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(54) **METHODS OF MAKING AND FILLING A FILL-THROUGH-THE-TOP PACKAGE**

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(52) **U.S. Cl.** **53/412**; 53/459; 53/469; 53/133.4; 53/139.2; 53/284.7; 53/562; 53/570; 493/213

(58) **Field of Classification Search** 53/412, 53/133.4, 139.2
See application file for complete search history.

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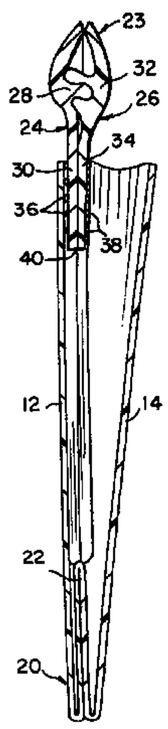
(57) **ABSTRACT**

A fill-through-the-top reclosable package includes first and second opposing body panels joined to each other along a pair of sides and a bottom bridging the pair of sides. The package is provided with a reclosable fastener extending along a package top disposed opposite the bottom. The fastener includes first and second opposing tracks. The first track includes a male profile, while the second track includes a female profile adapted to releasably interlock with the male profile. To provide tamper evidence, the first and second tracks may be joined to each other along an area of weakness. When making the package, the first track is first attached to the first panel, the package is filled with a product via a fill opening between the second track and the second panel, and then the second track is attached to the second panel.

2 Claims, 8 Drawing Sheets



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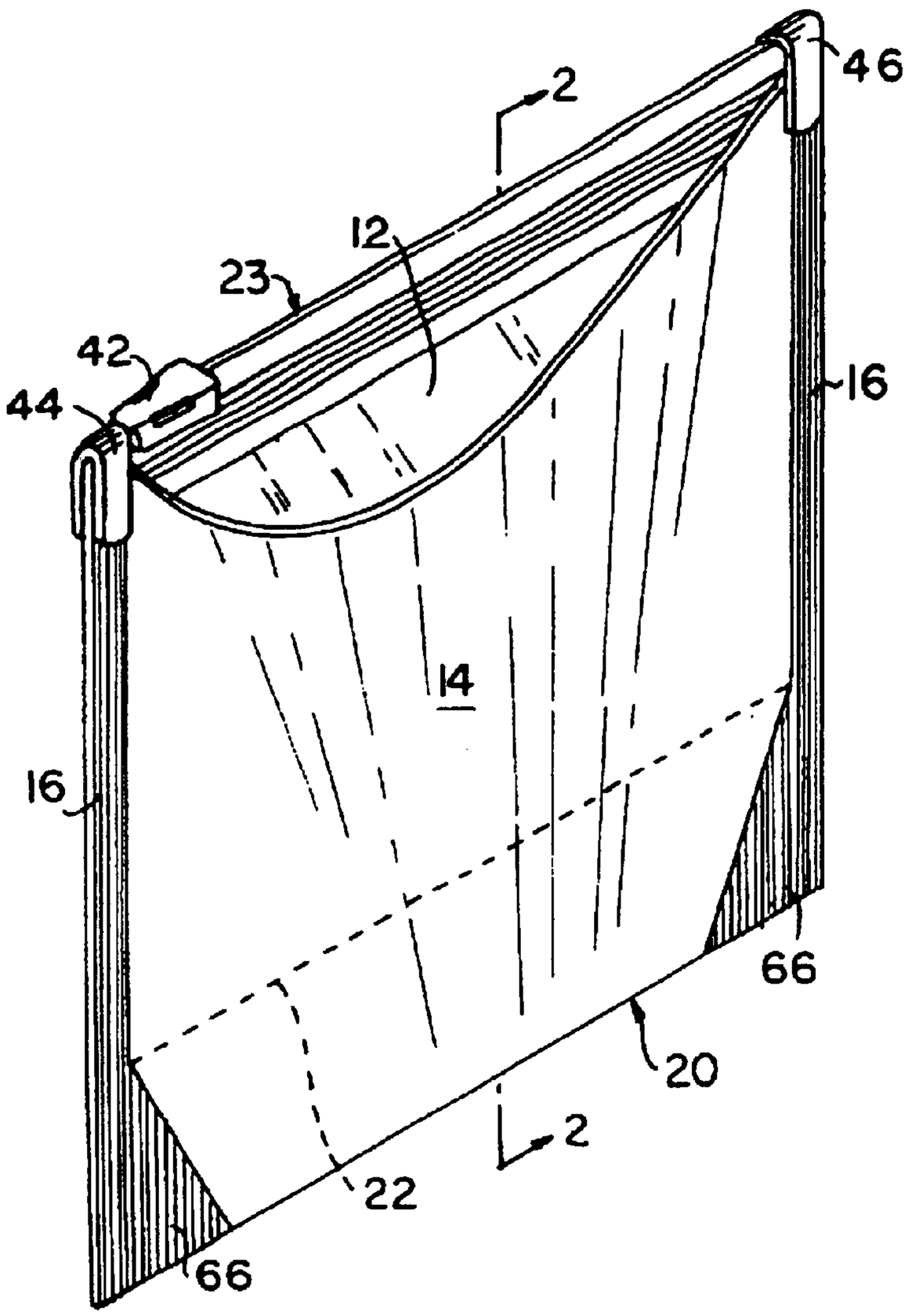
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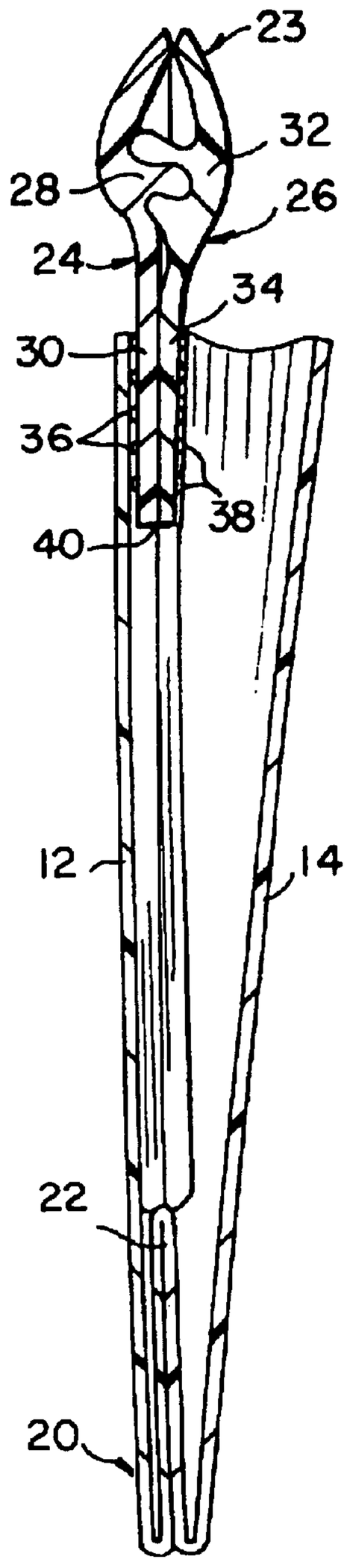
FIG. 1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38
40
12
14
22
20

