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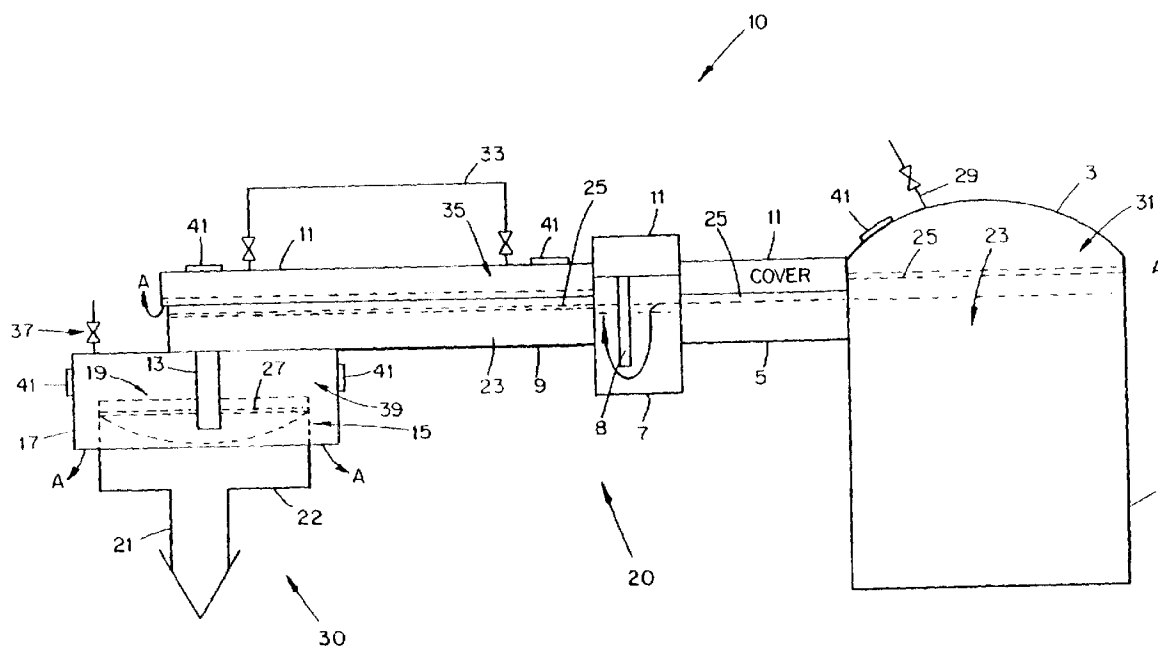
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(54) **Method and apparatus for reducing moisture and hydrogen pick up of hygroscopic molten salts during aluminum-lithium alloy ingot casting**

(57) A method and an apparatus for melting and casting aluminum-lithium alloy ingots enhance ingot quality by supplying an inert gas such as argon to ambient atmospheric air (31, 35) during melting and cast-

ing. Argon is supplied to one or more covers (3, 11, 17) of the furnace (1), pour trough (9) and casting station (30) to reduce moisture pick up by hygroscopic molten salt baths (25, 27) used during the melting and casting steps.



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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 96 10 1738

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Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.6)
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Y	* page 2, column 1, line 4 - line 9 * * page 3, column 3, line 50 - line 58 * * page 3, column 4, line 5 - line 10 * * page 3, column 4, line 15 - line 20 * * page 3, column 3, line 30 - line 32 * ---	10-13,15	
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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 26 June 1997	Examiner Peis, S
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 I : document cited for other reasons ----- & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document	

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