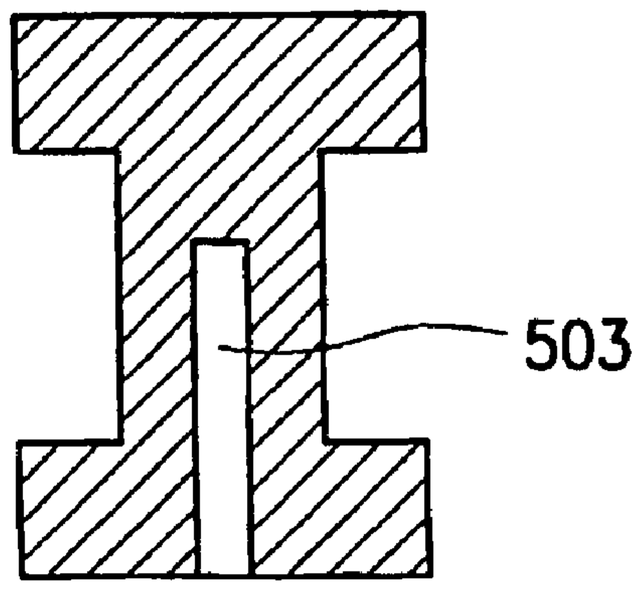


Fig. 5C

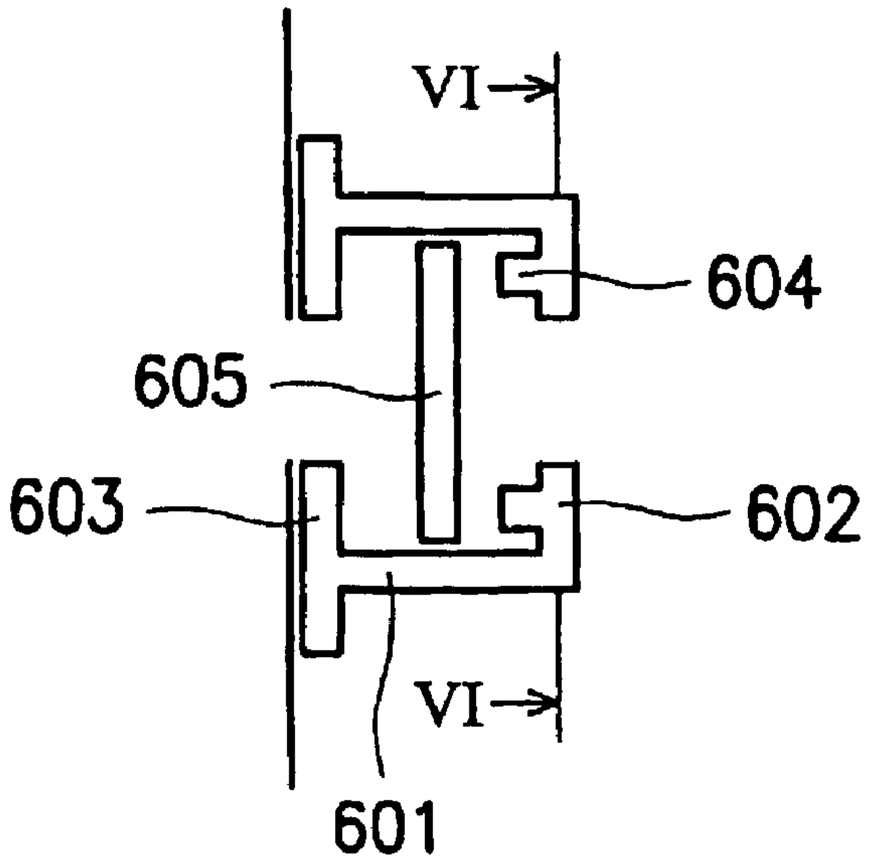


Fig. 6A

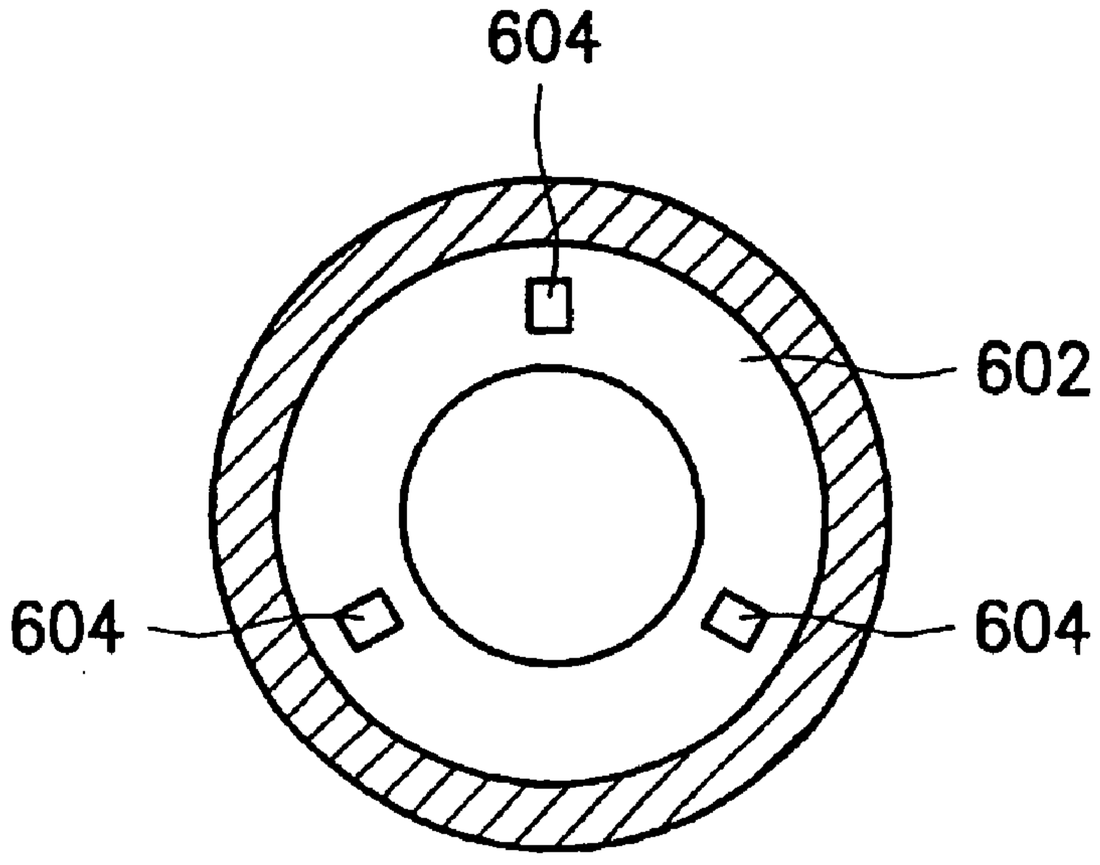


Fig. 6B

