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(54) **Structural support**

(57) Method of pre-stressing two spaced components (2,10), such as a structural steel member (2) and a flat roof panel (10), wherein an expandable element (20'), preferably in the form of an inflatable tube of given length, is inserted in the space between the two components (2,10) and is expanded to generate a force acting between the two components (2,10), to pre-stress at least one of the components (2,10). Once the two components (2,10) have been pre-stressed, rigid spacing means (6) may be placed in at least part of the remainder of the space not occupied by the non-expanded element (20') and in engagement with both components (2,10). An inflatable tube (20) may be used as the expandable element (20') and may have its opposed ends (21) sealed in a fluid-tight manner by folding and clamping (22).

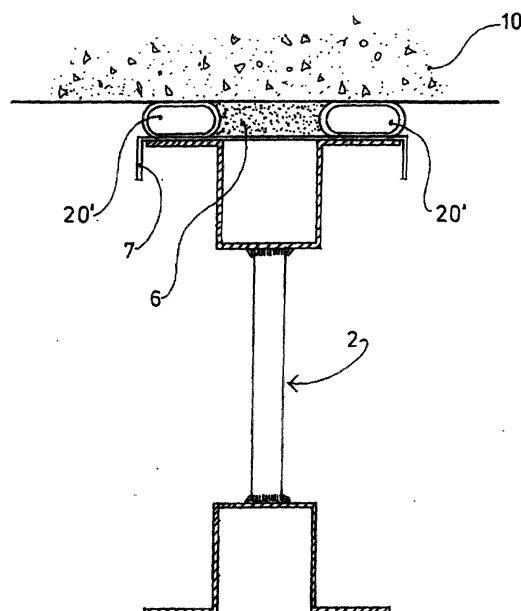


FIG. 6

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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 00 30 7351

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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search MUNICH		Date of completion of the search 13 September 2002	Examiner Vratsanou, V
<div>CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS</div> <div> 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 </div>			

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