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(54) **Collapsible clothing hanger**

(57) A hanger for clothing item is disclosed as including a central body part (12), two locking members (20), and two arms (16) in which the arms (16) are swivellably movable relative to the body part (12) between a lower position and an upper position, and the locking members

(20) are movable between a first position in which movement of the arms (16) from the upper position to the lower position is prevented, and a second position in which movement of the arms (16) from the upper position to the lower position is allowed.

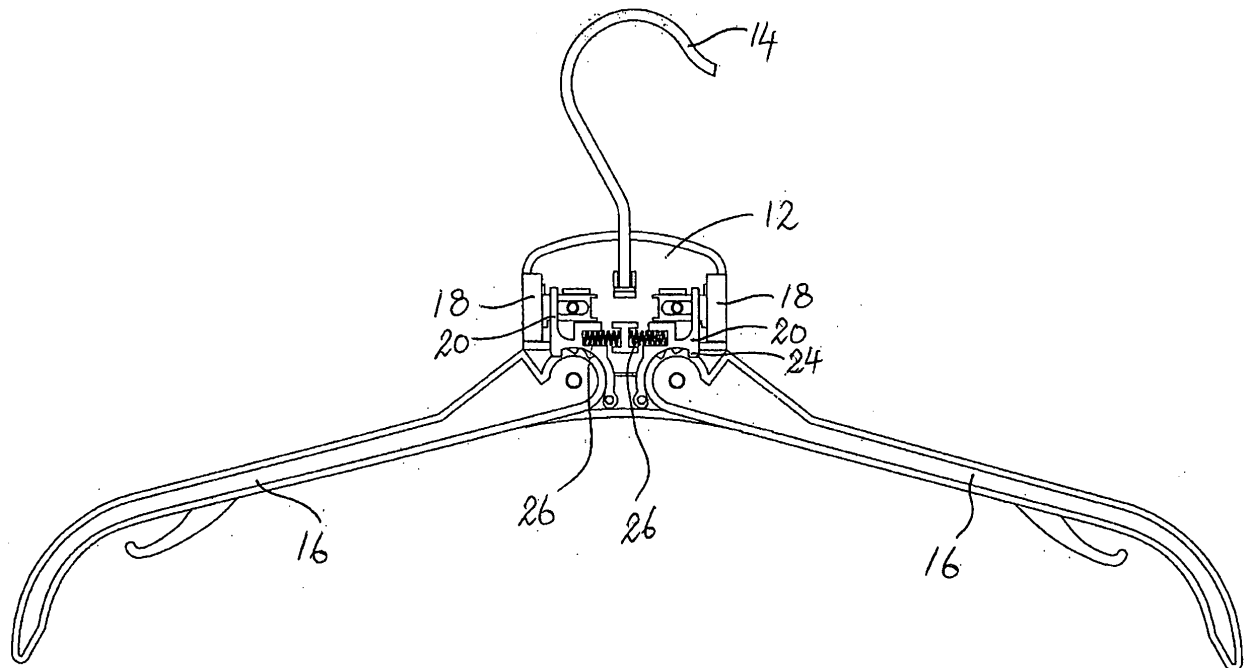


Fig. 6

EP 1 806 078 A1

Description

[0001] This invention relates to a hanger, and in particular such a hanger with movable arms.

Background of the Invention

[0002] Hangers for clothing items have been available for a long time. Such hangers generally include a central body part with two arms extending leftward and rightward, and a hook extending generally upward. However, given the relatively long distance between the extremities of the arms of the hangers, more space is required to store or accommodate such hangers, e.g. in a suitcase. It is thus an objective of the present invention to provide a hanger in which such a shortcoming is mitigated or to provide at least a useful alternative to the trade and public.

Summary of the Invention

[0003] According to the present invention, there is provided a hanger including a body member, at least one locking member, and two arm members wherein at least one said arm member is swivelably movable relative to said body member between a lower position and an upper position, wherein said at least one locking member is movable between a first position in which movement of said at least one arm member from said upper position to said lower position is prevented, and a second position in which movement of said at least one arm member from said upper position to said lower position is allowed.

Brief Description of the Drawings

[0004] A preferred embodiment of the present invention will now be described, by way of example only, with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

Fig. 1 is a front view of a hanger for clothing items according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

Fig. 2 is a rear view of the hanger of Fig. 1;

Fig. 3 is a front view of the hanger of Fig. 1 with the buttons in an inwardly pressed position;

Fig. 4 is a front view of the hanger of Fig. 1 with the arms in an intermediate position;

Fig. 5 is a front view of the hanger of Fig. 1 with the arms in a lowermost position;

Fig. 6 is a front view of the hanger of Fig. 1 with the interior structure and mechanism of the central body part exposed;

Fig. 7 is a further exposed front view of the hanger of Fig. 6 with the buttons in an inwardly pressed position;

Fig. 8 is a yet further exposed front view of the hanger of Fig. 6 with the buttons in an inwardly pressed position and the arms in an intermediate position;

Fig. 9 shows the hanger of Fig. 8 with the buttons in an outer un-pressed position; and

Fig. 10 shows the hanger of Fig. 6 with the arms in the lowermost position.

Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiment

[0005] A hanger according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention is shown in Figs. 1 and 2, and generally designated as 10. The hanger includes a central body part 12 from an upper end of which a hook 14 extends. Two arms 16 extend sideward from the body part 12, and a manually operable button 18 is engaged with each side of the body part 12.

[0006] As shown in Fig. 3, the buttons 18 may be pressed from the outer position as shown in Figs. 1 and 2 to the inner position as shown in Fig. 3 by an inwardly directing force F. When the buttons 18 are in the inwardly pressed position as shown in Fig. 3, the arms 16 may move, e.g. under gravity or be moved by a user, from the uppermost position as shown in Fig. 1, which may be referred to as the "in-use configuration", to and remain in the intermediate position as shown in Fig. 4, and further to and remain in the lowermost position as shown in Fig. 5, which may be referred to as the "storage configuration".