FIG. 2

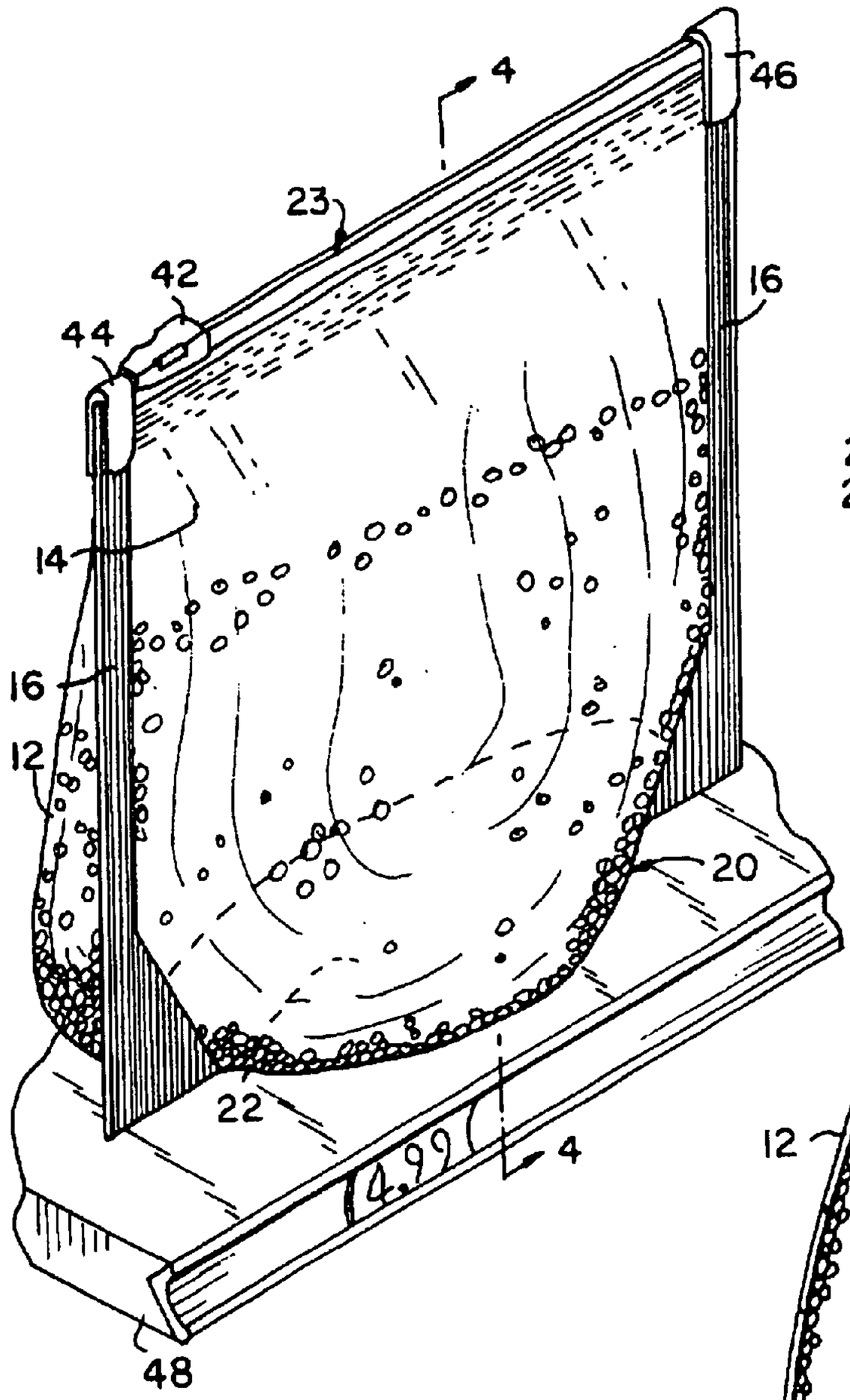
4
46
23
42
44
16
14
16
12
20
22
4
48

FIG. 3

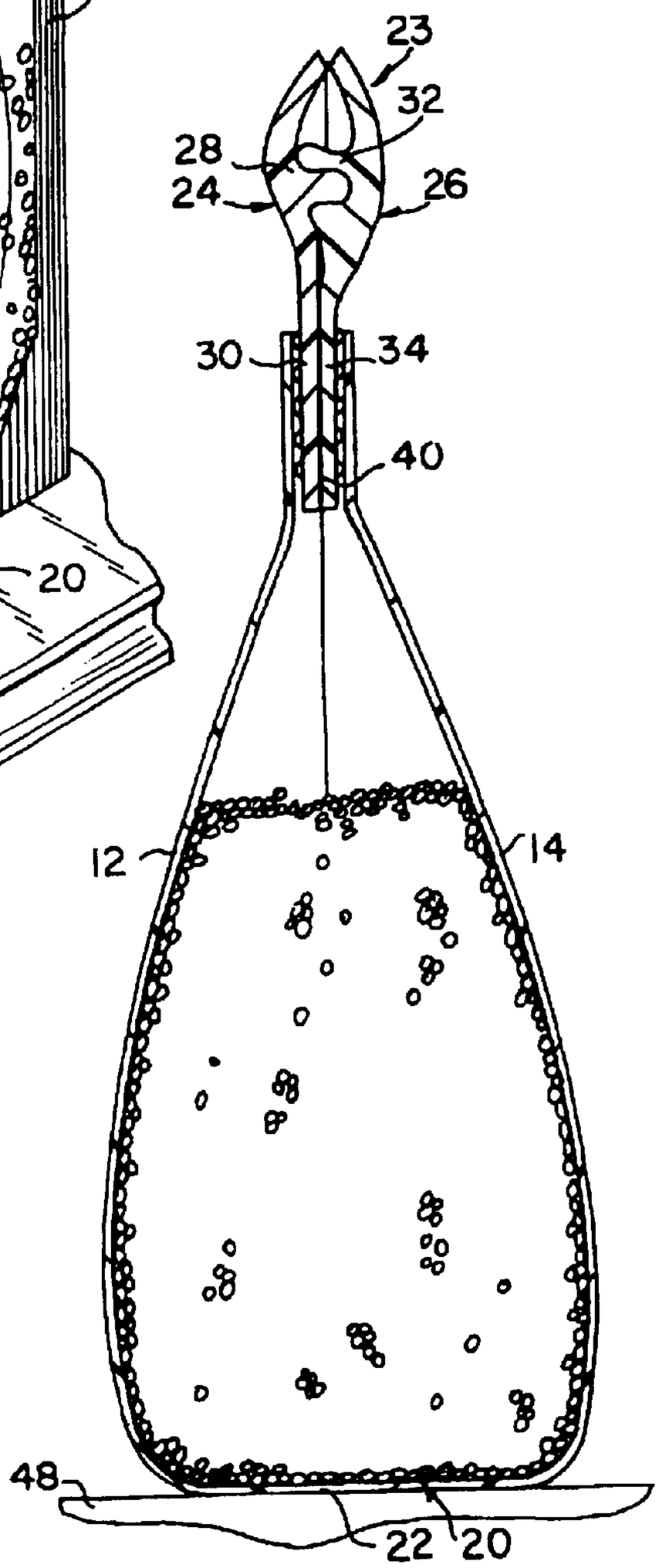
23
32
28
24
26
30
34
40
12
14
48
22
20

FIG. 4

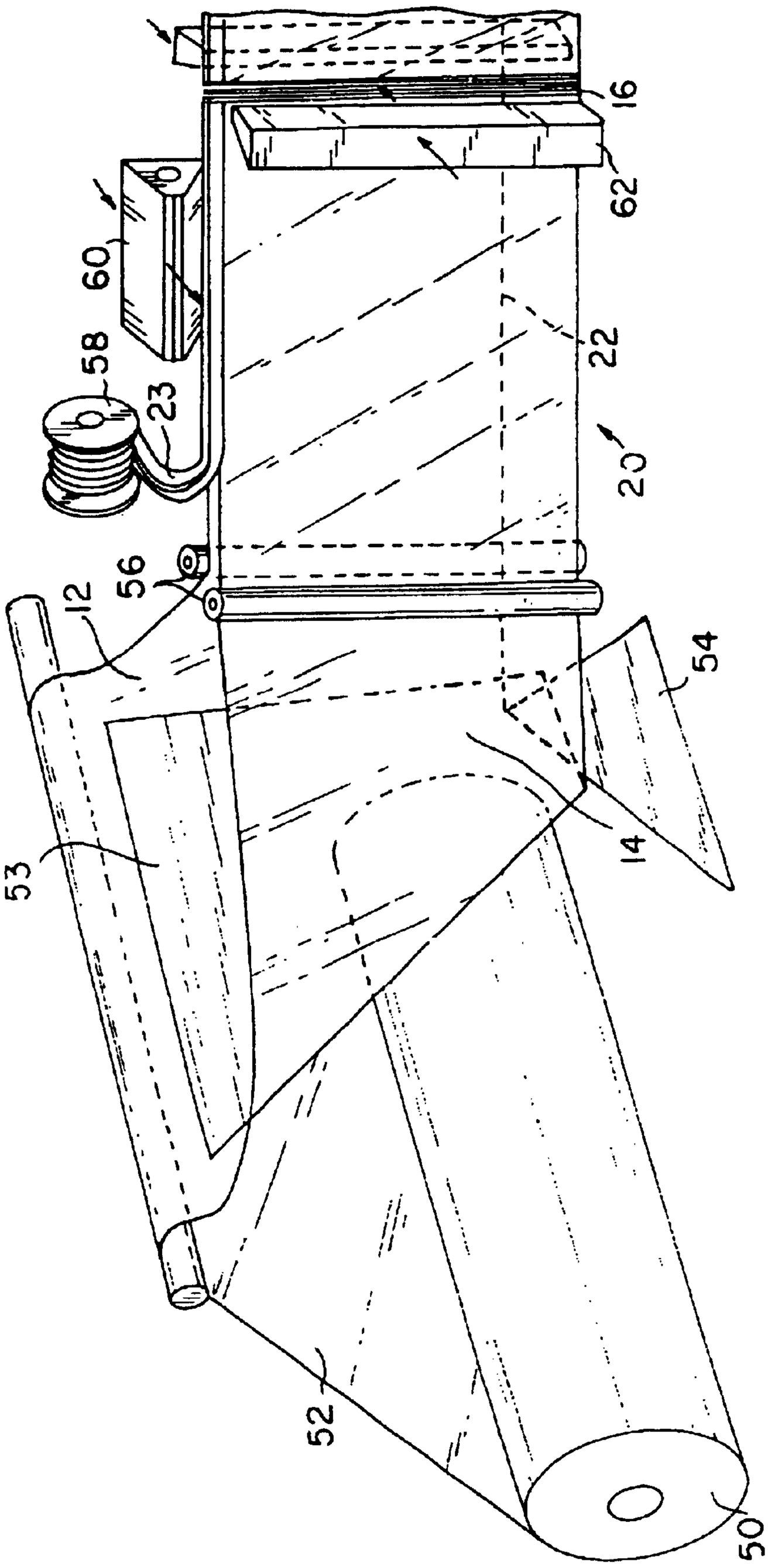

FIG. 5A

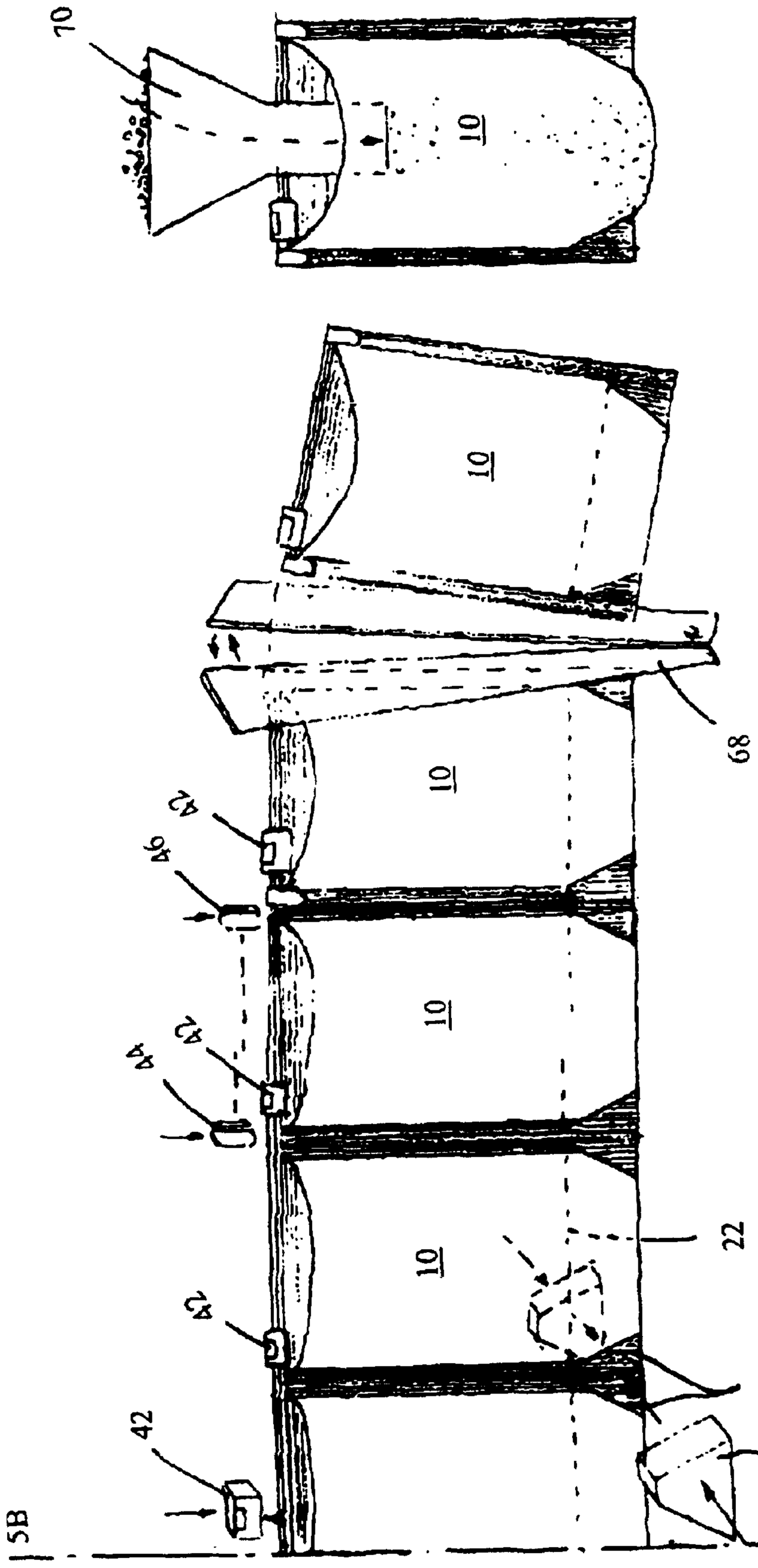

FIG. 5B

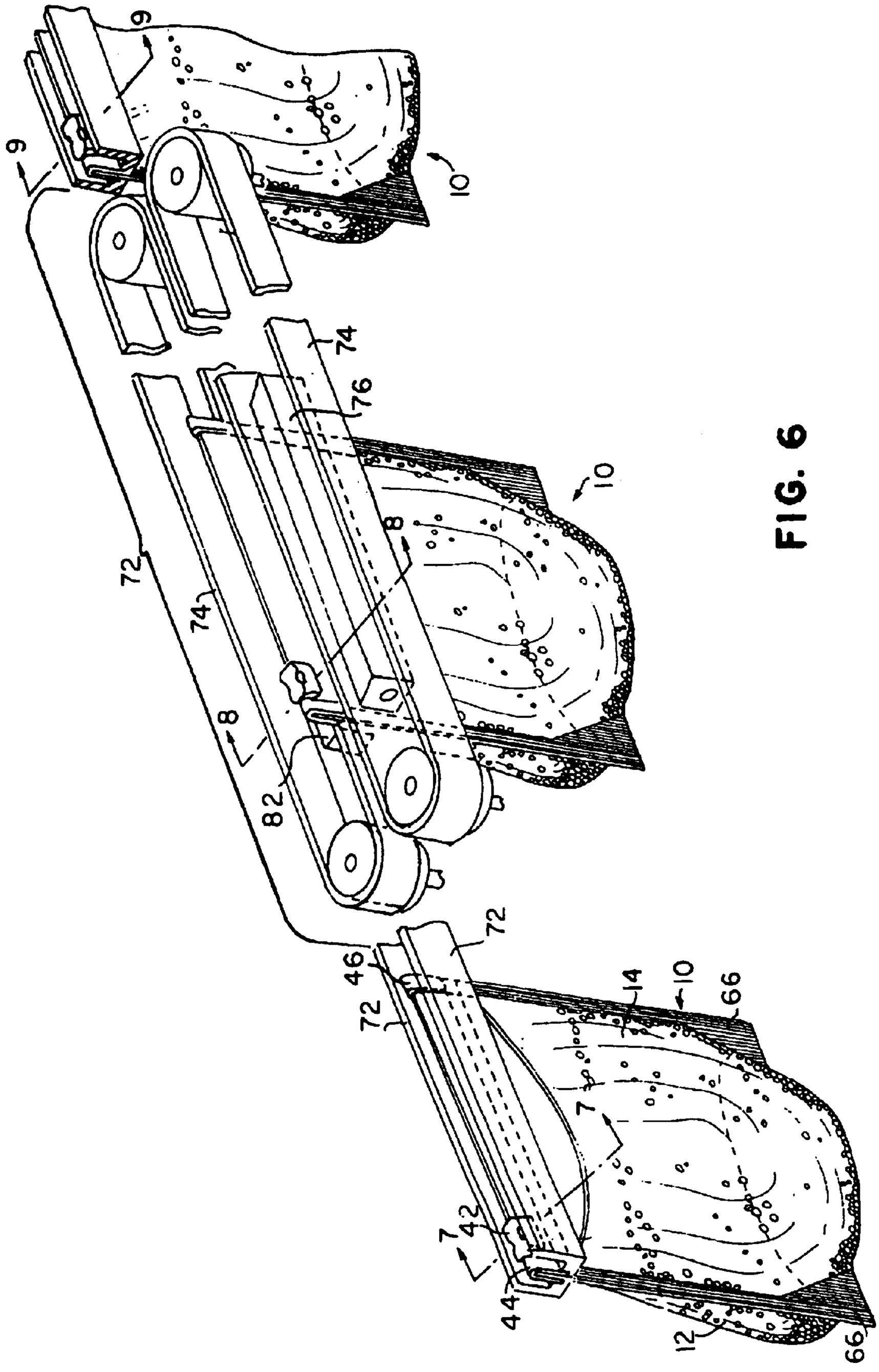

FIG. 6

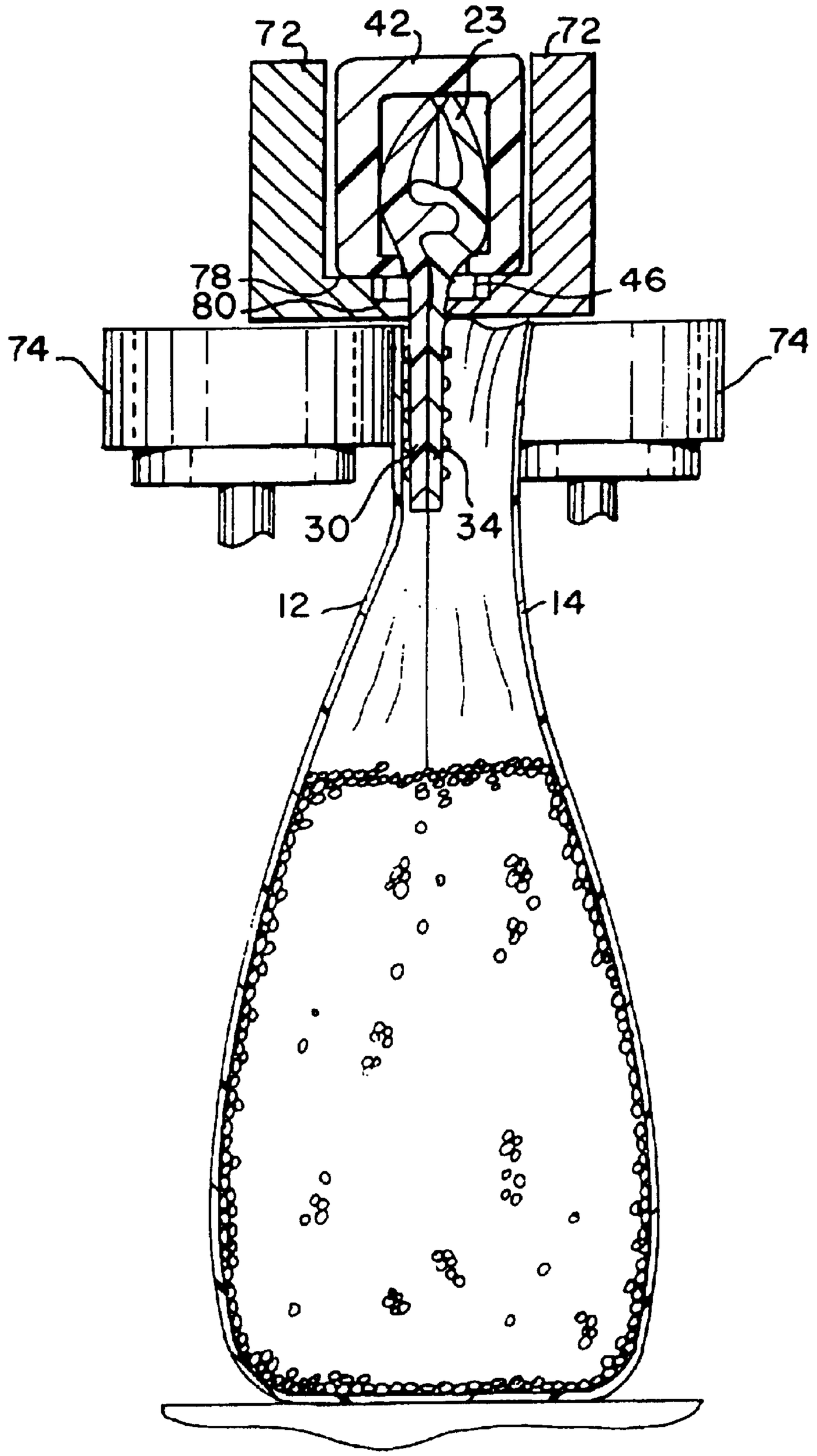

FIG. 7

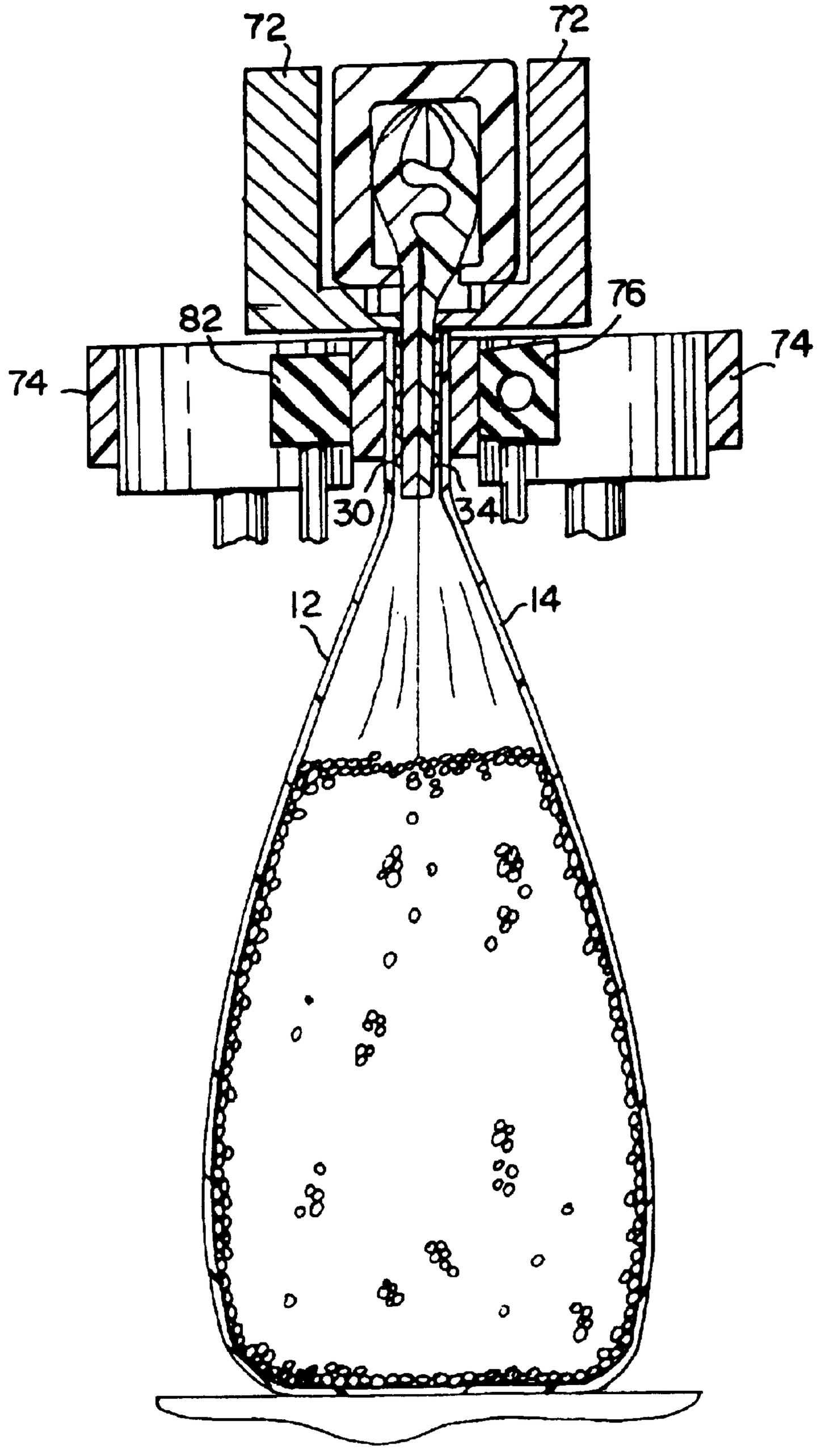

FIG. 8

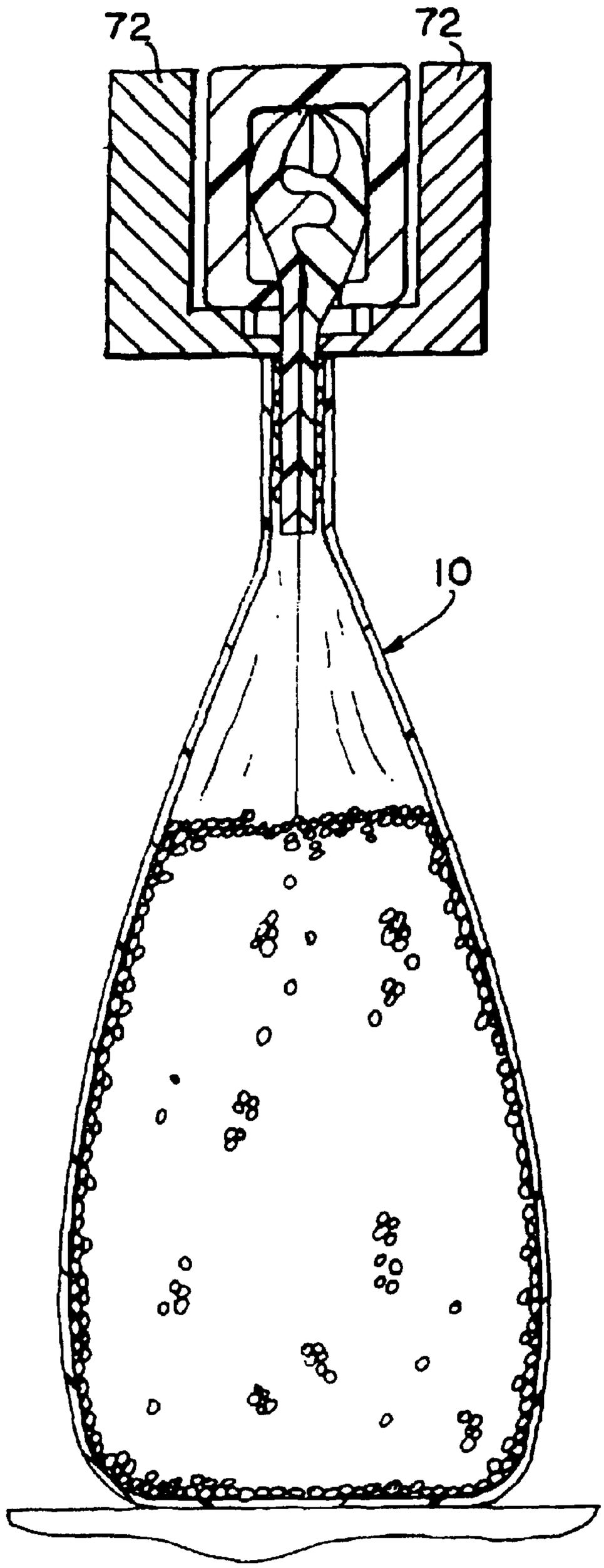

FIG. 9

METHODS OF MAKING AND FILLING A FILL-THROUGH-THE-TOP PACKAGE

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.

RELATED APPLICATION

More than one reissue application has been filed for the reissue of U.S. Pat. No. 6,279,298; the reissue applications include the present application, which is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/647,819, filed Aug. 25, 2003, now issued as U.S. Pat. No. Re. 39,505, which is a reissue of U.S. Pat. No. 6,279,298; U.S. Pat. No. 6,279,298 is a divisional of U.S. application Ser. No. 09/373,212, filed on Aug. 12, 1999, now issued as U.S. Pat. No. 6,071,011, and all of the aforementioned U.S. patents and patent applications are hereby incorporated by reference in their entireties.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention generally relates to packages to be filled with a product on a form, fill, and seal machine and, more particularly, to a reclosable package filled through its top on a form, fill, and seal machine.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

A typically reclosable package includes first and second opposing panels joined to each other along a pair of sides and a bottom bridging the pair of sides. A reclosable fastener extends along a package top disposed opposite the bottom. The fastener generally includes first and second opposing tracks. The first track includes a male profile, while the second track includes a female profile adapted to releasably interlock with the male profile. The first and second tracks are thermally fused to, or integrally formed with, the respective first and second panels. To open and close the fastener, the package may be provided with a slider mounted to the fastener.

