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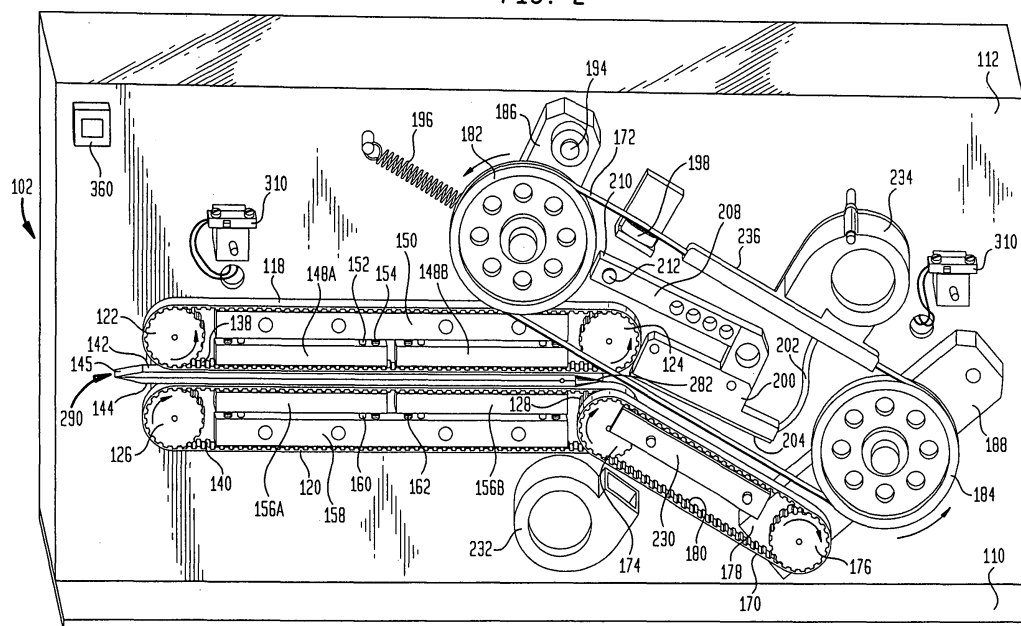
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(54) **Apparatus and method for forming inflated packaging cushions**

(57) An inflation apparatus (100) automatically inflates and seals a plurality of pockets (24) preformed in a film web (10) to form packaging cushions. As the film web is advanced, a stream of inflation gas is directed from an inflation port (282) into each of the pockets. The stream of inflation gas is directed in a flow direction hav-

ing a component in the direction of travel. A sealing mechanism is positioned as close as possible to the inflation port (282) so that the opening of each pocket is almost entirely closed and sealed while the stream of inflation gas is directed into the pocket. As a result, it is possible to achieve more fully inflated packaging cushions on a consistent basis.

FIG. 2



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CLAIMS INCURRING FEES

The present European patent application comprised at the time of filing more than ten claims.

- ☐ Only part of the claims have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for the first ten claims and for those claims for which claims fees have been paid, namely claim(s):
- ☐ No claims fees have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for the first ten claims.

LACK OF UNITY OF INVENTION

The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention and relates to several inventions or groups of inventions, namely:

see sheet B

- ☐ All further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for all claims.
- ☐ As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, the Search Division did not invite payment of any additional fee.
- ☐ Only part of the further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the inventions in respect of which search fees have been paid, namely claims:
- ☒ None of the further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the invention first mentioned in the claims, namely claims:

1-4, 6-13, 19-29



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**LACK OF UNITY OF INVENTION
SHEET B**

Application Number
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The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention and relates to several inventions or groups of inventions, namely:

1. claims: 1-4,6-13,19-29

flow direction of inflation gas stream having a component in
the direction of travel of a film web

2. claims: 5,14-18

portion of outlet port being positioned between the nip of
opposed sealing rollers and an imaginary vertical line
tangential to one of the rollers

**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO.**

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This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report.
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11-07-2006

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