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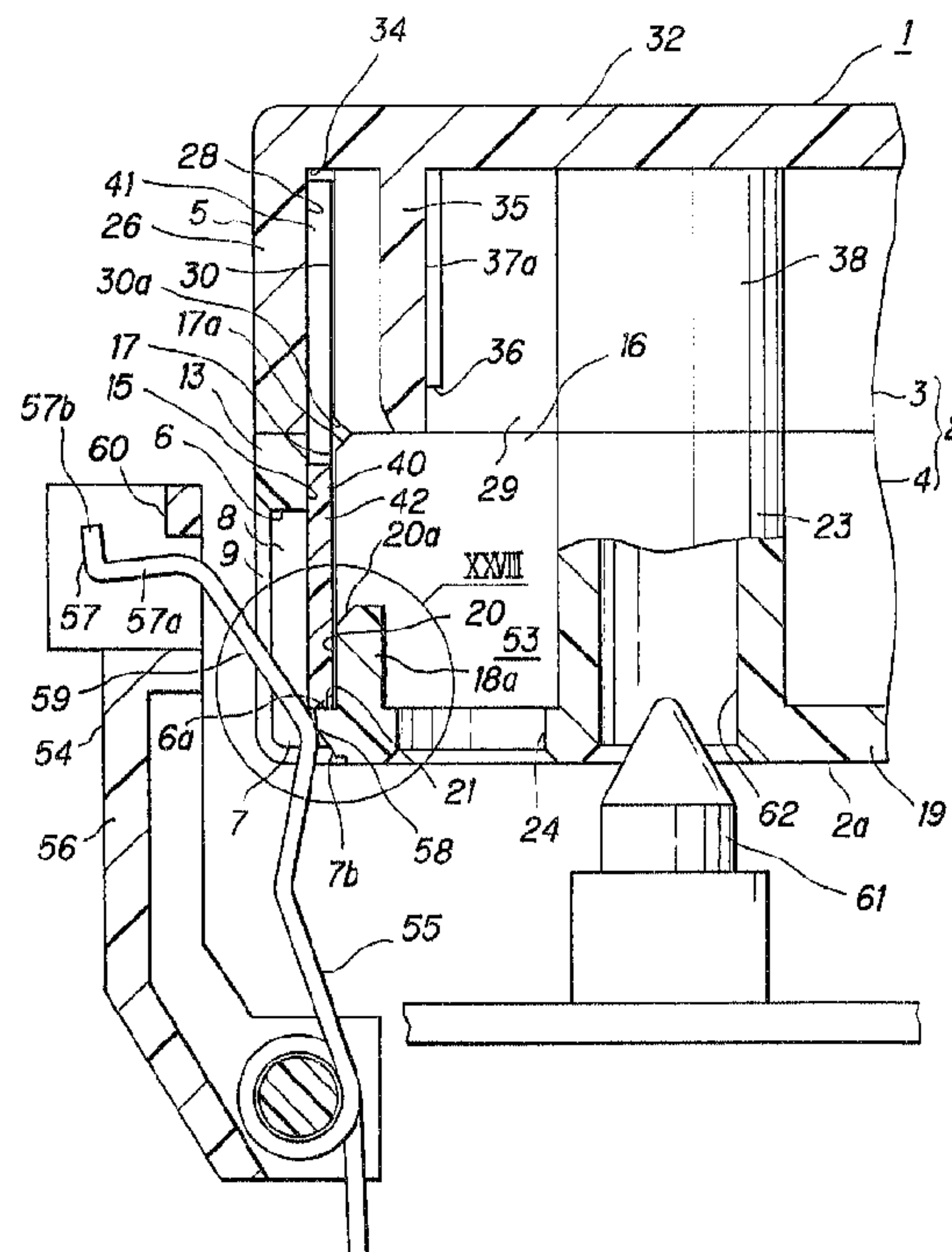
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(54) Titre : CASSETTE DE SUPPORT D'ENREGISTREMENT

(54) Title: RECORDING MEDIUM CASSETTE



(57) Abrégé/Abstract:

A recording medium cassette comprises a cassette case cassette case board and a release part. The cassette case board has a plurality of board terminals and also has positioning holes formed in its outer surface so as to expose the plurality of board terminals along with insertion guide channels formed consecutively at the lower ends of the positioning holes so as to reach the lower end of the cassette case. Also, a release part slopes towards the lower end of the insertion guide channel away from the outer surface. The angle of the release part with respect to the height of the cassette case is greater than the angle of an inclined portion, which spans from contact points to free end parts of resilient connector contacts set up at a recording/playback apparatus connector, with respect to the height of the cassette case, and the connector contacts do not come into contact with the release part when the recording medium cassette is installed in the recording/playback apparatus and the contacts are therefore brought together in a reliable manner.



ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A recording medium cassette comprises a cassette case cassette case board and a release part. The cassette case board has a plurality of board terminals and also has positioning holes formed in its outer surface so as to expose the plurality of board terminals along with insertion guide channels formed consecutively at the lower ends of the positioning holes so as to reach the lower end of the cassette case. Also, a release part slopes towards the lower end of the insertion guide channel away from the outer surface. The angle of the release part with respect to the height of the cassette case is greater than the angle of an inclined portion, which spans from contact points to free end parts of resilient connector contacts set up at a recording/playback apparatus connector, with respect to the height of the cassette case, and the connector contacts do not come into contact with the release part when the recording medium cassette is installed in the recording/playback apparatus and the contacts are therefore brought together in a reliable manner.

