

(19)



Europäisches Patentamt
European Patent Office
Office européen des brevets



(11) Publication number:

0 533 983 A1

(12)

EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION(21) Application number: **91116483.8**(51) Int. Cl.⁵: **A47K 5/14**(22) Date of filing: **26.09.91**

(43) Date of publication of application:
31.03.93 Bulletin 93/13

(84) Designated Contracting States:
AT BE CH DE DK ES FR GB GR IT LI LU NL SE

(71) Applicant: **TOTO LTD.**
No. 1-1, Nakashima 2-chome Kokurakita-ku
Kitakyushu-shi Fukuoka-ken(JP)

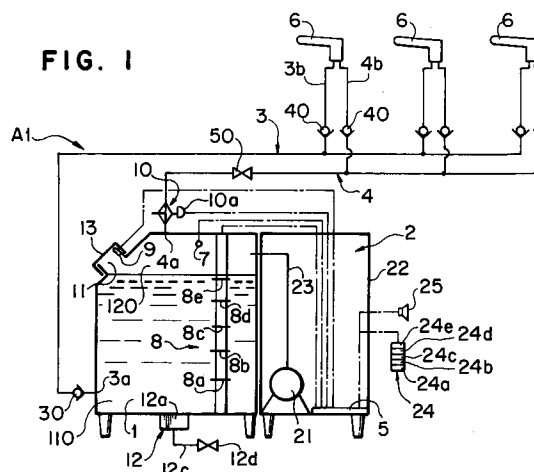
(72) Inventor: **Azuma, Tsutomu, c/o Toto Ltd.**
1-1, Nakashima 2-chome, Kokurakita-ku
Kitakyushu-shi, Fukuoka-ken(JP)
Inventor: **Taketomi, Yojiro, c/o Toto Ltd.**

1-1, Nakashima 2-chome, Kokurakita-ku
Kitakyushu-shi, Fukuoka-ken(JP)
Inventor: **Umemoto, Akimitsu, c/o Toto Ltd.**
1-1, Nakashima 2-chome, Kokurakita-ku
Kitakyushu-shi, Fukuoka-ken(JP)
Inventor: **Nakano, Kaoru, c/o Toto Ltd.**
1-1, Nakashima 2-chome, Kokurakita-ku
Kitakyushu-shi, Fukuoka-ken(JP)

(74) Representative: **Füchsle, Klaus, Dipl.-Ing. et al**
Hoffmann . Eitle & Partner Patentanwälte
Arabellastrasse 4
W-8000 München 81 (DE)

(54) **Liquid soap supplying device.**

(57) The present invention relates to a liquid soap supplying device (A1) comprising a tank (1) for storing liquid soap, a discharging nozzle (6) communicating with the tank (1) through a pipe (3), a liquid soap supplying means for supplying liquid soap in the tank (1) to the discharging nozzle (6), an air supplying means communicated with the discharging nozzle (6) through a pipe (4) and a mixing chamber for liquid soap and air arranged in the discharging port of the discharging nozzle (6). A pressurized device (2) can be in communication with the air accumulation part at an inner upper part in the tank (1), an air feeding pipe is led out of the air accumulation part, and the liquid soap and air in the tank (1) are fed to the discharging nozzle under operation of the pressurizing device (2), thereby providing a supplying system capable of discharging bubbled liquid soap from a plurality of discharging nozzles (6) with only one supplying source in a cost saving manner.

**EP 0 533 983 A1**

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Field of the Invention

This invention relates to a liquid soap supplying device for use in washing hands, hair and body and for other desired applications.

Description of the Prior Art

In the prior art, it has been known to provide a liquid soap supplying device comprised of a tank for storing liquid soap, a pressurizing device for pressurizing an interior side of the tank and a discharging nozzle communicating with the tank through a liquid soap feeding pipe (for example, see Jap.U.M.Laid-Open No.Hei 2-92789).

This supplying device feeds liquid soap in a tank by a pressurising force of a pressurizing device to a discharging nozzle and discharges the liquid soap of steam-like flow from the discharging port under an opening or closing operation of the discharging nozzle.

In case of the aforesaid prior art supplying device, a discharging force for the liquid soap was too strong in response to a certain pressurizing force of the pressurizing device, the liquid soap struck against the hands of a user, splashed and dropped from between the fingers and the device left a certain room for improvement in view of an efficient use of the liquid soap.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention has been invented in view of the above circumstances as found in the prior art, and its first object is to provide a supplying device for use in discharging bubbled liquid soap without forming any splashing and dropping off even if the liquid soap strikes against the hands.

The second object of the present invention is to prevent liquid soap remained in a piping communicating with a tank and the discharging nozzle from being fixed in the supplying device of the first object and clogging the piping.

The third object of the present invention is to enable a fine texture of the liquid soap or the like to be optionally adjusted in the supplying device of the aforesaid first object in compliance with a preference of a user.

The fourth object of the present invention is to improve a safety characteristic of the supplying device of the aforesaid first object.

The fifth object of the present invention is to enable an efficient use of liquid soap to be attained when the supplying device of the aforesaid first object is operated or used.

The sixth object of the present invention is to provide a liquid soap supplying device in an apparatus having a plurality of supplying portions for use in discharging bubbled liquid soap in which a remained amount of liquid soap in each of the tanks at each of the supplying portions can be totally displayed.

The seventh object of the present invention is to enable the supplying device for discharging the aforesaid bubble liquid soap to be easily mounted in a container such as a basin already installed.

The aforesaid first object can be attained by constructing the liquid soap supplying device comprising a discharging nozzle having a mixing chamber for liquid soap and air, means for forcedly supplying liquid soap to the discharging nozzle and means for forcedly supplying air to the discharging nozzle. More particularly, this object can be attained by applying a tank for storing liquid soap with an air accumulating part being left at an inner upper part thereof; a pressurising device mounted to be communicated with the aforesaid air accumulating part; a control part for controlling an operation of the pressurizing device in response to a sensing signal from a pressure sensor arranged in the air accumulating part; a liquid soap feeding pipe to be taken out of a bottom part of the aforesaid tank; an air feeding pipe to be taken out of the aforesaid air accumulating part; and a discharging nozzle provided with a mixing chamber for mixing liquid soap and air and arranged to be communicated with the liquid soap feeding pipe and the air feeding pipe.

The aforesaid second object can be accomplished by means of mounting a check valve at the upper-most stream side of the liquid soap feeding pipe.

The aforesaid third object can be accomplished by arranging a flow rate adjusting valve for use in adjusting a supplying amount of air to the discharging nozzle at a proper location in the air feeding pipe.

The aforesaid fourth object can be accomplished by means of arranging an emergency stop control means for stopping an operation of the pressurizing device by sensing an abnormal state of a system in the control part.

The fifth object of the present invention can be accomplished by means of a remained amount sensor for use in performing a step-wise sensing of a remained amount of liquid soap in the tank and a remained amount displaying part for use in displaying in a step-wise manner a remained amount of liquid soap in the tank in response to a sensing signal from the remained amount sensor of the like.

The sixth object of the present invention can be accomplished by a constitution of the liquid soap supplying device in which a plurality of liquid

soap supplying portions comprised of the aforesaid tank, pressurizing device, controlling part, liquid soap feeding pipe, air feeding pipe, discharging nozzle and remained amount sensor or the like are arranged and also a displaying function part for concentrically displaying a remained amount of liquid soap within each of the tanks at each of the aforesaid liquid soap supplying device is provided.

The seventh object of the present invention can be accomplished by the liquid soap supplying device comprised of a tank for storing liquid soap, a main body of a water tap having a liquid soap discharging port, a liquid soap pump for feeding liquid soap in the tank to the liquid soap discharging port, an air pump for feeding air to the liquid soap discharging port and a control part for controlling an operation of each of the liquid soap pump and the air pump, wherein the aforesaid main body of the water tap is provided with two connection ports to be connected to the two fixing ports mounted on an upper surface of a basin already installed, the liquid soap discharging port and the supplied water discharging port are arranged side-by-side, a supplementing pipe for communicating a supplementing port for liquid soap to be mounted at an upper surface side of the basin with the liquid soap tank to be mounted at a lower part of the basin is arranged to be passed through one connection port described above, and both the water supplying pipe and the liquid feeding pipe connected to the liquid soap tank are connected to each of the supplied water discharging port of the main body of the water tap and the liquid soap discharging port through the other connecting port.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Other objects and features of the present invention will become more apparent from the following description concerning the accompanying drawings.

Fig.1 is a schematic view for showing one preferred embodiment of the liquid soap supplying device of the present invention.

Fig.2 is a perspective view for showing a tank and a casing.

Fig.3 is a longitudinal side elevation in section for showing a tank.

Fig.4 is a longitudinal front elevational view in section for showing a tank.

Fig.5 is a longitudinal side elevational view in section for showing a casing.

Fig.6 is an enlarged sectional view for showing a discharging nozzle.

Fig.7 is an expanded view for showing a substantial part of Fig.6 to indicate a liquid soap discharging state.

Fig.8 is an enlarged sectional view for showing a check valve.

Fig.9 is a view for showing an operating state in Fig.8.

Fig.10 is an exploded perspective view for showing a tank and a casing.

Fig.11 is an enlarged sectional view for showing a drain port.

Fig.12 is a front elevational view partly broken away to show a remained amount sensor.

Fig.13 is a front elevational view partly broken away to show another example of a remained amount sensor.

Fig.14 is a flow chart for a controlling operation of the device shown in Fig.1.

Figs.15, 20, 29, 30 and 32 are schematic views for showing other liquid soap supplying devices of the present invention, respectively.

Fig.16 is an enlarged sectional view for showing a discharging nozzle in Fig.15.

Fig.17 is a front elevational view partly broken away for showing another example of a discharging nozzle.

Fig.18 is an enlarged view for showing a substantial part of a mixing chamber in a discharging nozzle in Fig.17.

Fig.19 is an enlarged sectional view for showing another example of a mixing chamber.

Fig.21 is a sectional view taken along a line (21)-(21) of Fig. 20.

Fig.22 is a top plan view for showing a lower part of a main body of a tank.

Fig.23 is a sectional view taken along a line (23)-(23) of Fig.22.

Fig.24 is an enlarged view for showing a supplementary port in Fig.20 to indicate a state of an opened supplementary port.

Fig.25 is a sectional view for showing another example of a supplementary port.

Fig.26 is a top plan view for showing a supplementary port lid in Fig.25.

Fig.27 is an enlarged sectional view for showing a discharging nozzle in Fig.20.

Fig.28 is an enlarged sectional view for showing a substantial part of a remained amount sensor in Fig.20.

Fig.31 is an enlarged view for showing a substantial part in Fig.30.

Fig.33 is a side elevational view of Fig.32.

Fig.34 is a top plan view for showing a substantial part of Fig.33.

Fig.35 is a sectional view taken along a line (35)-(35) of Fig.34.

Fig.36 is a sectional view taken along a line (36)-(36) of Fig.34.

Fig.37 is a time chart for an operation of a pump in the liquid soap supplying device shown in Fig.32.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Fig.1 shows a liquid soap supplying device A1 comprised of a tank 1, a pressurising device 2, a liquid soap feeding pipe 3, an air feeding pipe 4, a control part 5 and discharging nozzles 6 or the like and a basic configuration of the device A1 will be described at first.

The tank 1 has an entire shape of a cylindrical shape, a rectangular cylinder or a spherical shape or any other optional shape and its shape is not restricted at all. However, the tank is comprised of a box-like pressure-proof container as shown in Figs.2 to 5, wherein a liquid soap supplementary port 11 is opened at a middle and higher location in a side wall. The container may accumulate liquid soap 110 with the supplementary port 11 being applied as an upper limit location and at the same time an air accumulating part 120 can be kept above the liquid soap 110 and a desired amount of compressed air can be stored there. The supplementary port 11 is closed by a lid 13 in such a way as it may be opened or closed.

A liquid soap discharging port 3a is opened at a bottom part of the tank 1 and a base end of the liquid soap feeding pipe 3 is connected to the discharging port 3a. An upper part of the tank 1 is provided with an opened air discharging port 4a which is communicated with the air accumulation part 120, and a base end of the air feeding pipe 4 is connected to the discharging port 4a.

A pressure sensor 7 electrically connected to the control part 5 is arranged within the air accumulating part 120, and a compressor 21 for the pressurizing device 2 is communicated through an air intake pipe 23.

The pressure sensor 7 is comprised of a well-known pressure switch using either a strain gauge or a magnetic resistance element and transmits a pressure within the tank as an electrical signal to the control part 5 by utilizing a variation of an electrical resistance accompanied by a variation of pressure in the tank 1.

The pressurizing device 2 is constructed such that the compressor 21 and the control part 5 are arranged in the casing 22 separately arranged from the tank 1 and it may easily be fixed to several kinds of tanks.

The compressor 21 is electrically connected to the control part 5 and an operation of the compressor 21 is controlled by it.

The control part 5 is comprised of electrical circuits such as ICs or capacitors or the like and is provided with a pressurizing control means for operating the compressor 21 in response to a sensed signal from the pressure sensor 7 when a pressure in the tank 1 becomes less than a low side set

pressure P_1 (0.3 kgf/cm² in the preferred embodiment) and stopping the compressor 21 when the pressure in the tank 1 becomes more than a higher side set pressure P_2 (0.5 kgf/cm² in the preferred embodiment). This control part 5 is provided with various control means to be described later.

Although a difference between the aforesaid or later described lower side set pressures P_1 , P_4 and the higher side set pressures P_2 , P_3 are not limited to the numerical values in the preferred embodiments, the difference between P_1 and P_2 should be set to such a value (value having no trouble) as one endurable against a concurrent use of a continuous use in response to the number of cooperating discharging nozzles 6. The higher set pressure should be set to such a value as one allowed in the tank 1 (a value applying a slight surplus to the tank).

The liquid soap feeding pipe 3 and the air feeding pipe 4 connected to the tank 1 are divided into several segment pipes in the midway parts and then the discharging nozzle 6 is connected to each of the branched pipes.

The discharging nozzle 6 is mounted at a hand washing basin, a face washing basin, a hair washing basin in their circumferential portions or other desired mounting surfaces C, and has, as shown in Figs.6 and 7, a liquid soap feeding port 6a and an air feeding port 6b in it. The liquid soap feeding pipe 3 is connected to the former and the air feeding pipe 4 is connected to the latter. An inside part of the discharging nozzle is provided with a mixing chamber 61 communicating with the feeding ports 6a and 6b and an agitating chamber 62 communicating with the discharging port 6d. The mixing chamber 61 and the agitating chamber 62 are communicated to each other through a passage 63 having a small diameter.

The discharging nozzle 6 is provided with an opening or closing valve 6c, and the agitating chamber 62 has several straighteners 6e (3 pieces in the preferred embodiments) mounted therein.

The opening or closing valve 6c may be of an electrical or an electromagnetical unit opened for a specified period of time with an electrical signal based on a sensing of hand through a human sensor such as a photo-electrical sensor or the like or a pressing operation of a touch switch or may be of a manual unit opened while a push button is being depressed under a mechanical operation of pushing the push button or for a specified period of time. However, in the drawing is indicated the manual opening or closing valve 6c operated under an operation of the push button 6c'.

The liquid soap supplying device A1 constructed as above is operated such that an operation of the compressor 21 is controlled by the control part 5 in such a way as a pressure within the tank 1 is

kept at a specified range (0.3 kgf/cm² to 0.5 kgf/cm²) and both liquid soap and air are supplied to each of the discharging nozzles 6. As the push button 6c' is depressed by each of the discharging nozzles 6, the supplied liquid soap and the air are mixed to each other within the mixing chamber 61 and they are agitated by straighteners 6e. Then, the liquid soap is discharged in its bubble form.

In this way, a discharging of bubble liquid soap may prevent not only some disadvantages that an excessive strong discharging state of liquid soap under a pressurizing force of the compressor 21 causes the liquid soap to be struck against the hand and splashed or flowed down the hand but also enable an efficient usage of a small amount of liquid soap as well as a saving of the liquid soap.

The aforesaid device A1 is operated such that the air in the tank 1 is always pressurized or compressed by the pressurizing device 2 to a predetermined pressure to cause both the liquid soap 110 and the air in the tank 1 to be forcedly fed to the discharging nozzle 6 under a pressure of the air, so that even of a plurality of supplying systems, i.e. nozzle systems are arranged, it is not necessary to provide each of the compressor or supplying pumps for each of the systems, liquid soap and air. Thus, the device is simple in its structure, resulting in that a concentrated supplying system for supplying bubble liquid soap from one supplying source to a plurality of basins and hand washing units can be attained under a low cost.

In addition, air to be mixed with liquid soap is always kept in the tank 1, so that the bubble liquid soap can be positively discharged.

Some details of the liquid soap supplying device A1 comprised of the aforesaid basic configuration will be described as follows.

At first, the additional configuration of the present device will be described.

The nearest location of the aforesaid liquid soap feeding pipe 3 for the tank 1 (the most upstream side of the liquid soap feeding pipe 3) is provided with a check valve 30, and with this check valve, even if the remained liquid soap in the tank 1 is eliminated, the liquid soap is fully filled in the liquid soap feeding pipe 3. Thus, the air in the tank 1 does not enter the liquid soap feeding pipe 3 and does not cause the remained liquid soap in the feeding pipe 3 to be solidified, resulting in that it does not produce any disadvantages that the liquid soap feeding pipe 3 is clogged.

In addition, in place of the aforesaid check valve 30, the locations near each of the discharging nozzles 6 (the most downstream of the liquid soap feeding pipe 3 and the air feeding pipe 4) branched from the liquid soap feeding pipe 3 and the air feeding pipe 4 may be provided with check valves 40. Such an arrangement as above can prevent

some disadvantages that air enters from the discharging nozzles 6 into the liquid soap feeding pipe 3 or liquid soap enters the air feeding pipe 4 to cause the liquid soap to be fixed in each of the pipes 3 and 4 and clog the same. In concurrent with this operation, the present invention prevents the liquid soap in the liquid soap feeding pipe 3 from being pushed back by air can provide a stable characteristic in discharging operation at the beginning of discharging liquid soap. In the drawings, both check valves 30 and 40 are shown to be installed and any one of them will be placed in a practical system.

The aforesaid check valves 40 are arranged in rising parts 3b and 4b in the liquid soap feeding pipe 3 and the air feeding pipe 4, respectively, and as shown in Figs.5 and 6, their details are made such that there are provided a spherical valve member 40b within a valve chamber 40a arranged in a coupling pipe 41 and a funnel-like valve seat 40c on which the valve member 40b is seated, and the valve is closed by its own weight of the valve member 40b, resulting in that, as compared with a system in which the valve is closed by a forced biasing means such as a spring or the like, even if the inside part of the tank 1 shows a low pressure, a pushing-up of the valve member 40b is not prohibited and a reliability of the check valve 40 can be improved. Provided, however, in this case, it is necessary for the rising-up parts 3b, 4b to be kept at their vertical states.

The air feeding pipe 4 is provided with either a manual or an electrical flow rate adjusting valve 50 at its appropriate midway location, this adjusting valve 50 is manually or electrically operated so as to adjust an air supplying amount for the discharging nozzles 6, thereby a fine texture or hardness of bubble discharged liquid soap can be optionally adjusted in compliance with a preference of user. In addition, a complete closing of the air feeding pipe 4 stops an air supplying to the discharging nozzles 6 to enable the non-bubbled water-flow like liquid soap to be discharged from the discharging nozzles 6.

As shown in Fig.4, the casing 22 is formed to be fixed to any one of the right and left side surfaces of the tank 1 in such a way as it may be conveniently placed in response to a setting position of the tank 1.

