

(19)



(11)

**EP 1 990 273 A2**

(12)

**EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION**

(43) Date of publication:  
**12.11.2008 Bulletin 2008/46**

(51) Int Cl.:  
**B63H 25/00 (2006.01) B63H 23/06 (2006.01)**

(21) Application number: **07018298.5**

(22) Date of filing: **18.09.2007**

(84) Designated Contracting States:  
**AT BE BG CH CY CZ DE DK EE ES FI FR GB GR HU IE IS IT LI LT LU LV MC MT NL PL PT RO SE SI SK TR**  
Designated Extension States:  
**AL BA HR MK RS**

(72) Inventor: **Lin, Yeun-Junn**  
**Taichung (TW)**

(74) Representative: **Straus, Alexander**  
**Patentanwälte**  
**Becker, Kurig, Straus**  
**Bavariastrasse 7**  
**80336 München (DE)**

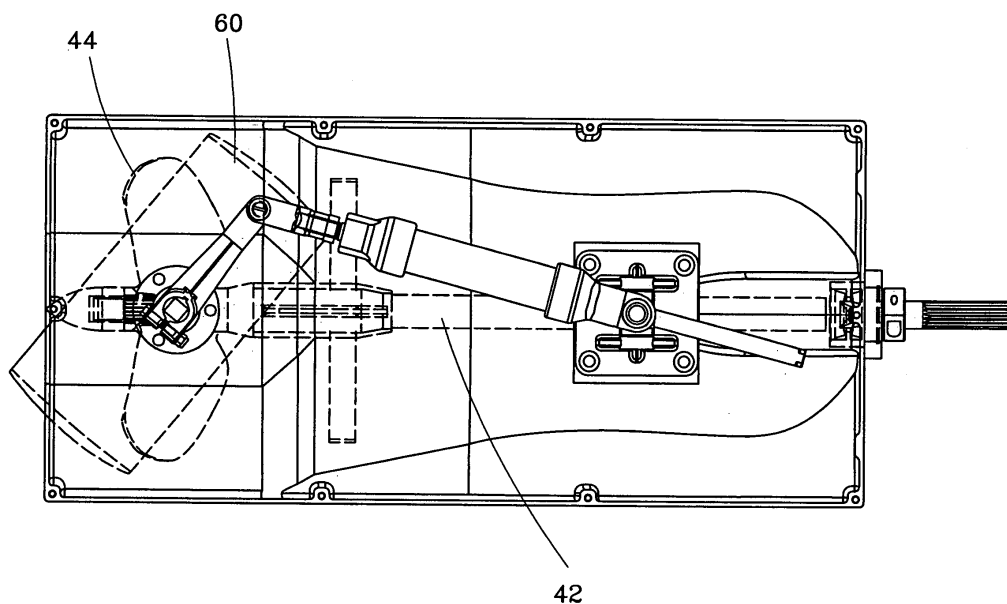
(30) Priority: **09.05.2007 CN 200710101768**

(71) Applicant: **SOLAS SCIENCE & ENGINEERING CO., LTD.**  
**Taichung Industrial Park**  
**Taichung (TW)**

**(54) Propelling system for boat**

(57) A propelling system (20) for a boat includes a housing (30) adapted to be mounted to a stem of the boat and having a receiving chamber (36) inside and a waterway (38) at a bottom side thereof, a propeller (40) rotatably disposed in the waterway (38) of the housing (30), a driving device (50) mounted in the receiving chamber (36) of the housing (30) and having a driving member

(54) and a linking member (56) pivotally coupled to the driving member (54), and a guide ring (60) connected to the linking member (56) of the driving device (50) and located in the waterway (38) of the housing (30) in such a way that the guide ring (60) surrounds blades (44) of the propeller (40) and is pivotable relative to the propeller (40). Thus, the propelling system has the advantage of increasing the utilization of the internal space of the boat.



**FIG. 12**

**EP 1 990 273 A2**

## Description

### BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

#### 1. Field of the Invention

[0001] The present invention relates generally to a propelling system for use in a boat and more specifically, to a propelling system that can broaden the-usable internal space of the boat.

#### 2. Description of the Related Art

[0002] FIG. 1 is a schematic drawing showing a propelling system equipped in a small boat **1** according to a prior art. The middlebody of hull of the small boat **1** is installed with an engine **110** to which a driving shaft **120** is connected. The driving shaft **122** slantingly downward penetrates through the bottom **130** of the small boat **1** and is supported by an A-shaped frame **140** and then coupled with a propeller **15**. Further, the small boat **1** is provided at a stern **160** thereof with a rudder **170**.

[0003] Because the A-shaped frame **140**, the rudder **170** and the propeller **150** are located under the bottom **130** of the small boat **1**, these components not only cause relatively higher water drag to reduce the speed of the small boat **1**, but also tend to bump a rock or a driftwood accidentally, resulting in damage of themselves. In addition, the engine **110** is generally mounted inside the small boat **1** at the middlebody or afterbody of the boat; therefore, the inside space of the small boat **1** around the middlebody or afterbody area may not be usable for other purpose, i.e. the usable inside space of the small boat **1** is restricted.

[0004] FIG. 2 a schematic drawing showing a propelling system equipped in a big yacht **2** according to another prior art. According to this design, the engine **210** is mounted in the middlebody inside the hull of the yacht **2**, which limits the utilization of the internal space of the yacht **2**, and the propeller **220** and the rudder **270** are located under the bottom of the yacht **2**, which may easily hit a rock or hurt divers or the endangered species of marine fauna, such as manatee, or even resulting in that seaweed may be wound on the propeller **220** to be up-rooted. Besides, when the yacht **2** would like to sail backward, the yacht **2** has to change its direction through bow thrusters **240** mounted to a bow **230** thereof and stern thrusters **260** mounted to a stern **250** thereof. The mechanisms of the bow thrusters **240** and the stern thrusters **260** will also occupy partial internal space of the yacht **2**. Thus, it is desirable to provide a propelling system that eliminates the aforesaid drawbacks.

### SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0005] The present invention has been accomplished in view of the above-noted circumstances. It is therefore one objective of the present invention to provide a pro-

PELLING system for a boat, which can increase the usable internal space of the boat.

[0006] It is another objective of the present invention to provide a propelling system for a boat, which can change direction of the boat when it sails forward or backward.

[0007] It is still another objective of the present invention to provide a propelling system for a boat, which can reduce water drag when the boat sails forward.

[0008] It is further still another objective of the present invention to provide a propelling system for a boat, which can protect divers and the endangered species of marine fauna and flora from damage.

[0009] To achieve these objectives of the present invention, the propelling system for a boat comprises a housing, a propeller, a driving device and a guide ring. The housing is adapted for mounting to a stern of the boat and has a receiving chamber inside and a waterway at a bottom side thereof. The propeller is rotatably disposed in the waterway of the housing. The driving device is mounted in the receiving chamber of the housing and has a driving member and a linking member pivotally coupled to the driving member. The guide ring is connected to the linking member of the driving device and located in the waterway of the housing in such a way that the guide ring surrounds blades of the propeller and is pivotally moveable relative to the propeller by the actuation of the driving member through the linking member.

[0010] Since the housing, driving device, propeller and guide ring of the propelling system of the present invention can be disposed outside the stern of the boat rather than inside the boat, the usable internal space of the boat increases. In addition, by means of pivoting the guide ring relative to the propeller, the sailing direction of the boat can be controlled. Further, the bottom of the guide ring can be set in flush with the bottom of hull of the boat so as to reduce water drag when the boat sails and protect divers and the endangered species of marine fauna and flora from directly hitting by the propeller.