RECORDING MEDIUM CASSETTE

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field Of The Invention:

The present invention relates to a new recording medium cassette and more particularly to a new recording medium cassette whereby a number of board terminals for transmitting each of the various items of information relating to the recording medium cassette to the side of the recording playback apparatus exposed from positioning holes formed in the external surface of the cassette case make contact in a reliable manner with connector contacts set up in the recording/playback apparatus when the recording medium cassette is installed in the recording/playback apparatus so that each of the various items of information can be read.

2. Description Of The Related Art:

With recent recording medium cassettes such as, for example, tape cassettes, each of the items of information relating to the recording medium cassette, such as the recording contents, the type of recording media and whether recording is not permissible etc., is transmitted to the side of the recording/playback apparatus. Recording medium cassettes have therefore been used where a number of terminals for transmitting each of these various items of information to the recording/playback apparatus side are exposed from the external

surface of the cassette case, so that control of recording and playback can be carried out in a way which is most appropriate for this recording media cassette.

However, one of the problems with using this kind of recording medium cassette is that when it is installed in the recording/playback apparatus, a prescribed part of the reading means on the recording/playback apparatus side, for example, the connector contacts, have to come securely into contact with a prescribed terminal on the side of the recording medium cassette.

Also, the recording medium cassette has a certain degree of freedom within the mechanism, known as the loading mechanism, for installing the recording medium cassette at a prescribed position in the recording/playback apparatus i.e. it is held with a certain amount of play to the right, left, forward and backward directions and the final installation position is decided by a position deciding mechanism.

The play of the cassette recording medium within the loading mechanism and the play in the direction of contact between the terminals and the connector contacts does not present a problem. However, shifts between the terminals and the connector contacts and shifts in the vertical direction as these contact positions are approached cause corresponding shifts in the position between the terminals and the connector contacts, which creates serious problems.

Depending on this kind of position shift, a connector contact

may fall into a terminal part which is not its corresponding terminal part and the recording medium cassette may then be installed into its prescribed position without modification. This means that the correct information concerning the recording media cassette may not be transmitted to the recording/playback apparatus side. Also, depending on the circumstances, the connector contacts may change shape if subjected to an unreasonable amount of force, which may cause serious problems such as it not being possible to read the information thereafter.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

As the present invention sets out to solve the aforementioned problems, a recording medium cassette comprises a cassette case, a cassette case board and a release part. The cassette case board has a plurality of board terminals and positioning holes are formed in the outer surface of the cassette case so as to expose the plurality of board terminals. Insertion guide channels are formed consecutively at the outer surface of the cassette case at the lower ends of the positioning holes so as to reach the lower end of the cassette case. Also, a release part slopes towards the lower end of the insertion guide channel away from the outer surface. Here, the angle of the release part with respect to the height of the cassette case is greater than the angle of an inclined portion, which spans from contact points to free end parts of resilient connector contacts set up at a recording/playback apparatus connector, with respect to the height of the cassette case, and the

connector contacts do not come into contact with the release part when the recording medium cassette is installed in the recording/playback apparatus.

Also, according to this invention, an inclined guide surface is formed at the circumferences of the positioning holes and the insertion guide channels at the outer surface of the cassette case so as to guide the connector contacts to the positioning holes and insertion guide channels.

According to this invention there is also a step which limits the lower end of the positioning holes and on which the lower end of the cassette case board rests, with the surface of the cassette case board extruding outwards to a greater extent than the front end of the step.

Further, according to this invention, a reference hole into which a reference axis for the recording playback apparatus is inserted is formed in the vicinity of the cassette case board equipped with board terminals which extrude from the positioning holes at the lower part of the cassette case.

Therefore, with the recording medium cassette in this invention, when the recording medium cassette comes down into the installation position, the connector contacts are first inputted to the input guide channels and then guided by these guide channels into the positioning holes from which the board terminals are exposed. The connector contacts are therefore accurately guided into the positioning holes for their corresponding board terminals.

Also, the incline of the release parts for the input guide channels is greater than the incline of the inclined portions of the connector contacts and the inclined portions of the connector contacts do not come into contact with the release parts of the of the input guide channels but do come into contact with a ridge at the upper end of the release parts for the input guide channels. This means that the generation of dust due to frictional rubbing between the connector contacts and the cassette case can be kept to a minimum.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a rear view of an example of an embodiment of a recording medium cassette for the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a rear enlarged view of the essential parts of this embodiment;

FIG. 3 is an inclined view of the essential parts of this embodiment viewed from slightly below;

FIG. 4 is an inclined enlarged view of the essential parts of this embodiment;

FIG. 5 is a plane enlarged view of the essential parts of the lower half of the cassette case;

FIG. 6 is a rear view of the essential parts of the lower half of the cassette case;

FIG. 7 is a cross-sectional view of taken along the line VII-VII of FIG. 5;