That is, the right and left side surfaces of the tank 1 are provided with a plurality of threaded holes 14 at several positions and further the right and left side surfaces of the casing 22 are provided with a plurality of holes 22a and 22b in such a way as they may oppositely face against each of the threaded holes 14. In this way, extreme ends of long bolts 22c inserted from holes 22a at one side surface are threadably fitted to the threaded holes

14 through holes 22b at the other side surface and the casing 22 is removably fixed to the side surface of the casing 22.

In the drawings, one example in which the casing 22 is fixed to the right side of the tank 1 is illustrated and it is optional that the casing 22 is fixed to the left side of the tank 1 as indicated by a phantom line in Fig.2. It is also apparent that both right and left side surfaces of the tank 1 are inscribed with lines for opening a connection port for the air intake pipe 23, i.e. the air intake port 23a and only one of the lines is opened in response to a right or a left specification of the casing 22.

As shown in Fig.10, it is also possible to arrange the casing 22 such that fixing pieces 22d are extended at the right and left edge portions and then the holes 22a and 22b are opened at the fixing pieces 22d. In this case, in place of the long bolts 22c, short bolts 22c' are applied to fix the casing to the tank 1.

A bottom wall of the tank 1 is provided with a drain port 12 for use in discharging deposits.

As shown at an enlarged figure of Fig.11, the drain port 12 has a concave portion 12a having a proper size, a bottom part of the concave portion 12a is provided with a discharging port 12b, a drain pipe 12c is drawn from the discharging port 12b and the drain pipe 12c is provided with an opening or closing valve 12d.

Accordingly, the deposit in the tank 1 is accumulated in the concave part 12a and then the deposit is passed through a drain pipe 12c and discharged out of the tank 1 by opening the opening or closing valve 12d. Thus, it is not necessary to require a troublesome operation for setting the tank 1 up-side-down and discharging the deposit and it is possible to facilitate a cleaning in the tank 1.

An additional controlling function will be described.

A remained volume sensor 8 for the liquid soap 110 is arranged in the tank 1, an opening or closing sensor 9 is arranged in the supplementary port 11 and also an air drain port 10 having a safety valve 10a is arranged in the midway part of the air feeding pipe 4. A front surface of the casing 22 is provided with a remained volume displaying part 24 and a buzzer 25. Each of the remained volume sensor 8, opening or closing sensor 9, safety valve 10a, remained volume displaying part 24 and buzzer 25 is electrically connected to the control part 5 and all the operations of these devices are controlled by the control part 5.

The remained volume sensor 8 is, as shown in Fig.12, made such that an annular float magnet 81 is inserted onto a guide shaft 80 uprighted within the tank 1 in such a way as the magnet 81 may be moved up and down freely. An outer periphery of

the guide shaft 80 is provided with contact pints (magnetic sensing elements) 8a to 8e in five steps and the remained volume sensor 8 is constructed by a multi-staged float switch provided with a contact element 81a contacted to or moved away from each of the contact points 8a to 8e at an inner periphery of the float magnet 81. The remained volume of liquid soap is detected in a step-wise manner through a contact between the contact element 81a of the float magnet 81 and each of the contact points 8a to 8e of the guide shaft 80, the detected volume is transmitted as an electrical signal to the control part 5 and then the remained volume of liquid soap within the tank 1 is acknowledged in a stepwise manner.

The lower-most stage contact point 8a in the remained volume sensor 8 is placed at a location higher than a liquid soap discharging port 3a in the tank 1 and the uppermost state contact point 8e is arranged at a location lower than the supplementary port 11. Reference numerals 80a in the figure denote stoppers arranged at an upper end and a lower end of the guide shaft 80.

As shown in Fig.13, the aforesaid remained volume sensor 8 has contact points 8a to 8e in multi-stage manner at an outer periphery of the guide shaft 80 and it is also possible to arranged the upper and lower stoppers 80a for every contact points 8a to 8e and to construct to have the float magnets 81.

The opening or closing sensor 9 is comprised of a microswitch arranged in the supplementary port 11. The opening or closing sensor 9 may transmit each of a closed state and an opened state of the supplementary port 11 with a lid 13 as an electrical signal to the control part 5 so as to cause the control part 5 to acknowledge an opened or closed (opened or closed state of the lid 13) state of the supplementary port 11.

A safety valve 10a of the air drain port 10 is comprised of an electrical (electromagnetical) three-way valve to open the air feeding pipe 4 under a normal state and to close the air drain port 10. In this way, the safety valve 100 is controlled by the control part 5 in such a way as it may be operated when the opening or closing sensor 9 detects an opening of the supplementary port 11 (a lid 13 is opened), or when the remained volume sensor 8 detects the lower-most position (8a) of the liquid soap remained volume, or when the pressure sensor 7 detects a value more than a high set value P_3 (0.7 kgf/cm^2 in the preferred embodiment), opens the air drain port 10, removes the compressed air in the tank 1 and at the same time operates again after a specified period of time (for example, 60 seconds) elapses and closes the air drain port 10. The air drain port 10 can be arranged at the tank 1 separately and independently

from the air feeding pipe 4 and in this case the safety valve 10a is constructed by an electrical (electro-magnetical) opening or closing valve for use in opening or closing the air drain port 10.

The safety valve 10a is controlled by the control part 5 in order to prevent a poor opening or closing caused by a fixing in such a way as it may be opened or closed only for a slight period of time (for example, 0.1 second) every time the compressor 21 is started to operate.

The remained volume displaying part 24 is constructed such that light emitting diode elements 24a to 24e are arranged in a multi-stage manner in correspondence with each of the contact points 8a to 8e in the remained volume sensor 8 and at the same time each of the elements 24a to 24e is electrically connected. In this way, the device is controlled by the control part 5 in such a way as each of the elements 24a to 24e is lit through a sensing of the remained volume with the corresponding contact points 8a to 8e, it is lit for a specified period of time (for example, 5 seconds) with a sensing signal from the upper-most contact point 8e at the upper-most stage element 24e, an overflow during supplementing of the liquid soap is alarmed and after this operation it is lit.

The buzzer 25 is controlled by the control part 5 in such a way as it may ring for a specified period of time (for example, 5 seconds) when the remained volume sensor 8 detects the upper-most level (8e) of the remained volume of liquid soap and an over-flow at the time 01 supplementing the liquid soap is alarmed.

In addition to the aforesaid pressurizing control means, the control part 5 is provided with (I) a control means for acknowledging a remained amount of the liquid soap 110 in the tank 1 in a stepwise manner and operating the remained volume displaying part 24 as described above, (II) a control means for preventing a flying of the lid 13 and preventing a fixing of the liquid soap feeding pipe 3 so as to operate the safety valve 10a upon acknowledging that the remained volume of the liquid soap 110 in the tank 1 descends down to its lower-most location, (III) a control means for stopping an operation of the compressor 21 upon acknowledgement of an opened state of the lid 13 (an opened state of the supplementing port 11), (IV) a control means for alarming an over-flow state for operating the remained volume displaying part 24 and the buzzer 25 upon acknowledgement of an increasing of the remained volume of the liquid soap 110 in the tank 1 up to the upper-most position, (V) a control means for protecting the tank so as to operate the safety valve 10a upon acknowledgement of a pressure within the tank 1 more than a higher set pressure P_3 (0.7 kgf/cm^2), (VI) a control means for preventing a fixing of the

safety valve so as to operate the safety valve as described above every time the operation of the compressor 21 is started or the like.

With the foregoing configuration, the compressor 21 is operated such that a pressure within the tank 1 may be kept within a specified range while the supplementary port 11 being closed and then bubble-like liquid soap can be discharged from each of the discharging nozzles 6.

In addition, a remained volume of the liquid soap 110 in the tank 1 is displayed in the remained volume displaying part 24 in a step-wise manner and a supplementing of the liquid soap can be efficiently carried out.

As the remained volume of the liquid soap in the tank 1 reaches the lower-most level (8a) of the remained volume sensor 8 or the lid 13 is opened when the liquid soap is supplemented, the compressor 21 is stopped and at the same time the air drain port 10 is opened to remove the air in the tank 1. With such an arrangement, the present invention provides an effect to eliminate a probability of pumping-out of the lid 13 due to an inner pressure in the tank 1, to perform a safe supplementation of the liquid soap and to prevent a useless operation of the compressor 21 when the lid 13 is released.

In addition to the aforesaid effects, the arrangement in which the liquid soap taking-out port 3a is arranged at a location lower than the lower-most location (8a) of the remained volume sensor 8 may prevent the remained volume of the liquid soap 110 from being placed lower than the liquid soap discharging port 3a. With such an arrangement, it is possible to prevent the air in the tank 1 from entering the liquid soap feeding pipe 3 and further prevent some disadvantages of solidifying of the remained liquid soap in the pipe and clogging the liquid soap feeding pipe 3.

As the remained volume of the liquid soap 110 within the tank 1 is increased up to a place near the supplementing port 11 when the liquid soap is supplemented, the buzzer 25 is rung, the upper-most element 24e in the remained volume displaying part 24 is illuminated to alarm an over-flow condition of the liquid soap and then a useless consumption of the liquid soap can be prevented.

In addition, as the inner pressure in the tank 1 exceeds a high set pressure P_3 (0.7 kgf/cm^2), the safety valve 10a is operated to reduce a pressure within the tank 1 and to protect that tank 1.

The safety valve 10a is opened or closed every time the compressor 21 is operated to cause the liquid soap adhered to the safety valve 10a to be solidified and further to prevent a possibility of not operating the safety valve 10a and then a reliability in controlling operation described above or to be described later is improved.

The safety valve 10a is opened or closed every time the pressurizing pump 21 is operated to cause the liquid soap adhered to the safety valve 10a to be solidified and further to prevent a possibility of not operating the safety valve 10a and then a reliability in controlling operation described above or to be described later is improved.

In addition, the aforesaid control part 5 is provided with an emergency stopping means for stopping an operation of the compressor 21 when an abnormal state indicated in the following ① or ② is detected, opening the air drain port 10 for a specified period of time under an operation of the safety valve 10a, illuminating each of all elements 24a to 24e at the remained volume displaying part 24 to inform an occurrence of abnormal state at the device A1, stopping the operation of the compressor 21 when an abnormal state indicated in ③ is detected and opening the air drain port 10 for a specified period of time, diminishing the light emitting diode elements 24a to 24e corresponding to the contact points 8a to 8e showing a detection of the remained volume other than the liquid surface of the remained liquid soap, illuminating other elements 24a to 24e and informing an occurrence of abnormal state.

① that the pressure within the tank 1 does not reach the high set pressure P_1 (0.5 kgf/cm²) even after a specified period of time (for example, 5 minutes) elapses upon inputting an instruction for operating the compressor 21 from the control part 5;

② that the pressure within the tank 1 is more than P_4 (0.1 kgf/cm² cm² in the preferred embodiment) even after a specified period of time (for example, 60 seconds) elapses from an inputting of an instruction for operating the safety valve 10a of the air drain port 10 from the control part 5; and

③ that the remained volume of liquid soap 110 in the tank 1 is detected by the remained volume sensor 8 other the liquid level.

In this case, when the abnormal states indicated in the above items ① to ③ occur, the compressor 21 is stopped and an interior part of the tank 1 is reduced. Thus, it is possible to eliminate a certain dangerous condition in which the device A1 continues to operate when an air leakage occurs in the tank 1, the liquid soap feeding pipe 3, air feeding pipe 4 and discharging nozzle 6 of the like or the control for the tank 1 may not be carried out or an abnormal state is found in the remained volume sensor 8 and further to improve a safety and a reliability of the device A1. In concurrent with this fact, it is also possible to inform a user of an occurrence of abnormal state through an illumination of the remained volume displaying part 24.

In Fig.14 is shown the flow-chart concerning the control over the aforesaid liquid soap supplying device A1.

In addition, it may also be possible to provide a controlling function other than the above described in the above supplying device A1, for example, to arrange a temperature sensor near the compressor 21 in the casing 22 and when the temperature sensor detects a value more than the set temperature (an overloaded condition of the compressor 21), a control means may be provided for stopping the compressor 21 or the like.

Liquid soap supplying devices A2 to A4 will be described in which each of the composing elements for the supplying device A1 will be described as follows.

In Figs.15 and 16, there is illustrated the liquid soap supplying device A2 having discharging nozzles 6' provided with electro-magnetic or electrical opening or closing valves 65 opened for a specified period of time upon detecting a user in place of the above discharging nozzles 6.

The discharging nozzles 6' are provided with the liquid soap feeding port 6a, air feeding port 6b, air discharging port 6d, straighteners 6e, mixing chamber 61, agitating chamber 62 and a flow passage 63 or the like in the same manner as that of the above discharging nozzles 6 and further it has a photo-electrical sensor 6f at a predetermined location at the base end for sensing a hand extended just below the discharging port 6d.

The opening or closing valves 65 are arranged at downstream sides of the check valves 40 in the liquid soap feeding pipe 3 and the air feeding pipe 4 and further cooperatively connected to the control part 5 in such a way as the valve may be opened or closed for a predetermined period of time through a sensing of the hand by the sensor 6f.

The sensor 6f may sense automatically the hand or may be one of a sensor touch type.

According to the liquid soap supplying device A2, if the use is detected by the sensor 6f, the opening or closing valve 65 is opened for the predetermined period of time, the liquid soap of specified amount and the air are supplied to the discharging nozzles 6' and then only a specified amount of bubbled liquid soap is discharged from the discharging port 6d. Thus, it is possible to make a proper discharging amount of liquid soap in one time of use and to perform an efficient utilization of liquid soap.

In addition, in case of the supplying device A2, the control part 5 is provided with a control means for avoiding a judgement of abnormal state in which the pressure within the tank 1 is rapidly decreased when more than a plurality of discharging nozzles 6' are used concurrently.

The means are, for example, (1) when the two discharging nozzles 6' are used concurrently, the opening or closing valves 65 are controlled so as to be closed at 70% of a normal discharging time, (2) when the other discharging nozzle 6' is used during a use of one discharging nozzle 6', the former discharging nozzle 6' is stopped in about one second and the latter discharging nozzle 6' is discharged after about one second under a control of the opening or closing valve 65, and (3) the opening or closing valve 65 is controlled in such a way as when the other discharging nozzle 6' is used during a continuation of the discharging time of 70% at the previous discharging nozzle 6', the discharging nozzle 6' of previous one is immediately closed to make a rapid stopping of the discharging operation and the discharging of the latter discharging nozzle 6' for 70% discharging time of the normal time.

A limiting capability of the compressor 21 is set in such a way as when five discharging nozzles 6' are used concurrently no discharging is carried from the two discharging nozzles 6' or as one example, the opening or closing valves 65 of the two discharging nozzles 6' are not opened.

In addition, in the case that more than a plurality of discharging nozzles 6' are concurrently used, the opening or closing valves 65 may be controlled in such a way as the opening or closing valves 65 in the air feeding pipe 4 are closed and the liquid soap is changed over to a discharging of water flow and then the air in the tank 1 may not be rapidly decreased.

With such an arrangement as above, the pressure within the tank 1 is not rapidly decreased and a normal operation can be continued.

In Figs.17 to 19 is illustrated an example of modification around the discharging port 6d in the above discharging nozzle 6'.

As shown in Fig.17, the discharging nozzle 6'' is made such that a discharging port 6d is vertically arranged at an extreme end lower surface of the main body having a hollow interior, in which the extreme end of the liquid soap feeding pipe 3 and the air feeding pipe 4 are connected to a primary side of the discharging port 6d and at the same time the two straightners 6e are arranged in sequence in the discharging port 6d from the upstream side, a spacer 66 is arranged between each of the straightners 6e and 6e and then a spacer 66 is arranged at the primary side of the straightner 6e at the upstream side.

As shown in Fig.18, the spacer 66 has a substantial funnel-like mixing chamber 66b by downwardly inclining a central part of the spacer main body 66a, and a communication-passage 66d is formed over a lower surface of the spacer main body 66a from the deepest part 66c of the mixing

chamber 66b.

As shown in Fig.19, the spacer 66 may be further added to the secondary side of the downstream side straightner 6e in the discharging port 6d and the number of straightners and spacers can be properly varied.

With such an arrangement as above, upon sensing of a use of the device with the sensors 6f, the opening or closing valves 65 are opened for a specified period of time to feed the liquid soap and the air toward the discharging nozzle 6'' and further the liquid soap and the air are forcedly blown from the extreme ends of the liquid soap feeding pipe 3 and the air feeding pipe 4 toward into the mixing chamber 66b. The liquid soap and the air are sufficiently and positively mixed within the substantial funnel-like mixing chamber 66b, pass through the communicating passage 66d arranged in the deepest part 66c of the mixing chamber 66b, and they are agitated by the straightner 6e, agitated by the downstream-side spacer 66 and the straightner 6e and then the liquid soap and the air are discharged from the extreme end of the discharging port 6d under a fine bubbled state.

In the case that the discharging nozzle 6'' is used, a funnel-like mixing chamber 66b is arranged at the up-stream side of each of the straightners 6e arranged in the discharging port 6d, the liquid soap and the air are sufficiently and positively mixed within the mixing chamber 66b, thereafter they are agitated by the straightner 6e, so that even if several straightners are not arranged, fine bubbled liquid soap can be discharged.

In addition, since a less amount of use of the straightners 6e is satisfactory, it may eliminate defects of clogging the straightners 6e with liquid soap under a use of a long period of time.

A configuration of the part of the discharging port 6d shown in Figs.18 and 19 can be formed in the discharging port 6d of the discharging nozzle 6 shown in Fig.6.

In Figs.20 to 28, there is illustrated a liquid soap supplying device A3 provided with a tank 1', discharging nozzles 600, a remained volume sensor 8' and a casing 220 or the like made as described later.

The tank 1' is comprised of a main body lower part 1a having an upper surface opened and a main body upper part 1b having a lower surface opened. Flanges 101 and 100 are arranged at each of the opening edges of the main body lower part 1a and the main body upper part 1b. These flanges 100 and 101 are connected by screws 102 to make a box-like shape in which the upper surface of the main body lower part 1a is covered by the main body upper part 1b.

As shown in Figs.22 and 23, the flange 101 is provided with concave grooves 104 positioned in-

side and outside of the screw holes 103. The flange 100 is provided with projections 105 fitted to the concave grooves 104, and further packings 106 are present in the concave grooves 104. According to such a configuration as above, it has some effects that the fastening force applied by the screws 102 is concentrated in the concave grooves 104 or the projections 105 so as to shield an air flow passage and at the same time the packings 106, the concave grooves 104 and the projections 105 are forcedly made into an integral assembly to as to improve an air-tightness.

An inner part of the tank 1' is divided into two sections by a partition wall 200, an upper part of the side surface of the chamber 201 divided with the partition wall 200 being interfaced (right side in Figs.20 and 21) is formed into an inclined surface, a supplying port 11 is arranged in the inclined surface 202 and at the same time the upper surface of the chamber 201 is communicated with an air intake pipe 23.

The upper surface of the chamber 203 at the divided part with the partition wall 200 being interface (left side in Figs.20 and 21) is communicated with the air feeding pipe 4 and at the same time the lower surface of it is communicated with the liquid soap feeding pipe 3. A pressure sensor 7 is arranged at the upper part (within the air accumulation part 120) of the chamber 203 and then the remained volume sensor 8' is vertically arranged.

As shown in the figure, the partition wall 200 has a height ranging from an inner bottom surface of the tank 1' to the upper surface thereof, formed to have a substantial same width as that of the tank 1', several communication holes 200a having a proper diameter are formed in it. The wall is integrally formed at a substantial central part in the tank 1' or fixed by adhesive agent and each of the chambers 201, 203 is communicated with each other through the communication holes 200a described above.