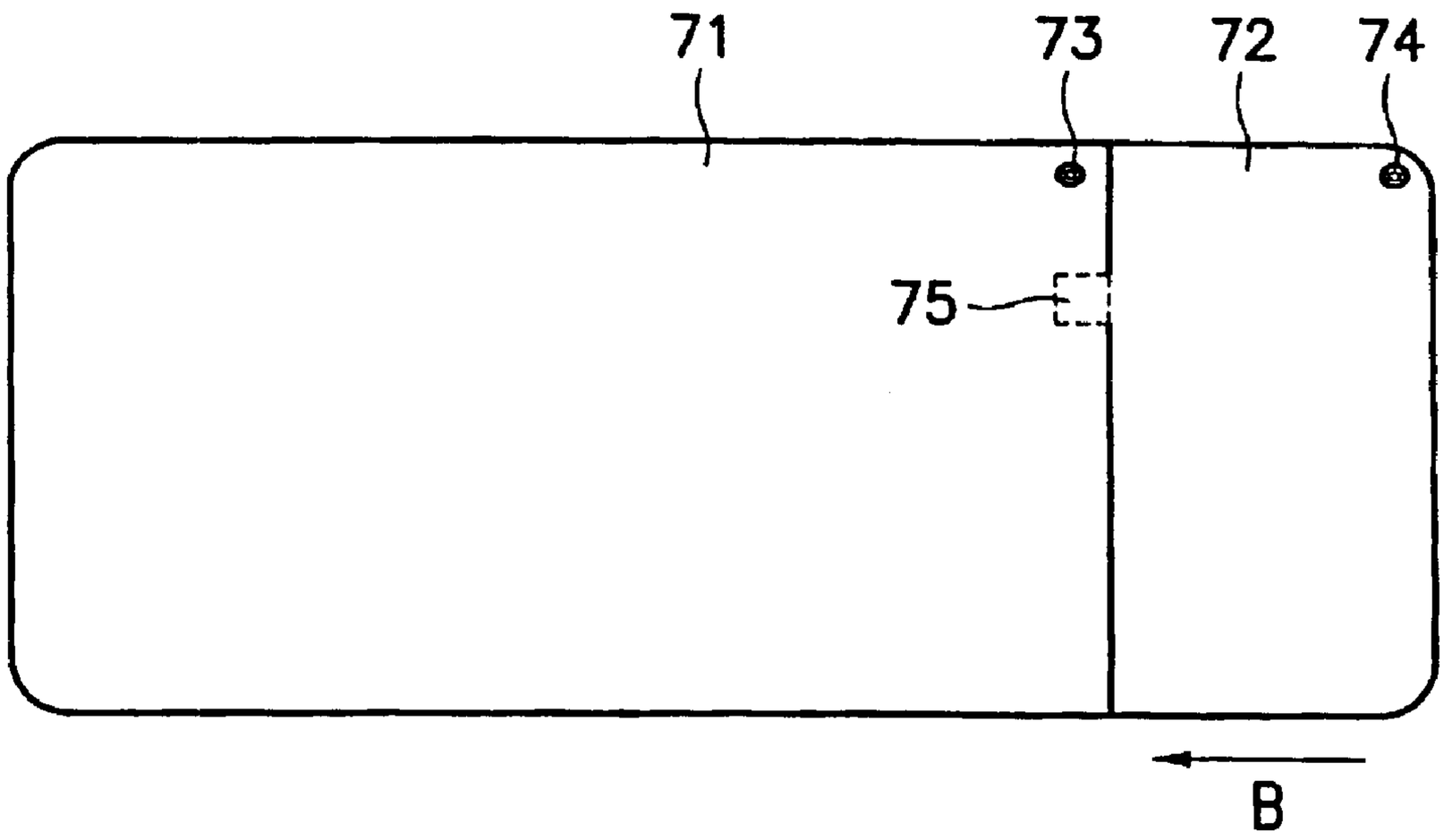


Fig. 7

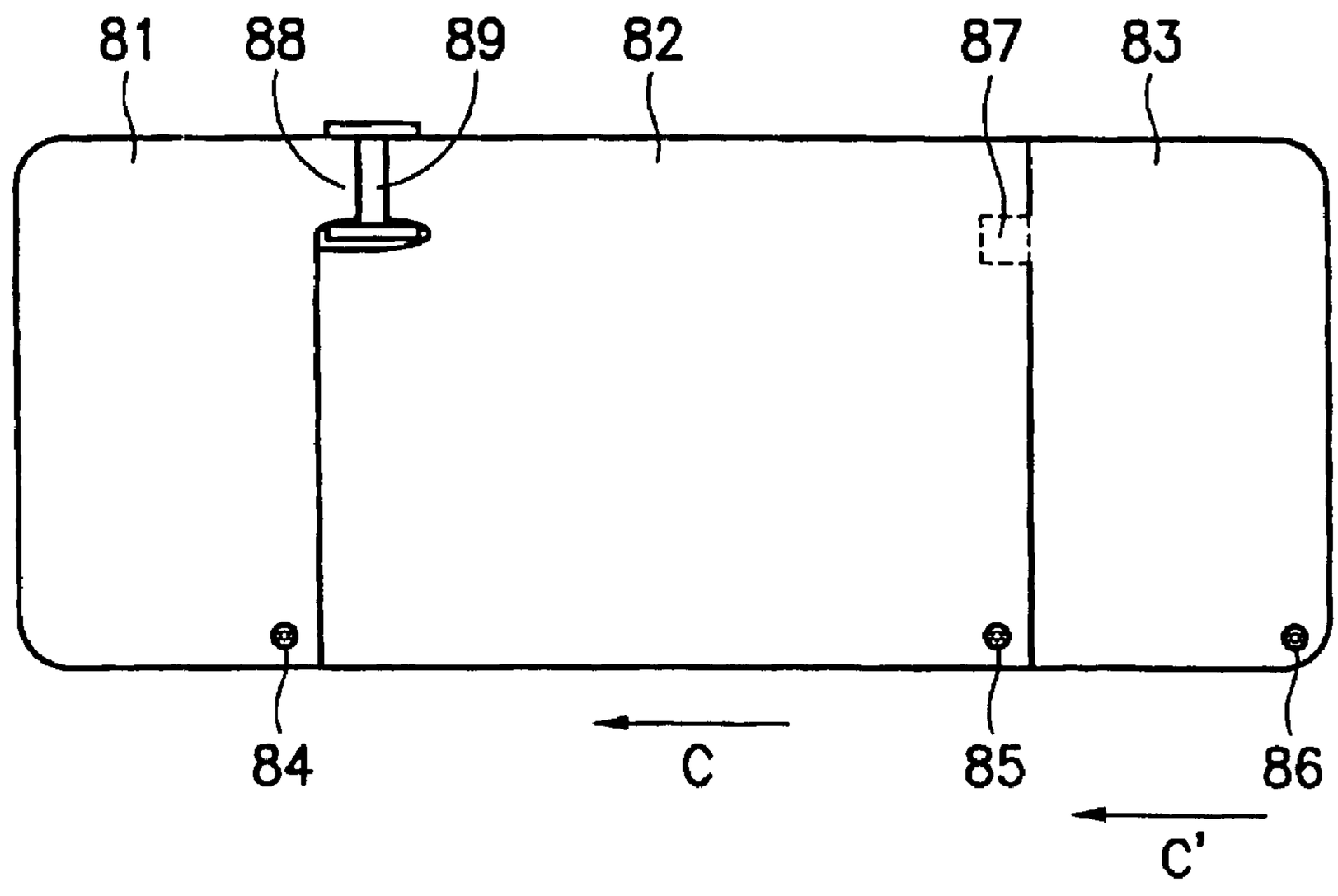


Fig. 8

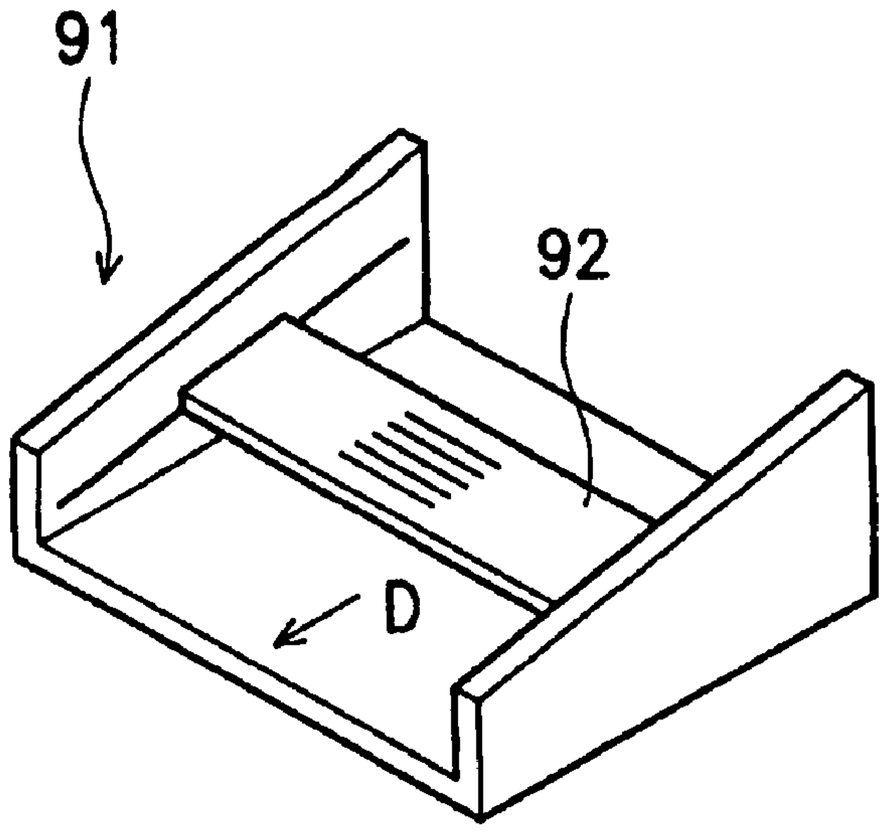


Fig. 9A

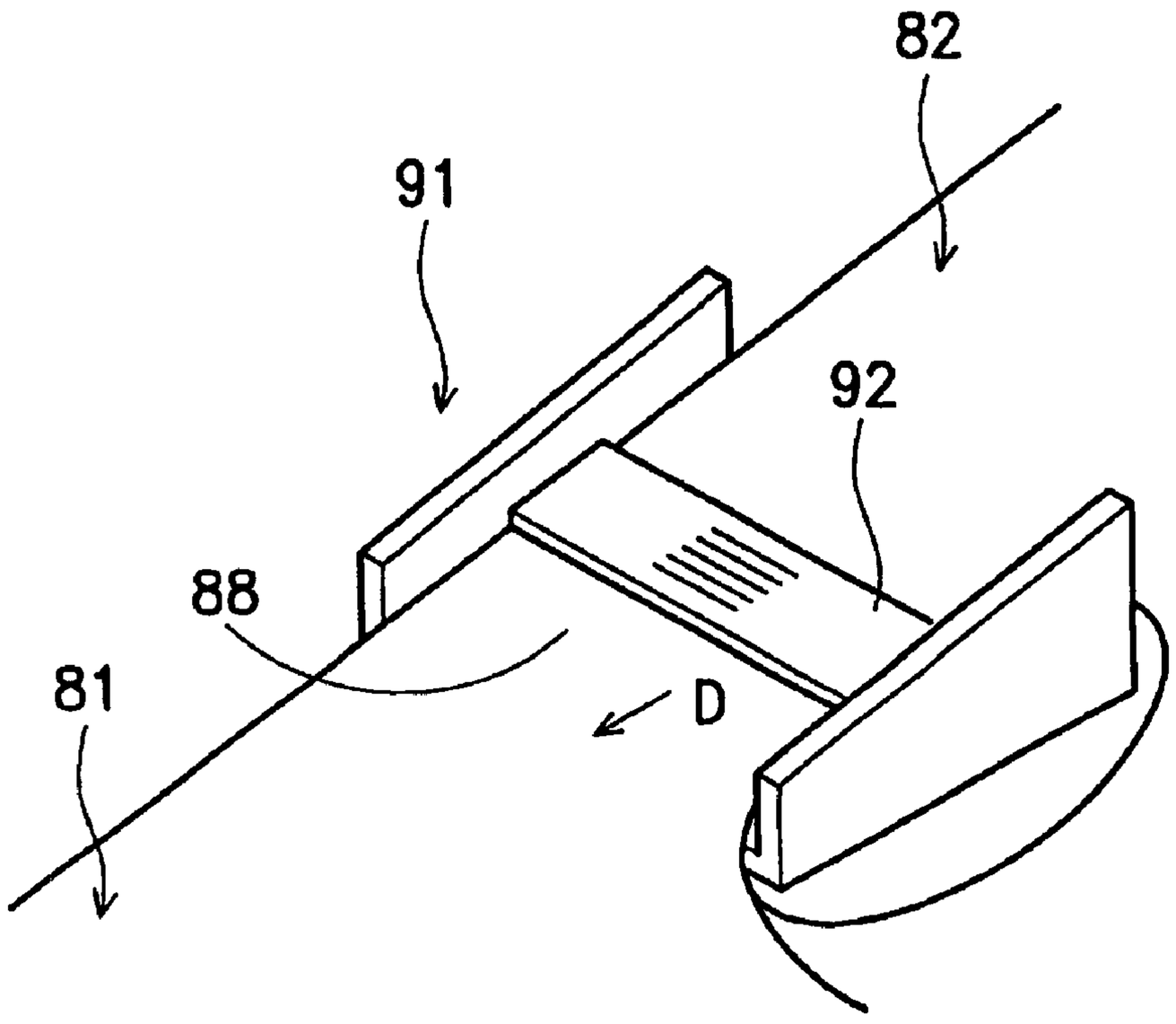