If reclosable packages of the foregoing type are to be prepackaged with a product and then sold in a store, the packages are typically prepared on a horizontal or vertical form, fill, and seal machine. In the form, fill, and seal machine, the package is first formed into the shape of a pouch having a fill opening at either the top or the bottom. If the fill opening is disposed at the bottom, then the top is sealed prior to filling the package. Similarly, if the fill opening is disposed at the top, then the bottom is sealed prior to filling the package. Next, the package filled with the product via the fill opening. Finally, the fill opening is sealed shut to fully enclose the product within the package. If the product delivered to the package includes food, then the fill opening is typically provided at the package bottom and a tamper-evident feature is provided along the top. The tamper-evident feature indicates to a consumer whether or not the package has been tampered with prior to purchase.

Some reclosable packages include a gusset along the bottom which expands in response to filling the package with a product. The gusset is advantageous because it increases the volume of product that can be contained in the package and, when the gusset expands, it allows the package to stand up on a store shelf. The stand-up package obviates the use of additional features such as headers with holes for hanging the package from a hook or post. The bottom gusset, however, makes it less practical to provide a fill opening at the bottom because most of the product resides in the gusset.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In accordance with one aspect of the present invention, a fill-through-the-top reclosable package includes first and second opposing body panels joined to each other along a pair of sides and a bottom bridging the pair of sides. The bottom optionally includes a gusset. The package is provided with a reclosable fastener extending along a package top disclosed opposite the bottom. The fastener includes first and second opposing tracks. The first track includes a male profile, while the second track includes a female profile adapted to releasably interlock with the male profile. To provide tamper evidence, the first and second tracks are joined to each other along an area of weakness. The first and second tracks are optionally provided with respective first and second fins joined to each other along the aforementioned area of weakness to effectively create a single fin comprised of the first and second fins. To open and close the fastener, the package is optionally provided with a slider mounted to the fastener.

The package is convertible between a pre-filled condition and a post-filled condition. In the pre-filled condition, the first track is connected to the first panel, but the second track is only connected to the second panel along the sides thereby creating a fill opening between the second track and the second panel in a region between the sides. After the package is filled with a product via the fill opening, the package is converted to the post-filled condition. In the post-filled condition, the second track is connected to the second panel to seal the fill opening.

In accordance with another aspect of the present invention, a method of making a reclosable package includes the following sequence of steps:

(a) supplying a web of plastic material;

(b) supplying a reclosable fastener including first and second opposing tracks, the first track including a male profile, the second track including a female profile adapted to releasably interlock with the male profile, the first and second tracks being joined to each other along an area of weakness;

(c) folding the web to provide first and second opposing panels;

(d) attaching the first track to the first panel;

(e) sealing the web such that the first and second panels are joined to each other along a pair of sides and a bottom bridging the pair of sides;

(f) filling the package with a product via a fill opening between the second track and the second panel; and

(g) attaching the second track to the second panel to seal the fill opening.

In accordance with yet another aspect of the present invention, another method of making a reclosable package includes the following sequence of steps:

(a) supplying a web of plastic material in a longitudinal direction;

(b) supplying a reclosable fastener including first and second opposing tracks, the first track including a male profile, the second track including a female profile adapted to releasably interlock with the male profile;

(c) folding the web along one or more longitudinal folds to provide first and second opposing panels, the longitudinal folds creating a bottom of the package;

(d) attaching the first track to the first panel;

(e) sealing the web along a pair of sides, the bottom bridging the pair of sides;

(f) filling the package with a product via a fill opening between the second track and the second panel; and

(g) attaching the second track to the second panel to seal the fill opening.

In accordance with a further aspect of the present invention, there is provided an apparatus for performing the above methods.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Other objects and advantages of the invention will become apparent upon reading the following detailed description and upon reference to the drawings in which:

FIG. **1** is an isometric view of a reclosable plastic bag in a pre-filled condition embodying the present invention;

FIG. **2** is a sectional view taken generally along line **2**—**2** in FIG. **1**;

FIG. **3** is an isometric view of the reclosable plastic bag in a post-filled condition;

FIG. **4** is a sectional view taken generally along line **4**—**4** in FIG. **3**;

FIGS. **5**a and **5**b are a diagrammatic representation of a method and apparatus for making and filling the reclosable plastic bag;

FIG. **6** is a diagrammatic representation of a method and apparatus for sealing the reclosable plastic bag;

FIG. **7** is a sectional view taken generally along line **7**—**7** in FIG. **6**;

FIG. **8** is a sectional view taken generally along line **8**—**8** in FIG. **6**; and

FIG. **9** is a sectional view taken generally along line **9**—**9** in FIG. **6**.

While the invention is susceptible to various modifications and alternative forms, a specific embodiment thereof has been shown by way of example in the drawings and will herein be described in detail. It should be understood, however, that it is not intended to limit the invention to the particular forms disclosed, but on the contrary, the intention is to cover all modifications, equivalents, and alternatives falling within the spirit and scope of the invention as defined by the appended claims.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Turning now to the drawings, FIGS. **1** and **3** depict a fill-through-the-top reclosable package **10**, and FIGS. **2** and **4** depict a top portion of the package **10**. Referring to FIGS. **1** through **4**, the package **10** includes first and second opposing body panels **12** and **14** joined to each other along a pair of sides **16** and a bottom **20** bridging the pair of sides **16**. The bottom **20** optionally includes a gusset **22**.

The package **10** is provided with a reclosable fastener **23** extending along a package top disposed opposite the gusset bottom **20**. The fastener **23** includes first and second opposing tracks **24** and **26**. The first track **24** includes a rib-type male profile **28** and a first fin **30** extending downward from the male profile **28**, while the second track **26** includes a groove-type female profile **32** and a second fin **34** extending downward from the female profile **32**. The male and female profiles **28** and **32** are adapted to interlock with each other. The first track **24** includes a plurality of narrow first sealant ribs **36** on an outer surface of the first fin **30** to facilitate connecting the first fine **30** to the first panel **12**, and the second track **26** includes a plurality of narrow second sealant ribs **38** on an outer surface of the second fin **34** to facilitate connecting the second fine **34** to the second panel **14**. To provide tamper evidence, lowermost ends of the first and second fins **30** and **34** are joined to each other along a line of weakness **40** to effectively create a single fin comprised of the first and second fins **30** and **34**. The line of weakness **40** may be a scored line, a perforated line, a thinned die line, or a tear strip. In an alternative embodiment, the first and second tracks **24** and **26** do not include the respective depending fins **30** and **34**, and tamper evidence is provided by joining the lowermost ends of the profiles **28** and **34** instead of the lowermost ends of the fins.

To open and close the fastener **23**, the package **10** is optionally provided with a slider **42** mounted to the fastener **23**. The slider **42** disengages the profiles **28** and **32** in response to movement along the fastener **23** in an opening direction and engages the profiles **28** and **32** in response to movement along the fastener **23** in a closing direction. To accommodate the slider **42** and make it difficult to open the fastener **23** without using the slider **42**, the fastener **23** is preferably free of pull flanges extending upwardly from the male and female profiles **28** and **32**. To stop movement of the slider **42** near the sides **16** of the package **10** and thereby prevent the slider **42** from sliding off the end of the fastener **23**, a pair of end terminations **44** and **46** are mounted to the fastener **23** near the respective sides **16** of the package.**10**. The end termination **44** stops movement of the slider **42** in the opening direction, while the end termination **46** stops movement of the slider **42** in the closing direction. The end terminations **44** and **46** may be a separate element attached to the fastener **23**, as shown in FIGS. **1** and **3**, or may be integrally formed with the fastener **23**. Examples of end terminations are disclosed in U.S. Pat. No. 5,088,971 to Herrington, U.S. Pat. No. 5,131,121 to Herrington et al., U.S. Pat. No. 5,161,286 to Herrington et al., U.S. Pat. No. 5,405,478 to Richardson et al., U.S. Pat. No. 5,442,837 to Morgan, U.S. Pat. No. 5,448,807 to Herrington, U.S. Pat. No. 5,482,375 to Richardson et al., and U.S. Pat. No. 5,924,173 to Dobreski et al., which are incorporated herein by reference in their entireties.