An entire area of the communication holes 200a.....of the partition wall 200 is preferably low to enable an influence of each of the chambers 201 and 203 to be reduced. However, too low area causes an entering speed of the liquid soap or air into the adjoining chamber to be delayed to take much time for a supplementary work, resulting in that it is necessary to determine the number and positions of the communication holes 200a and an entire area of each of the communication holes 200a or the like in view of the above.

With such an arrangement as above, a strength of anti-pressure of the tank 1' is improved by the partition wall 200. One of the chambers divided by the partition wall 200 is provided with the liquid soap supplementing port 11 and the other chamber is provided with the pressure sensor 7, so that the

liquid surface waving during supplementing the liquid soap does not reach directly to the pressure sensor 7. Accordingly, an inner pressure of the tank 1' can be detected accurately.

One chamber divided by the partition wall 200 is communicated with the compressor 21 and a liquid soap supplementing port 11 and at the same time the other chamber is connected with the air feeding pipe 4, so that the liquid surface waving during a pressurizing of the tank 1' or during a supplementing the liquid soap does not reach directly to the air feeding pipe 4. Thus, it is possible to prevent drawbacks in which the liquid soap enters the air feeding pipe 4 and clog the air feeding pipe 4.

The bottom surface of the above tank 1' is inclined toward the drain port 12' and the drain port 12' which can be opened or closed with a lid is formed at a substantial central part of it and ribs 205 are radially arranged around the drain port 12'. The ribs 205 may act as guides for discharging precipitate material and the discharging of the precipitate material can be smoothly performed.

As shown in Fig.24, the supplementing port 11 is formed to rise from the inclined surface 202 of the tank 1' in a cylindrical form and it is closed by an inner lid 13'.

The inner lid 13' is provided with an inserting cylinder 13a closely contacting with an inner wall surface of the supplementing port 11, and the upper central part of the lid is provided with a lateral extending handle 13b. This inner lid 13' is covered by a lid cover 15.

The lid cover 15 is formed into a dome-shape covering an upper side of the inclined surface 202 and supported by a hinge 16 in such a way as it may be opened or closed. A bottom surface side of the lid cover 15 is provided with a fitting concave part 15a at its inner side to be coincided with an outer surface shape of the inner lid 13'. A bottom surface of the lid cover 15 is provided with an opening or closing sensor 9 for use in detecting an opening or closing of the lid cover 15 and sending the detected signal to the control part 5.

The fitting concave part 15a is formed in such a way as the supplementing port 11 is coincided with a shape completely sealed with the inner lid 13', thereby the lid cover 15 is not closed unless the inner lid 13' is sealingly closed, the opening or closing sensor 9 detects an opening of the lid cover 15 and then the compressor 21 is not operated.

That is, the operation of the compressor 21 can be carried out only after the supplementing port 11 is closed and the lid cover 15 is fully closed and thus an air leakage from the supplementing port 11 can be prevented and the a possibility that the compressor 21 may operate uselessly can be pre-

vented.

In Figs.25 and 26 is illustrated an example of the modification of the inner lid and the lid cover described above.

The inner lid 13" illustrated in the drawing is not provided with a handle 13b at the inner lid 13' and at the same time its top plan view is of a shape as shown in Fig.26 to have the right and left sides cut. The lid cover 15' is formed with a fitting concave part 15b coinciding with the outer shape of the inner lid 13".

As shown in Fig.27, a discharging nozzle 600 has a liquid soap feeding port 6a and an air feeding port 6b at the base part of the main body 600a, it is further provided with a liquid soap passage 601 and an air passage 602 vertically arranged from these inlet ports 6a and 6b. To each of the passages 601 and 602 are connected the liquid soap feeding pipe 3 and the air feeding pipe 4. Within the main body 600a are arranged a flow passage 603 communicating with the air feeding port 6b, a mixing chamber 61 communicating with the passage 603, a flow passage 604 communicating the liquid soap feeding port 6a with the mixing chamber 61, the aforesaid agitating chamber 62, a flow passage 63, an opening or closing valve 6c, a discharging port 6d and a straightner 6e or the like. In addition, within the aforesaid liquid soap passage 601 and the air passage 602 is arranged the aforesaid check valve 40.

As shown in Fig.28, the remained volume sensor 8' is provided with a frame-like stopper 800 for every contact point (a magnetic sensing element) of the guide shaft 80, a circumferential surface of the stopper 800 is provided with through-holes 801 for use in communicating an inside and an outside of the frame body and further a float magnet 802 is arranged in the stopper 800 in such a way as it may be lifted up or down. In this way, the float magnet 802 is moved up and down in response to an increased or decreased amount of liquid soap so as to detect the remained amount of liquid soap for every contact points 8a to 8e and to transmit each of the detected signals to the control part 5. Reference numerals 809.....denote projections for use in preventing a close contact of the float magnet 802.

As described above, even if the arrangement of the float magnet 802 in the frame-like float stopper 800 causes the liquid soap surface in the tank 1' to be largely oscillated, it may not directly influence against the float magnet 802. Thus, this has some effects that a chattering of each of the contact points (magnetic sensing elements) 8a to 8e can be prevented and no trouble may occur against the controlling operation.

The aforesaid remained volume sensor 8' can also be applied in the aforesaid liquid soap sup-

plying devices A1 and A2.

The casing 220 is formed by a non-metallic material such as resin or the like and stores the control part 5 and the compressor 21 or the like. The control part 5 is stored in a metallic shield case 221. Arrangement of the control part 5 in the shield case 221 and further arrangement in the non-metallic casing 220 may protect electronic circuits in the control part 5 against noise and external static electricity and thus it is possible to eliminate a damage or runaway of the electronic circuits or the like.

Accordingly, it is not necessary to apply an electronic component element having a high withstand-voltage and then a cost-down of an entire device can be attained.

Reference numeral 23b in Fig.20 denotes a electric (electro-magnetic) three-way valve arranged in the midway part of the air feeding pipe 23 and cooperatively related to the control part 5. The three-way valve may operate when the liquid soap is discharged (when the compressor 21 is operated) or when an excessive pressure within the tank 1' (when the compressor 21 is stopped) for a quite short period of time (for example, 0.1 second), resulting in that the valve may prohibit possibility that the liquid soap or liquid soap bubbles, evaporating element of the liquid soap or the like enter through the air feeding pipe 23 to cause a trouble in the operation of the compressor 21.

In Fig.29 is illustrated a liquid soap supplying device A4 in which only the supplementing port 11 is arranged at one chamber 201 divided in the tank 1' with the partition wall 200 being interfaced, and the air feeding pipe 23 and the air feeding pipe 4 are communicated with the upper surface of the other chamber 203.

According to this supplying device A4, one chamber divided by the partition wall 200 is provided with the liquid soap supplementing port 11 and at the same time the other chamber is communicated with the compressor 21, so that the liquid surface waving when the liquid soap is supplemented does not directly influence the outlet port 23a of the air feeding pipe 23.

Accordingly, it is possible to prevent a possibility that liquid soap or liquid soap bubbles may enter the air feeding pipe 23 to cause a trouble in the compressor 21.

In Figs.30 and 31 is illustrated a large-sized liquid soap supplying device A5 in which a liquid soap supplying part A' comprising the aforesaid tank 1 (or 1'), the pressurizing device 2, the liquid soap feeding pipe 3, the air feeding pipe 4, the control part 5, a plurality of discharging nozzles 6 (or 6', 6'', 600), the pressure sensor 7, the remained volume sensor 8 (or 8') is mounted for every floor F in an office building or the like or in other

suitable locations and at the same time the displaying function part G having each of the remained volume displaying parts 24' at each of the liquid soap supplying parts A' is provided.

The displaying function part G is provided with a discrete remained volume displaying part 24' corresponding to each of the liquid soap supplying parts A' in a single panel G1. Each of the remained volume displaying parts 24' is communicated with each of the control parts 5 for cooperating with the remained volume sensor 8 in each of the liquid soap supplying parts A'. It may display through LED in a step-wise manner the remained volume of the liquid soap 110 within each of the tanks 1 in response to each of the control parts 5.

Each of the remained volume displaying parts 24' may display a full charged state of the tank 1 when all LED displays are lit and display a vacant state when all LED displays are diminished. When the remained volume sensor 8 detects the lower-most level (8a) of the remained volume of liquid soap, the LED display is illuminated and all the displaying functions of the aforesaid remained volume displaying part 24 are included.

According to the liquid soap supplying device A5, since the remained volume of the liquid soap 110 in each of the tanks 1 in a plurality of liquid soap supplying parts A' is displayed at the single displaying function part G, the remained volume of the liquid soap at each of the liquid soap supplying part's A' installed at each of the floors F or the like can be confirmed at a glance.

Accordingly, it is not necessary to perform a periodical round-check for each of the liquid soap supplying parts A' on purpose, so that its supervising operation may easily be carried out and a labour of a supervisor can be reduced. In addition, since the remained volume of the liquid soap at each of the liquid soap supplying parts A' can be frequently confirmed, a supplementing time for the liquid soap can be seen at an early time and convenient.

A liquid soap supplying device A6 shown in Figs.32 to 36 is operated such that a supplying of the liquid soap and air is carried out by a pump, a water spigot main body (a) is attached and fixed to the upper surface of the basin B mounted at the wall surface W in a toilet room or the like and at the same time within the lower spacing of the aforesaid basin B, a hot water and cold water mixing spigot (b), a liquid soap tank (c), a liquid soap pump (d), an air pump (e) and a control part (f) or the like are fixed and attached to a base block (n).

The basin B is an already existing product in which the two fixing ports B1 and B2 are arranged at the upper surface of the bowl part at the wall surface W at a predetermined spacing, for exam-

ple, the openings having a diameter of 28 mm are spaced apart by a spacing of 102 mm.

As shown in Figs.34, 35 and 36, the water spigot main body (a) is hollow and formed in a wide width, and the water discharging port a1 and the liquid water discharging port a2 adjacent to the bowl of the basin B are arranged in side-by-side at the upper part of the main body. In addition, the bottom surface of the water spigot main body (a) are formed with the two connection ports a3 and a4 in compliance with the spacing between the fixing ports B1 and B2 mounted in the basin B.

The water spigot main body (a) is provided with the aforesaid connection ports a3 and a4, thereby the water spigot main body can be fixed to an already installed basin B having the two fixing ports B1 and B2 arranged at a predetermined spacing.

Both connection ports a3 and a4 of the water spigot main body (a) are fitted to the fixing ports B1 and B2 of the basin B and fastened with nut (g) from the lower surface side, thereby when the water spigot main body (a) is attached and fixed, the aforesaid connection ports a3 and a4 may form a passage communicating the interior part of the water spigot main body (a) with the lower spacing of the basin B.

As shown in Fig.35, an interior part of a door a5 arranged at the upper part of the water spigot main body (a) is provided with a supplementing port (h) communicating with a liquid soap tank (c). The supplementing port (h) and the upper port c1 of the liquid soap tank (c) mounted at the lower part of the basin B are connected by a supplementing pipe (i) to be described later. In the conventional system, the supplementing port (h) for the liquid soap described above was directly arranged at the liquid soap tank (c). Accordingly, in the case that the liquid soap is to be supplemented, liquid soap should be directly supplemented into the liquid soap tank below the basin B. However, as described above, the arrangement of the liquid soap supplementing port (h) in the water spigot main body (a) enables the liquid soap to be easily supplemented through the supplementing port (h) arranged on the basin B without taking a difficult attitude for the work.

A water supplying pipe (j) is connected to the water discharging port a1 of the water spigot main body (a), and each of a liquid feeding pipe (k) and an air pipe (m) is connected to the liquid soap discharging port a2 from an inside part of the main body (a), respectively, and these pipes (j), (k), (m) are passed through the other connection port a3 and arranged toward the lower part of the basin B. The water supplying pipe (j) arranged at the lower part of the basin B is connected to the secondary side of the hot water and cold water

mixing spigot (b), and the liquid feeding pipe (k) and the air pipe (m) are connected to the secondary connection ports of the liquid soap pump (d) and the air pump (e) communicated with the liquid soap tank (c), respectively.

As shown in Fig.35, the aforesaid liquid soap discharging port a2 is made such that a cylindrical case q1 having an opened bottom surface is inserted and fixed at an extreme end part of the water spigot main body (a), and a mixing chamber q2 is formed in the case q1. On the upper surface of the case q1 is arranged a communicating passage q3 communicated with the mixing chamber q2 and to which the liquid feeding pipe (k) and the air pipe (m) are connected.

The mixing chamber q2 has straightners q20 and q20 within the case q1 in a properly spaced-apart relation, and at the upper surface side of each of the straightners q20 are installed the mixing members q30 provided with concave parts q31 having a funnel-like section and through-pass holes q32 opened at the deepest portion of the concave part q31.

The liquid soap and air flowing through the communication passages q3 and q3 are agitated and mixed by the mixing member q30 and the straightner q20 of upper (upstream side) and further repeatedly agitated and mixed by the mixing member q30 and the straightner q20 at the lower (downstream) side, thereby a fine and mooth-like liquid soap similar to that of the arrangement of several (normally 5 to 6 pieces) straightners overlapped to each other can be attained. Concurrently, it is also possible to prevent a clogging which is apt to occur in the case that several straightners are overlapped to each other.

The aforesaid supplementing pipe (i) is constructed as a double-pipe structure comprising an outer pipe i1 and an inner pipe i2.

The outer pipe i1 is constructed such that its upper end is connected to a connection port a4 of the water spigot main body (a). The outer pipe is projected downwardly, passes through the fixing port B1, extends into the spacing below the basin B and is connected to the upper port c1 of the liquid soap tank (c).

The inner pipe i2 is inserted into the outer pipe i1 with a slight clearance being left between it and the inner circumferential surface of the outer pipe i1, passes through the upper port c1 and is inserted up to a part near the bottom part in the liquid soap tank (c). The upper end of the inner pipe i2 is connected to the supplementing port (h).

Accordingly, the supplementing pipe (i) may constitute the liquid soap supplementing passage in the inner pipe i2, resulting in that a spacing between the inner pipe i2 and the outer pipe i1 may constitute an air releasing passage for releas-

ing air from the liquid soap tank (c).

A concave part h10 communicating with the connection port a4 is arranged within the water spigot main body (a), and the supplementing port (h) is arranged in the concave part h10. The upper end of the outer pipe i1 is communicated with the concave part h10.

As shown in Fig.35, the supplementing port (h) is formed into a funnel shape having a flange h1 at an upper opening edge, the flange h1 is engaged with the upper end opening edge h11 of the concave part 10 and arranged in the concave part h10, then the upper end of the inner pipe i2 is connected to the feeding port h2 opened from the bottom part of the concave part in its projected form.

The flange h1 of the aforesaid supplementing port (h) is formed with recesses h3 and the air releasing passage is communicated with an external side through the recesses h3.

The hot water and cold water mixing spigot (b) is a well-known unit for use in mixing hot water and cold water up to a set temperature under an operation of a temperature setting handle, in which the water supplying pipe (j) is connected to its discharging port and there are provided an opening or closing valve b1 to be opened or closed under an operation of a user and an electromagnetic valve b2 to be opened or closed under an instruction from the control part (f).

Each of the touch switches p1 and p2 are arranged just above the water discharging port a1 and the liquid water discharging port a2 in the water spigot main body (a). These touch switches are connected to the control part (f) mounted on the base block (n).

The control part (f) is electrically connected to the electromagnetic valve b2 of the hot water and cold water mixing spigot (b), the liquid soap pump (d) and an air pump (e) in the same manner as the aforesaid both touch switches p1 and p2.

The control part (f) may open the electromagnetic valve b2 in response to the pushing of the touch switches p1 and p2, supply water to the water discharging port a1, operate the liquid soap pump (d) and the air pump (e) and concurrently supply the liquid soap and the air to the liquid soap discharging port a2. As shown in Fig.37, the control part (f) is provided with means for operating the liquid soap pump (d) and the air pump (e), stopping the air pump at first after elapsing a predetermined time and further stopping the liquid soap pump (d) after an elapsing of a predetermined time.

Accordingly, in case of the aforesaid water spigot, a pushing of the touch switch p1 causes either water or mixed water of a predetermined temperature to be discharged/stopped through the

water discharging port a1, and another pushing of the touch switch p2 causes the bubbled liquid soap to be discharged/stopped through the liquid soap discharging port a2.

The liquid soap supplying device A6 described above enables the water spigot main body (a) to be fixed to the already installed basin B and further to enable the pipes (i), (j), (k) and (m) for water feeding or liquid soap to be attained. Accordingly, the device may easily be mounted in place of the water spigot installed in an already set basin B in a home, for example, and thus the water supplying function as well as the liquid soap supplying function may easily be utilized.

In addition, since the water discharging port a1 and liquid soap discharging ports a2 and a2' are arranged in the water spigot main body (a), a comparison of the present invention with the prior art system in which the water discharging port and the liquid soap discharging port are projected from the device in side-by-side relation shows that the arrangement of the water discharging fittings for the basin B can be arranged well and its cleaning may easily be carried out.

In the aforesaid liquid soap discharging device A6, if the lid a5 of the water spigot main body (a) is opened to feed liquid water into the supplementing port (h), the liquid water is fed to the bottom part of the liquid soap tank (c) through the liquid soap supplementing passage comprised of the inner pipe i2 of the supplementing pipe (i), and as the amount of liquid soap in the tank (c) is increased, the air in the tank (c) is discharged out of the tank (c) through the air releasing passage formed by the clearance between the inner pipe i2 and the outer pipe i1 of the supplementing pipe (i), resulting in that the air and the liquid soap are replaced from each other. Thus, in the case that the liquid soap is supplemented into the liquid water tank, the replacement of air and liquid soap in the tank is carried out well and then occurrence of bubbles is restricted.

Accordingly, in the present invention, there occurs no drawbacks that the bubbles are overflowed out of the liquid soap supplementing port and troublesome operation for supplementing a small amount of liquid soap little by little with the case not to make any bubbles, resulting in that the liquid soap supplementing work can be carried out easily within a short period of time.

In addition, according to the aforesaid liquid soap supplying device A6, a user operates the touch switch p2 to cause the bubbles liquid soap to be discharged from the liquid soap discharging port a2 for a specified period of time and subsequently the liquid soap is discharged so as to flush away the bubbled liquid soap left in the discharging port a2. Thus, there is no possibility that the liquid

soap is left in the mixing chamber q2 and further it is possible to prevent a drawback that the liquid soap is dried and fixed to clog the discharging port a2.

In the aforesaid liquid soap supplying device A6, it is apparent that a photo-electrical human body sensor, for example, of non-touch type can be utilized in place of the touch switches p1 and p2.

Claims

1. A liquid soap supplying device comprising a discharging nozzle provided with a mixing chamber for liquid soap and air; liquid soap supplying means for forcedly supplying liquid soap to said discharging nozzle; and air supplying means for forcedly supplying air to said discharging nozzle.
2. A liquid soap supplying device according to claim 1) characterized in that the device is comprised of a tank for storing liquid soap with an air accumulation part being left at an inner upper part therein; a pressurizing device arranged to be communicated with said air accumulation part; a control part for controlling an operation of the pressurizing device in response to a sensing signal got from a pressure sensor arranged at the air accumulation part; a liquid soap feeding pipe taken out at a bottom part of said tank; an air feeding pipe taken out at said air accumulation part; and a discharging nozzle provided with a mixing chamber for liquid soap and air and communicated with the liquid soap feeding pipe and the air feeding pipe.
3. A liquid soap supplying device according to Claim 2) characterized in that a liquid soap supplementing port arranged in the tank is arranged at a middle height location in the tank.
4. A liquid soap supplying device according to Claim 2) characterized in that a check valve is arranged in the liquid soap feeding pipe.
5. A liquid soap supplying device according to Claim 4) characterized in that a check valve is arranged near the discharging nozzle in the liquid soap feeding pipe.
6. A liquid soap supplying device according to Claim 5) characterized in that a check valve is arranged at a rising part of the liquid soap feeding pipe and said check valve is provided with a ball-like valve seated on a valve seat by

its own weight.