Fig. 9B

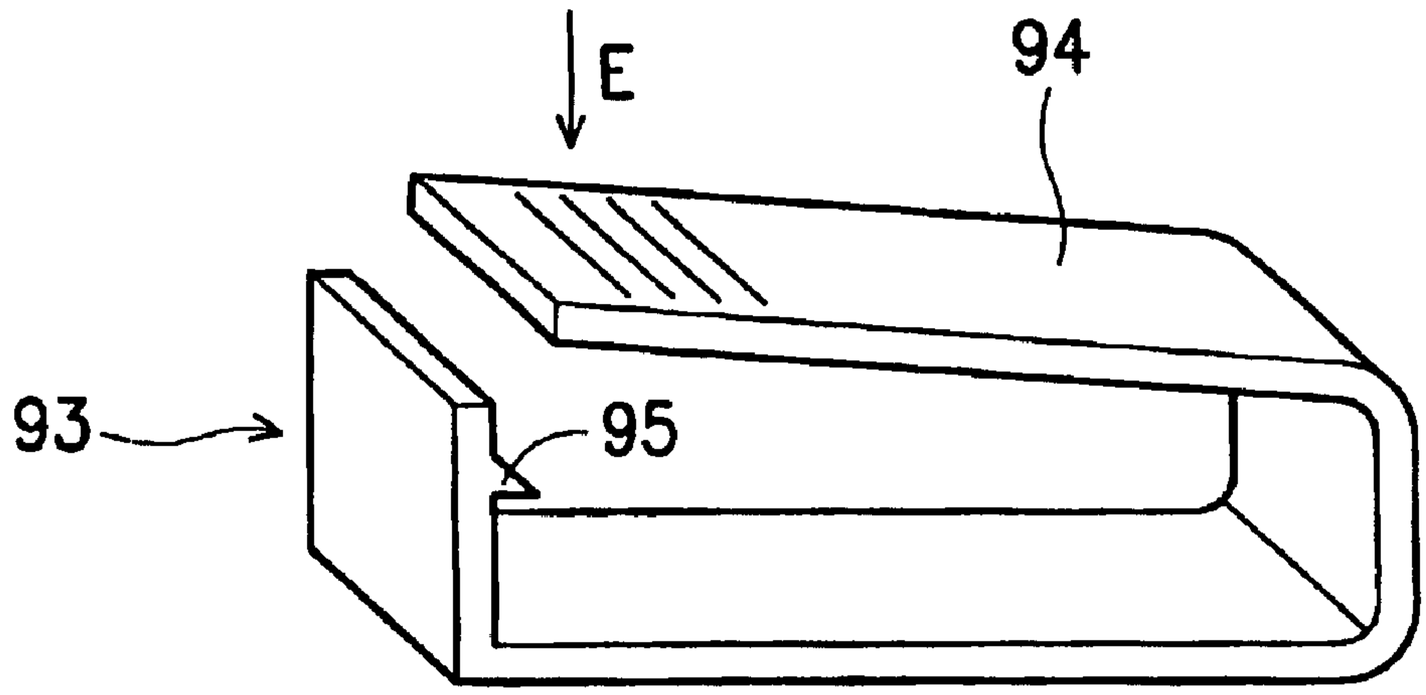


Fig. 10

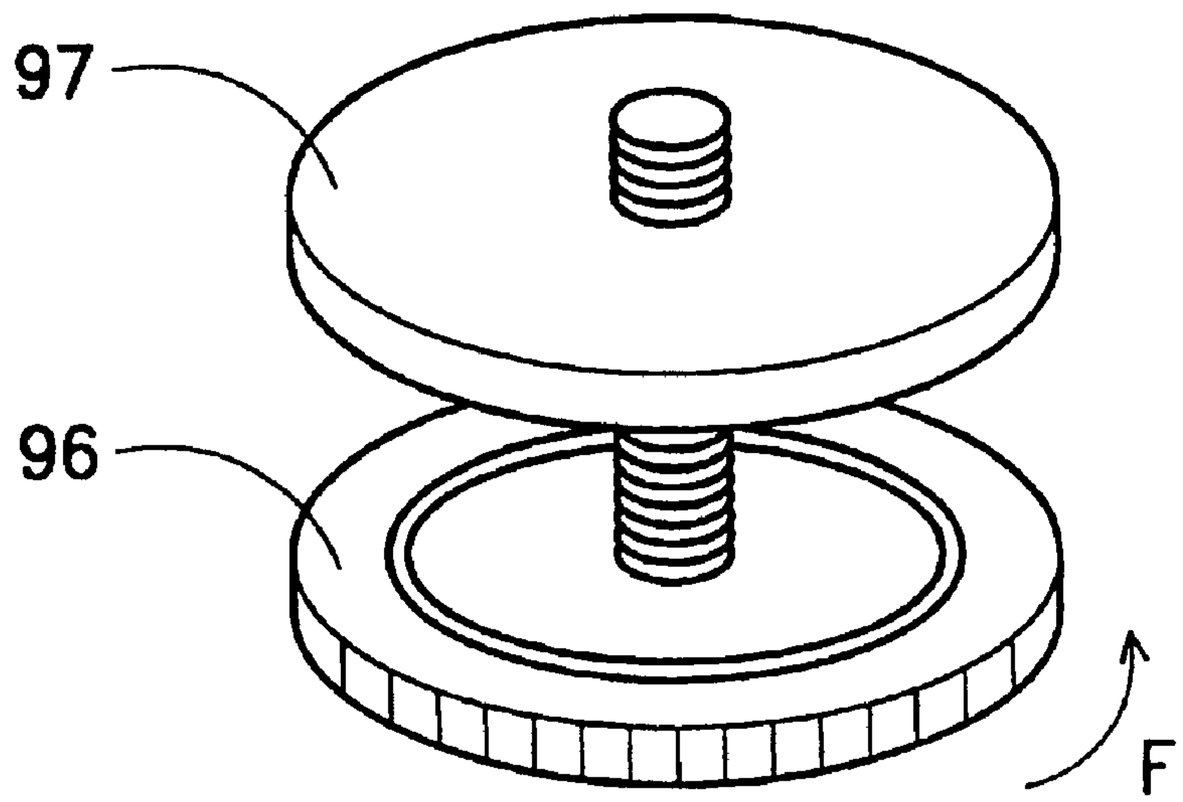


Fig. 11

SELF-INFLATING MATTRESS

Matter enclosed in heavy brackets [ ] appears in the original patent but forms no part of this reissue specification; matter printed in italics indicates the additions made by reissue.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

The present invention relates in general to a self-inflating mattress to be inflated without using any additional tool.