FIG. 8 is an enlarged plane view showing the essential parts

of the lower half of the cassette case with the cassette case board in place;

FIG. 9 is an enlarged rear view showing the essential parts of the lower half of the cassette case with the cassette case board in place;

FIG. 10 is a cross-sectional view taken along the line X-X of FIG. 8;

FIG. 11 is an enlarged plane view of the lower half of the cassette case with the accidental erasure prevention member in place;

FIG. 12 is an enlarged rear view of the lower half of the cassette case with the accidental erasure prevention member in place;

FIG. 13 is a cross-sectional view taken along the line XIII-XIII of FIG. 11;

FIG. 14 is a plane enlarged view of the essential parts of the upper half of the cassette case;

FIG. 15 is a rear view of the essential parts of the upper half of the cassette case;

FIG. 16 is a right side view of the essential parts of the upper half of the cassette case;

FIG. 17 is an enlarged plan view of the accidental erasure prevention member;

FIG. 18 is an enlarged rear view of the accidental erasure prevention member;

FIG. 19 is an enlarged right side view of the accidental erasure prevention member;

FIG. 20 is an enlarged view of the essential parts of the accidental erasure prevention member in the position where recording is permitted;

FIG. 21 is an enlarged view of the essential parts of the accidental erasure prevention member in the position where recording is not permitted;

FIG. 22 is a plan view of that shown in FIG. 21 with the upper half removed;

FIG. 23 is a cross-sectional view taken along line XXIII-XXIII of FIG. 22;

FIG. 24 is an inclined view of the essential parts of the recording/playback apparatus;

FIG. 25 is a cross-sectional view showing the essential parts of the conditions while the recording medium cassette is being installed into the cassette installation position in the recording/playback apparatus;

FIG. 26 is an enlarged view of the part XXVI of FIG. 25;

FIG. 27 is a cross-sectional view of the essential parts in FIG. 25 if the conditions in FIG. 25 continue;

FIG. 28 is an enlarged view of the part XXVIII of FIG. 27;

FIG. 29 is a cross-sectional view showing the essential parts when the recording medium cassette is installed into the cassette installation position in the recording/playback apparatus.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Embodiment

The following is a description of the details of a recording medium cassette for the present invention according to the embodiment shown in the diagrams.

In these embodiments, the present invention is applied to a tape cassette 1 for use with video tape recorders.

The numeral 2 indicates a cassette case, which when viewed from above is of a flat, rectangular, oblong box-shape. Each end of a magnetic tape is attached to and wound around two separate tape reels which are housed rotatably inside the cassette case 2, although this cannot be seen from the diagrams.

The cassette case 2 is made up of an upper half 3 and a lower half 4 which are thin plate shapes. These are then brought together so that their open sides meet.

FIG. 1 is a view of the whole of the rear surface 5 of the tape cassette 1. A row from left to right of four positioning holes 6, 6, ... is formed at the right side of the lower half of the cassette case 2.

Insertion guide channels 7, 7, ... which reach the lower surface 2a of the cassette case 2 are formed consecutively at the lower ends of the positioning holes 6, 6 at the rear surface 5 of the cassette case 2. Vertical parts 7a are also formed consecutively in the direction of the height of the cassette case 2 along the lower ends of the positioning holes 6 at the surface facing the rear of the

insertion guide channels 7. Also, inclined release parts which face downwards and are shifted forward are formed consecutively as portions 7b at the lower ends of the vertical parts 7a.

A step 6a which forms the boundary of the lower ends of the positioning holes 6 is formed continuously at the upper ends of the vertical parts 7a of the insertion guide channels 7 so as to protrude forward slightly from the vertical with respect to the height of the cassette case 2.

A side part 8 limits both sides of the portion which continues from the positioning holes 6 to the guide channel 7. A chamfer-shaped inclined guide surface 9 is then formed so as to run along the upper, side, and lower edges of the opening in the side part 8. Also, in the diagram, a flat inclined surface is shown as the inclined guide surface but a curved inclined surface is also possible.

A window 10 for preventing accidental erasure is formed in the upper half of the right end of the rear surface 5 of the cassette case 2, up from the portion in which the positioning holes 6, 6, . . . are formed.

Numeral 11 indicates a first recess formed as a label sticking region on the portion of the rear surface 5 of the cassette case 2 which does not include the portions in which the positioning holes 6, 6 . . . and the accidental erasure prevention window 10.

Numeral 12 indicates a circular arc-shaped first partition formed in the rear right-hand end part of the lower half 4 which

forms the boundary of one part of the tape reel arrangement region. One end of the first partition 12 continues from a lower rear wall 13 for the lower half 4 and the other end continues onto the right side wall 14.

Numeral 15 indicates a second recess notched up to the upper end of the inner surface of the lower rear wall 13. This is formed from the right end of the lower rear wall 13 up to the portion from where an end of the first partition 12 comes.

Numeral 16 indicates a first center wall formed so as to extend from a position approximately at the center of the first partition 12 in a direction towards the rear. The rear end of this wall finishes slightly before the second recess 15. There is also a first inclined edge 17a which rises from the front formed at the upper end of the rear edge 17 of the first center wall 16.