7. A liquid soap supplying device according to Claim 2) characterized in that a flow rate adjusting valve for adjusting an air supplying amount for the discharging nozzle is arranged at a proper location in the air feeding pipe. 5
8. A liquid soap supplying device according to Claim 2) characterized in that said pressurizing device and the control part are arranged in one casing and said casing is removably attached to a side surface of the tank. 10
9. A liquid soap supplying device according to Claim 2) characterized in that a drain port for discharging precipitate is arranged at a bottom wall of the tank. 15
10. A liquid soap supplying device according to Claim 9) characterized in that a drain port is arranged at a tank bottom wall, the tank bottom wall is formed in a downward gradient toward the drain port, and an inner bottom surface of the tank is provided with radial ribs around the drain port. 20 25
11. A liquid soap supplying device according to Claim 2) characterized in that the same is comprised of a remained volume sensor for sensing in a stepwise manner a remained volume of liquid soap in the tank and a remained volume displaying part for displaying in a stepwise manner a remained volume of liquid soap in the tank in response to the sensing signal from said remained volume sensor. 30 35
12. A liquid soap supplying device according to Claim 11) characterized in that the remained volume sensor has a magnetic sensing element within a guide shaft, is formed to detect a liquid surface by turning ON or OFF said magnetic sensing element with a float magnet moving up and down along said guide shaft as the liquid surface ascends or descends, said guide shaft is provided with a float stopper for restricting an upward or downward movement of said float magnet while enclosing the float magnet, and said float stopper is provided with a communication hole communicating an inside and an outside of the float stopper. 40 45 50
13. A liquid soap supplying device according to Claim 2) characterized in that there are provided a remained volume sensor for sensing that the remained volume of liquid soap in the tank descends lower than its predetermined volume and a safety valve operated under an 55

instruction from the control part to release air in the tank, and the control part is provided with a control means for operating the safety valve in response to a sensed signal from said remained volume sensor.

14. A liquid soap supplying device according to Claim 2) characterized in that there are provided a remained volume sensor for sensing that the remained volume of liquid soap in the tank descends to a location near a taking-out part of the liquid soap feeding pipe and a safety valve operated under an instruction from the control part to release air in the tank, and the control part is provided with controlling means for operating the safety valve in response to the sensing signal from said remained volume sensor.
15. A liquid soap supplying device according to Claim 2) characterized in that a liquid soap supplementing port arranged at the tank is provided with an opening or closing sensor for sensing an opening or closing said supplementing port, and the control part is provided with controlling means for stopping an operation of the pressurizing device when said opening or closing sensor detects an opened supplementing port.
16. A liquid soap supplying device according to Claim 15) characterized in that there are provided an inner lid for opening or closing the supplementing port and a lid cover for covering said inner lid in such a way as the inner lid may be opened or closed, and there is provided an opening or closing sensor for sensing an opening or closing of said lid cover.
17. A liquid soap supplying device according to Claim 2) characterized in that there are provided a remained volume sensor for sensing that a remained volume of liquid soap in the tank ascends up to a location near the supplementing port, a buzzer operated under an instruction from the control part and a displaying part, and the control part is provided with controlling means for operating the buzzer and the displaying part in response to a detected signal from said remained volume sensor.
18. A liquid soap supplying device according to Claim 2) characterized in that the control part is provided with an emergency stop controlling means for stopping an operation of the pressurizing device by sensing an abnormal state in a system.

19. A liquid soap supplying device according to Claim 18) characterized in that there is provided a safety valve operated under an instruction from the control part to release air in the tank and the control part is provided with controlling means for operating the safety valve when the pressure sensor detects a pressure in the tank more than a predetermined pressure. 5
20. A liquid soap supplying device according to Claim 2) characterized in that the control part is provided with controlling means for operating the safety valve only for a slight time every time the pressurizing device is operated. 10 15
21. A liquid soap supplying device according to Claim 2) characterized in that the discharging nozzle is provided with a sensor for sensing a use of it, the liquid soap feeding pipe and the air feeding pipe are provided with an electromagnetic valve to be opened for a predetermined period of time in response to an instruction from the control part upon sensing of said sensor. 20 25
22. A liquid soap supplying device according to Claim 2) characterized in that the tank is divided into an upper part and a lower part, a connection part for each of the divided parts is provided with flanges, one of said flanges is provided with a concave groove over its entire length, the other flange is provided with a projection to be fitted in said concave groove, and a seal member is set in said concave groove. 30 35
23. A liquid soap supplying device according to Claim 2) characterized in that an inner side of the tank is divided by a partition wall having several communication holes, one air accumulation part is provided with a liquid soap supplementing port with said partition wall being interfaced, the other air accumulation part is provided with a pressure sensor. 40 45
24. A liquid soap supplying device according to Claim 2) characterized in that an inner side of the tank is divided by a partition wall having several communication holes, one air accumulation part is provided with liquid soap supplementing port with said partition wall being interfaced so as to communicate with the pressurizing device, and the air feeding pipe is taken out of the other air accumulation part. 50 55
25. A liquid soap supplying device according to Claim 2) characterized in that an inner side of the tank is divided by a partition wall having several communication holes, one air accumulation part is provided with liquid soap supplementing port with said partition wall being interfaced, and the other air accumulation part is communicated with the pressurizing device.
26. A liquid soap supplying device according to Claim 2) characterized in that a plurality of tanks, pressurizing devices, liquid soap feeding pipes, air feeding pipes and discharging nozzles are provided, a remained volume sensor for sensing a remained volume of liquid soap in each of the tanks is provided, and a displaying function part for concentrically displaying the remained volume of liquid soap in each of said tanks is provided.
27. A liquid soap supplying device according to Claim 1) characterized in that a plurality of straightners are loaded in an extreme end discharging port of the discharging nozzle, a spacer is set between each of the straightners and a central part of said spacer is concaved in a substantial funnel-like shape to form a mixing chamber for liquid soap and air.
28. A liquid soap supplying device according to Claim 1) characterized in that the same is comprised of a tank for storing liquid soap; a water spigot main body having a liquid soap discharging port provided with a mixing chamber for liquid soap and air; a liquid soap pump for feeding liquid soap in the tank to the liquid soap discharging port; an air pump for feeding air to the liquid soap discharging port; and a control part for controlling an operation of each of the liquid soap pump and the air pump in response to a signal from the switch arranged in the water spigot main body.
29. A liquid soap supplying device according to Claim 28) characterized in that the water spigot main body is provided with two connection ports connected to the two fixing ports arranged in spaced apart by a predetermined spacing on an upper surface of the body of the basin or the like, the liquid soap discharging port and the water supplying discharge port are arranged in side-by-side relation, a supplementing pie communicating the liquid soap supplementing port arranged at the upper surface of the spigot body with the liquid soap tank mounted at a lower part of the spigot body is arranged through said one connection port, the water supplying pipe and the liquid feeding pipe connected to the liquid soap tank are communicated with each of the water sup-

plying discharge port and the liquid soap discharging port of the water spigot main body through the other connection port.

30. A liquid soap supplying device according to Claim 29) characterized in that the supplementing pipe is of an inside and an outside double pipe, its inner spacing is applied as a liquid soap supplementing passage and the outer spacing is applied as an air releasing passage. 5 10
31. A liquid soap supplying device according to Claim 29) characterized in that the control part is provided with a fixing prevention means at the discharging port for stopping only the air pump after a predetermined time elapses from a beginning of the operation of each of the liquid soap pump and air pump and further stopping the liquid soap pump after a predetermined time elapses. 15 20