[0007] Turning now to Figs. 6 and 7, it can be seen that each of the button 18 is operatively associated with a respective resiliently deformable locking member 20, which is in turn operatively associated with a respective ratchet wheel portion 22 at an inner end of the arm 16. It can be seen from Fig. 6 that, when the buttons 18 are at the outer position, a respective lower free end 24 of the locking member 20 is engaged with the respective ratchet wheel portion 22 of the arm 16, thus preventing movement of the respective arm 16 relative to the body part 12 from the uppermost position to the intermediate position or subsequently to the lowermost position.

[0008] When the buttons 18 are inwardly pressed, against the biasing force of springs 26 in the central body part 12, to the inner position as shown in Fig. 7, the locking member 20 is deformed such that the lower free end 24 of the locking member 20 is raised and thus out of engagement with the respective ratchet wheel portion 22 of the arm 16, thus allowing the arms 16 to move, e.g. under gravity, or be moved by a user, from the uppermost position as shown in Figs. 6 and 7, to and remain in the intermediate position as shown in Figs. 8 and 9, and further to and remain in the lowermost position as shown in Fig. 10.

[0009] It can be seen in Figs. 9 and 10 that, when the arms 16 are in the intermediate position or the lowermost position, and when the buttons 18 are in the normal stable outer position, the arms 16 will remain in that position. It should also be noted that, because of the shape of the lower end 24 of the locking member 20 and that of the teeth on the ratchet wheel portions 22 of the arms 16, the arms 16 may also be moved upwardly (in the direction

indicated by the arrows A) from the lowermost position as shown in Fig. 10 to and remain in the intermediate position as shown in Fig. 9, and further to and remain in the uppermost position as shown in Fig. 6.

[0010] It can thus be seen that the present invention provides an uncomplicated yet effective mechanism for allowing the arms 16 of the hanger 10 to move between the in-use configuration and the storage position. In particular, when the hanger 10 is held at an upright position, pressing the buttons 18 inwardly will allow the arms 16 to fall from the uppermost position to the lowermost position under gravity. On the other hand, without pressing the buttons 18, the arms 16 may be brought by a user from the lowermost position to the uppermost position.

[0011] It should be understood that the above only illustrates an example whereby the present invention may be carried out, and that various modifications and/or alterations may be made thereto without departing from the spirit of the invention.

[0012] It should also be understood that certain features of the invention, which are, for clarity, described in the context of separate embodiments, may be provided in combination in a single embodiment. Conversely, various features of the invention which are, for brevity, described in the context of a single embodiment, may also be provided separately or in any appropriate sub-combinations.

Claims

1. A hanger including a body member, at least one locking member, and two arm members wherein at least one said arm member is swivellably movable relative to said body member between a lower position and an upper position, wherein said at least one locking member is movable between a first position in which movement of said at least one arm member from said upper position to said lower position is prevented, and a second position in which movement of said at least one arm member from said upper position to said lower position is allowed.
2. A hanger according to Claim 1 wherein said locking member is operatively associated with a manually operable switch member.
3. A hanger according to Claim 1 wherein said locking member includes a locking portion which is in engagement with an engagement portion of said at least one arm member when said locking member is in said first position.
4. A hanger according to Claim 3 wherein said locking portion is out of engagement with said engagement portion of said at least one arm member when said locking member is in said second position.
5. A hanger according to Claim 3 wherein said engagement portion of said at least one arm member comprises a ratchet wheel.
6. A hanger according to Claim 1 wherein said locking member is resiliently deformable.
7. A hanger according to Claim 1 wherein when said locking member is in said first position, movement of said at least one arm member from said lower position to said upper position is allowed.
8. A hanger according to Claim 1 wherein said locking member is biased towards said first position.
9. A hanger according to Claim 8 wherein said locking member is biased towards said first position by a spring member.
10. A hanger according to Claim 1 wherein both said arm members are swivellably movable relative to said body member, each respectively between a lower position and an upper position, wherein each said arm member is operatively associated with a respective locking member which is movable between a first position in which movement of said respective arm member from said upper position to said lower position is prevented, and a second position in which movement of said respective arm member from said upper position to said lower position is allowed.
11. A hanger according to Claim 10 wherein each said locking member is operatively associated with a respective manually operable switch member.