Numerals 18a and 18b indicate first and second presser walls set up so as to come from the surface of the lower wall 19 of the lower half 4 and these are positioned so as to leave a slight gap with the inner wall of the second recess 15. Their rear surfaces 20, 20 are therefore in the same plane as the first center wall 16 and the rear edge 17. There are also front rising inclined surfaces 20a, 20a at the upper end parts of the rear surfaces 20 and 20 of the first and second presser walls 18a and 18b. A receiving channel 21 is then formed between the inner surface of the second recess 15, the rear surfaces 20, 20 of the first and second presser walls 18a and 18b, and the rear edge 17 of the first center wall 16.

Also, the extent of the exposure from the lower wall surface 19 of the first and second presser walls 18a and 18b is less than half that of the exposure from the lower wall surface 19 of the lower rear wall 13.

The positioning holes 6, 6, ... are formed so as to be in communication with the second recess 15 formed in the lower rear wall 13. The upper ends of these positioning holes 6, 6, ... come to an end slightly down from the upper end of the lower rear wall 13. Also, the lower ends of the positioning holes 6, 6, ... are bounded by the step 6a and the inner end of the step 6a is bounded by the rear face 20 of the first presser wall 18a.

Numeral 22 indicates a first limiting wall which extends to the right out from a position approximately at the center of the first center wall 16 with regards to the direction from front to back to as far as the right side wall 14. A lower hub 23 is then formed as a protrusion going forward from this right end part.

Numeral 24 indicates an insertion guide hole formed in the right end part of a portion surrounded by the lower wall surface 19 of the lower rear wall 13, the right side wall 14, the first center wall 16 and the first limiting wall 22. This insertion guide hole 24 is positioned just to the rear side of the lower hub 23.

Numeral 25 indicates a circular arc-shaped second partition which bounds one part of the tape reel arrangement region formed at the right end of the rear of the upper half 3 so as to correspond with the position of the first partition 12 in the lower half 4. One

end of this second partition 25 continues from the upper half 3 of the upper rear wall 26 and the other end continues on from the right side wall 27.

Numerical 28 indicates a third recess notched up to the lower end of the inner surface of the upper rear wall 26. This is formed from the right end of the upper rear wall 26 up to the portion from where an end of the second partition 25 comes from it. This is formed so as to correspond with the second recess 15 of the lower half 4.

Numerical 29 indicates a second center wall extending out in the rear direction from a portion at the approximate center of the second partition 25, the rear end edge 30 of which stops just slightly to the near side of the third recess 28, with the lower end part of this rear end edge 30 being inclined so as to rise at the front as a second inclined edge 30a. This second center wall 29 is also formed so as to correspond with the position of the first center wall 16 of the lower half 4.

Numerical 31 indicates a third presser wall which comes down perpendicularly from a top wall surface 32 of the upper half 3, so as to fall between the second center wall 29 and one end of the second partition 25. Its rear surface 33 falls within the same plane as the rear end edge 30 of the second center wall 29 and a receiving channel 34 is formed between this rear surface 33 and the third recess 28. Also, at the lower end of the rear surface 33 of the third presser wall 31 there is an inclined surface 33a which

slopes at the front. Further, the extent to which this third presser wall 31 protrudes from the top wall surface is approximately a fifth of that of the protrusion of the upper rear wall 26 from the top wall surface 32.

Numeral 35 indicates a second limiting wall which extends from a position towards the rear end of the second center wall 29 in the right direction as far as the right side wall 27. The extent of its protrusion from the top wall surface 32 is approximately the same as the extent of the protrusion of the upper rear wall 26 from the top wall surface 32.

A first notch 36 is formed at the lower end part of the front surface of the second limiting wall 35 so as to run along its entire length. Also, first and second click channels 37a and 37b which extend upwards and downwards are formed positioned at two places, one in the approximate center with respect to the right and left directions of the front surface of the portion excluded from the first notch 36 and one at the center of this center and the right end.

The numeral 38 indicates an upper hub which drops down from the roof wall surface 32 at a position just slightly to the front of the right end part of the second limiting wall. This is formed so that its position corresponds with the lower hub 23 of the lower half.

Numeral 39 indicates a slightly elongated second notch formed in the right end of the upper rear wall 26. When the upper

and lower halves 3 and 4 are then joined, the accidental erasure prevention window 10 is formed from this second notch 39 and the upper edge of the lower rear wall 13 for the lower half 4.

Numerical 40 indicates a rectangular cassette case board, the height of which is about half that of an IC mounting part 41 which is in the shape of an elongated rectangle elongated across its width, and the width of which is slightly less than that of the IC mounting part 41. This is formed as a single item together with a terminal arrangement part 42 which protrudes from the lower half of the right end of the IC mounting part 41 in the right-hand side direction. An IC 43 is mounted on the front surface of the IC mounting part 41 and a plurality of vertical board terminals 44, 44, ... are arranged from left to right on the rear surface of the terminal arrangement part 42. These board terminals 44, 44, ... are then connected to IC 43.