25

30

35

40

45

50

55

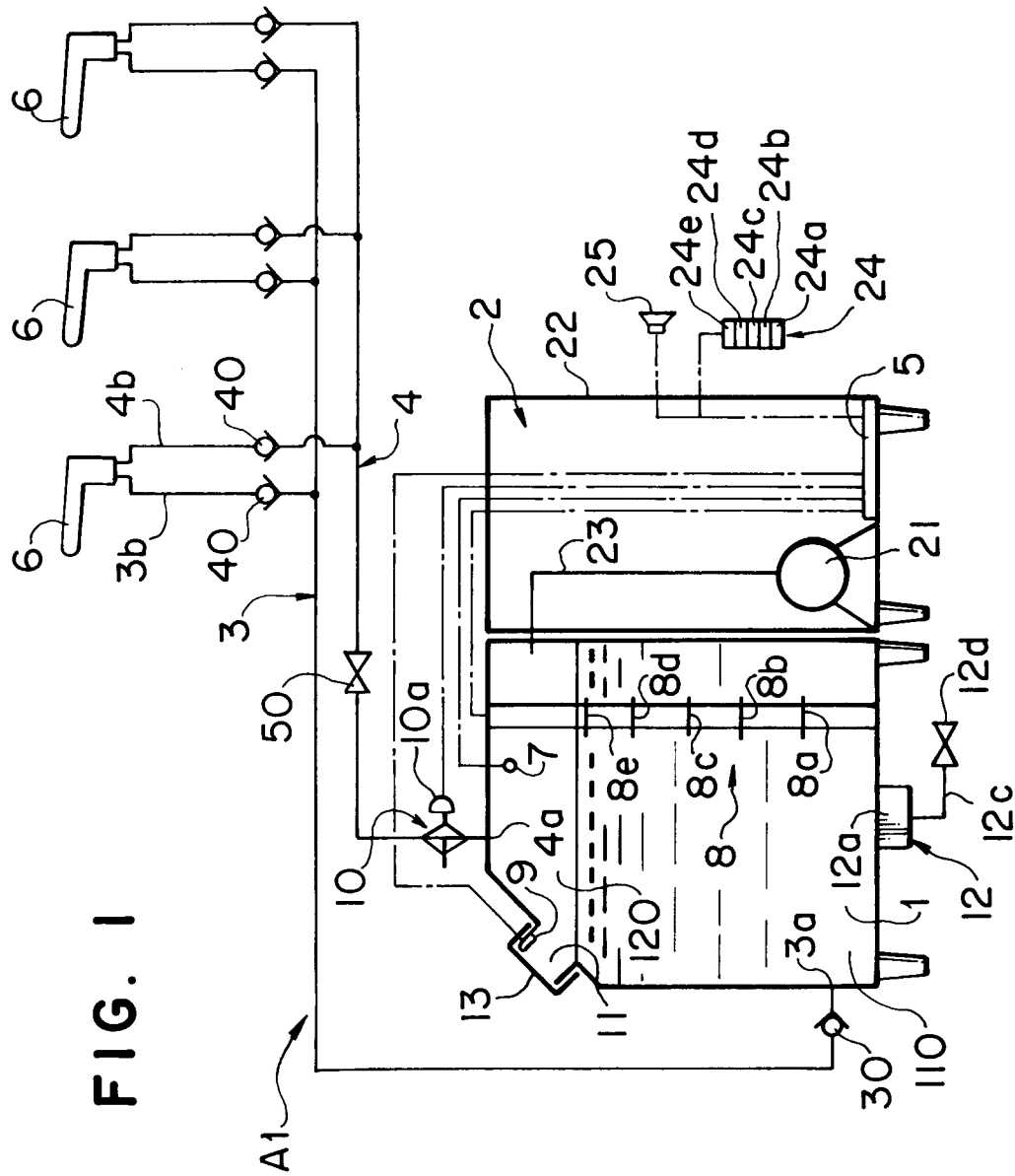


FIG. 4

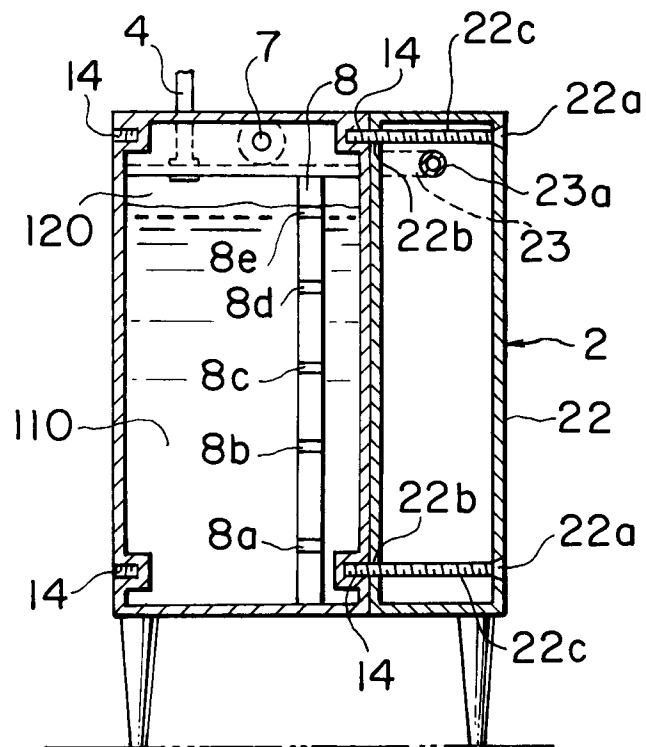


FIG. 5

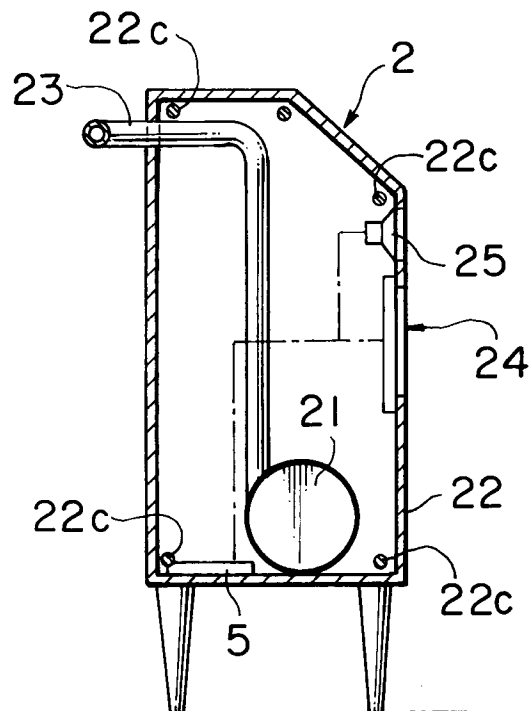


FIG. 6

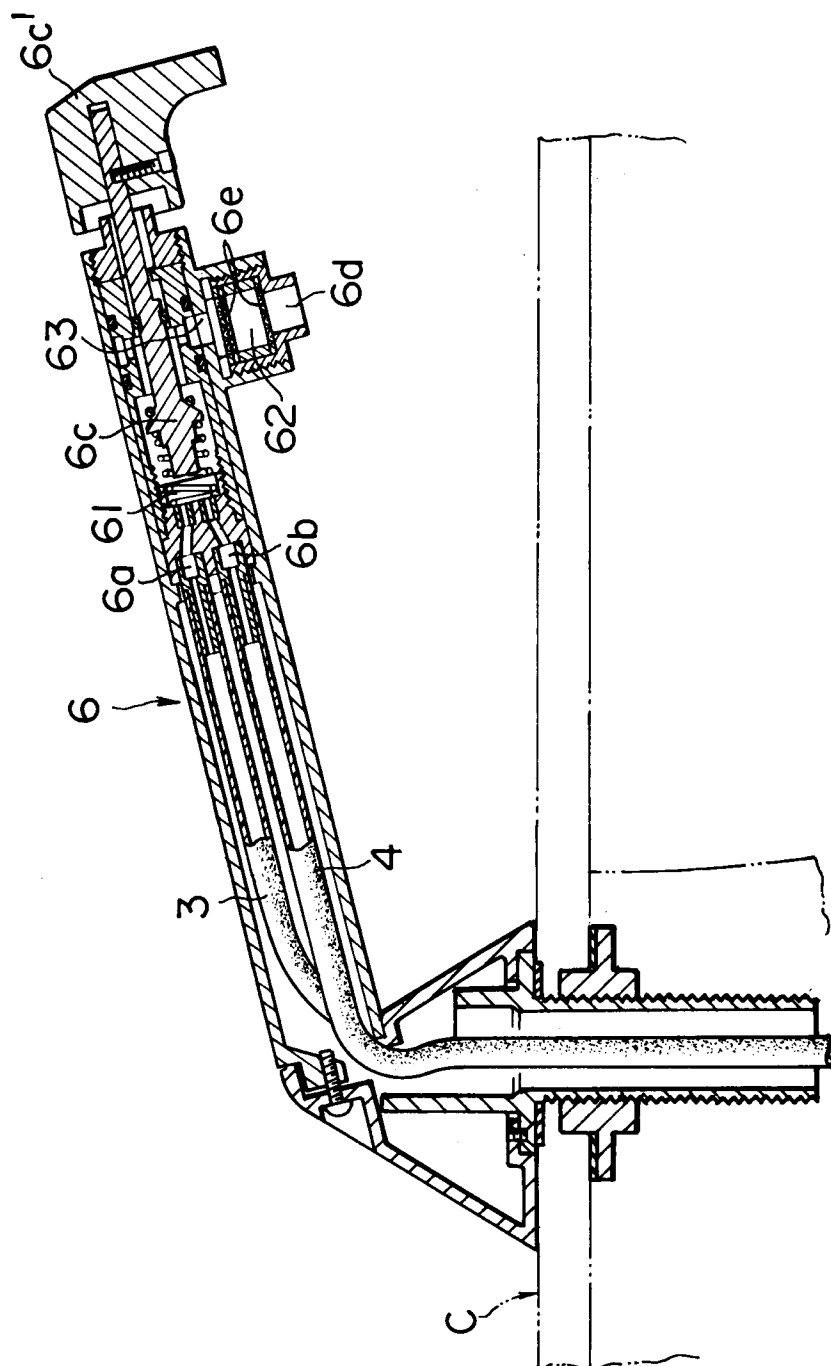


FIG. 7

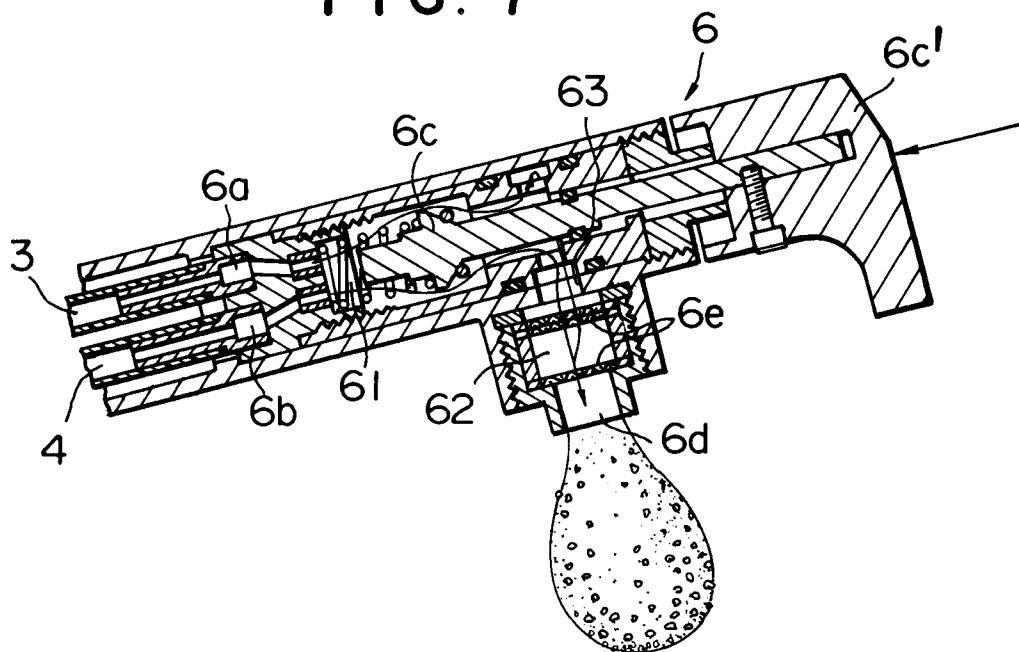


FIG. 8

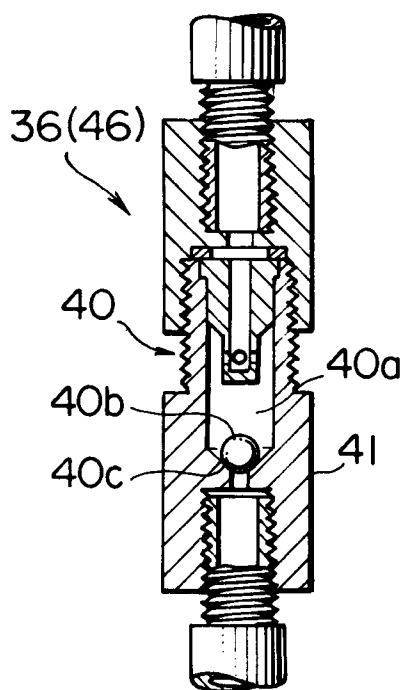


FIG. 9

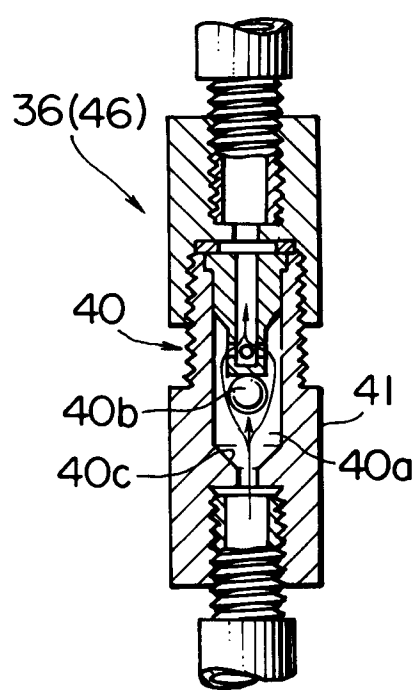


FIG. 10

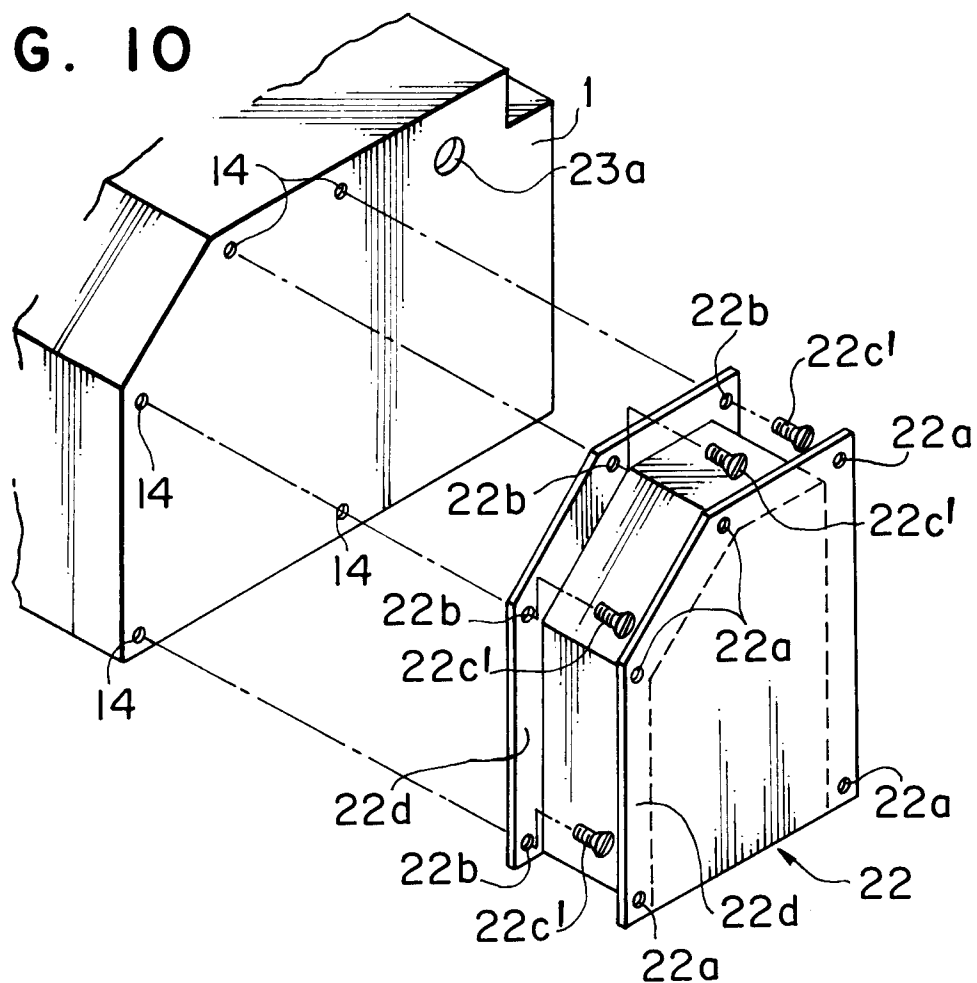


FIG. 11

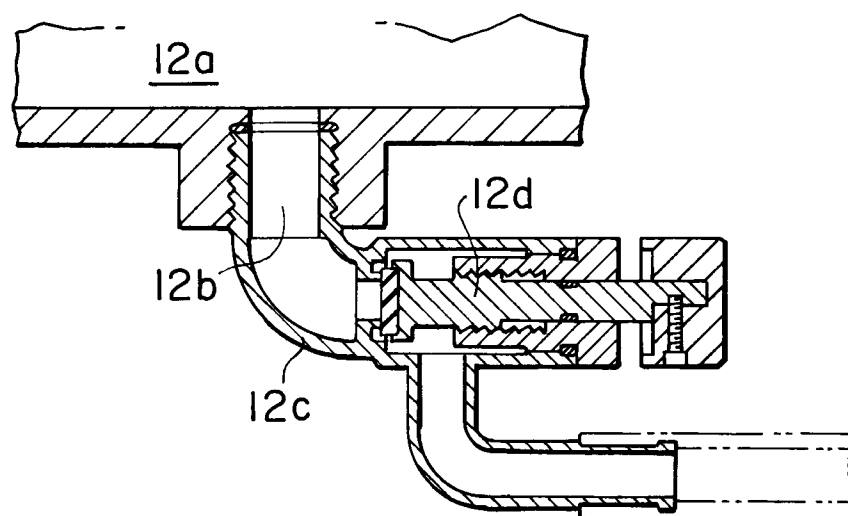


FIG. 12

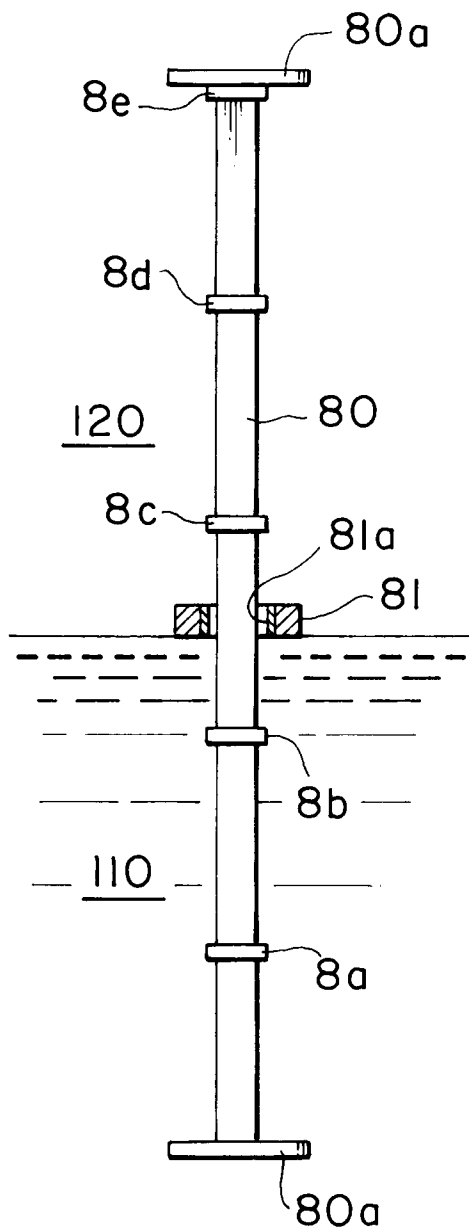
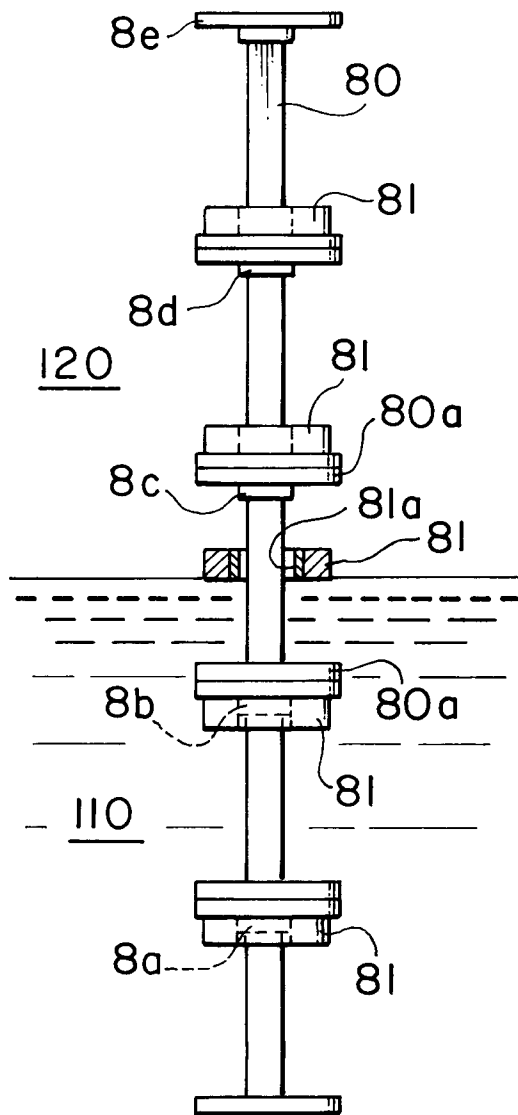
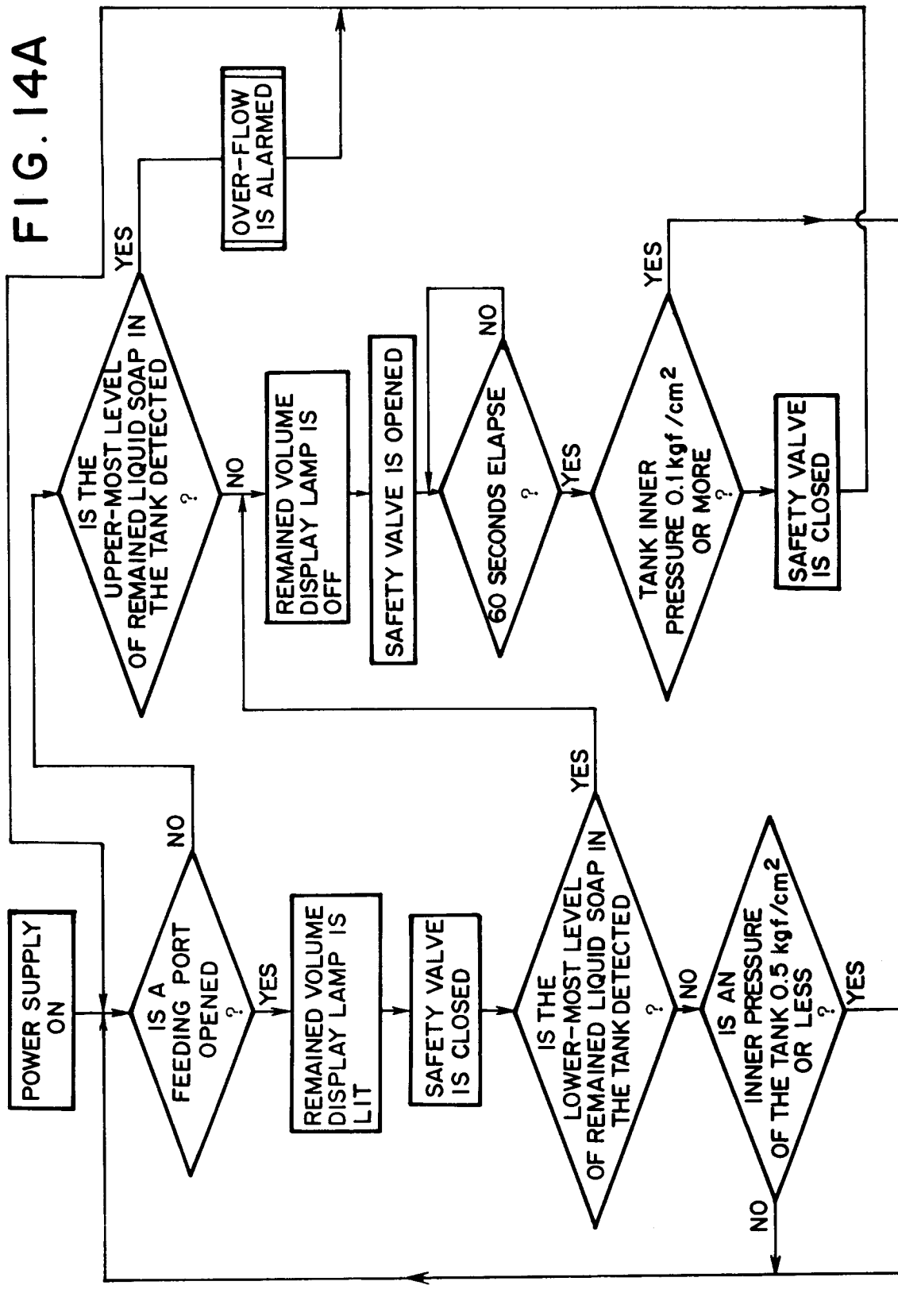