The package **10** is convertible between a pre-filled condition and a post-filled condition. In the pre-filled condition shown in FIGS. **1** and **2**, the first fin **30** is connected to the first panel **12**, but the second fin **34** is not connected to the second panel **14**, except along the sides **16**, thereby creating a fill opening between the second fin **34** and the second panel **14**. After the package **10** is filled with a product via the fill opening, the package **10** is converted to the post-filled condition shown in FIGS. **3** and **4**. In the post-filled condition, the second fin **34** is connected to the second panel **14** to seal the fill opening. If the bottom **20** includes the gusset **22**, the gusset **22** expands in response to filling the package **10** with the product. The gusset **22** is advantageous because it increases the volume of product that can be contained in the package **10** and, when the gusset **22** expands, it allows the package **10** to stand up on a store shelf **48**. The stand-up package **10** obviates the use of additional features such as headers with holes for hanging the package from a hook or post.

In accordance with another aspect of the present invention, there is provided a method and apparatus for making and filling the reclosable package **10**. The method and apparatus are illustrated in FIGS. **5**a–b, **6**, **7**, **8**, and **9**. Referring first to FIGS. **5**a and **5**b, a core **50** supplies a web **52** of plastic material. A folder **53** folds the web **52** to provide first and second opposing panels **12** and **14** joined

along a bottom **20** having one or more fold lines. The folder **53** optionally includes a gusset point **54** that creates a gusset **22**. The folded web **52** is conveyed between a pair of rollers **56** that bring the first and second panels **12** and **14** is close proximity to each other. A spool **58** supplies a reclosable fastener **23** having the structure discussed above. The fastener **23** is fed between the upper portions of the first and second panels **12** and **14**.

A sealer **60** seals the first fin **30** (see FIGS. **1** and **2**) to the first panel **12** in the machine direction, i.e., the direction of movement of the web **52**. The sealer **60** may be a stationary convective (hot air) sealer that does not contact the web **52**, a reciprocating heated bar sealer that intermittently contacts the web **52**, or a band sealer comprising a heated band that moves with the web **52** until the seal is made. The first sealant ribs **36** (see FIGS. **1** and **2**) on the outer surface of the first fin **30** facilitate this attachment between the first fin **30** and the first panel **12**. At this time, the second fin **34** remains disconnected from the second panel **14**. Another reciprocating heated bar scaler **62** seals the first and second panels **12** and **14** to each other in the transverse direction. The side seals **16** are generated by the sealer **62** at bad width distances apart to create individual packages **10**. If the bottom **20** includes a gusset **22**, a heated bar sealer **64** creates a pair of angle seals **66** along the gusset **22** on opposite sides of each side seal **16**. The first and second panels **12** and **14** are attached to each other at the angle seals **66**.

If the packages **10** are provided with respective sliders **42**, the sliders **42** are mounted to the fastener **23** at bag width distances apart either before the fastener **23** is attached to the web **52** or after the fastener **23** is attached to the web **52**. FIG. **5**b depicts the sliders **42** as being installed after the fastener **23** is attached to the web **52** and after the formation of the side seals **16**. To stop movement of the slider **42** near the sides **16** of each package **10**, a pair of end terminations **44** and **46** are mounted to the fastener **23** on opposite sides of each side seal **16**.

The sliders **42** may be installed using various techniques. For example, the slider **42** may have hinged wings that fold and snap permanently in place to attach the slider **42** to the fastener **23**. Further details concerning such a hinged slider may be obtained from U.S. Pat. Nos. 5,010,627, 5,063,644, and 5,070,583 to Herrington, which are incorporated herein by reference in their entireties. In an alternative embodiments the slider **42** may have a pair of side walls that are temporarily flexed away from each other as the slider **42** is mounted on the fastener **23** and then returned to their original position after the slider **42** is mounted. In another alternative embodiment, prior to the formation of the side seals, the fastener **23** is cut apart at a location where a side seal is to be generated, the ends formed by the cutter are moved laterally relative to each other to expose the ends, and the slider **42** is threaded onto one of the exposed ends. Further details concerning this technique of inserting a slider through a split fastener may be obtained from U.S. Pat. No. 5,431,760 to Donovan, which is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety. In yet another alterative embodiment, prior to the formation of the side seals, the fastener **23** is notched at a location where a side seal is to be generated and the slider **42** is threaded onto the fastener **23** via the notch. The notch is sized to accommodate the slider **42**. Further details concerning this technique of inserting a slider onto a notched fastener may be obtained from U.S. application Ser. No. 09/307,937 to Provan et al. entitled "Zipper and Zipper Arrangements and Methods of Manufacturing the Same", filed May 10, 1999, and incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

After forming the side seals **16** and installing such optional components as a slider **42** and end terminations **44** and **46**, a cutter **68** separates the packages **10** from each other at the side seals **16**. Each package **10** is then placed beneath a fill tube **70** having a spout that is inserted into a fill opening between the second fin **34** and the second panel **14** (see FIGS. **1** and **2**). The fill tube **70** conveys a predetermined amount of product to the interior of the package **10**. The gusset **22** expands in response to filling the package **10** with the product.

FIG. **6** illustrates a method and apparatus for sealing the filled packages **10** so that they are ready for shipment to and display at a store. The apparatus includes a pair of spaced, profiled guides **72**, a pair of moving members **74**, a reciprocating heated bar sealer **76**, and a stationary backing plate **82**. The profiled guides **72** are shaped in cross-section to support each package by either the fastener **23**, the slider **42**, and/or the end terminations **44** and **46**. As best shown in FIG. **7**, the illustrated guides **72** include respective first steps **78** for engaging the respective lower shoulders of the slider **42** and respective second steps **80** of engaging the lower sides of the end terminations **44** and **46**. The opposing inner vertical faces of the guides **72** below the second steps **80** are spaced sufficiently apart to allow the fins **30** and **34** to fit therebetween, but sufficiently close to minimize the amount of air in the package head space above the product in the filled package. Each filled package **10** may be manually placed between the guides **72** or automatically fed into the guides **72** by conventional conveying equipment. The guides **72** are preferably made of a low-friction, rigid material such as hard anodized aluminum or ultra high density polyethylene.

The moving members **74** are disposed on opposite sides of the package **10** beneath the respective guides **72**. The moving members **74** continuously or intermittently convey the packages **10** supported by the guides **72** to the sealer **76**. Each moving member **74** is preferably a Teflon-coated glass-cloth belt encompassing a pair of spaced pulleys. As shown in FIGS. **6** and **8**, the reciprocating heated bar sealer **76** is disposed within one of the conveyor belts, while the backing plate **82** is disposed within the other of the conveyor belts. When a package **10** is disposed between the sealer **76** and the backing plate **82**, the sealer **76** presses the package **10** against the backing plate **82** (with the belts disposed therebetween) to attach the second fin **34** to the second panel **14** in the region between the sides **16**, thereby sealing the fill opening of the filled package **10** (see FIG. **8**). The backing plate **82** is optionally cooled with chilled water or cool air as such pressure is applied by the sealer **76**. Additional cooling bars are optionally located within the moving members **74** downstream from the sealer **76** and the backing plate **82**. Instead of the heated bar sealer **76**, the apparatus for sealing the filled packages may include a heated band of metal, such as steel, lining the inner surface of the belt of each moving member **74** and moving with the belt. The heated bands inside the respective belts seal the second fin **34** to the second panel **14** as the belts convey the associated package **10** through the guides **72**. Once the fill opening is sealed, the package **10** is ready for shipment to and display at a store. The fully sealed package **10** is shown in FIG. **9**.