[0011] Further scope of applicability of the present invention will become apparent from the detailed description given hereinafter. However, it should be understood that the detailed description and specific examples, while indicating preferred embodiments of the invention, are given by way of illustration only, since various changes and modifications within the spirit and scope of the invention will become apparent to those skilled in the art from this detailed description.

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0012] The present invention will become more fully understood from the detailed description given herein below and the accompanying drawings which are given by way of illustration only, and thus are not limitative of the present invention, and wherein:

FIG. 1 is a schematic drawing showing a propelling

system equipped in a small boat according to a prior art;

FIG 2 is a schematic drawing showing a propelling system equipped in a yacht according to a prior art; FIG 3 is a perspective view of a propelling system according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

FIG 4 is a top view of the propelling system according to the preferred embodiment of the present invention;

FIG 5 is a sectional view taken along line 5-5 of FIG. 4;

FIG. 6 is a sectional view taken along line 6-6 of FIG 4;

FIG. 7 is a sectional view taken along line 7-7 of FIG. 4;

FIG. 8 is a schematic drawing showing that the propelling system of the present invention is installed in a small boat;

FIG. 9 is a schematic drawing showing that the propelling system of the present invention is installed in a big boat;

FIG 10 is a top view of the propelling system according to the preferred embodiment of the present invention, showing that the guide ring is turned counterclockwise;

FIG 11 is an end view of FIG 10;

FIG. 12 is similar to FIG. 10 but showing that the guide ring is turned clockwise;

FIG. 13 is an end view of FIG 12, and

FIG 14 is a schematic drawing showing that two propelling systems according to the preferred embodiment of the present invention are bilaterally installed at the stern of a boat.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0013] Referring to FIG. 3 to FIG. 8, a propelling system 20 in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention comprises a housing 30, a propeller 40, a hydraulic driving device 50 and a guide ring 60. As shown in FIG 8, the propelling system 20 is installed in a small boat having a hull 10, an engine 12 mounted inside the hull 10 near a stern 14 of the hull 10 and a deck 16 fixed to the stern 14 of the hull 10.

[0014] The housing 30 has a front end thereof affixed to the stern 14 of the hull 10 of the small boat and is located under the deck 16 of the hull 10 of the small boat, as shown in FIG 8. The housing 30 includes a base 34 and a lid 32 covered on a top side of the base 34 to define a receiving chamber 36 therebetween. The base 34 has two sidewalls 35a and 35b, each of which has a first section 352 extending slantingly from a front end of the base 34 to a position P located at the middle of the sidewalls 35a or 35b, and a second section 354 extending horizontally from the position P to a rear end of the base 34 such that the rear end of the base 34 is higher in elevation than the front end of the base 34. Further, the

base 34 is provided at a bottom side thereof with a semicircular waterway 38, which has an inclined section 382 defining between the first sections 352 of the sidewalls 35a and 35b of the housing 30 and a horizontal section 384 defining between the second sections 354 of the sidewalls 35a and 35b of the housing 30. Furthermore, as shown in FIG. 7, the housing 30 includes a supporting member 39 having a shaft sleeve 392 and three ribs 394, each of which is connected with the shaft sleeve 392 and a periphery wall of the waterway 38.

[0015] Referring to FIG 5 and FIG 8, the propeller 40 has a hub on which a plurality of blades 44 are provided. One end of a shaft 42 passes through the shaft sleeve 392 of the supporting member 39 and then coupled with the hub, and the other end of the shaft 42 penetrates through the front end of the housing 30 and then coupled with engine 12 of the small boat through a shaft coupling 46 such that the blades 44 can be driven to rotate by the engine 12 through the shaft 42. The shaft 42 is located in the waterway 38 and lower in elevation than the second sections 354 of the sidewalls 35a and 35b of the housing 30, and the blades 44 are located at the horizontal section 384 of the waterway 38 and close to the rear end of the housing 30.

[0016] Referring to FIG. 4, the hydraulic driving device 50 includes a casing 52 installed inside the receiving chamber 36 of the housing 30, a hydraulic driving member 54, which is a cylinder in this embodiment and mounted to the casing 52 and electrically connected with a steering system (not shown), and a linking member 56 pivotally connected to the hydraulic driving member 54 through a joint 542 at a distal end of the linking member 56.

[0017] The guide ring 60 is located in the waterway 38 of the housing 30 and connected to the linking member 56 of the hydraulic driving device 50 through a shaft 62 in such a way that the guide ring 60 surrounds the blades 44 of the propeller 40 and is pivotable about the shaft 62 counterclockwise and clockwise from the view point of FIGS. 10 and 12 by the actuation of the driving member 54 through the linking member 56 for deflection, rightward and leftward in a range within 45 degrees in each way relative to the blades 44 of the propeller 40, as shown in FIGS. 11 and 13.

[0018] By means of the aforesaid design, the engine 12 can be installed inside the hull 10 near the stern 14 of the small boat and use diesel such that the hull 10 provides a big internal space for use. Moreover, although the engine 12 is installed inside the hull 10 near the stern 14 of the small boat, the housing 30 can increase floatation of the stern 14 of the small boat to prevent the stern 14 of the small boat overweight. Besides, the bottom side of the guide ring 60 is substantially flush with the bottom of the hull 10, i.e. the small boat can be deemed as a flat-bottomed boat, for reducing water resistance when the small boat moves forward. Further, the small boat is suitable for use in a shallow area and won't easily hit a rock or hurts divers or the endangered species of marine

fauna and flora.

**[0019]** Furthermore, when the propeller **40** is rotated, water will be sucked from the inclined section **382** of the waterway **38** of the housing **30** into the horizontal section **384** of the waterway **38** of the housing **30**, and then ejected out of the rear end of the housing **30** through the guide ring **60** to propel the small boat forward. When the small boat would like to be turned to the right, a boat driver can start the hydraulic driving member **54** through the steering system such that the guide ring **60** can be driven by the linking member **56** to turn to the right, as shown in FIG. 10 and 11, thereby causing water to be ejected toward the right. Thus, the small boat will be turned to the right. On the contrary, when the guide ring **60** is driven by the linking member **56** to turn to the left, as shown in FIG. 12 and 13, water will be ejected toward the left, thereby causing the small boat to be turned to the left.

**[0020]** When the boat driver wants to steer the small boat backward, the propeller **40** has to be rotated reversely to suck water into the waterway **38** of the housing **30** through the guide ring **60**. Under this circumstance, because the second sections **354** of the sidewalls **35a** and **35b** of the housing **30** are higher in elevation than the shaft **42** of the propeller **40**, water is sucked into the waterway **38** and then ejected out of the second sections **354** of the side walls **35a** and **35b** of the housing **30**. Therefore, when the guide ring **60** is turned to the left, as shown in FIG. 12 and 13, water is ejected out of the second section **354** of the side walls **35a** of the housing **30**, thereby causing the stern **14** of the small boat to be turned to the left. On the contrary, when the guide ring **60** is turned to the right, as shown in FIG. 10 and 11, water is ejected out of the second section **354** of the side walls **35b** of the housing **30**, thereby causing the stern **14** of the small boat to be turned to the right.

**[0021]** Further, the propelling system **20** of the present invention also can be mounted to a big boat, as shown in FIG. 9. A top side of the base **34** of the housing **30** is directly fixed to the bottom **72** of the big boat without using the lid **32** for enabling the hydraulic driving device **50** to be located inside the big boat. As a result, the bottom side of the guide ring **60** can be still maintained flush with the bottom **72** of the big boat, thereby achieving the objectives of the present invention.