2. Description of the Related Art

Referring to FIG. **1**, a conventional self-inflating mattress having a cover is shown. The inside of the cover is divided into two isolated chambers **11**, **12**, wherein the chamber **11** has a foam **13** provided inside while the chamber **12** is empty. When storing the mattress, the user squeezes air out of the foam **13** and rolls up the mattress. When using the mattress, the user spreads out the mattress roll so that the foam **13** automatically expands by absorbing outside air via the inflation valve **14**. Then, the user fills the chamber **12** with air through the inflation valve **15** by an air pump (not shown).

It is understood that the user needs to use a tool (air pump) to pump the chamber (pillow) **12** of the mattress. In other words, the user needs to always carry an air pump besides the mattress to places such as the beach, which is neither economical nor convenient for the user.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

An object of the present invention is to modify the conventional self-inflating mattress so that inflating the mattress does not require any tool.

The self-inflating mattress of the present invention includes a first chamber, a second chamber, a first valve, a second valve, a foam, and a check valve. The foam is received inside the first chamber. The check valve is provided between the first chamber and the second chamber so that only air from the first chamber is allowed to flow to the second chamber. The first valve is attached to the first chamber for inflating and deflating the first chamber while the second valve is attached to the second chamber for deflating the second chamber.

To inflate the mattress, the user spreads out the mattress so that the foam inside the first chamber automatically expands by absorbing outside air via the first valve. Then, the user closes the first and the second valves and rolls up the first chamber, thereby pushing air in the foam into the second chamber via the check valve. Furthermore, the user spreads out the first chamber and re-opens the first valve so that the foam automatically expands again by absorbing outside air via the first valve. It is therefore understood that the inflation of the mattress according to the present invention does not require any tool.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The present invention can be more fully understood by the detailed description and examples described hereinafter with references made to the accompanying drawings, wherein:

FIG. **1** depicts a conventional self-inflating mattress;

FIG. **2** depicts a self-inflating mattress in accordance with the embodiment one of the present invention;

FIG. **3**A is a sectional view of a check valve in accordance with a first example as disclosed in the embodiment one of the present invention;

FIG. **3**B shows an operating principle of the check valve shown in FIG. **3**A;

FIG. **4**A is a sectional view of a check valve in accordance with a second example as disclosed in the embodiment one of the present invention;

FIG. **4**B shows an operating principle of the check valve shown in FIG. **4**A;

FIG. **5**A is a perspective diagram of a check valve in accordance with a third example as disclosed in the embodiment one of the present invention;

FIG. **5**B is a perspective diagram of the body of the check valve shown in FIG. **5**A;

FIG. **5**C is a sectional view of the body of the check valve along the line V—V as shown in FIG. **5**B:

FIG. **6**A depicts a check valve in accordance with a fourth example as disclosed in the embodiment one of the present invention;

FIG. **6**B is a sectional view of the check valve along the line VI—VI as shown in FIG. **6**A;

FIG. **7** depicts a self-inflating mattress in accordance with the embodiment two of the present invention;

FIG. **8** depicts a self-inflating mattress in accordance with the embodiment three of the present invention;

FIG. **9**A depicts a closing device in accordance with a first example as disclosed in the embodiment three of the present invention;

FIG. **9**B depicts the closing device shown in FIG. **9**A mounted on the mattress in accordance with the embodiment three of the present invention;

FIG. **10** depicts a closing device in accordance with a second example as disclosed in the embodiment three of the present invention;

FIG. **11** depicts a closing device in accordance with a third example as disclosed in the embodiment three of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Embodiment one:

Referring to FIG. **2**, a self-inflating mattress of the present invention includes a flexible cover. Wherein, the inner space of the cover is divided into a first chamber **21** and a second chamber **22**. Two valves **24**, **25** are provided on the cover for inflating and deflating the chambers **21**, **22** respectively. The first chamber **21** has a foam **23** disposed inside while the second chamber **22** is empty. Furthermore, a check valve **26** is buried in the foam **23** of the first chamber **21** abutting the second chamber **22** to allow air to communicate between the two chambers **21**, **22**.

When storing the mattress, a user first opens the valves **24**, **25**, squeezes air out of the chambers **21**, **22**, and rolls up the mattress. The check valve **26** is protected by the surrounding foam **23** so that bending of the check valve **26** would not occur when the mattress is rolled, which prevents the check valve **26** from being damaged. When inflating the mattress, the user spreads out the mattress roll, which allows the foam **23** to expand automatically by absorbing outside air via the valve **24**. Then, the user closes both of the valves **24**, **25** and rolls up the first chamber **21** in direction A, thereby forcing the air inside the foam into the second chamber **22** via the check valve **26**. Then, the user spreads out the first chamber **21** and opens the valve **24** again so that the foam **23** automatically expands again by absorbing outside air via the valve **24**. Thereafter, the user closes the valve **24**. It is therefore understood that inflation of the mattress according to the present invention does not require any tool.

FIG. **3**A depicts a check valve in accordance with a first example of this embodiment, wherein the check valve includes an inner flange **306**, a rod **301**, a diaphragm **302**, and a spring **303**. In particular, an end **304** of the rod **301** is disk-shaped while the other end **305** is anchored to the check valve. The diaphragm **302** is movably installed on and guided by the rod **301** with the spring **303** pushing the diaphragm **302** against the disk-shaped end **304** of the rod **301**. Normally, the diaphragm **302** is rested on the inner flange **306** of the check valve. When being operated, the diaphragm **302** is pushed away from the inner flange **306** by air pressure, which allows the air to flow through the check valve in a single direction as shown in FIG. **3**B.