FIG. 13





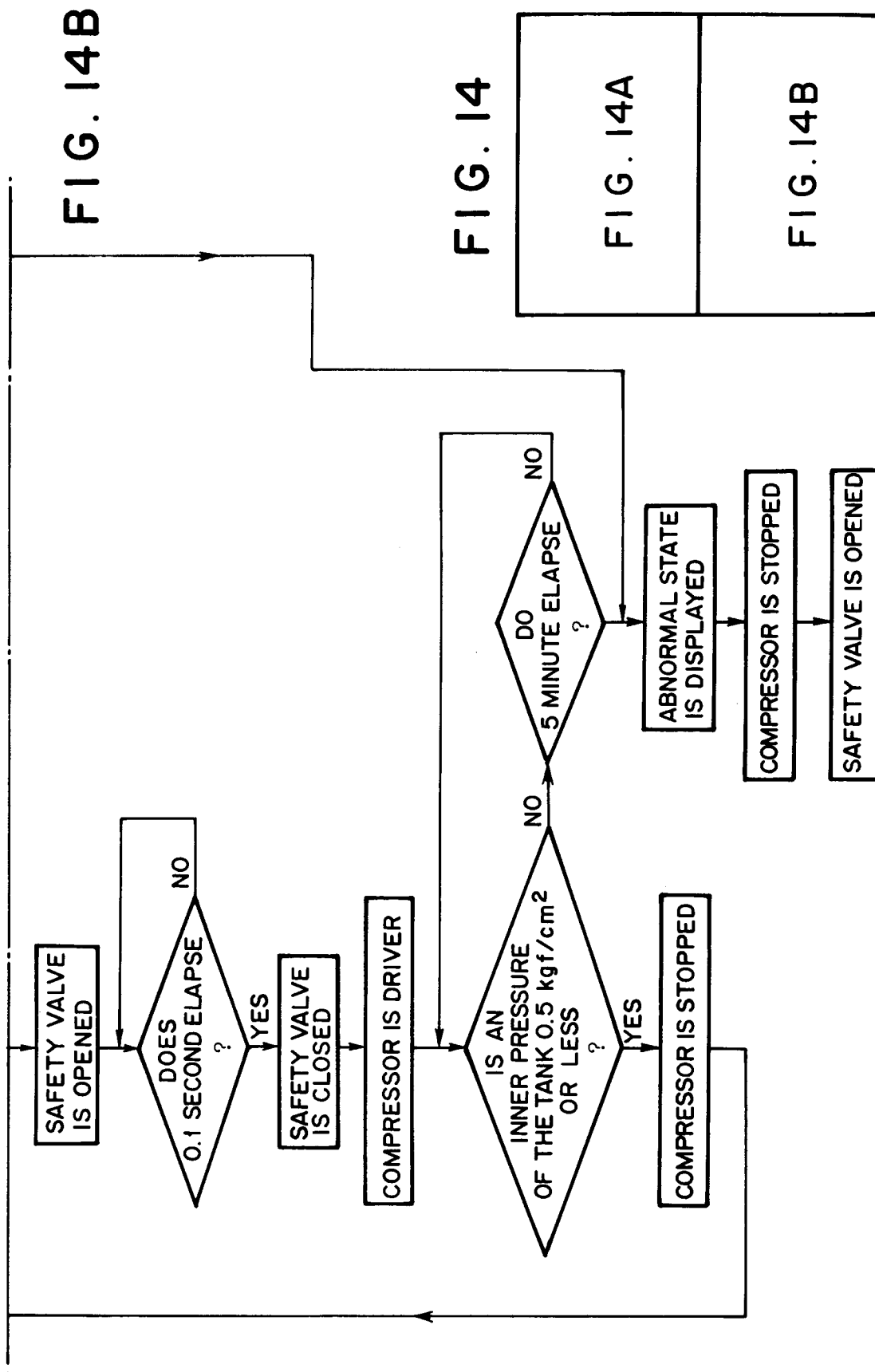


FIG. 15

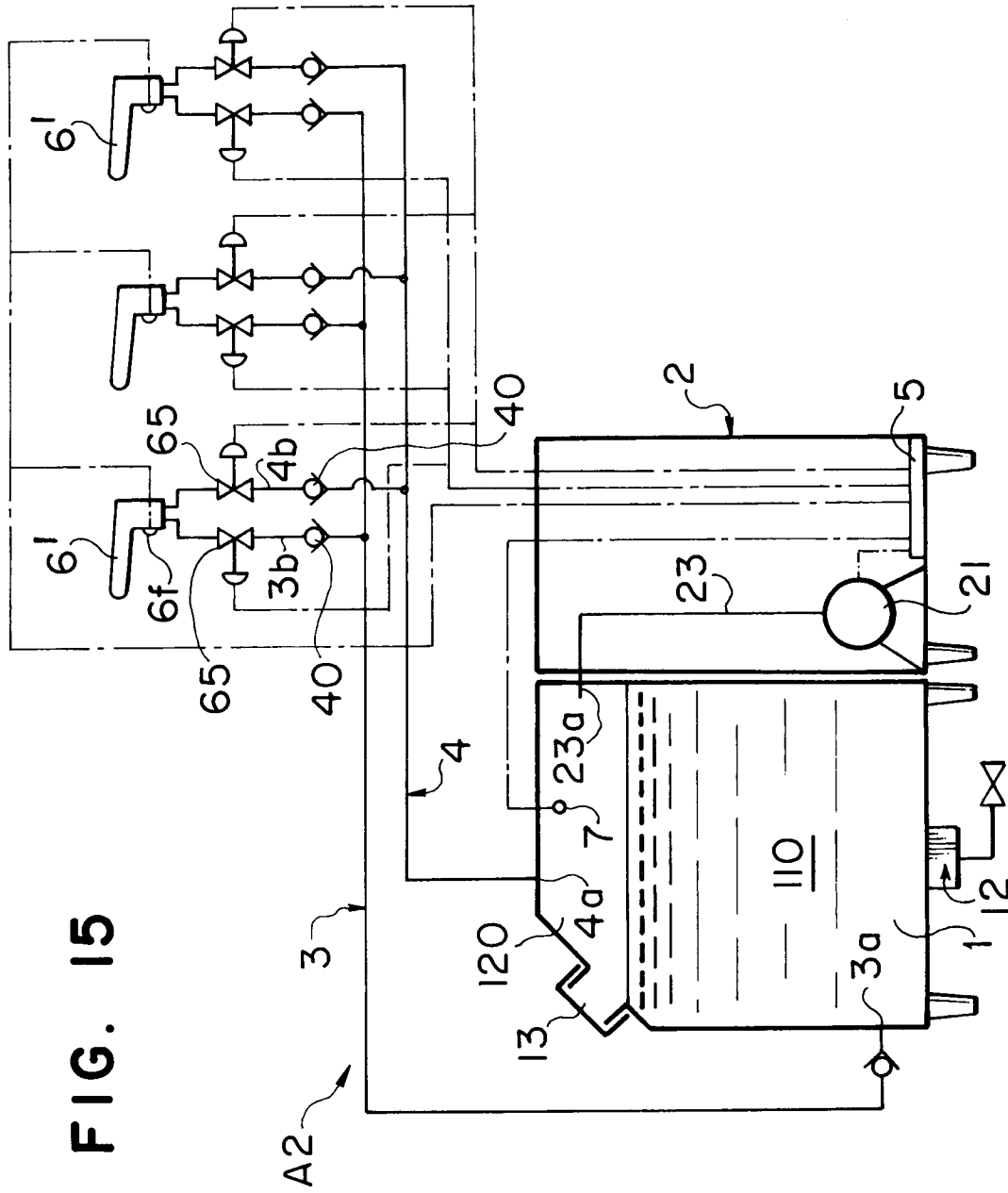


FIG. 16

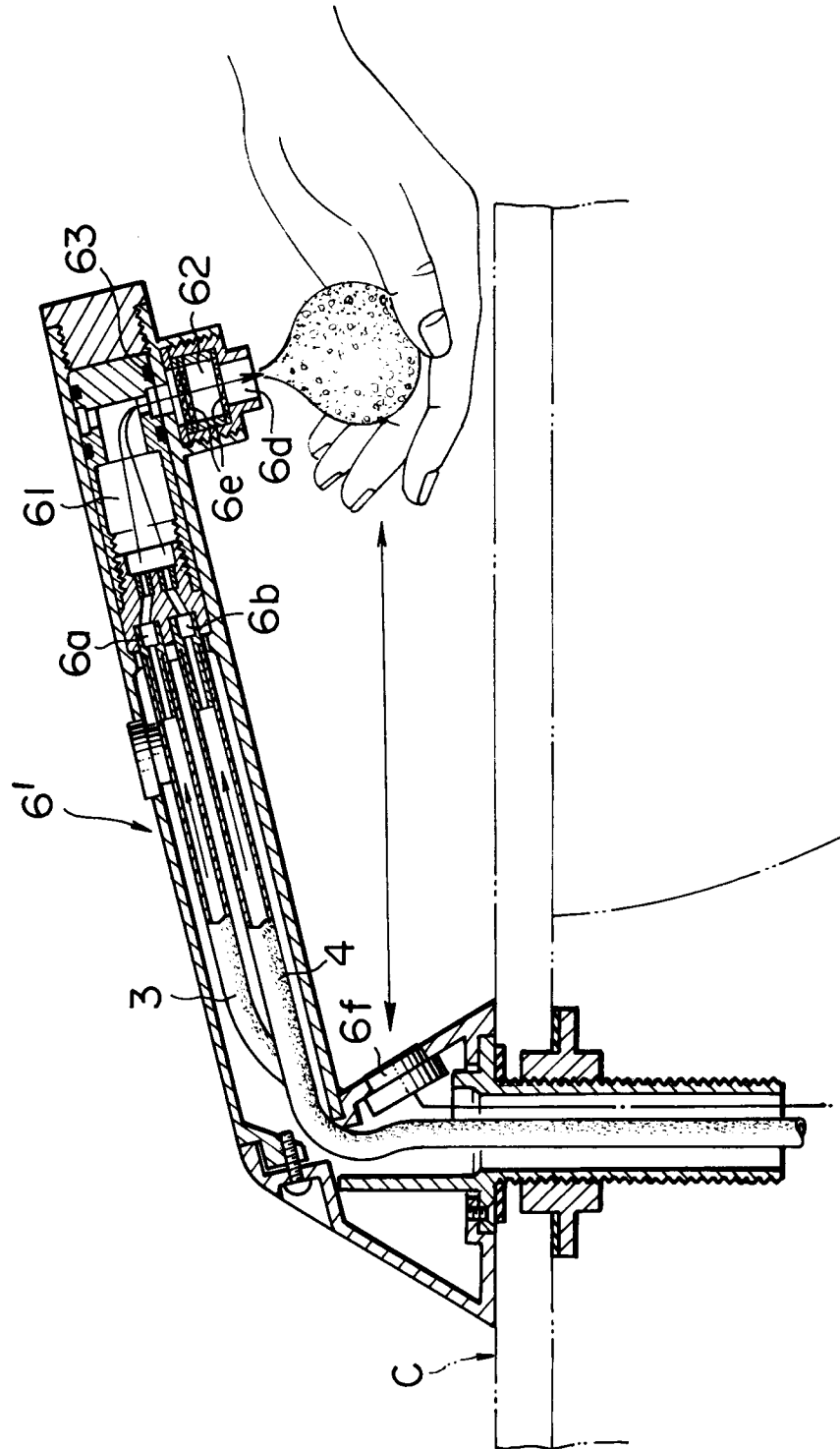


FIG. 17

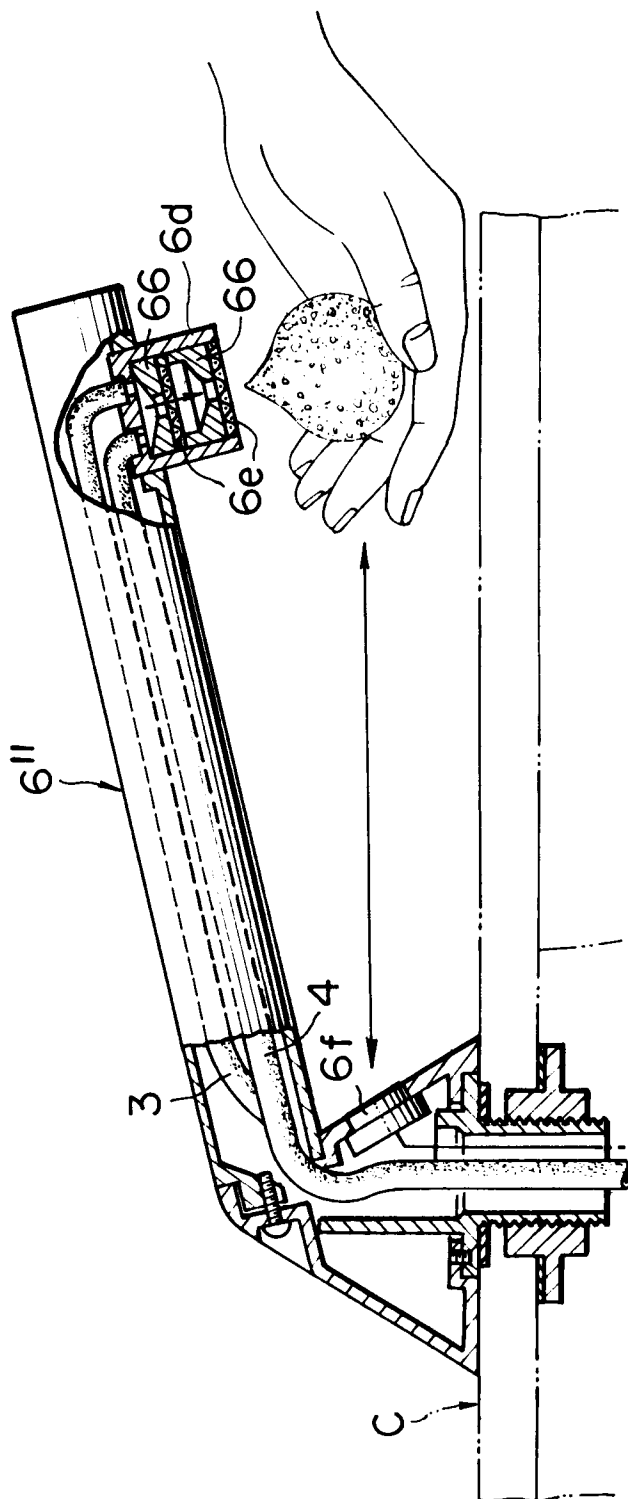


FIG. 18

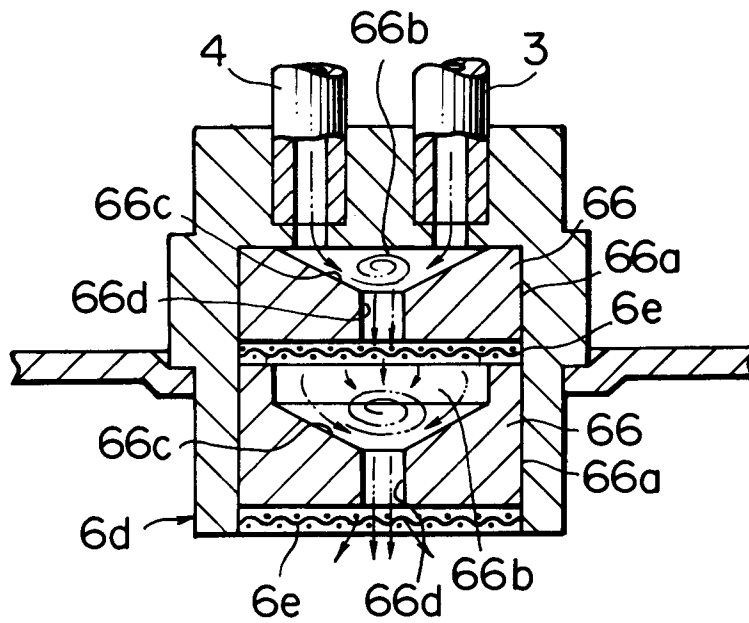


FIG. 19

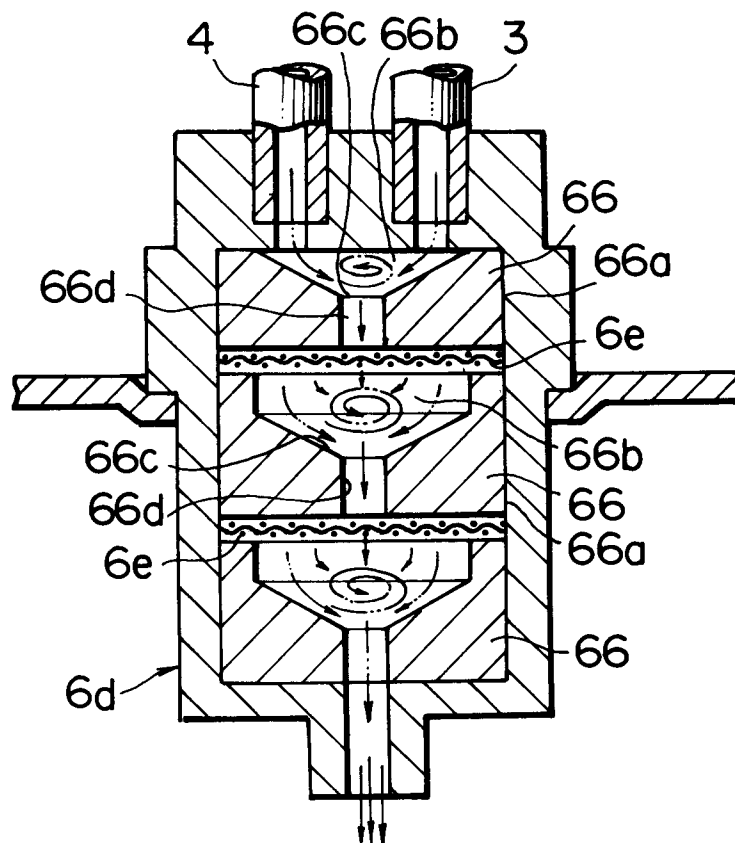


FIG. 20

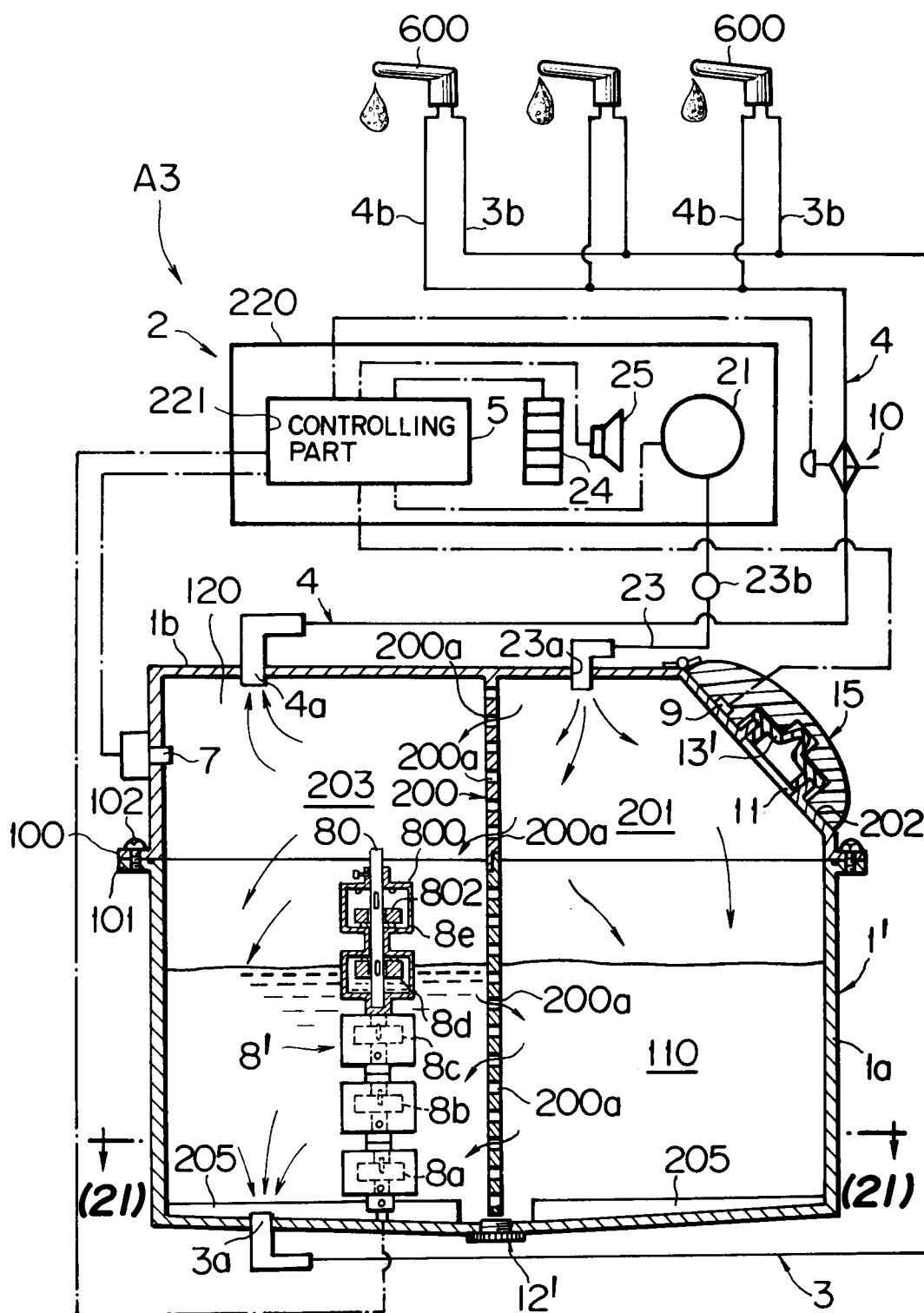


FIG. 21

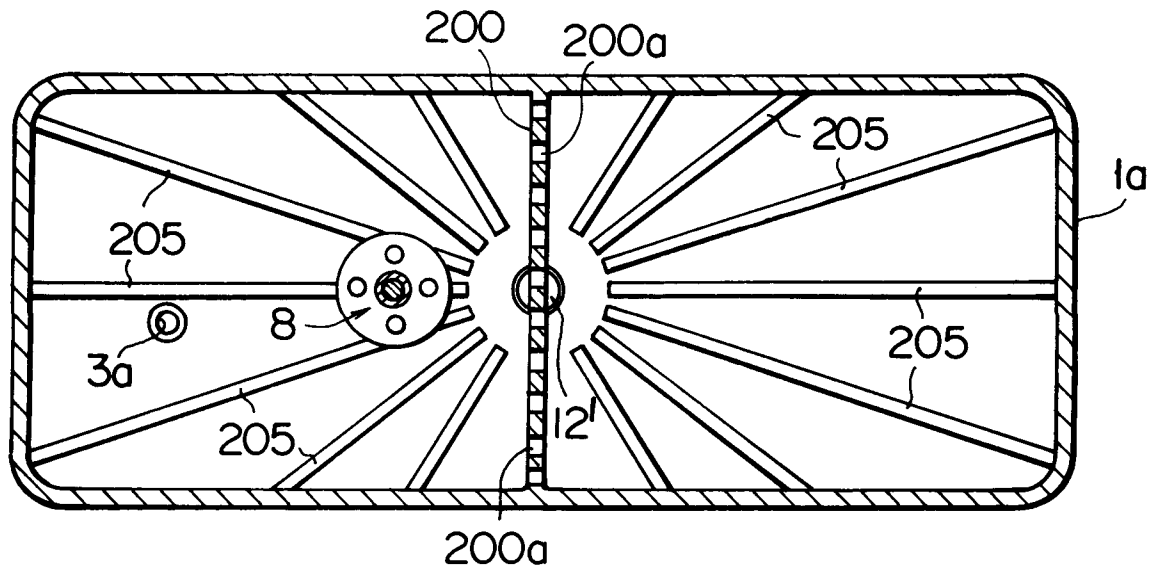


FIG. 23

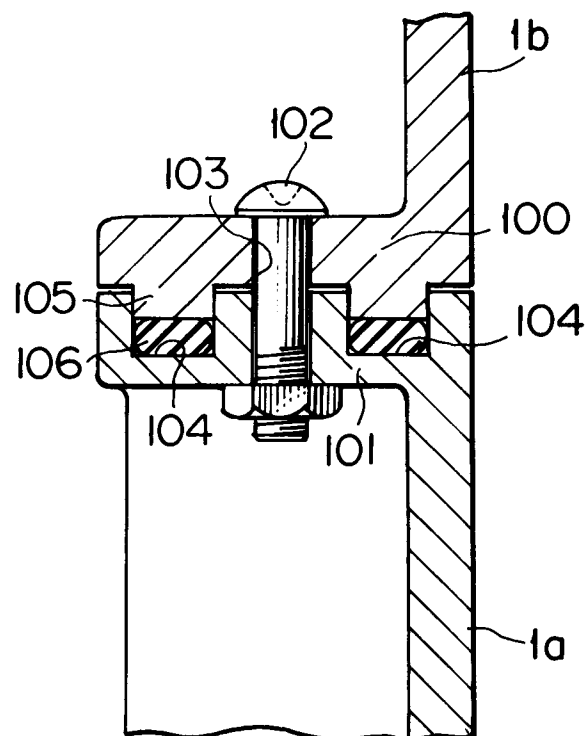


FIG. 22

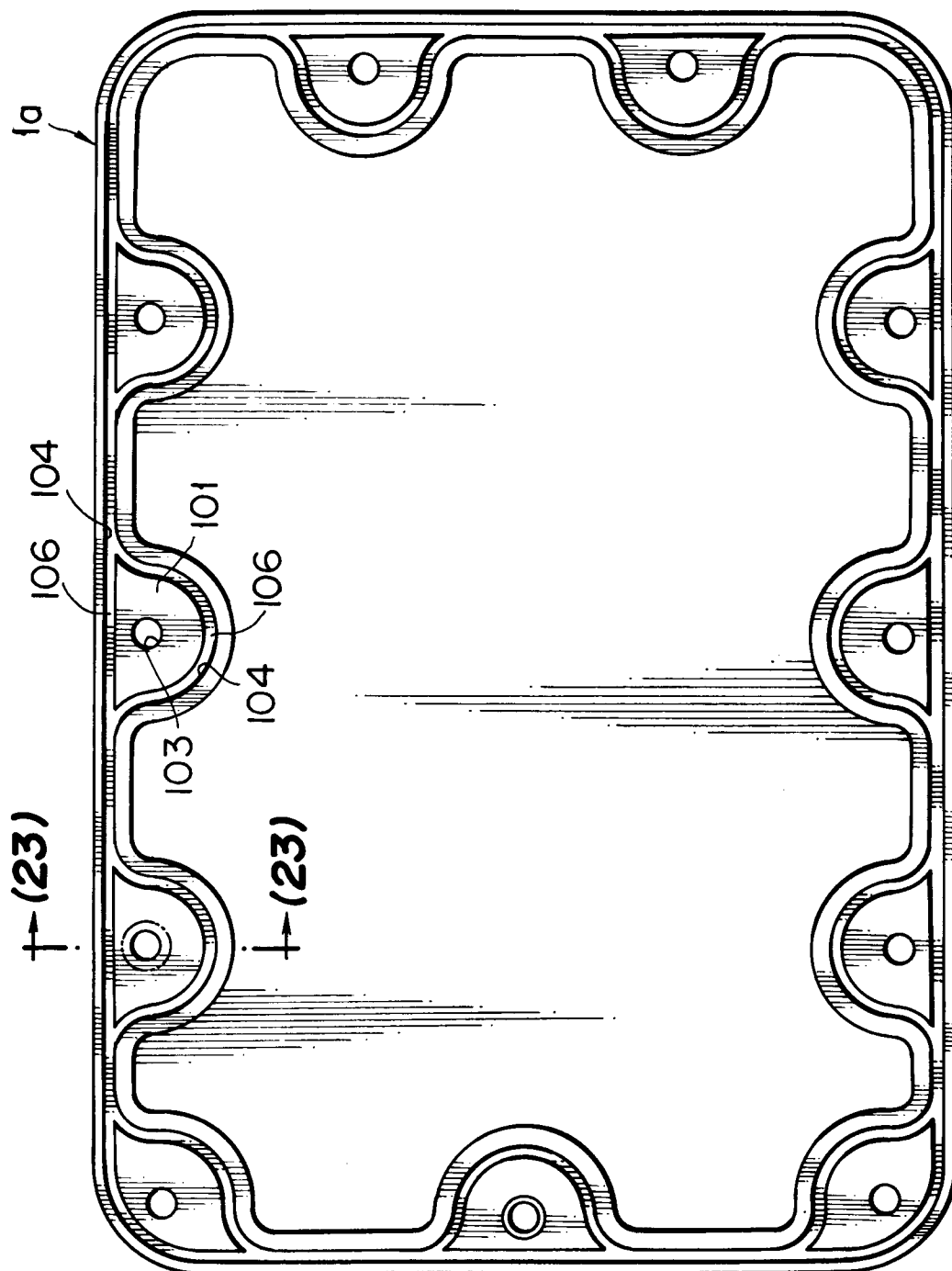


FIG. 24

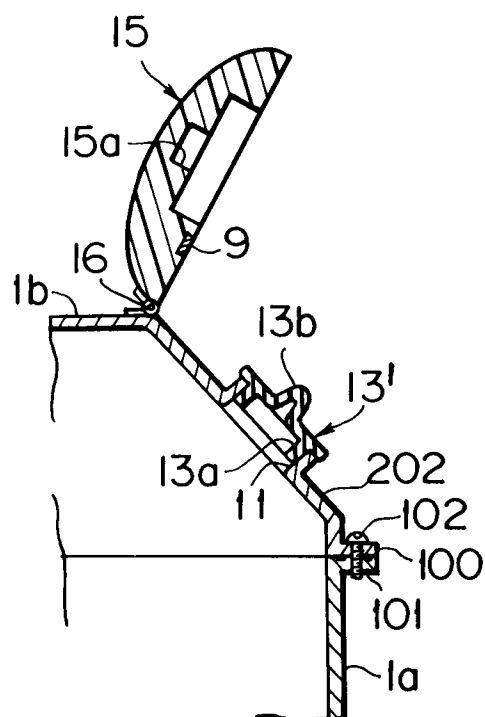


FIG. 25

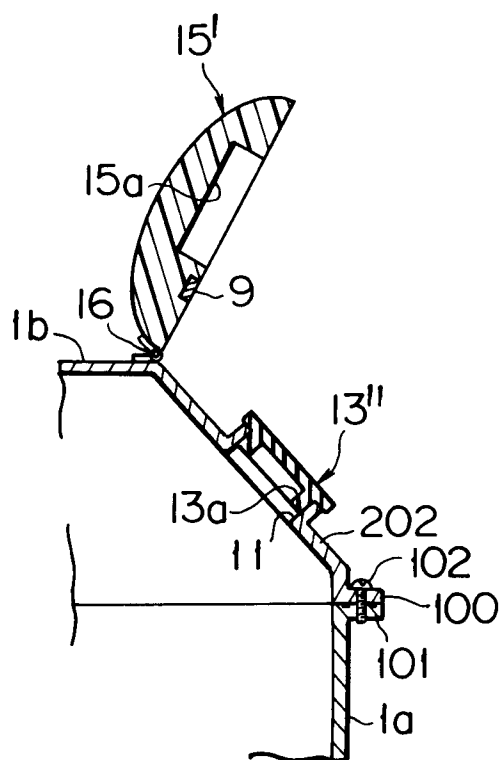
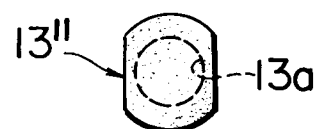