**[0022]** In addition, FIG. 14 shows another application of the propelling system of the preferred embodiment of the present invention. Two propelling systems **20** are symmetrically mounted at two sides of the stern to provide a high propelling force. The propelling systems **20** can be operated respectively or synchronously through a connecting member **22**.

**[0023]** The invention being thus described, it will be obvious that the same may be varied in many ways. Such variations are not to be regarded as a departure from the spirit and scope of the invention, and all such modifications as would be obvious to one skilled in the art are intended to be included within the scope of the following claims.

## Claims

1. A propelling system (20) for a boat having a stern (16), **characterized in that** the propelling system (20) comprises:
  - a housing (30) for mounting to the stern of the boat, the housing (30) having a receiving chamber (36) inside and a waterway (38) at a bottom side thereof;
  - a propeller (40) rotatably disposed in the waterway (38) of the housing (30), the propeller (40) having a plurality of blades (44);
  - a driving device (50) mounted in the receiving chamber (36) of the housing (30) and having a driving member (54) and a linking member (56) pivotally coupled to the driving member (54); and
  - a guide ring (60) connected to the linking member (56) of the driving device (50) and located in the waterway (38) of the housing (30) in such a way that the guide ring (60) surrounds the blades (44) of the propeller (40) and is pivotable relative to the propeller (40).
2. The propelling system (20) as claimed in claim 1, **characterized in that** the housing (30) includes two sidewalls (35a, 35b), each of which has a rear end thereof higher in elevation than a front end thereof; the waterway (38) of the housing (30) is defined between the two sidewalls (35a, 35b) of housing (30).
3. The propelling system (20) as claimed in claim 2, **characterized in that** each sidewall of the housing has a first section (352) slantingly and backwardly extending from the front end thereof, and a second section (354) integrally connected with the first section (352) and horizontally extending from the first section (352) to the rear end thereof.
4. The propelling system (20) as claimed in claim 3, **characterized in that** the waterway (38) of the housing has an inclined section (382) defining between the first sections (352) of the sidewalls (35a, 35b) of the housing (30) and a horizontal section (384) defining between the second sections (354) of the sidewalls (35a, 35b) of the housing (30).
5. The propelling system (20) as claimed in claim 2, **characterized in that** the housing (30) includes a base (34) having said sidewalls (35a, 35b) and said waterway (38), and a lid (32) covered on a top side of the base (34) to define said receiving chamber (36) between the lid (32) and the base (34).
6. The propelling system (20) as claimed in claim 1, **characterized in that** the guide ring (60) has a shaft (62) connected to the linking member (56) of the driving device (50) such that the guide ring (60) is piv-

otable about the shaft (62) by the actuation of the driving member (54) through the linking member (56).

7. The propelling system (20) as claimed in claim 6, *5*  
**characterized in that** the guide ring (60) is pivotable about the shaft (62) for deflection leftward and rightward within 45 degrees.
8. The propelling system (20) as claimed in claim 1, *10*  
**characterized in that** the propelling system further comprises a supporting member (39) having a shaft sleeve (392) for insertion of a shaft (42) of the propeller (40) and a plurality of ribs (394) respectively *15*  
affixed to the shaft sleeve (392) and a periphery wall of the waterway (38) of the housing (30).