FIG. **4**A depicts a check valve in accordance with a second example of this embodiment, wherein the check valve includes a flexible sleeve **401** made of, for example, plastic. In particular, an end **403** of the sleeve **401** is permanently sealed off by heat-sealing while a hole **402** is provided on the sleeve **401**. The flexible sleeve **401** normally is flat but expands in operation, allowing the air to flow out from the hole **402** as shown in FIG. **4**B.

FIG. **5**A depicts a check valve in accordance with a third example of this embodiment, wherein the check valve includes a stiff dumbbell-shaped body **501** and a resilient ring **502** wrapped round the body **501**. Further referring to FIGS. **5**B and **5**C, the valve body **501** has a longitudinal passage **503** formed inside and a lateral hole **504** connected to the passage **503**. Thus, the resilient ring **502** wrapped around the body **501** can only allow air to flow out from the hole **504**.

Referring to FIGS. **6**A and **6**B, a check valve in accordance with a fourth example of this embodiment includes a tube **601** and a diaphragm **605**. The tube **601** has a pair of annular lips **602**, **603** separately formed at opposite ends of the tube **601** to confine the diaphragm **605** inside the tube **601**. Furthermore, a plurality of protrusions **604** are formed, e.g. equidistantly, on the inner surface of the annular lip **602**. In operation, the diaphragm **605** is pushed against the protrusions **604** by air pressure, which causes a plurality of gaps to be temporarily formed between the diaphragm **605** and the lip **602** of the check valve that only allows air to flow through the check valve in a direction opposite to the arrow shown in FIG. **6**A. In another word, the airflow cannot flow through the check valve in the direction of the arrow when the diaphragm **605** is pushed against the lip **603** by air pressure.

It is understood that a variety of check valves can be incorporated into the present invention to control and regulate an unidirectional airflow from the first chamber **21** to the second chamber **22**.

Embodiment two:

Referring to FIG. **7**, a self-inflating mattress of the present invention includes a flexible cover. Wherein, the inner space of the cover is divided into a first chamber **71** and a second chamber **72**. Two valves **73**, **74** are provided on the cover for inflating and deflating the chambers **71**, **72** respectively. Both of the chambers **71**, **72** have foams disposed inside. Furthermore, a check valve **75** is buried in the foam of the first chamber **71** abutting the second chamber **72** to allow air to communicate between the two chambers **71**, **72**.

When inflating the mattress, a user opens each of the valves **73**, **74** so that the foams in the chambers **71**, **72** are allowed to automatically expand by absorbing outside air. Then, the user closes both of the valves **73**, **74** and rolls up the second chamber **72** in direction B, thereby forcing the air inside the foam of the second chamber **72** into the first chamber **71** via the check valve **75**. Then, the user spreads out the second chamber **72** and opens the valve **74** again so that the foam in the second chamber **72** automatically expands again by absorbing outside air. Thereafter, the user closes the valve **74**. In this way, the first chamber **71** can be filled with air sufficiently enough that the user can enjoy lying on the mattress comfortably. It is also understood that the inflation of the mattress according to the present invention does not require any tool.

Embodiment three:

Referring to FIG. **8**, a self-inflating mattress of the present invention includes a flexible cover. Wherein, the inner space of the cover is divided into a first chamber **81**, a second chamber **82** and a third chamber **83**. Three valves **84**, **85**, **86** are provided on the cover for inflating and deflating the chambers **81**, **82**, **83** respectively. The second and the third chambers **82**, **83** have foams disposed inside while the first chamber **81** is empty. Furthermore, a passage **88** is provided between the first and the second chambers **81**, **82**, wherein a closing device **89** is provided for controlling the closing and opening of the passage **88**. Furthermore, a check valve **87** is buried in the foam of the second chamber **82** abutting the third chamber **83** to allow air to communicate between the second and the third chambers **82**, **83**.

When inflating the mattress, a user opens the valves **85** and closes the valve **84** so that the foam in the second chambers **82** is allowed to automatically expand by absorbing outside air via the valve **85**. Then, the user closes the valve **85** and rolls up the second chamber **82** in direction C, thereby forcing the air inside the foam of the second chamber **82** into the first chamber **81** via the passage **88**. Thus, the first chamber (i.e. the pillow) is filled with air. Then, the user closes the passage **88** by shutting the closing device **89**. Then, the user spreads out the second chamber **82** again and opens the valves **85**, **86** so that the foams in the second and third chambers **82**, **83** automatically expand by absorbing outside air. Next, the user closes the valves **85**, **86** and rolls up the third chamber **83** in direction C, thereby forcing the air inside the foam of the third chamber **83** into the second chamber **82** via the check valve **87**. Then, the user opens the valve **86** only so that the foam in the third chamber **83** is allowed to automatically expand by absorbing outside air. Thereafter, the user closes the valve **86**. In this way, the second chamber **82** can be filled with air sufficiently enough that the user can enjoy lying on the mattress comfortably. It is also understood that the inflation of the mattress according to the present invention does not require any tool.

Now referring to FIGS. **9**A and **9**B, the closing device according to a first example of this embodiment is a clip as shown. When the user pushes the slider **92** of the clip **91** in direction D, the passage **88** of the mattress between the first and second chambers **81**, **82** is closed.

Referring to FIG. **10**, the closing device according to a second example of this embodiment is also a clip. When the user pushes down the cantilever arm **94** of the clip **93** in direction E such that the cantilever arm **94** is engaged tightly with the protrusion **95** and that the passage of the mattress between the first and second chambers is closed.