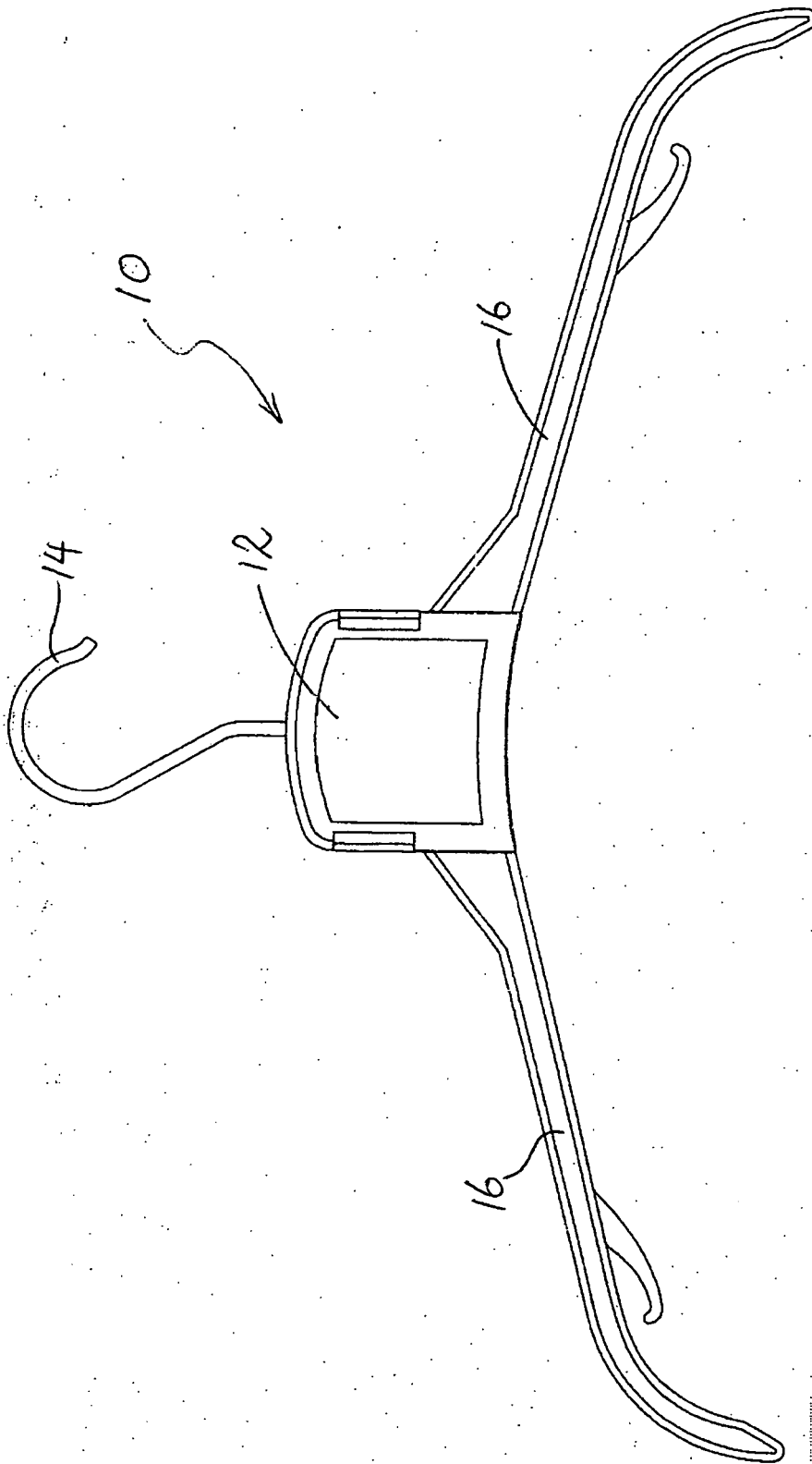


Fig. 1

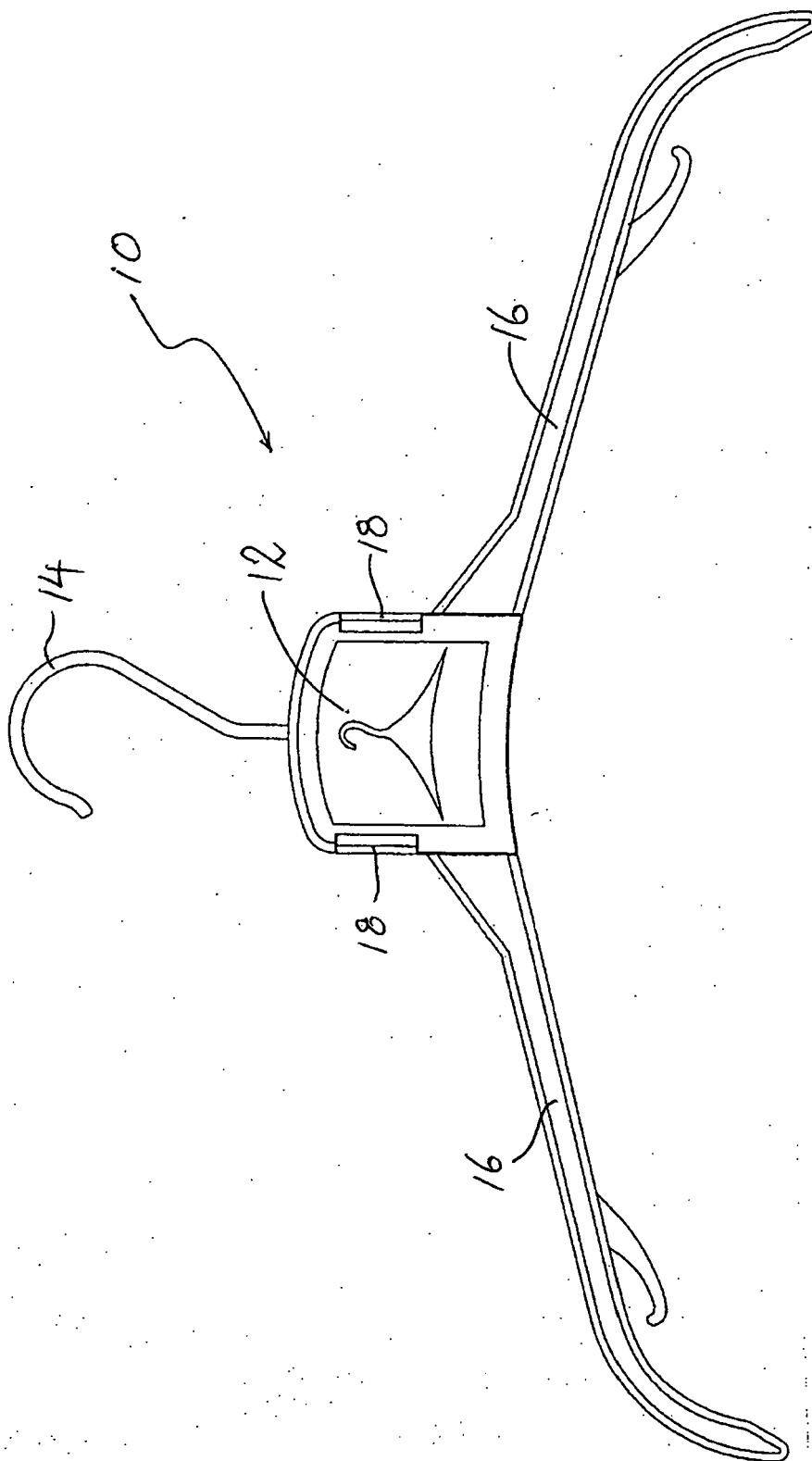


Fig. 2

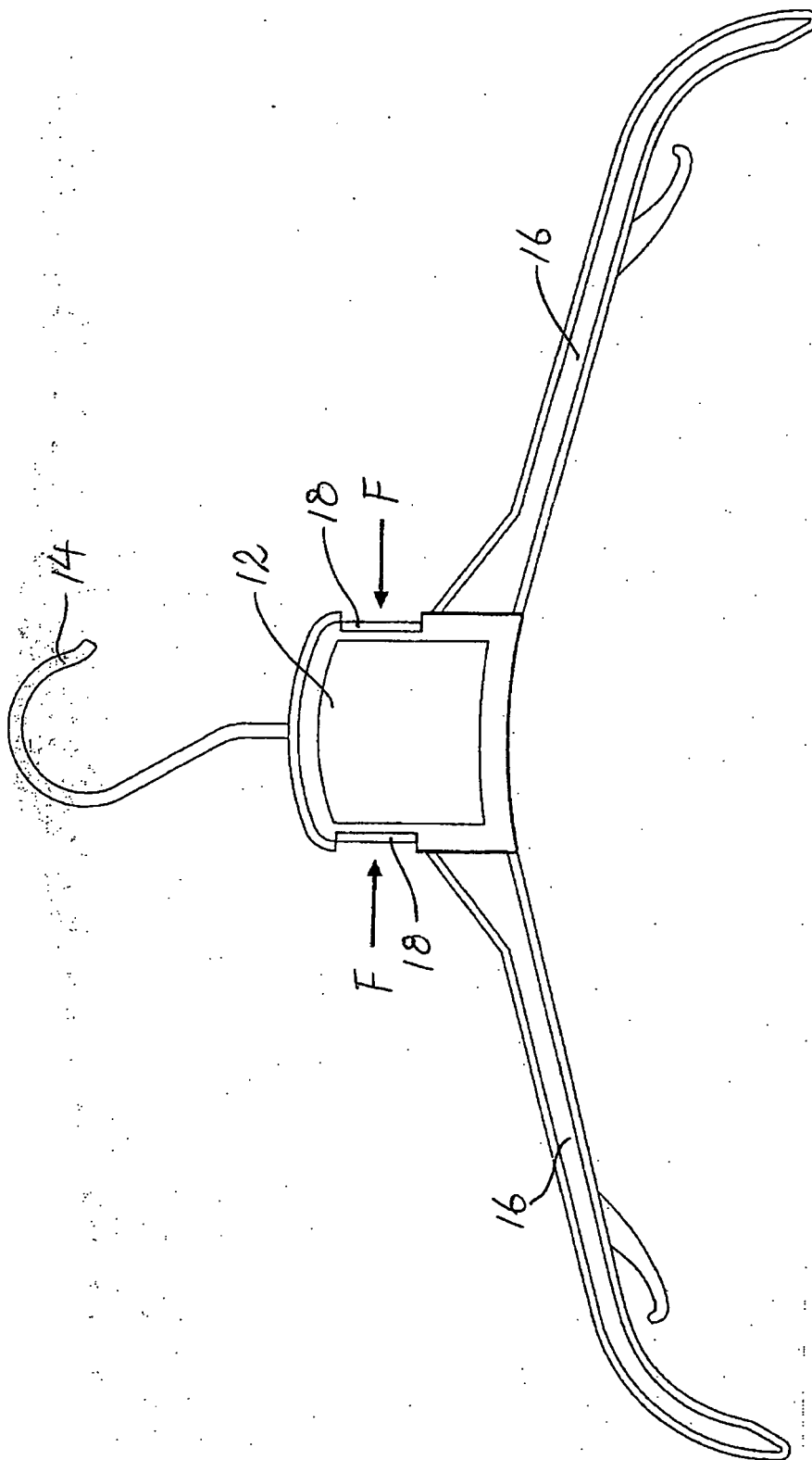


Fig. 3

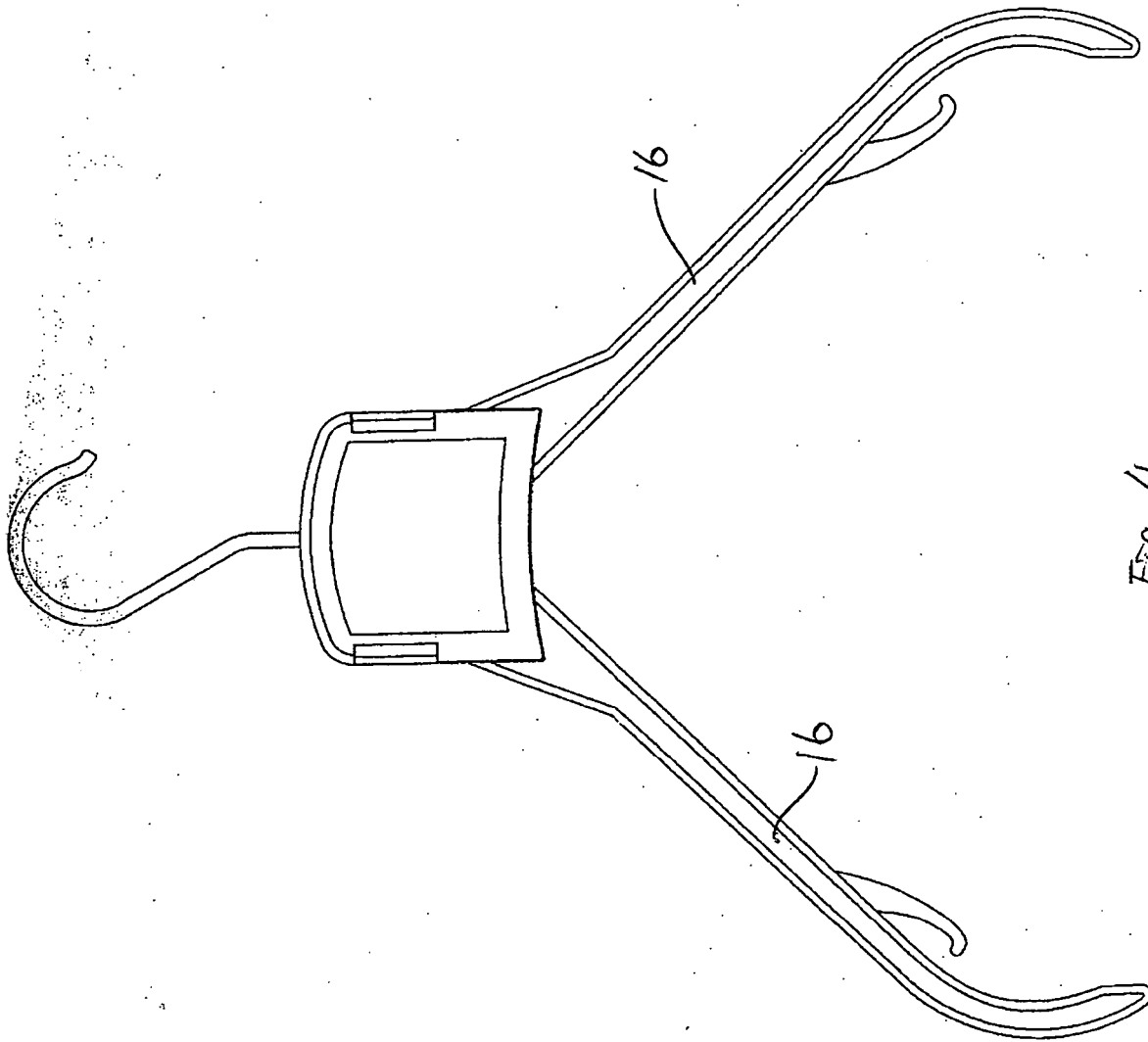


Fig. 4