*20*

*25*

*30*

*35*

*40*

*45*

*50*

*55*

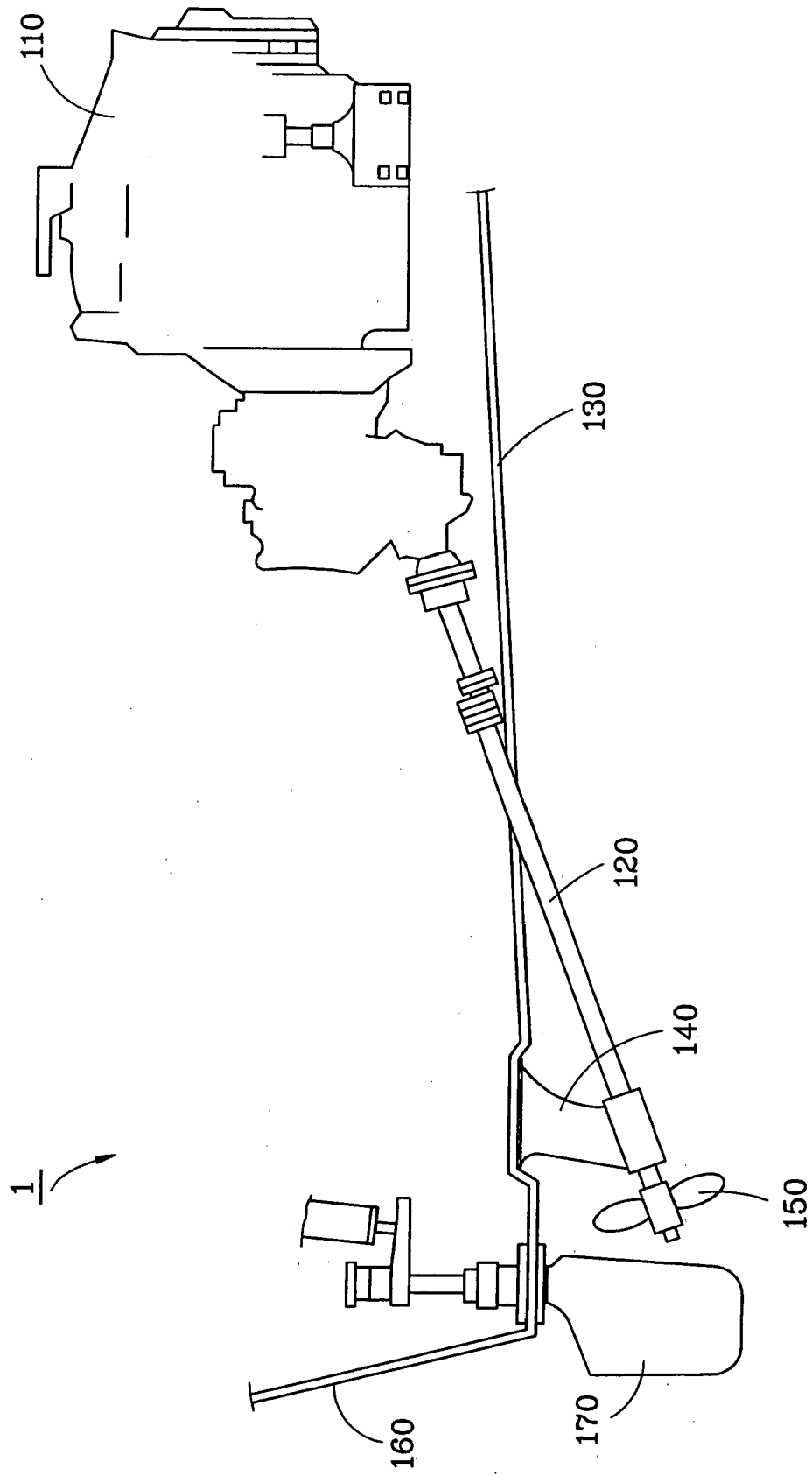


FIG. 1  
PRIOR ART