The lower end part of this cassette case board therefore slots into the receiving channel formed in the lower half 4. When the lower and upper halves 3 and 4 are then joined together, the upper end of the IC mounting part 41 for the cassette case board 40 slots into the receiving channel 34 formed in the lower half 3. In this way, the cassette case board 40 is arranged in the rear right part of the cassette case 2. The cassette case board terminals 44, 44, ... for the cassette case board 40 are then each individually exposed in the rear direction from the positioning holes 6, 6, ... formed in the lower rear wall 13 of the lower half 4.

The lower end of the terminal arrangement part 42 of the cassette case board 40 arranged within the cassette case 2 in the above way rests on the step 6a of the part in which the positioning holes 6, 6, ... are formed. However, the rear surface of the terminal arrangement part i.e. the surface in which the board terminals 44, 44, ... are formed projects slightly from the rear end of the step 6a (refer to FIG. 26 etc.).

Numerical 45 indicates an accidental erasure prevention member which is made from a slightly resilient composite resin.

Numerical 46 indicates the main part of the accidental erasure prevention member 45, which when viewed from behind appears as a flat-shaped rectangle with its long sides pointing upwards. A third notch 47 is also formed so as to run along the entire length of the lower end part of the main part 46.

Numerical 48 indicates a display part which is formed so as to be exposed slightly in a direction going towards the rear from approximately the upper half of the main part 46. A rib-shaped finger catch 49 extends up and down along the right-end part of the front surface of this display part 48 so as to protrude from it. The front surface of the display part 48 is also painted red.

Numerical 50 indicates a circular board-shaped open/close stopper, which is formed so as to protrude forwards from the right-end part of the lower end of the main part 46.

Numerical 51 indicates a rib which sprouts from the upper surface of the open/close stopper 50 and is of a height which is

approximately half that of the main part 46. Also, a clicker 52 protrudes in an upward direction from the front half of the upper surface of the rib 51 in such a manner that when the rear surface of this clicker 52 is viewed from above it appears as a circular arc.

The installation of an accidental erasure prevention member 45 into a cassette case 2 is carried out in the following way.

First, the lower half of the accidental erasure prevention member 45 i.e. the portion which is lower than the display part 48 is arranged within the space 53 which is surrounded by the lower rear wall 13, right side wall 14, first partition 12 and first center wall 16 of the lower half 4. At this time, the upper surface 47a of the third notch 47 in the accidental erasure prevention member 45 rests on the upper edge of the first presser wall 18a in the lower half 4. Also, the finger catch 49 is positioned within the accidental erasure prevention window 10.

If the upper half 3 and lower half 4 are then joined together in these circumstances, the limiting wall 35 for the upper half 3 is inserted between the upper half of the main part 46 of the accidental erasure prevention member 10 and the clicker 52. In this way, the front surface of the upper half of the main part 46 comes into contact with the limiting wall 35 in such a manner that shifting of the accidental erasure prevention member 45 in the forward direction is restricted.

In this way, the erasure prevention member 45 is fitted

within the cassette case 2 so as to be shiftable in the left and right directions within the space 53. i.e. the accidental erasure prevention material 45 is installed so as to be shiftable between the left end of the shiftable range, i.e. the position where the open/close stopper 50 is stopped by the insertion guide hole 24 of the cassette case 2 so that recording is not possible, and the right end of the shifting range, where the open/close stopper 50 is positioned out from the insertion guide hole 24 of the cassette case 2 so as to be released from the insertion guide hole 24 and make recording possible.

So, when the accidental erasure prevention member 45 is in the recording prevention position, the clicker 52 is up against the click channel 37a on the right-hand side. When it is in a position which allows recording, the clicker 52 is up against the right side click channel 37b. Both of these positions are such that the click stop is activated. Also, when shifting from the recording not permitted position to the recording permitted position, or when shifting from the recording permitted position to the recording not permitted position, the clicker 52 is slack and is brought out of the first or second click channel 37a or 37b depending on the force applied to shifting the accidental erasure prevention member 45.

Numerals 54 indicate a connector which is set up at the recording playback apparatus and has a plurality of connector contacts 55, 55, ... which come into contact with the board terminals 44, 44 of the tape cassette 1. The connector contacts 55,

55 are made from a conductive wire spring material with one lot of ends being fixedly supported by the case 56 and the other ends 57 being free.

The portions of the connector contacts 55 which approach the free end 57 are bent into the shape of a bent arm, with the bent portion which protrudes to the greatest extent 58 being the point of contact. This is then inclined in an upward direction towards the rear from the contact point 58 to the upper portion 59.

The free end 57 is made up of a horizontal part 57a which is extended horizontally from the upper end of the inclined portion 59 towards the rear and a stop part 57b which rises straight up from the rear end of the horizontal part 57a.

Torque is exerted on the free end 57 in the forward direction due to the elasticity of the material used for the connector contacts 55. When not in contact, the position is limited due to the stopper 57b coming into contact with a stopper step 60 formed at the upper end of the case 56 (see FIG. 25). Therefore, at the time shown in FIG. 25 when contact is not made, the angle θA which the inclined portions 59 of the connector contacts 55 make with respect to the height of the cassette case 2 is smaller than the angle θB that the release portion 7b of the insertion guide channel 7 for the cassette case 2 makes with respect to the height of the cassette case 2. For example, θA is taken to be about 250 and θB is set in the region of 300.