Referring to FIG. **11**, the closing device according to a third example of this embodiment is a bolt as shown. The bolt has an enlarged head **96** and a matching nut **97**. In operation, the user twists the head **96** of the bolt in direction F so that the head **96** and the nut **97** can get close enough to close the passage of the mattress between the first and second chambers.

While the invention has been described by way of example and in terms of the preferred embodiment, it is to be understood that the invention is not limited to the

disclosed embodiments. To the contrary, it is intended to cover various modifications and similar arrangements (as would be apparent to those skilled in the art). Therefore, the scope of the appended claims should be accorded the broadest interpretation so as to encompass all such modifications and similar arrangements.

What is claimed is:

1. A self-inflating mattress including:

a first chamber;

a second chamber;

a first foam received in the first chamber; and

a check valve buried in the first foam to communicate the first chamber and the second chamber, only allowing air inside the first foam to flow from the first chamber to the second chamber when the first chamber is compressed.

2. A self-inflating mattress as claimed in claim **1**, wherein the check valve comprises an inner flange, a rod, a diaphragm and a spring, wherein the spring surrounds the rod and biases the diaphragm against the flange, and wherein when sufficient air pressure is present, the diaphragm is pushed away from the flange thereby allowing air to flow through the check valve.

3. A self-inflating mattress as claimed in claim **1**, wherein the check valve comprises a dumbbell-shaped body including an internal longitudinal passage open at a first longitudinal end of the body and a lateral hole opening a second end of the longitudinal passage, and a resilient ring wrapped around the body covering the lateral hole, whereby air can only flow out from the lateral hole.

4. A self-inflating mattress as claimed in claim **1**, wherein the check valve comprises a tube and a diaphragm, the tube having (i) a pair of annular lips formed at opposite ends of the tube to confine the diaphragm inside the tube and (ii) a plurality of protrusions formed on an inner surface of one of the annular lips, whereby air can flow through the check valve when the diaphragm is pushed against the protrusions, but is precluded from flowing through the check valve when the diaphragm is pushed against the other one of the annular lips.

5. A self-inflating mattress including:

a first chamber;

a second chamber;

a first foam received in the first chamber; and

a second foam received in the second chamber;

a check valve provided between the first chamber and the second chamber, only allowing air inside the first foam to flow from the first chamber to the second chamber when the first chamber is compressed.

6. A self-inflating mattress as claimed in claim **5**, further including a third chamber, a passage communicating the first and third chambers, and a closing device for opening and closing the **[**passing**]** *passage*.

7. A self-inflating mattress as claimed in claim **6**, further including a first valve attached to the first chamber for inflating and deflating the first chamber, a second valve attached to the second chamber for inflating and deflating the second chamber, and a third valve attached to the third chamber for inflating and deflating the third chamber.

8. A method of inflating a mattress, comprising the steps of:

opening a first valve to a first chamber including foam and permitting the foam to expand;

closing the first valve and a second valve to a second chamber;

forcing air from the first chamber to the second chamber through a check valve buried in the foam of the first chamber;

reopening the first valve to permit the foam to expand; and

closing the first valve.

9. A method of inflating a mattress, comprising the steps of:

opening a first valve to a first chamber including foam and opening a second valve to a second chamber including foam and permitting the foam in both chambers to automatically expand;

closing the first valve and the second valve;

forcing air from the second chamber into the first chamber through a check valve buried in the foam of the first chamber;

reopening the second valve to permit the foam in the second chamber to expand; and

closing the second valve.

10. A method of inflating a mattress having (i) first, second and third chambers and respective first, second and third valves, the second and third chambers having foam disposed therein, (ii) a passage, closeable via a closing device, connecting between the first and second chambers, and (iii) a check valve buried in the foam of the second chamber, the check valve allowing air to communicate between the second and third chambers, the method comprising the steps of:

opening the second valve and closing the first valve;

allowing the foam in the second chamber to expand;

closing the second valve;

forcing air from the second chamber into the first chamber via the passage;

closing the closing device;

opening the second and third valves and allowing the foam in those chambers to expand;

closing the second and third valves;

forcing air from the third chamber into the second chamber via the check valve;

opening the third valve and allowing the foam therein to expand; and

closing the third valve.

11. A method of inflating a mattress, comprising the steps of:

providing a mattress with a first chamber and a second chamber, the first chamber having foam disposed therein; and

forcing air from the first chamber into the second chamber through a check valve buried in the foam, the check valve only allowing air inside the first chamber to flow from the first chamber to the second chamber when the first chamber is compressed.

12. A method of inflating a mattress, comprising the steps of:

opening a first valve to a first chamber including foam and permitting the foam to expand;

closing the first valve and a second valve to a second chamber;

forcing air from the first chamber to the second chamber through a passage provided between the first chamber and the second chamber;

closing a closing device to prevent air from the second chamber from passing to the first chamber through the passage;

reopening the first valve to permit the foam to expand; and

closing the first valve.

13. A method of inflating a mattress having (i) first, second and third chambers and respective first, second and third valves, the second and third chambers having foam disposed therein, (ii) a passage, closeable via a closing device, connecting between the first and second chambers, and (iii) a check valve provided between the second chamber and the third chamber, allowing air to communicate between the second and third chambers, the method comprising the steps of:

opening the second valve and closing the first valve;

allowing the foam in the second chamber to expand;

closing the second valve;

forcing air from the second chamber into the first chamber via the passage;

closing the closing device;

opening the second and third valves and allowing the foam in those chambers to expand;

closing the second and third valves;

forcing air from the third chamber into the second chamber via the check valve;

opening the third valve and allowing the foam therein to expand; and

closing the third valve.

* * * * *