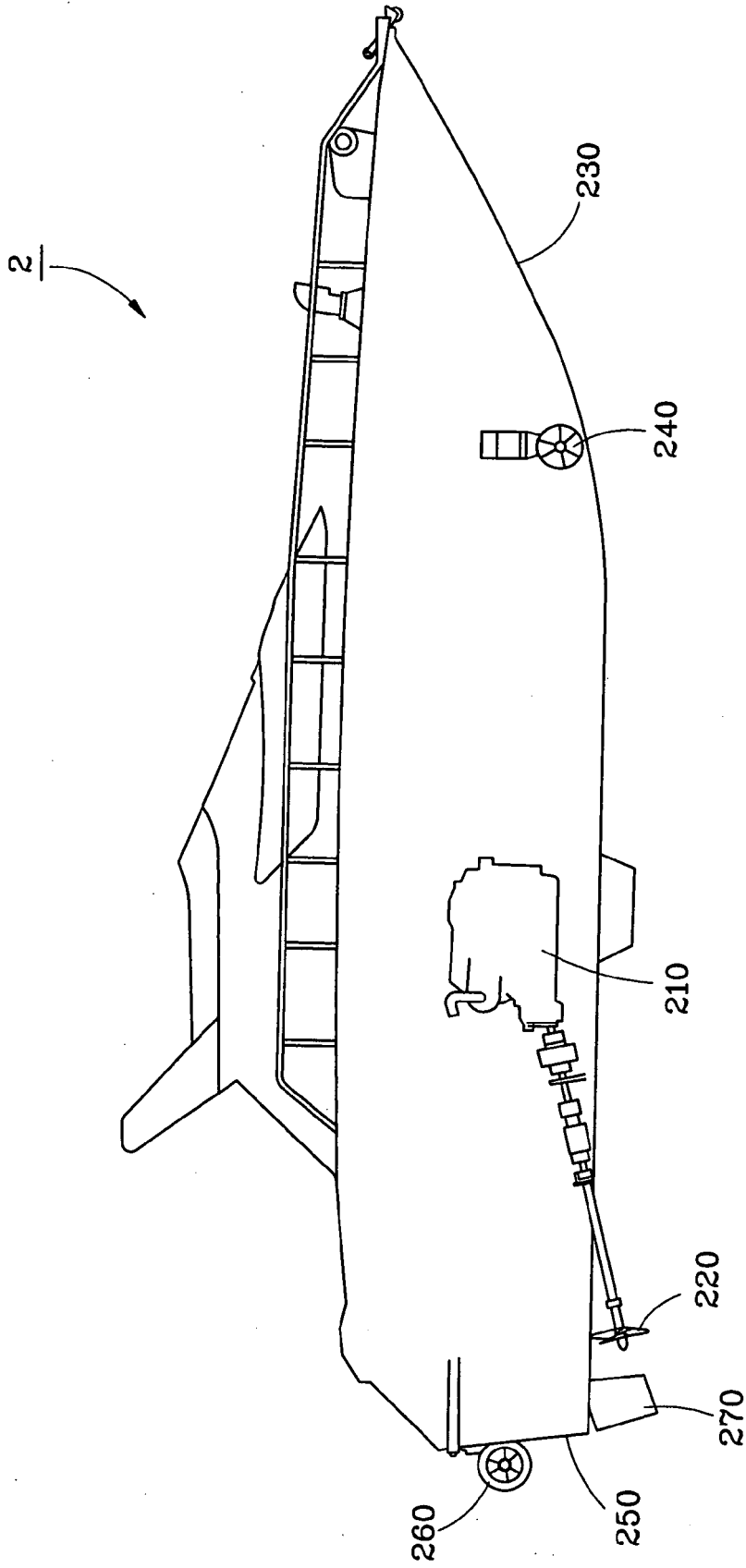


FIG. 2  
PRIOR ART

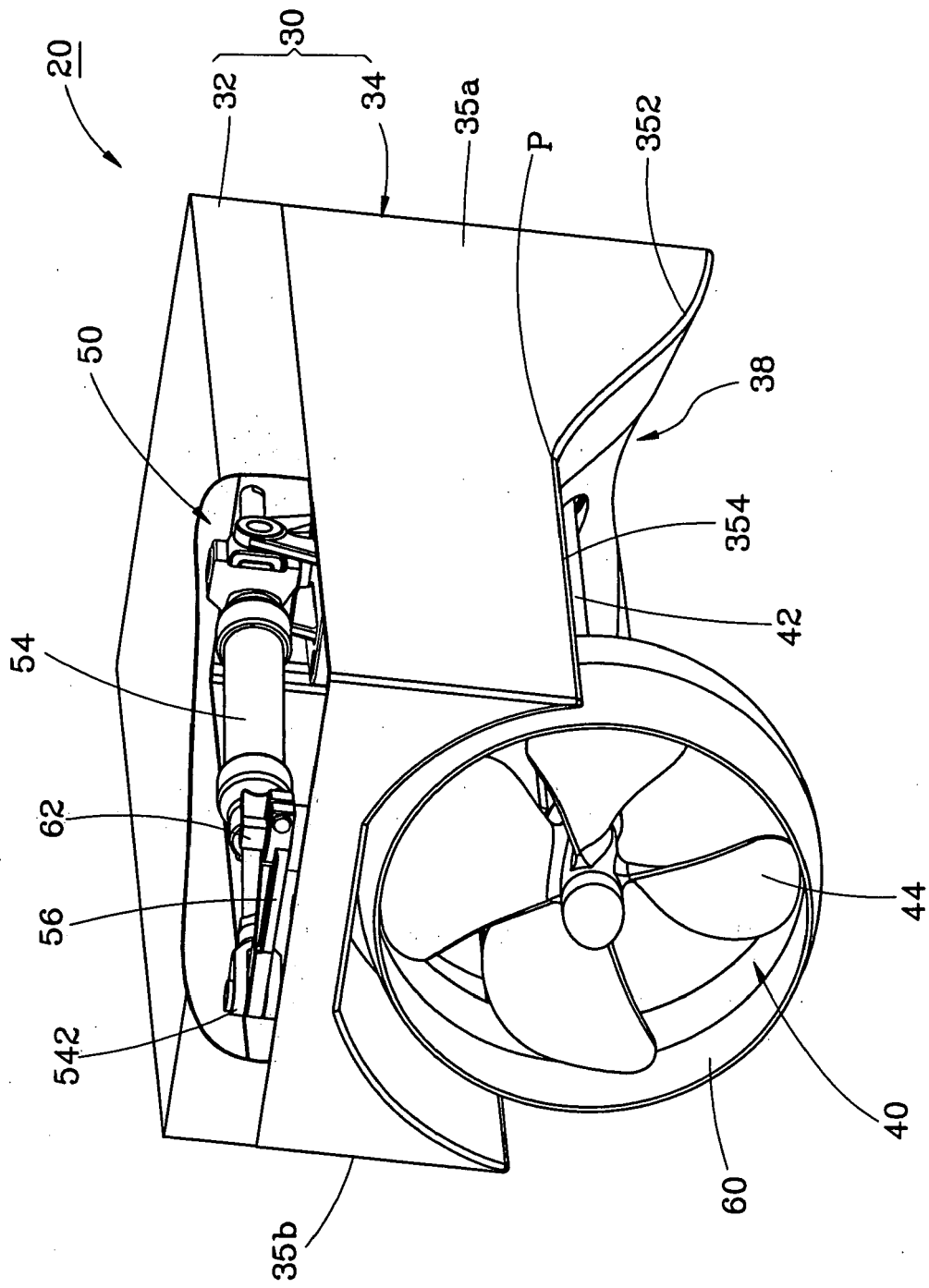


FIG. 3



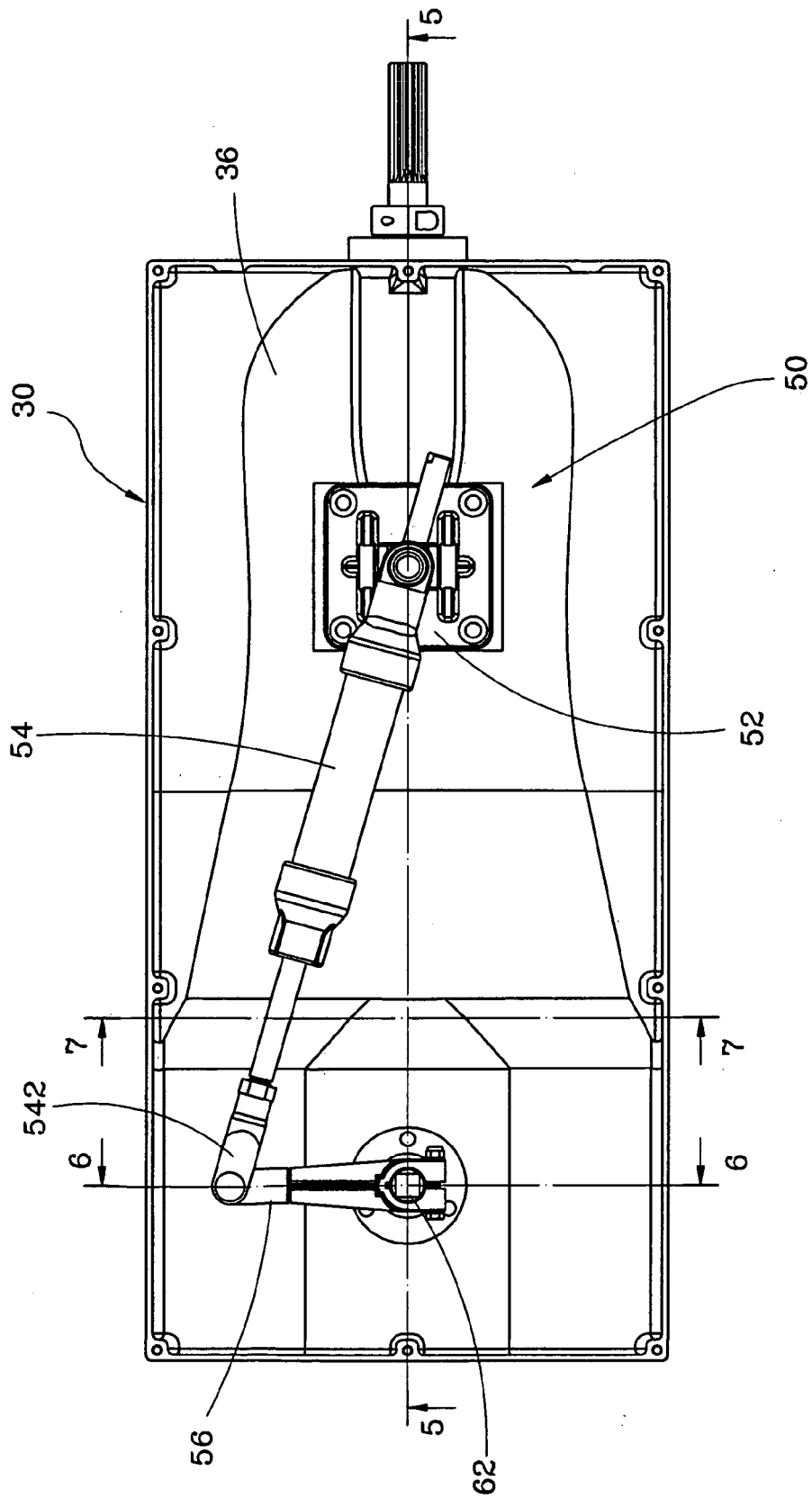