Further, numeral 61 indicates a reference axis set up in the

recording/playback apparatus and numeral 62 indicates a reference hole formed as an opening in the lower surface 2a of the cassette case 2 at the lower hub 23. Therefore, when the tape cassette 1 is installed in the recording/playback apparatus, the position of the tape cassette 1 within the recording/playback apparatus is stabilized due to the slotting of the reference axis 61 into the reference hole 62, and more particularly, the position is decided in the horizontal and vertical directions. Also, a number of these reference axes 61 and reference holes 62 for this kind of item may be set up at the recording playback apparatus and the tape cassette 1.

When the tape cassette 1 is lowered down into the cassette installation part of the recording/playback apparatus, the contact points 58, 58, ... of the connector contact terminals 55, 55, ... for the connector 54 reach the positioning holes 6, 6, ... after having been guided by the insertion guide channels 7, 7, ... of the cassette case 2. They are then guided by the positioning holes 6, 6, ... so as to each separately come into contact with the board terminals 44, 44, ... of the cassette case board 40. In this way, the reading part of the recording/playback apparatus which is connected to the connector contacts 55, 55, ... and which is not shown in the diagram can read the information recorded in the IC 43.

An explanation will now be given of the conditions for the board terminals 44, 44, ... of the tape cassette 1 to come into contact with the connector contacts 55, 55, ... when the tape

cassette 1 is installed in the recording playback apparatus.

When the tape cassette 1 comes down, the inclined portions 59, 59 of the connector contacts 55, 55, ... enter into the insertion guide channels 7, 7, ... At this time, as mentioned previously, the tape cassette 1 has a certain degree of freedom within the loading mechanism. i.e. it is supported with a certain amount of play to the right, left, front and back. This means that the connector contacts 55, 55, ... can shift to a certain extent to the left and right with respect to the insertion guide channels 7, 7, ... and the positioning holes 6, 6, ... Also, a chamfer-shaped inclined guide surface 9 which runs along the upper, side, and lower edges of the opening in the side part 8 which limits both sides of the portion which continues from the positioning holes 6 to the guide channel 7 is formed, which makes for a substantial enlargement in the horizontal direction of the region in which the positioning holes 6, 6, ... and the insertion guide channels 7, 7, ... are formed. Therefore, even if there are slight shifts in the left and right directions with regards to the insertion guide channels 7, 7, ... for the connector contacts 55, 55, ... or the positioning holes 6, 6, ..., the connector contacts 55, 55 are guided safely into the insertion guide channels 7, 7, ... and the positioning holes 6, 6, ... by the inclined guide surface 9, 9, ...

The parts of the cassette case which the connector contacts 55, 55, ... initially come into contact with are the vertical parts 7a, 7a, the release portion 7b, 7b, ... and the ridges 7c of the

insertion guide channels 7, 7 (see FIG. 26). Here, the relationship between the angle θA of the inclined portion 59 of the connector contacts 55 and the angle θB of the release portions 7b is $\theta A < \theta B$, as mentioned above. In this way, as the connector contacts 55, 55, ... start by coming into contact with the ridges 7c, 7c, ... first, the sliding distance between the cassette case 2 made of a composite resin material and the connector contacts 55, 55 made from metal can be kept to a minimum, as can the generation of dust due to wear.

Next, the surfaces formed by the board terminals 44, 44, . . . of the cassette case board 40 protrude slightly from the rear end of the step 6a. The connection points 58, 58, ... of the connector contacts 55, 55 ... therefore come into contact with the lower edge 40a of the surfaces formed by the board terminals 44, 44, ... of the cassette case board 40 (see FIG. 28). In this way, the contact points 58, 58, ... are cleaned.

Finally, when the tape cassette 1 is installed in the prescribed cassette installation position, the connection points 58, 58, ... of the connector contacts 55, 55, ... come into contact with the board terminals 44, 44, ... (see FIG. 29).

Therefore, as becomes clear from the above, in the present invention a recording medium cassette comprises a cassette case, a cassette case board and a release part. The cassette case board has a plurality of board terminals and positioning holes are formed in the outer surface of the cassette case so as to expose the

plurality of board terminals. Insertion guide channels are formed consecutively at the outer surface of the cassette case at the lower ends of the positioning holes so as to reach the lower end of the cassette case. Also, a release part slopes towards the lower end of the insertion guide channel away from the outer surface. Here, the angle of the release part with respect to the height of the cassette case is greater than the angle of an inclined portion, which spans from contact points to free end parts of resilient connector contacts set up at a recording/playback apparatus connector, with respect to the height of the cassette case, and the connector contacts do not come into contact with the release part when the recording medium cassette is installed in the recording/playback apparatus.

As a result, according to the recording medium cassette in this invention, when the recording medium cassette comes down into the installation position, the connector contacts are first inputted to the insertion guide channels and are then guided by these guide channels into the positioning holes from which the board terminals are exposed. The connector contacts are therefore accurately guided into the positioning holes for their corresponding board terminals.

Also, the incline of the release parts for the insertion guide channels is greater than the incline of the inclined portions of the connector contacts and the inclined portions of the connector contacts do not come into contact with the release parts of the

insertion guide channels but do come into contact with a ridge at the upper end of the release parts for the guide input channels. This means that the generation of dust due to frictional rubbing between the connector contacts and the cassette case can be kept to a minimum.