The package **10** may be composed of various plastic polymers, copolymers, coextrusions and/or laminations. The panels **12** and **14** are preferably comprised of mono-layer or multi-layer combinations of: polyethylene (high, medium, low, linear low, and/or ultra low density polymers including metallocene); polypropylene (oriented and/or biaxially oriented); ethylene vinyl acetate; nylon (oriented and/or

biaxially oriented); polyethylene terephtalate (oriented and/or biaxially oriented); polyvinyl chloride; ethylene vinyl alcohol (EVOH); polyvinylidene chloride (PVDC); polyvinyl alcohol (PVOH); polystyrene; foil and/or metalization; and paper. The slider **42** and end terminations **44** and **46** are preferably comprised of mono-material, blends, alloys, and/or co-polymers of: polyethylene (high, medium, low, linear low, and/or ultra low density polymers); polypropylene (oriented and/or biaxially oriented); ethylene vinyl acetate; nylon (oriented and/or biaxially oriented); thermoplastic polyesters; polycarbonate; acrylics; and/or polystyrene. The profiles **12** and **14** and the fins **30** and **34** are preferably comprised of mono-layer, blends, alloys, coextrusions, laminations and/or coatings of: polyethylene (high, medium, low, linear low, and/or ultra low density polymers including metallocene); polypropylene (oriented and/or biaxially oriented); ethylene vinyl acetate; nylon (oriented and/or biaxially oriented); polyethylene terephtalate (oriented and/or biaxially oriented); polyvinyl chloride; ethylene vinyl alcohol (EVOH); polyvinylidene chloride (PVDC); polyvinyl alcohol (PVOH); polystyrene; foil and/or metalization; and paper. The sealant ribs **36** and **38** are preferably comprised of mono-material, blends, and/or coextrusions of: polyethylene (low, linear low, and/or ultra low density polymers including metallocene); ethylene vinyl acetate, adhesive or low melting temperature sealant.

While the present invention has been described with reference to one or more particular embodiments, those skilled in the art will recognize that many changes may be made thereto without departing from the spirit and scope of the present invention. Each of these embodiments and obvious variations thereof is contemplated as falling within the spirit and scope of the claimed invention, which is set forth in the following claims.

What is claimed is:

[1. A method of filling a package, made from a continuous web of material comprising:

providing a plurality of interconnected packages made from said web, each package including first and second opposing body panels joined along a pair of sides and a bottom bridging the sides, the package including a fastener attached to the first body panel along a mouth portion of the package disposed opposite the bottom, the fastener initially being at least partially unattached to the second body panel while the fastener is attached to the first body panel.

separating each package from said plurality of interconnected packages;

filling the separated package with a product via a fill opening between the fastener and the second body panel; and

attaching the fastener to the second body panel of the filled package to seal the fill opening.**]**

[2. The method of claim **1**, wherein the fastener includes first and second interlocking profiles and first and second fins extending from the respective profiles, the first and second fins being joined along the breakable area of weakness, the first fin being attached to the first body panel, the second fin being at least partially unattached to the second body panel while the fastener is attached to the first body panel.**]**

[3. The method of claim **2**, wherein the fill opening in the step of filling the package is between the second fin and the second body panel.**]**

[4. The method of claim **3**, wherein the step of attaching the fastener to the second body panel includes attaching the second fin to the second body panel.**]**

[5. The method of claim **1** further including the step of sealing said first and second body panels above said fastener.**]**

[6. A method of making and filling a package, comprising:

providing a package including first and second opposing body panels;

attaching a fastener to the first body panel along a mouth portion of the package;

attaching said first and second panels to each other to form a pair of sides and a bottom bridging the sides opposite the fastener;

filling the package with a product via a fill opening between the fastener and the second body panel; and

attaching the fastener to the second body panel to seal the fill opening.**]**

[7. The method of claim **6**, wherein the fastener includes first and second interlocking profiles and first and second fins extending from the respective profiles, the fill opening in the step of filling the package being between the second fin and the second body panel, wherein the step of attaching the fastener to the first body panel includes attaching the first fin to the first body panel, and wherein the step of attaching the fastener to the second body panel includes attaching the second fin to the second body panel.**]**

[8. The method of claim **7**, wherein the first and second fins are joined to each other along the breakable area of weakness.**]**

[9. A method of making and filling packages, comprising:

providing a plastic web and a fastener in a longitudinal direction;

folding the web to provide first and second opposing panels joined along a longitudinal bottom;

attaching the fastener to an inner surface of the first panel near a longitudinal edge thereof opposite the longitudinal bottom;

sealing the first and second panels to each other at spaced seals transverse to the longitudinal direction to form the packages;

filling each package with a product via a fill opening between the fastener and the second panel; and

attaching the fastener to an inner surface of the second panel to seal the fill opening.**]**

[10. The method of claim **9**, wherein said bottom includes a gusset.**]**

[11. A method of filling a package made from a continuous web of material, comprising:

providing a plurality of interconnected packages made from said web, each package including two panels defining a mouth portion and a reclosable fastener that is useful for opening and closing said mouth portion after said package is filled, said fastener having a final attachment position on said two panels and being attached to said two panels along only a portion of said final attachment position so as to define an unattached segment and an attached segment of said fastener, said unattached segment and the adjacent one of said two panels define a fill opening therebetween;

filling said package with a product through said fill opening; and

separating each package from said plurality of interconnected packages;

attaching said unattached segment of said fastener to said panels along the entirety of said final attachment position.**]**

[12. The method of claim 11, wherein said package includes a bottom with a gusset.]

[13. The method of claim 11, wherein said fastener includes a first interlocking profile with a first fin and second interlocking profile with a second fin.]

[14. The method of claim 13, wherein said first and second fins are joined along a breakable area of weakness.]

[15. The method of claim 13, wherein, during said providing step, said first fin is attached to a first one of said two panels along said final attachment position and said second fin is at least partially unattached to a second one of said two panels along said final attachment position, said second fin and said second panel defining said fill opening.]

[16. The method of claim 14, wherein said second fin is entirely unattached to said second one of said two body panels along said final attachment position.]

17. A method of making and filling a package comprising:

supplying a web of plastic material in a longitudinal direction,

forming first and second opposing body panels from the web, the first and second body panels joined along a longitudinal bottom;

supplying a reclosable fastener including a first profile and a second profile adapted to releasably interlock with the first profile, the fastener further including first and second fins extending from the respective profiles and a breakable area of weakness providing a tamper-evident feature;

attaching a slider for opening and closing the first and second profiles to the fastener;

attaching the first fin to an inner surface of the first panel opposite the longitudinal bottom;

sealing the first and second panels to each other at spaced seals transverse to the longitudinal direction to form individual packages;

creating a pair of end terminations for stopping movement of the slider near the spaced seals;

filling the individual package with a product via a fill opening between the second profile and the second panel and opposite the bottom; and

attaching the second fin to an inner surface of the second panel to seal the fill opening.

18. A method of filling a package made from a continuous web of material, comprising:

providing a plurality of interconnected packages made from said web, each package including first and second opposing body panels joined along a pair of sides and a bottom bridging the sides,

separating each package from said plurality of interconnected packages;

attaching a fastener to the first body panel along a mouth portion of the package disposed opposite the bottom, the fastener initially being at least partially unattached to the second body panel while the fastener is attached to the first body panel;

filling the separated package with a product via a fill opening between the fastener and the second body panel; and

attaching the fastener to the second body panel of the filled package to seal the fill opening.

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