FIG. 4

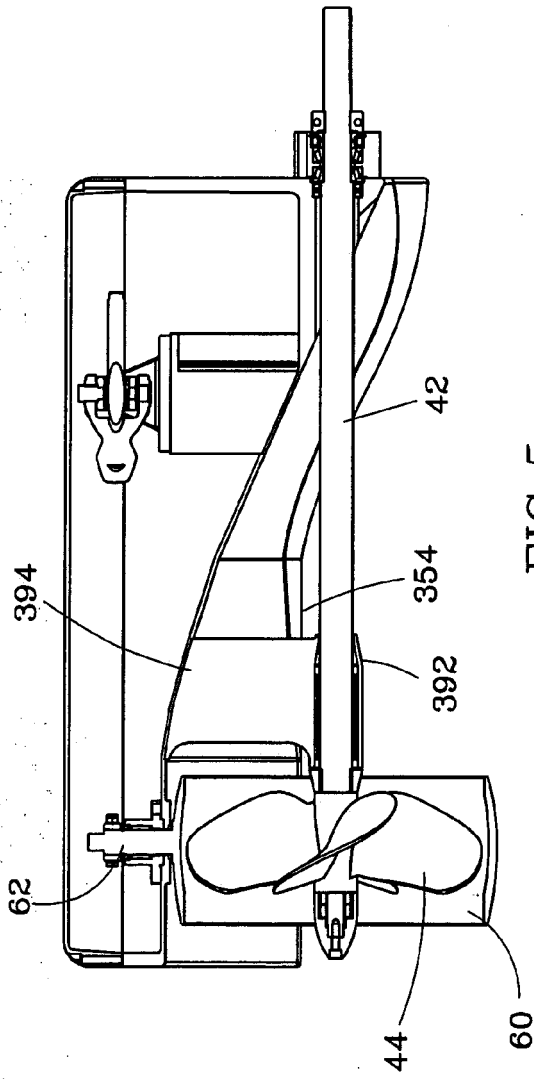


FIG. 5

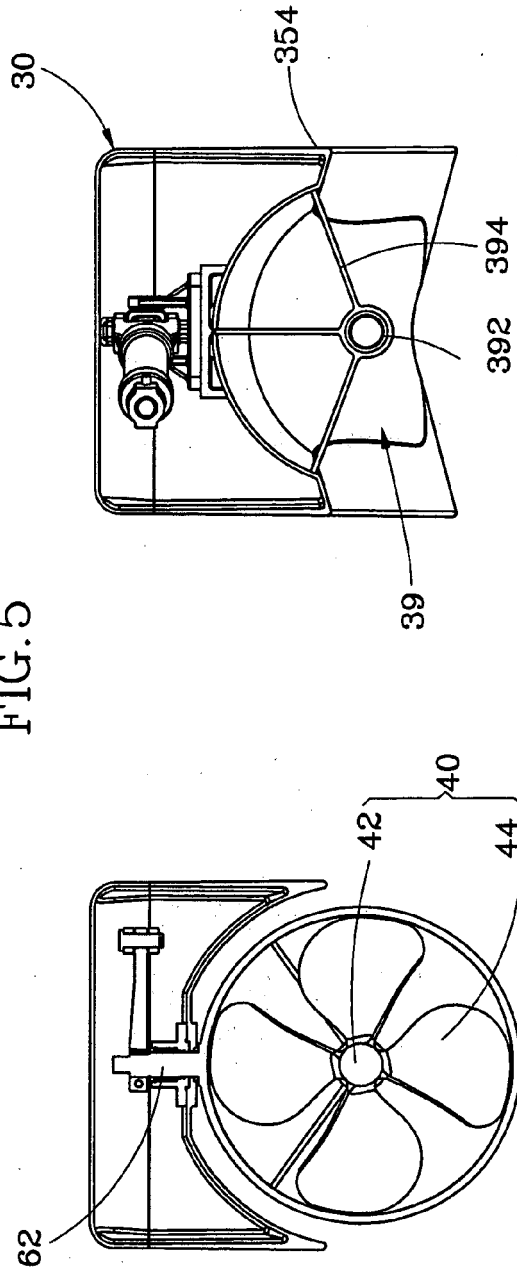


FIG. 6

FIG. 7