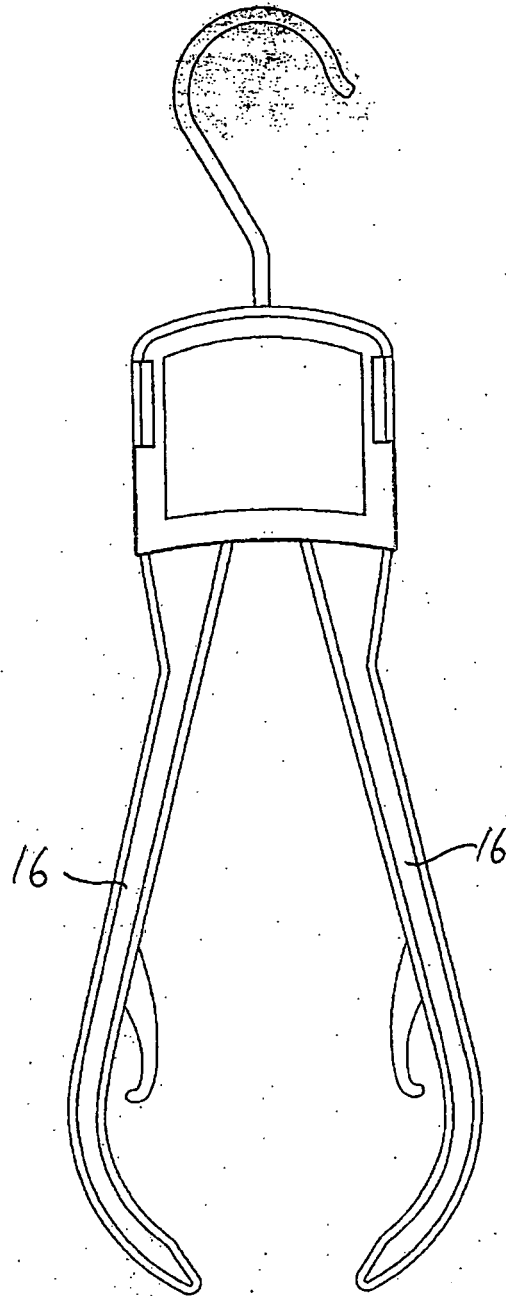


Fig. 5

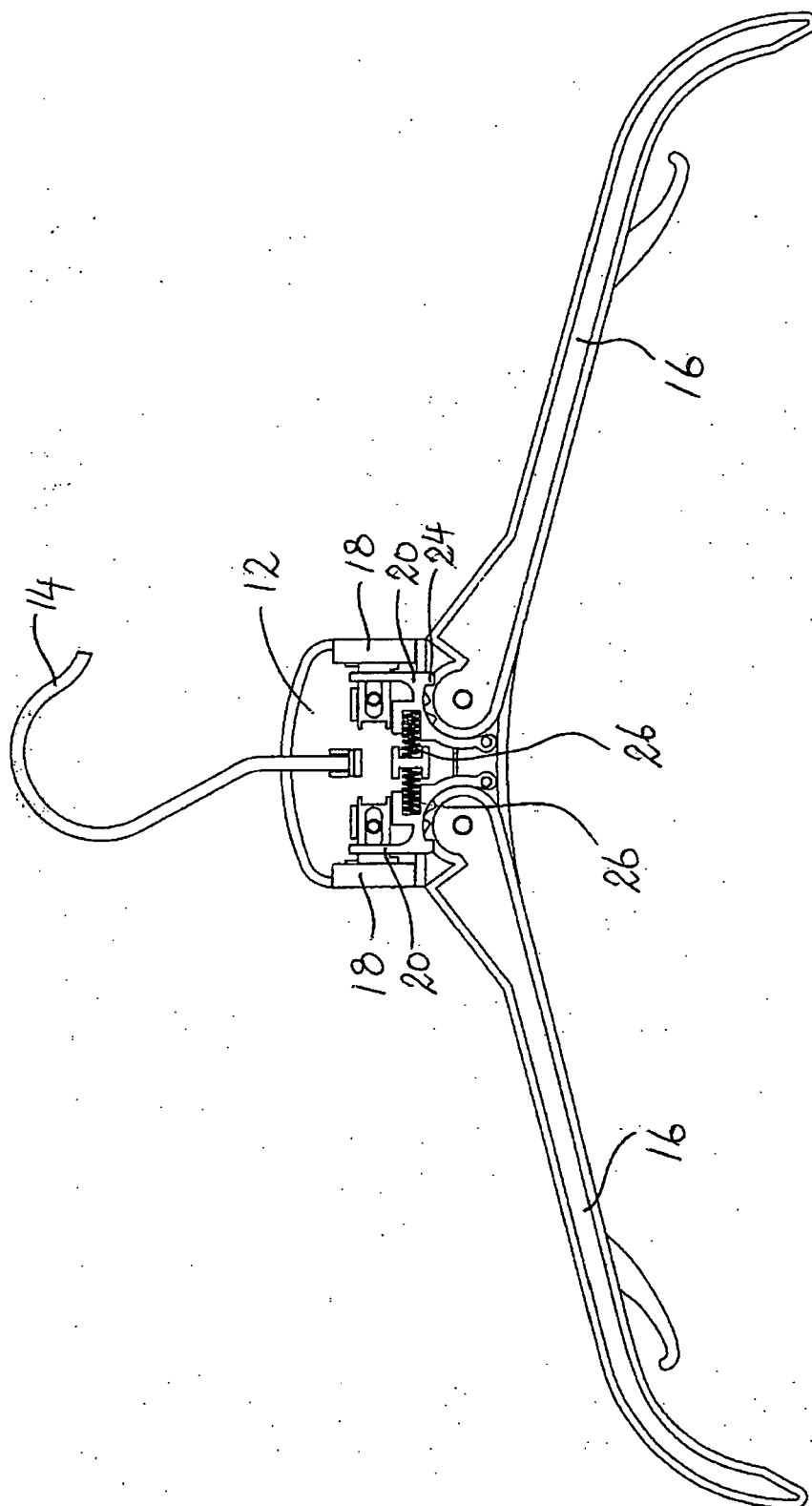


Fig. 6

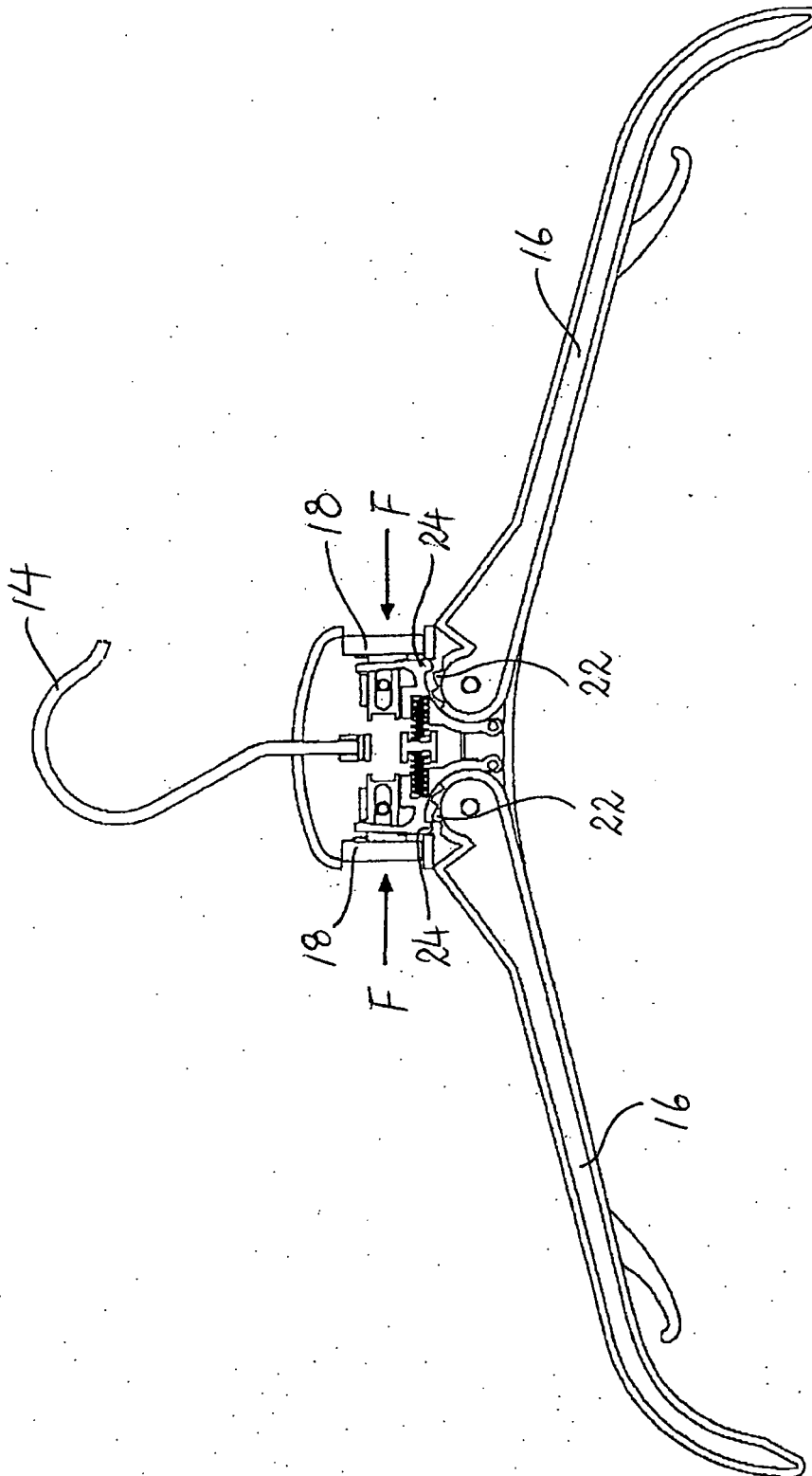


Fig. 7

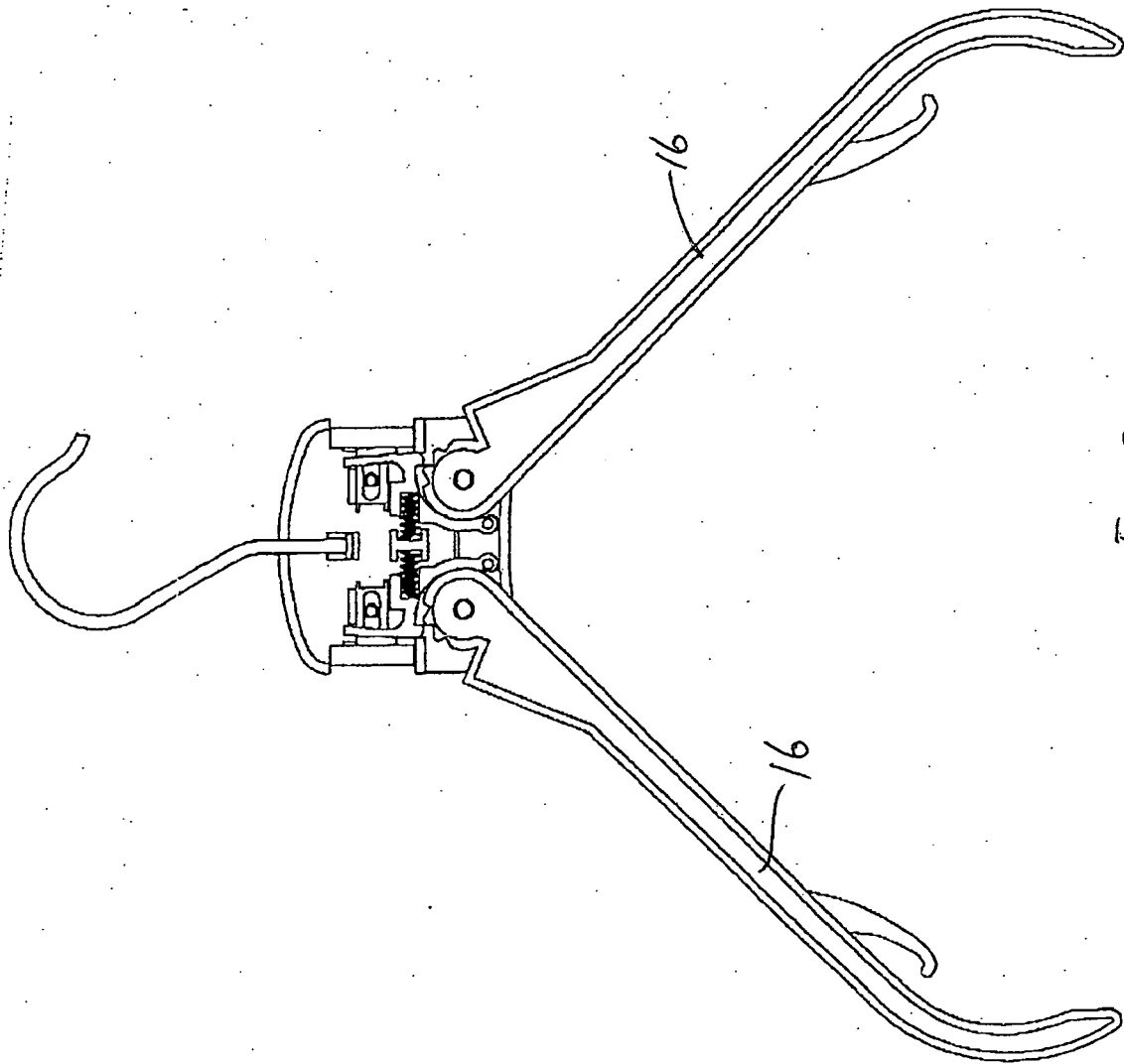


Fig. 8