FIG. 26



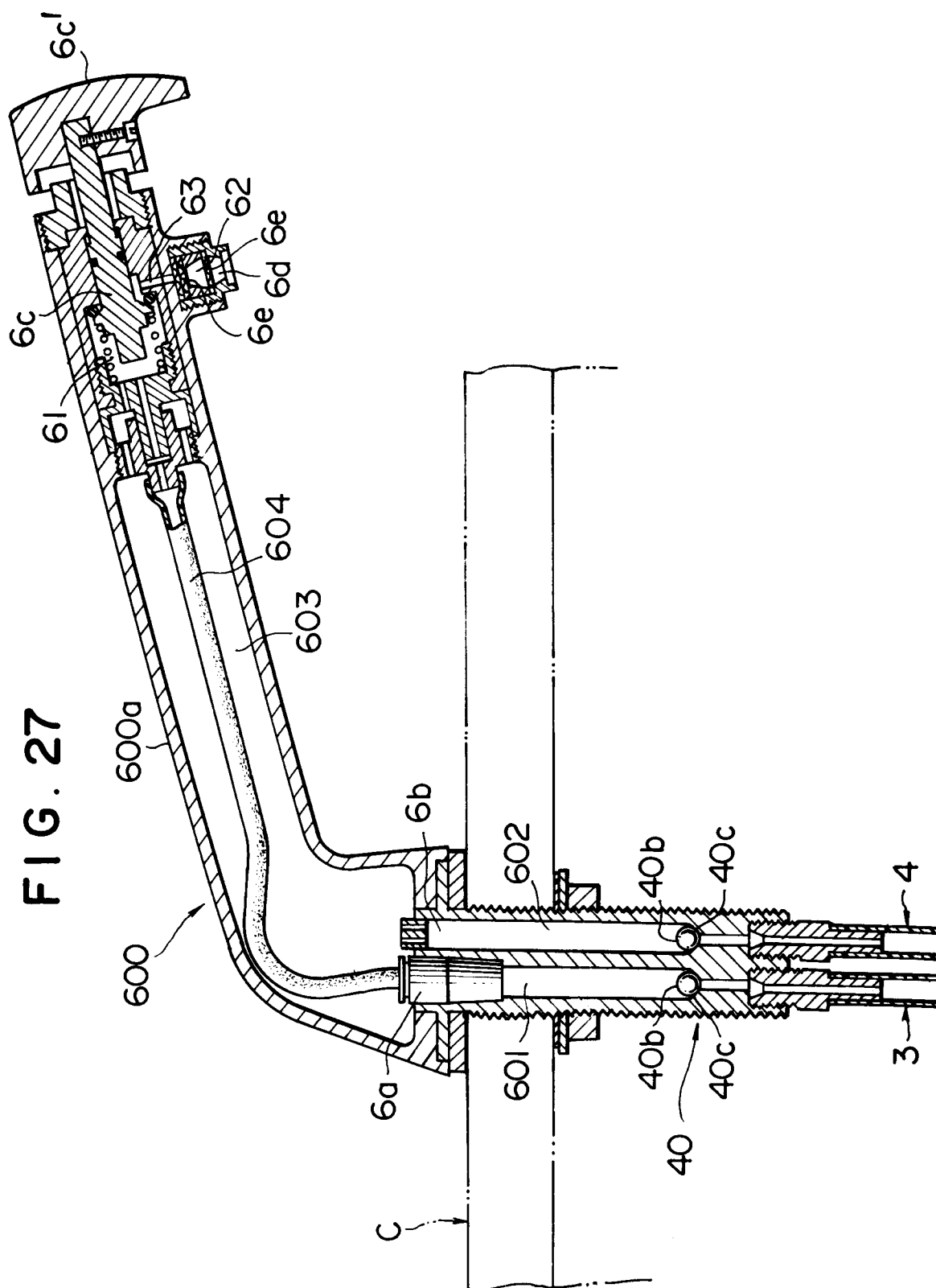


FIG. 28

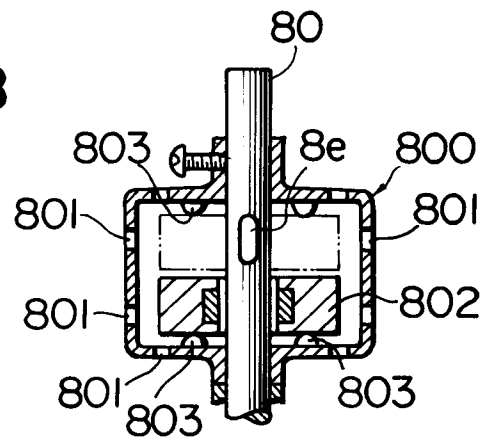


FIG. 30

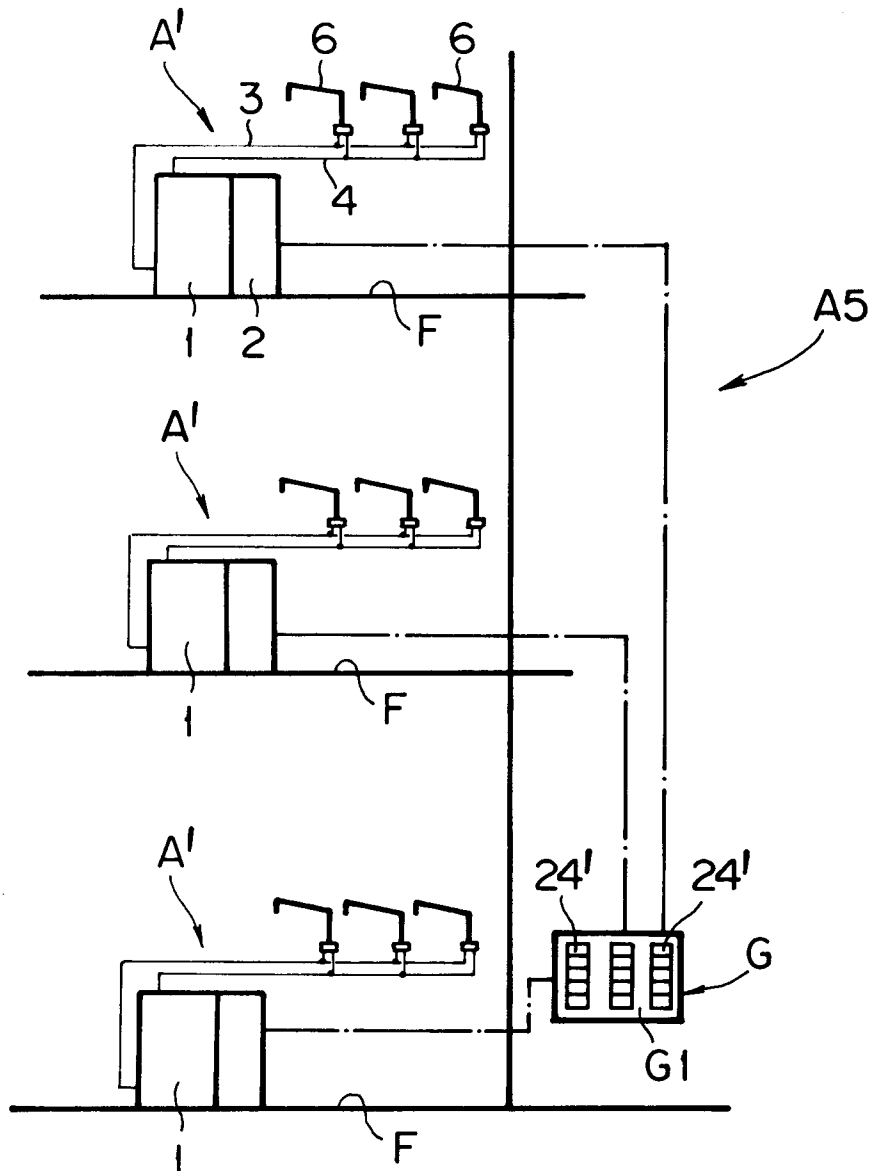


FIG. 29

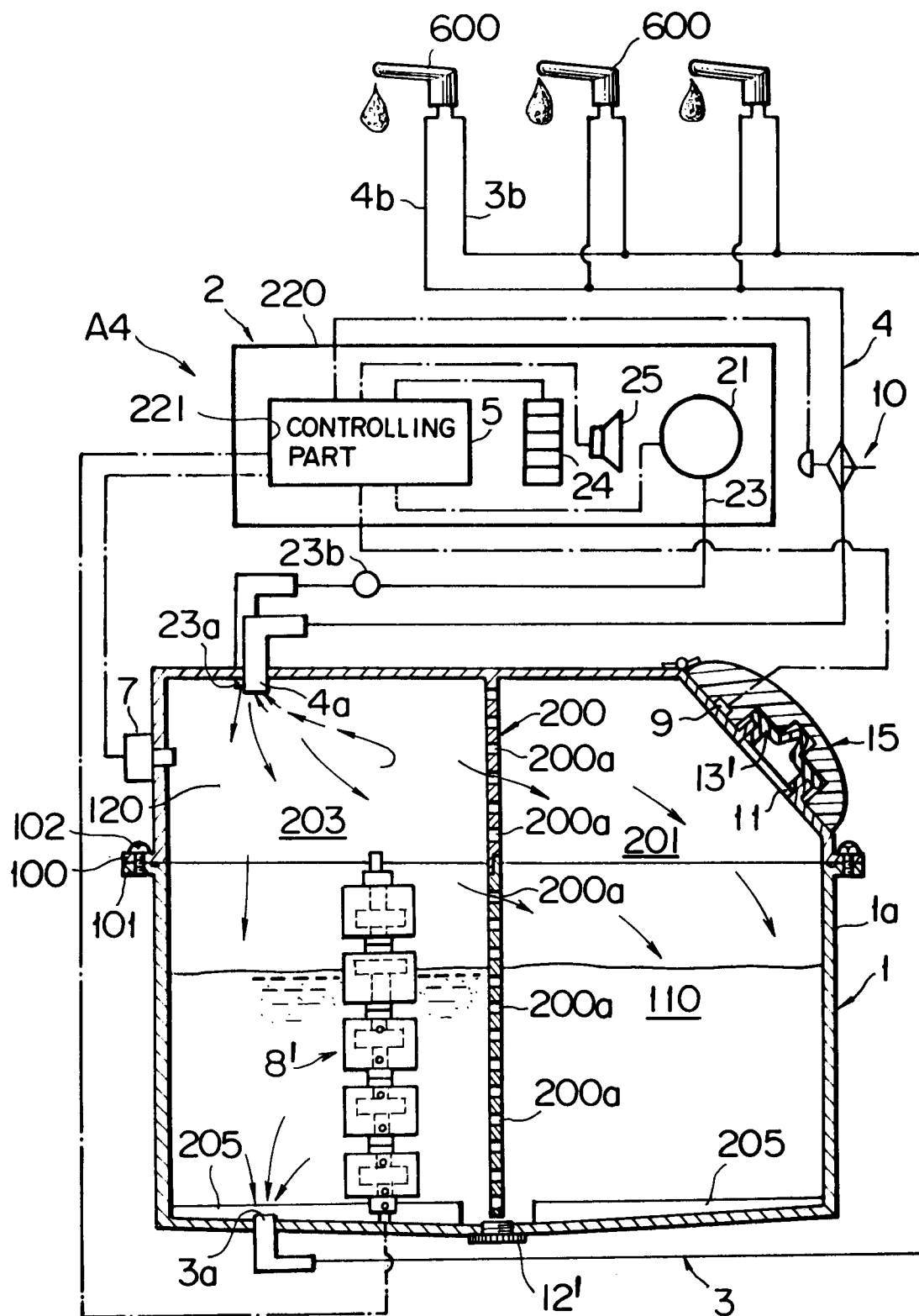


FIG. 31

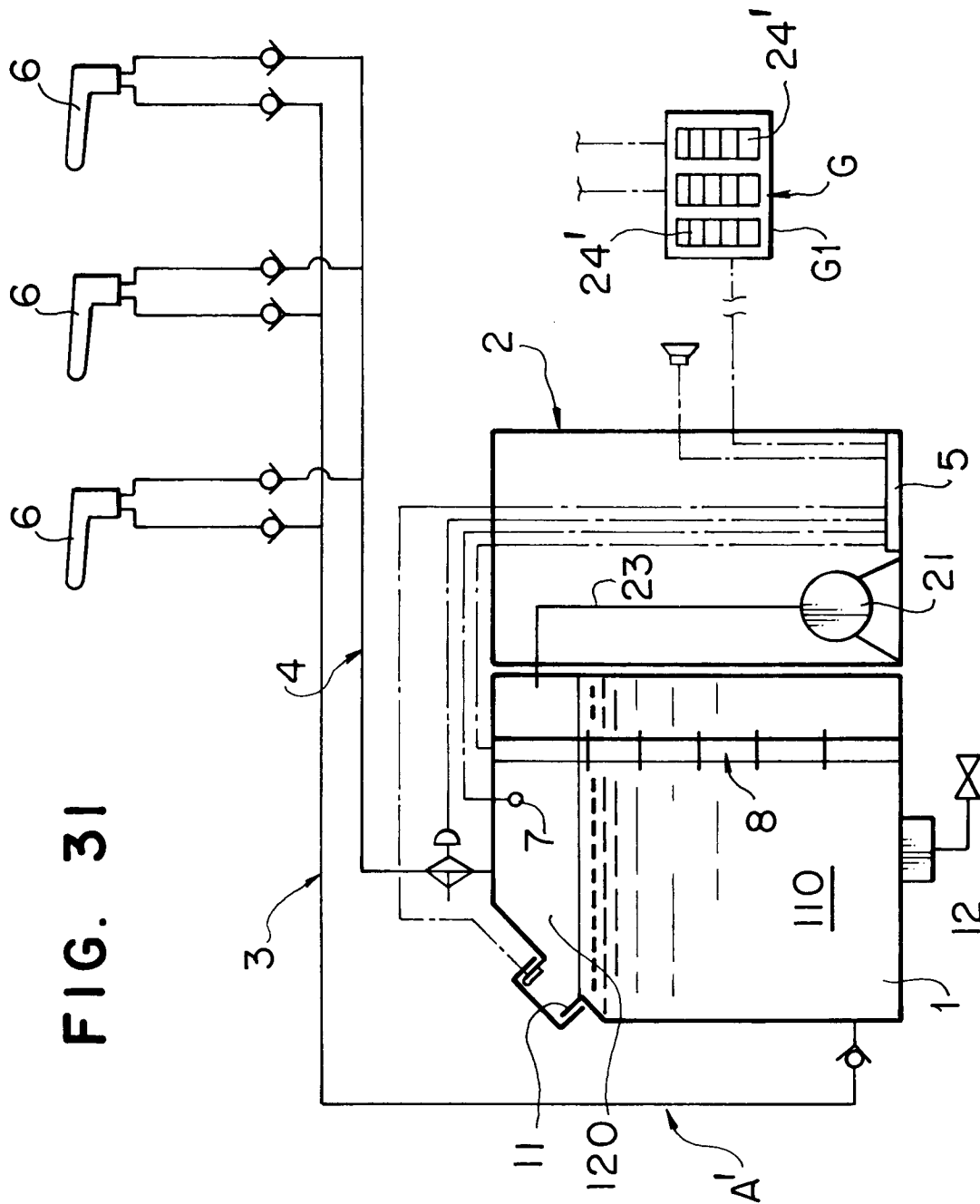


FIG. 32

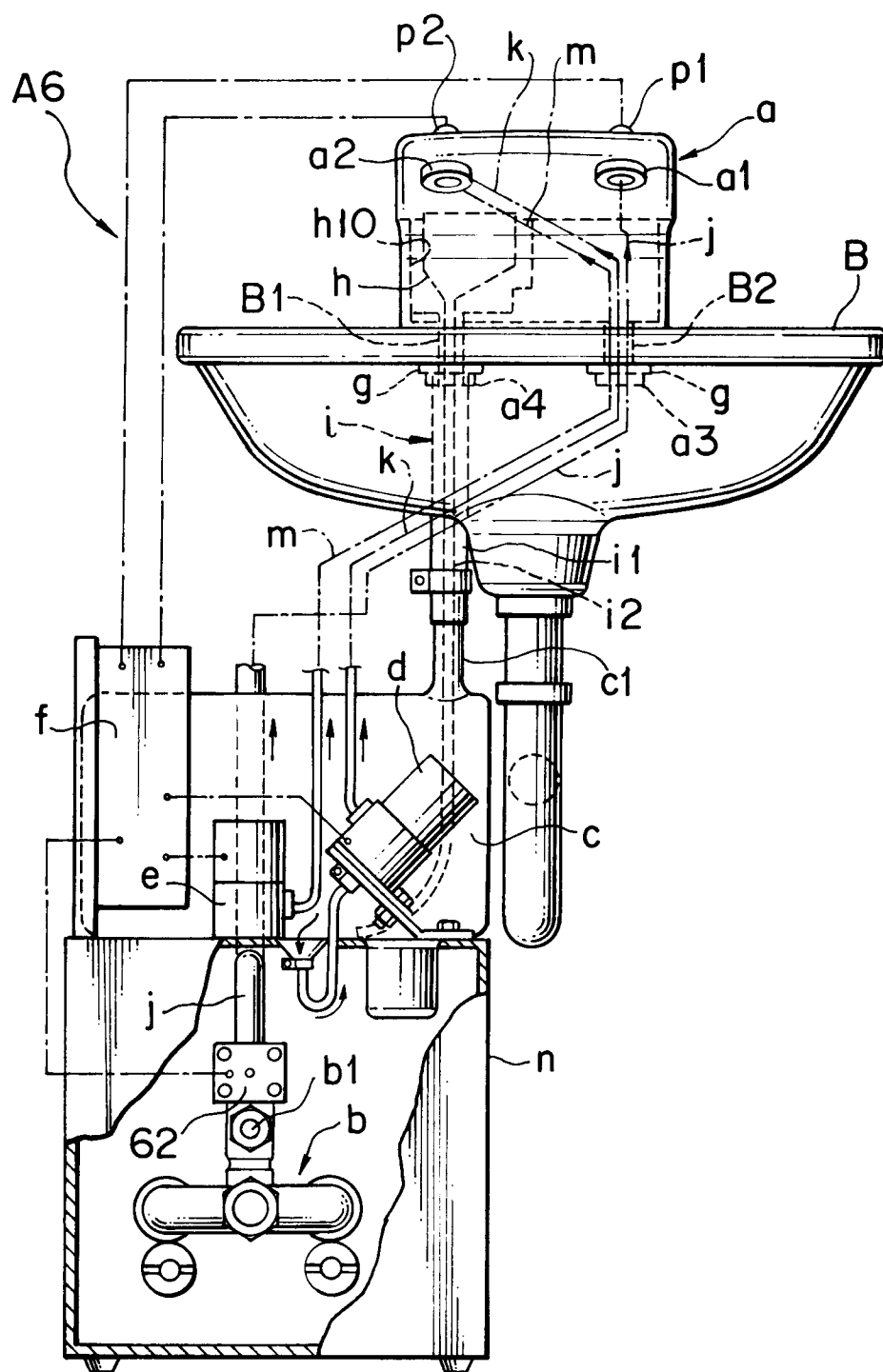


FIG. 33

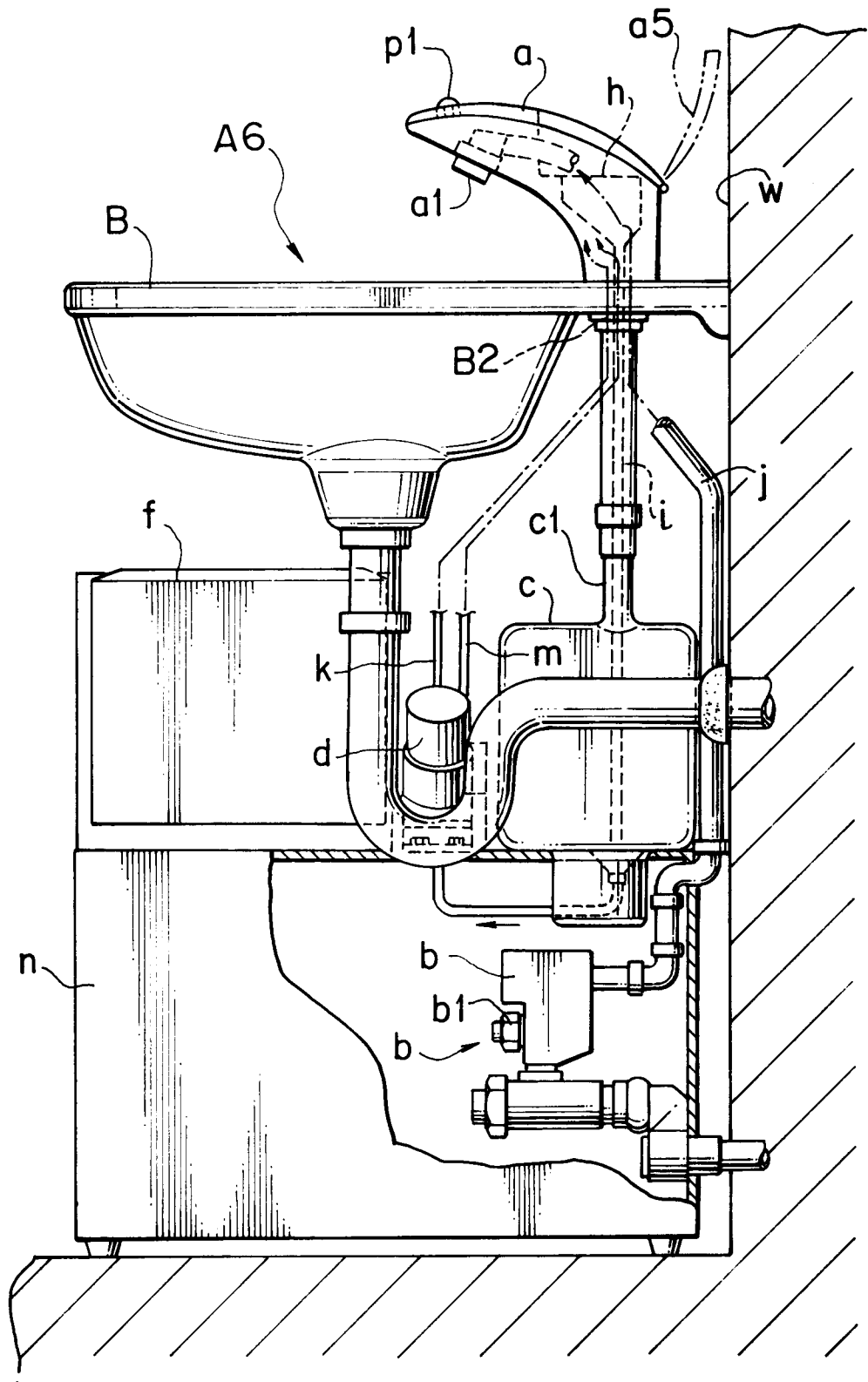


FIG. 34

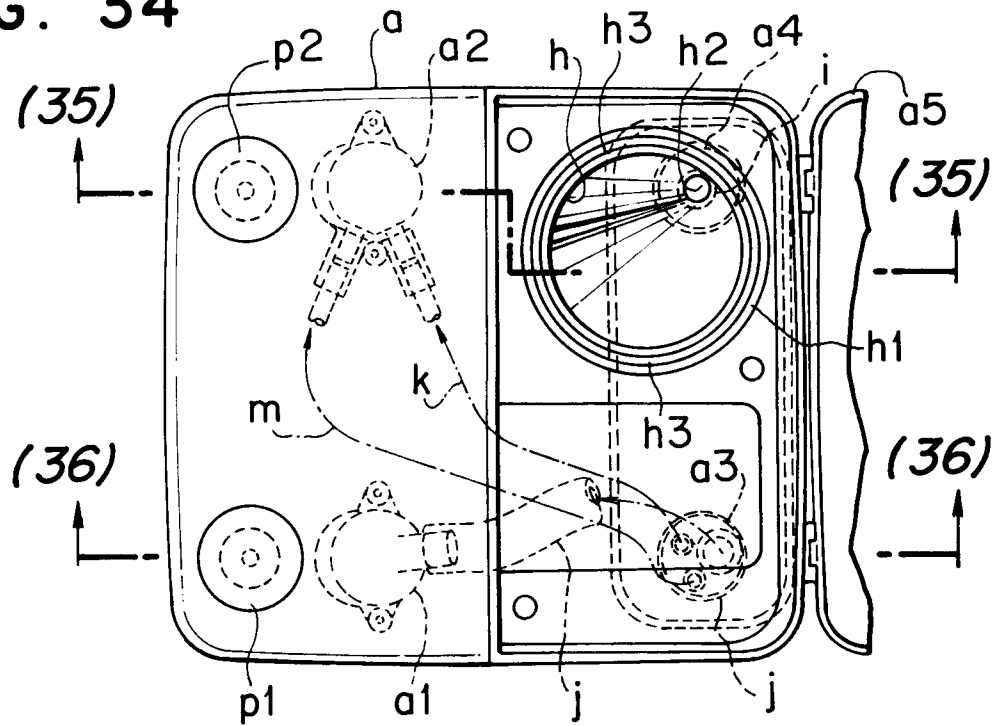


FIG. 37

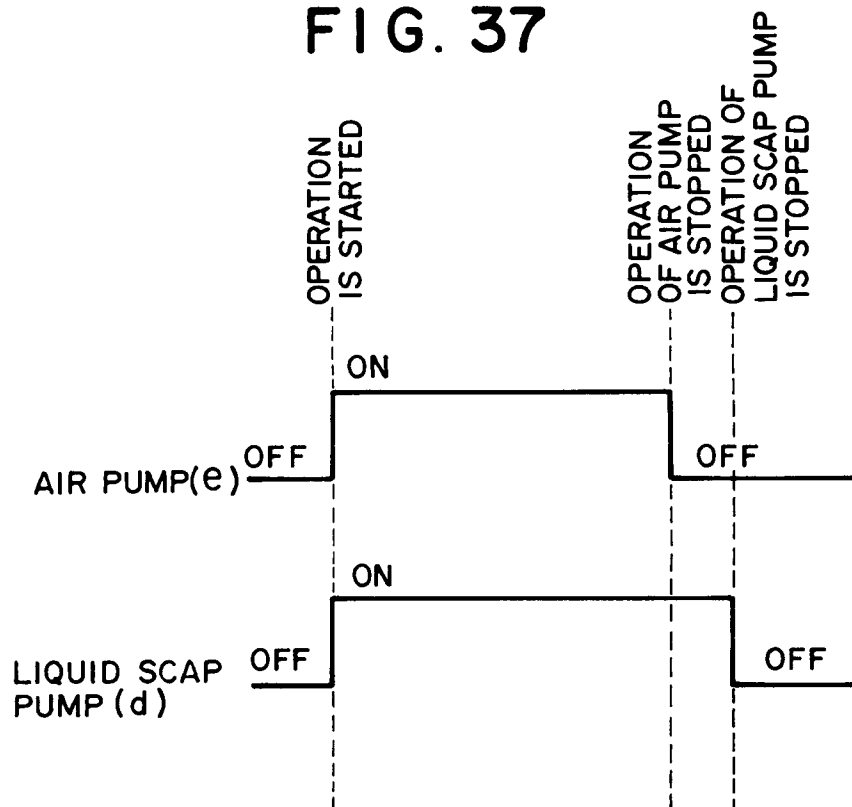


FIG. 35

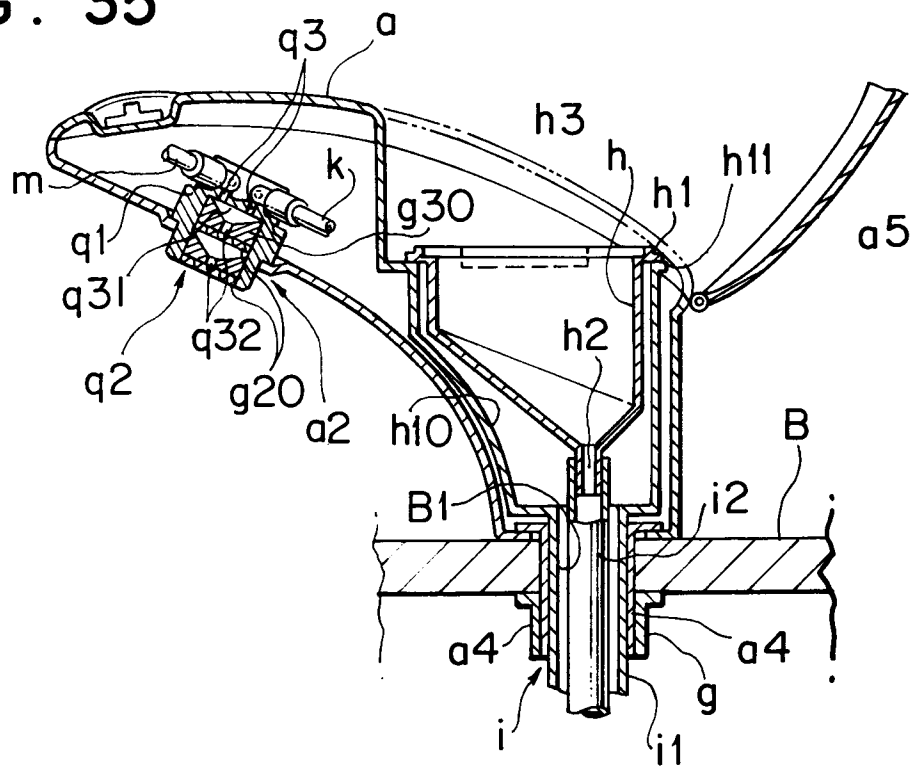
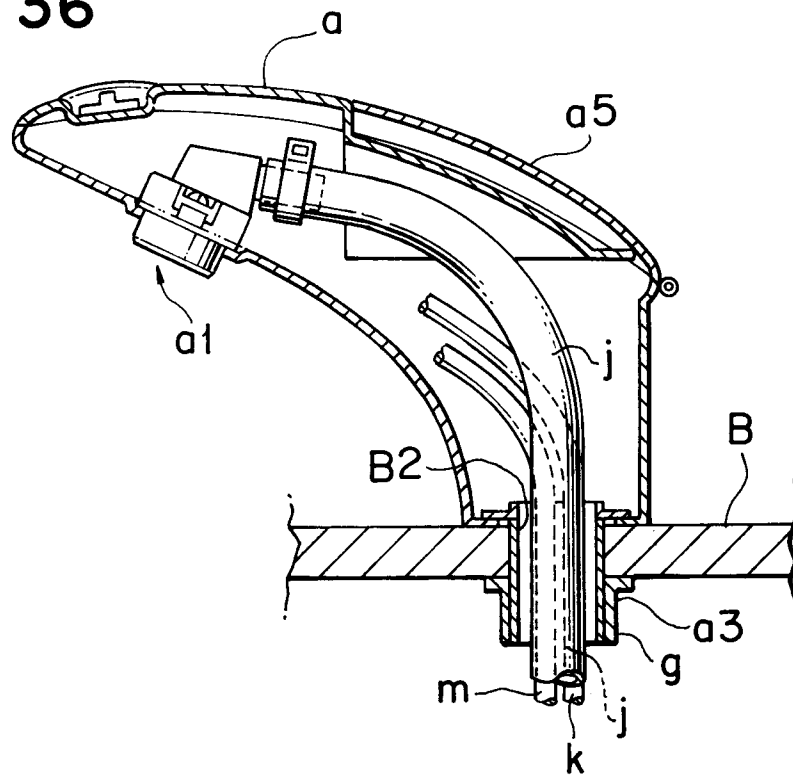


FIG. 36





European Patent
Office

EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number

EP 91 11 6483

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int. Cl.5)
X A	WO-A-8 807 895 (GREEN ET AL.) * page 1, line 1 - line 3 * * page 4, line 16 - page 6, line 8; claim 1; figures 2-4 * ---	1 2-7	A47K5/14
X	US-A-4 531 659 (WRIGHT) * column 2, line 60 - column 3, line 67; figures 1-3 * ---	1	
A	US-A-5 031 834 (SIMPSON) * column 6, line 9 - column 8, line 3; figures 2-4 * -----	1,2,7	
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int. Cl.5)
			A47K B05B
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 22 MAY 1992	Examiner BARBAS A.
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document			