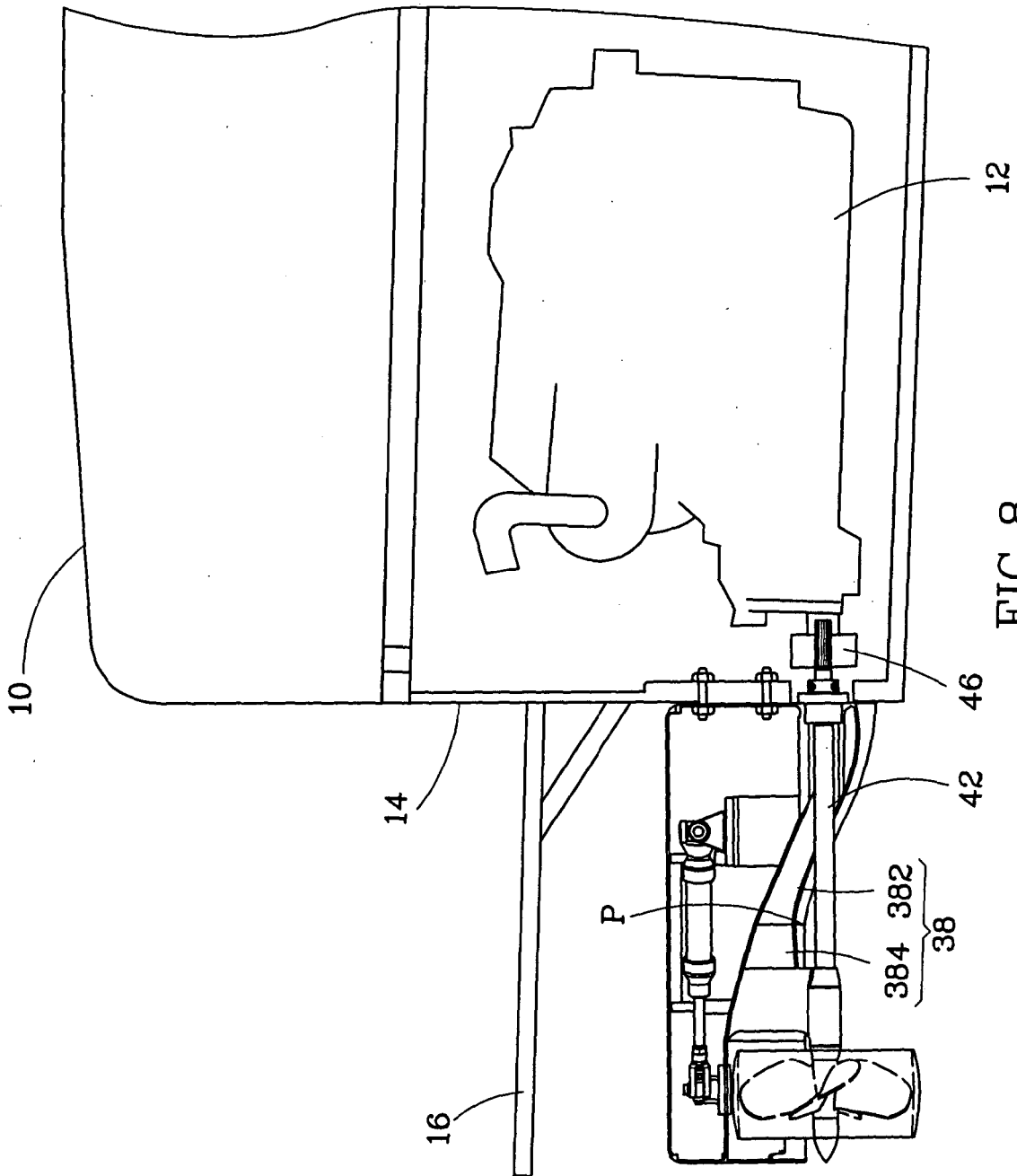


FIG. 8

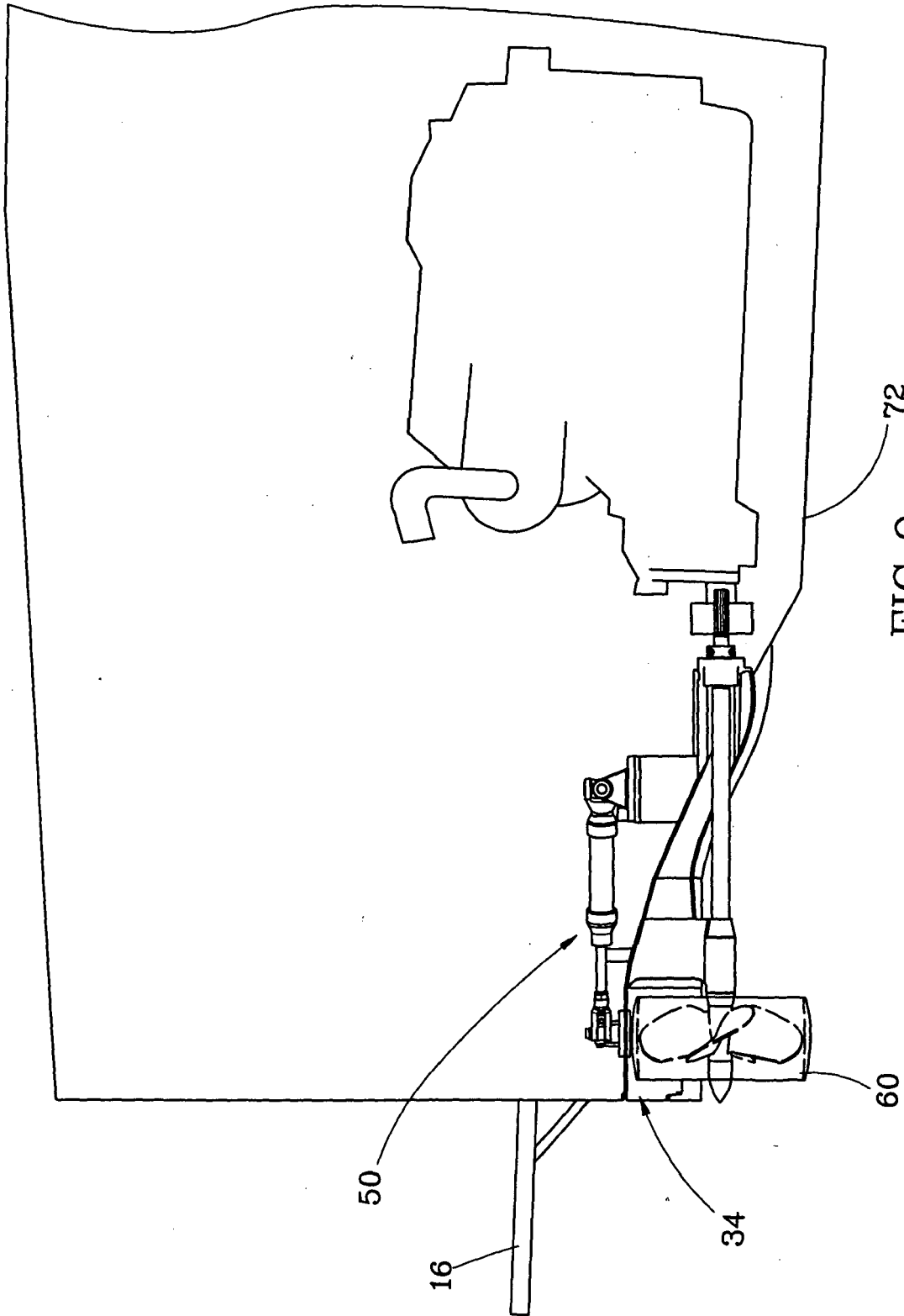
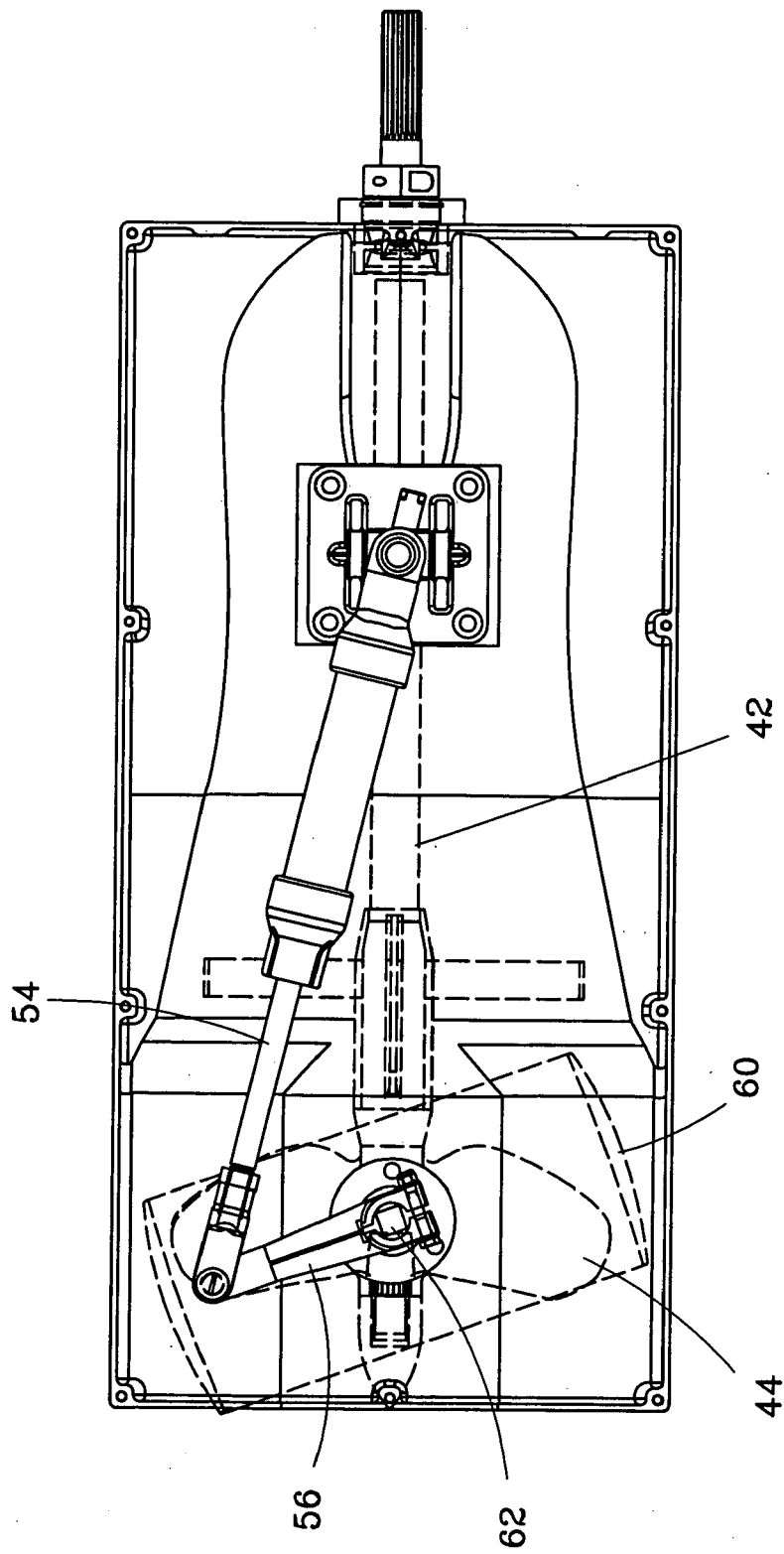