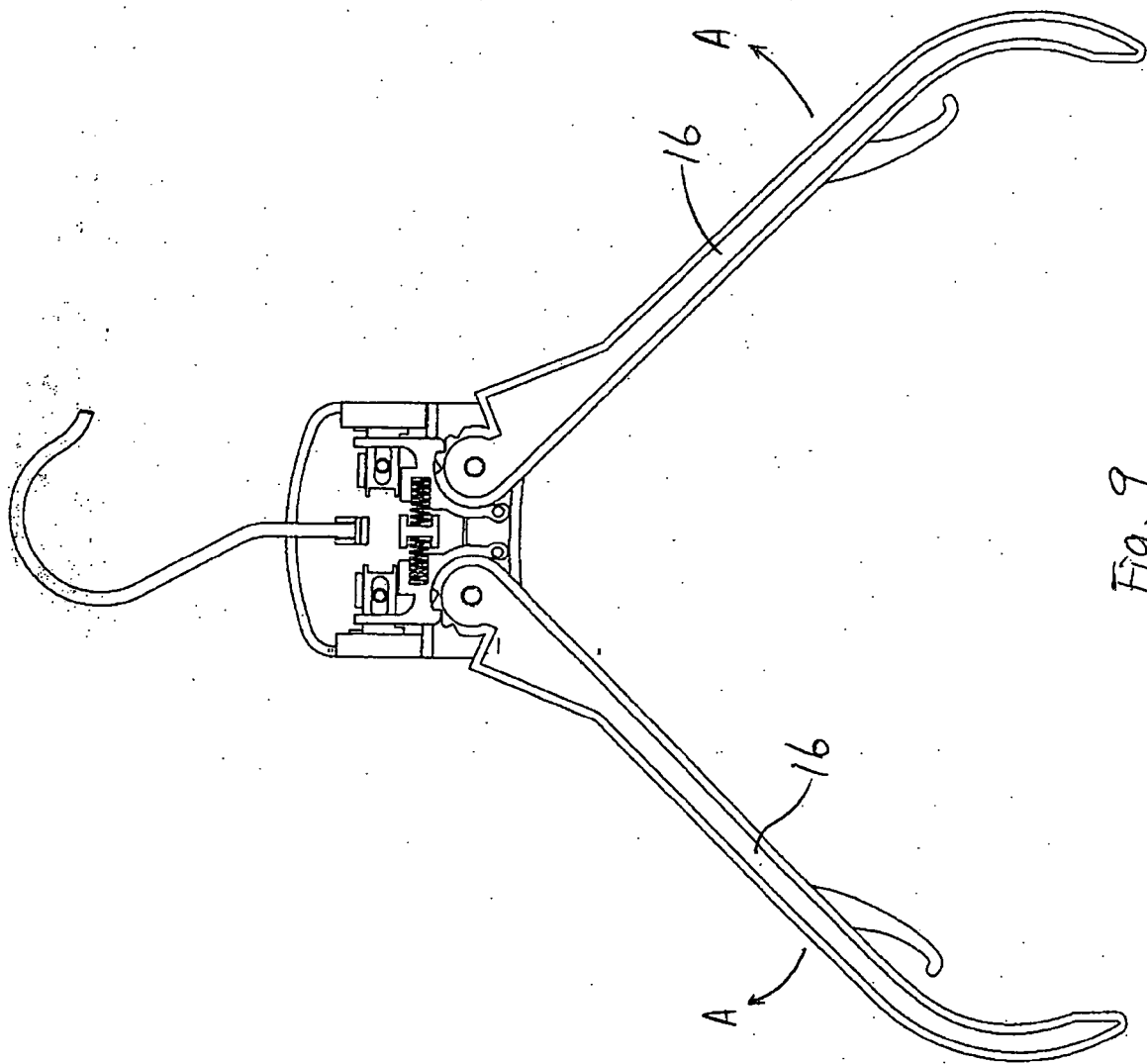


Fig. 9

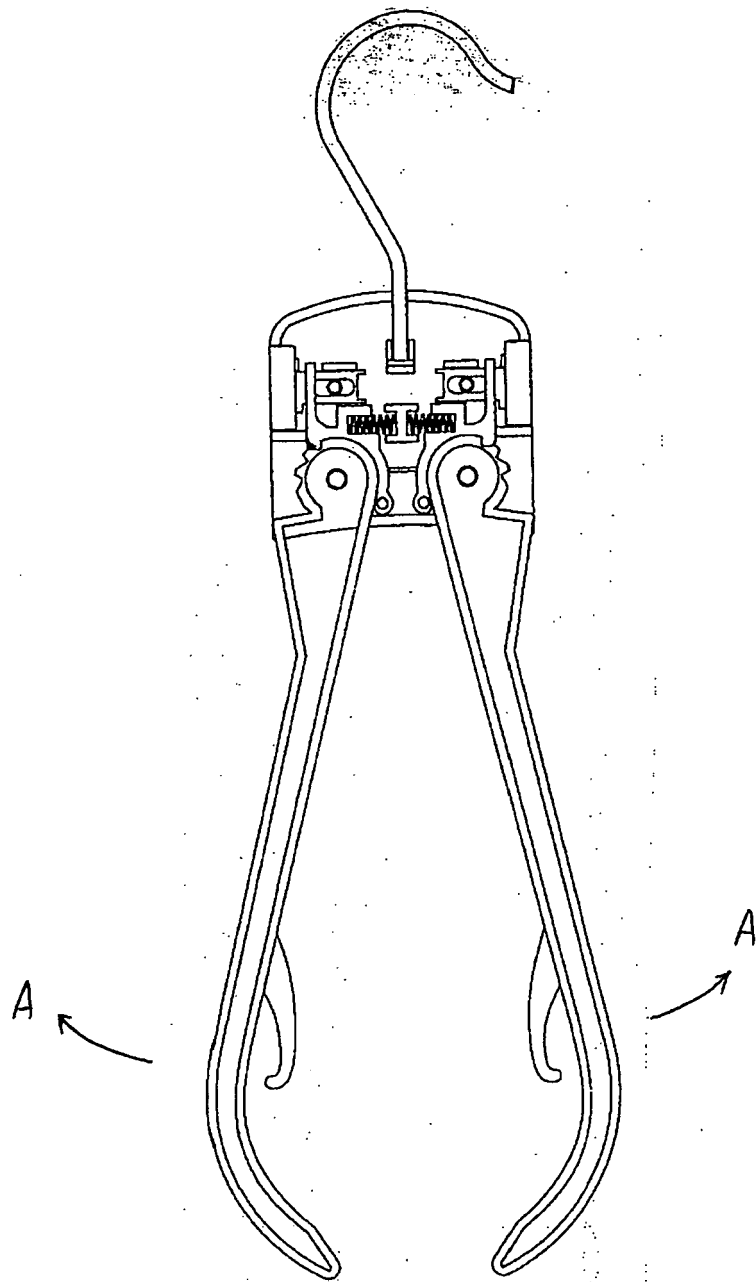


Fig. 10



DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (IPC)
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			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (IPC)
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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 4 April 2007	Examiner Beugeling, Leo
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			

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**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
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This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report. The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on
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