The detailed forms and structures for each of the parts shown for the aforementioned embodiment are just a small sample of the specific ways in which this invention can be carried out and the technology in this invention is by no means limited to this interpretation.

THE EMBODIMENTS OF THE INVENTION IN WHICH AN EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY OR PRIVILEGE IS CLAIMED ARE DEFINED AS FOLLOWS:

1. A recording medium cassette for insertion into a recording/playback apparatus comprising:
 - a cassette case;
 - a cassette case board having a plurality of board terminals and disposed in the cassette case;
 - positioning holes formed in an outer surface of the cassette case so as to expose the plurality of board terminals;
 - a plurality of insertion guide channels being formed in the outer surface aligned at lower ends of the positioning holes so as to reach a bottom edge of the cassette case; and
 - a release part sloping towards lower ends of the insertion guide channels and sloping away from the outer surface of the cassette case, wherein an angle of the release part with respect to a height of the cassette case is greater than an angle of an inclined portion, which extends from contact points provided at the free end parts of resilient connector contacts formed in a recording/playback apparatus connector, with respect to the height of the cassette case so that the connector contacts do not come into contact with the release part when the recording medium cassette is installed in the recording/playback apparatus.
2. The recording medium cassette according to claim 1, further comprising an inclined guide surface formed at circumferences of the positioning holes and the insertion guide channels at the outer surface of the cassette case in such a manner as to guide the connector contacts to the positioning holes and the insertion guide channels.
3. The recording medium cassette according to claim 2, further comprising a step which defines the lower ends of the positioning holes and on which the lower end of the cassette case board rests, with a surface of the cassette case board extending outwardly to a greater extent than a front end of the step.

4. The recording medium cassette according to claim 3, further comprising a reference hole into which a reference insertion member for the recording/playback apparatus is inserted formed in the vicinity of the cassette case board equipped with the board terminals which extend from the positioning holes at a lower part of the cassette case.
5. The recording medium cassette according to claim 1, further comprising a step which defines the lower ends of the positioning holes and on which the lower end of the cassette case board rests, with a surface of the cassette case board extending outwardly to a greater extent than a front end of the step.
6. The recording medium cassette according to claim 1, further comprising a reference hole into which a reference insertion member for the recording playback apparatus is inserted formed in the vicinity of the cassette case board equipped with the board terminals which extend from the positioning holes at a lower part of the cassette case.