FIG. 9



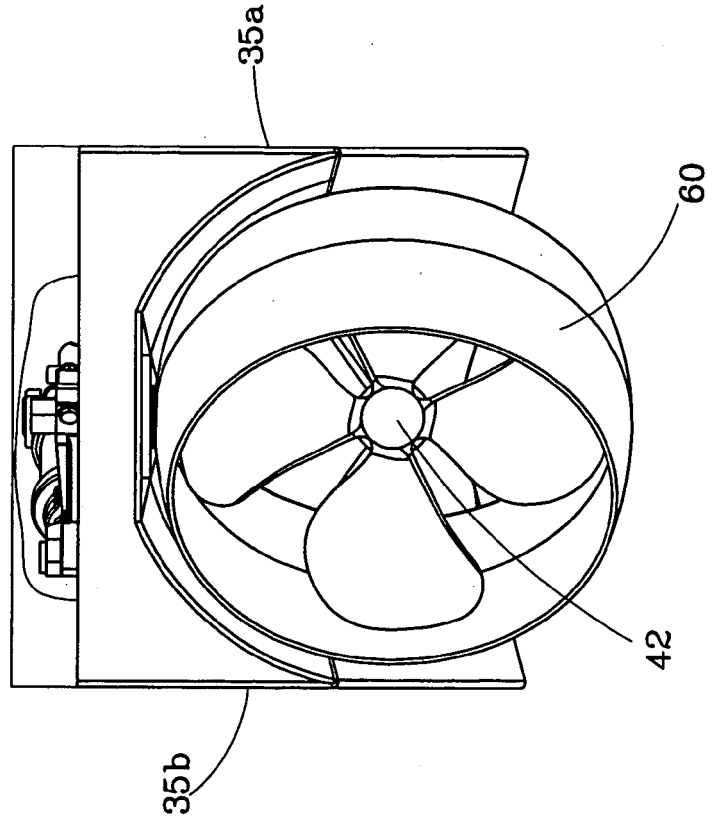


FIG. 11

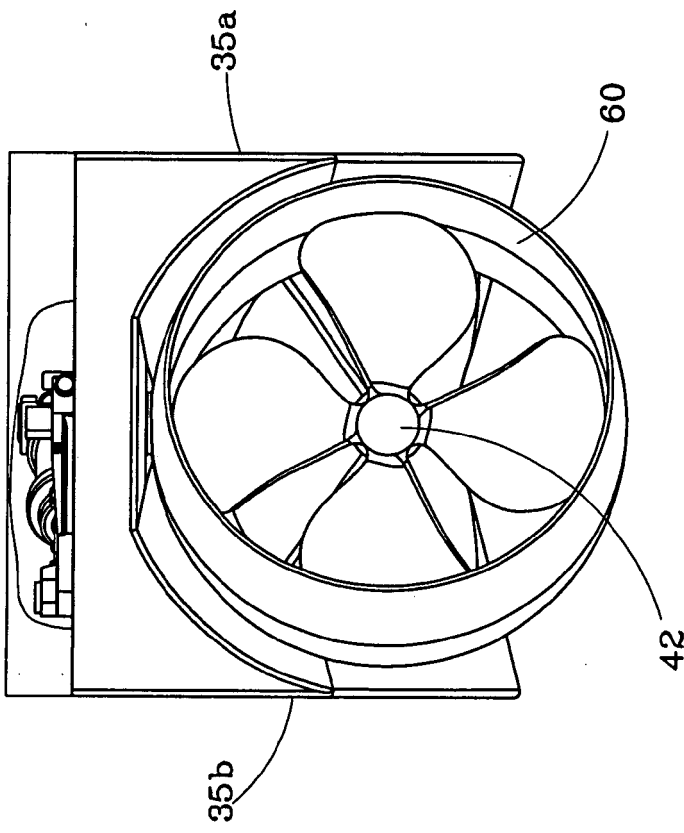


FIG. 13

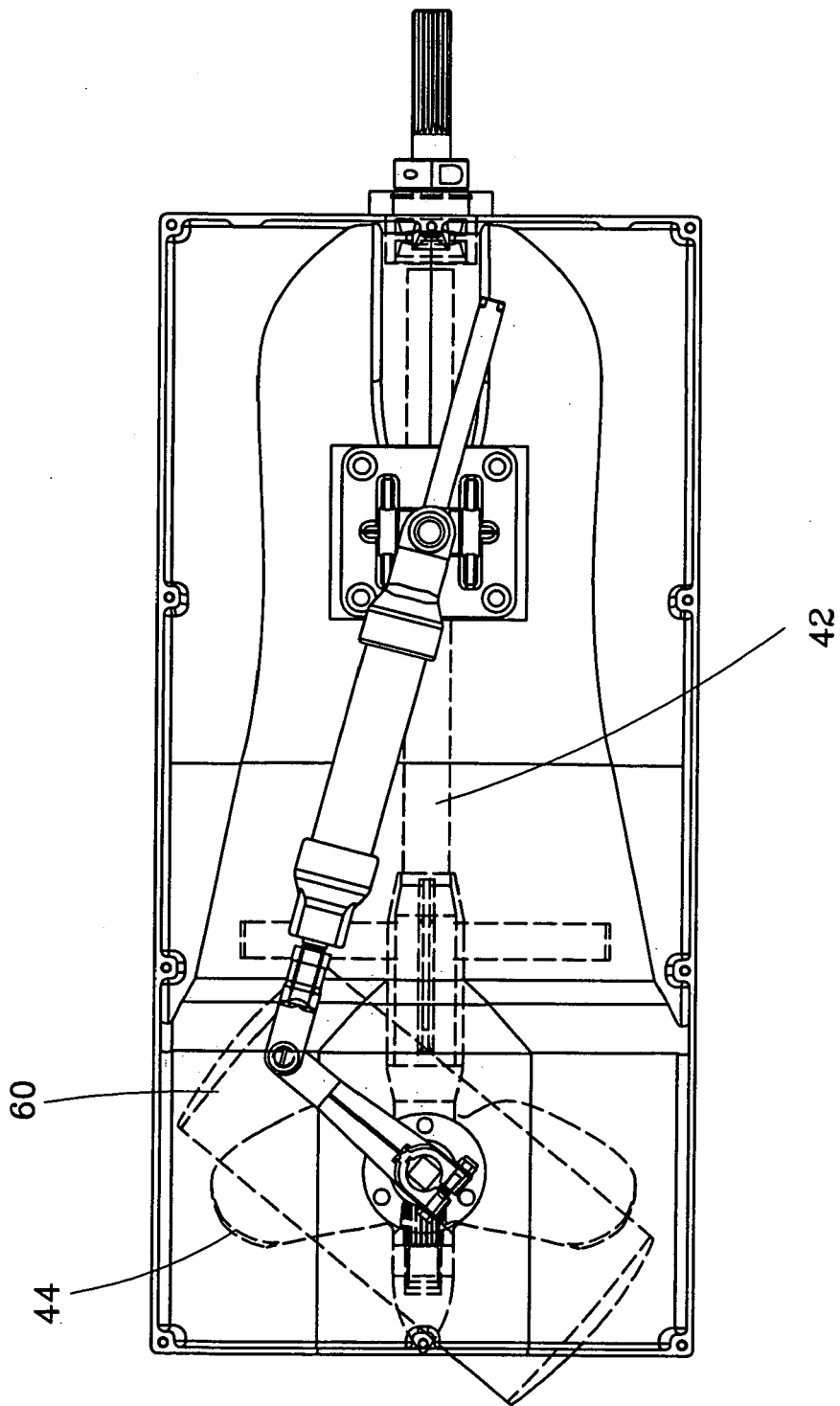


FIG.12

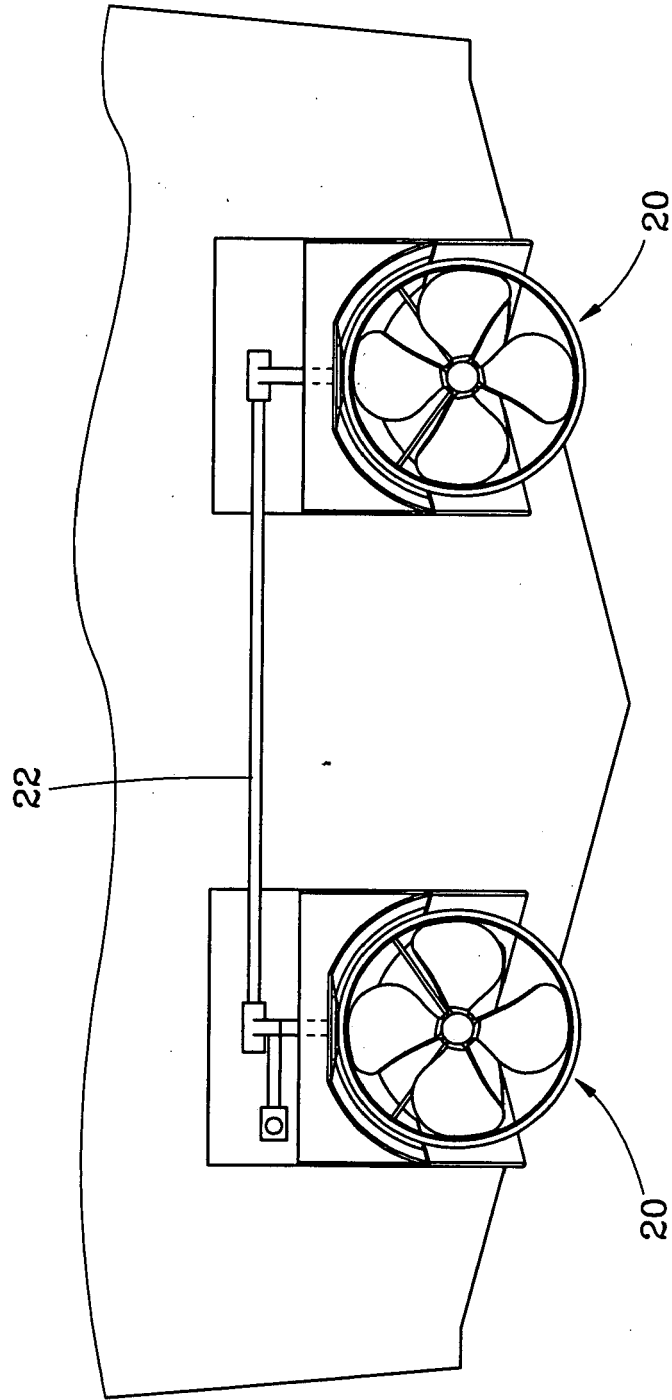


FIG.14