A

FIG. 2

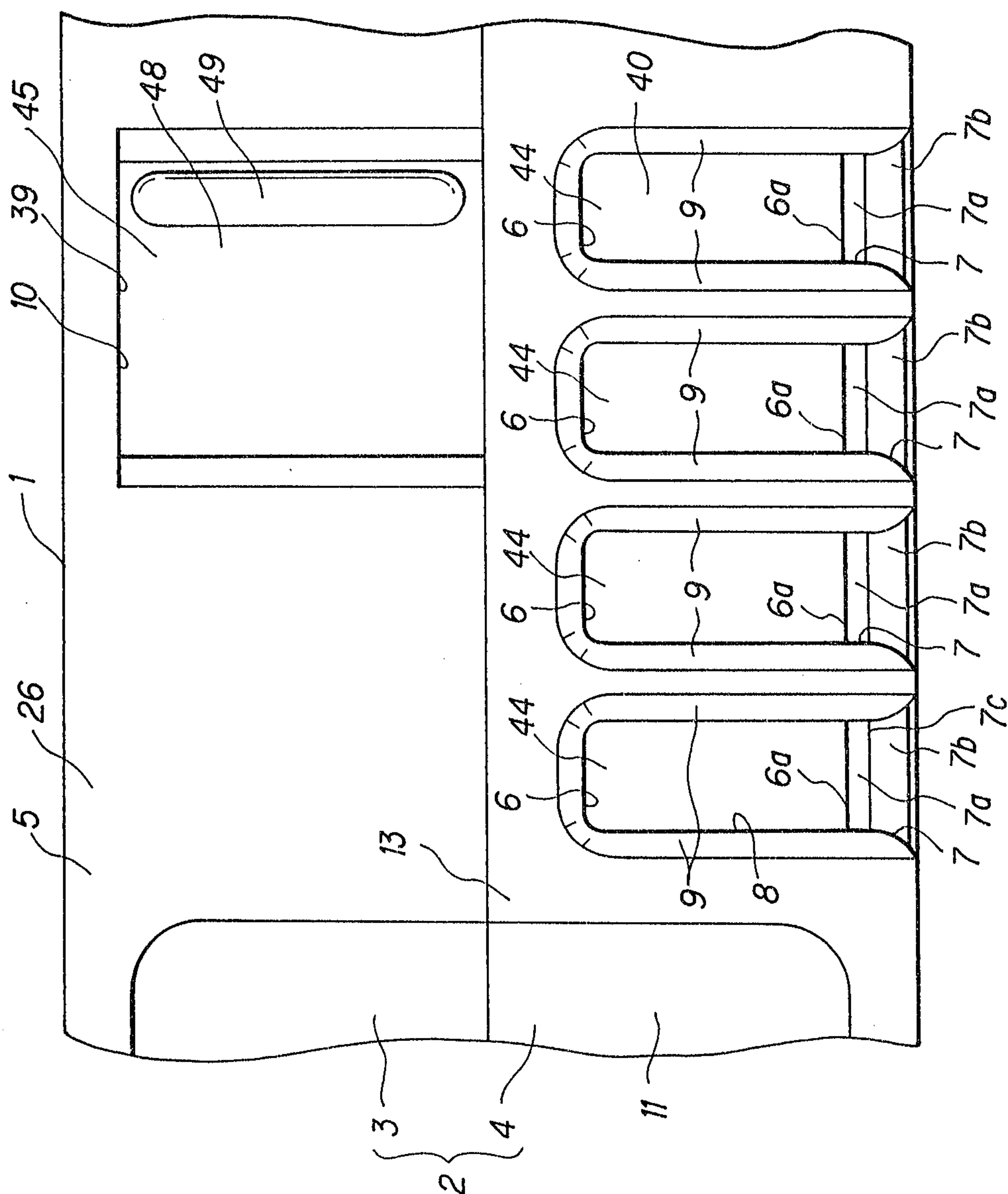
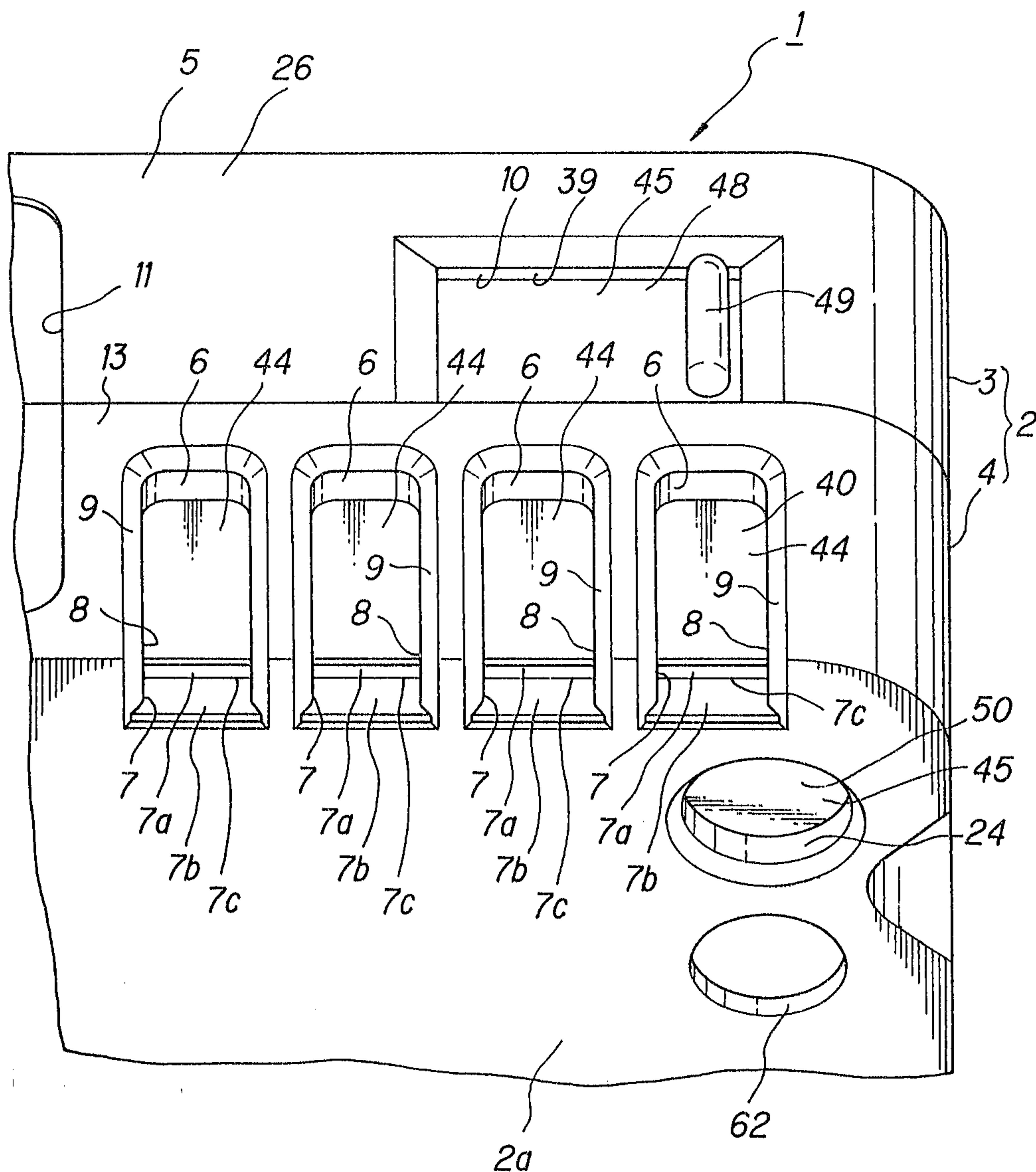


FIG. 3



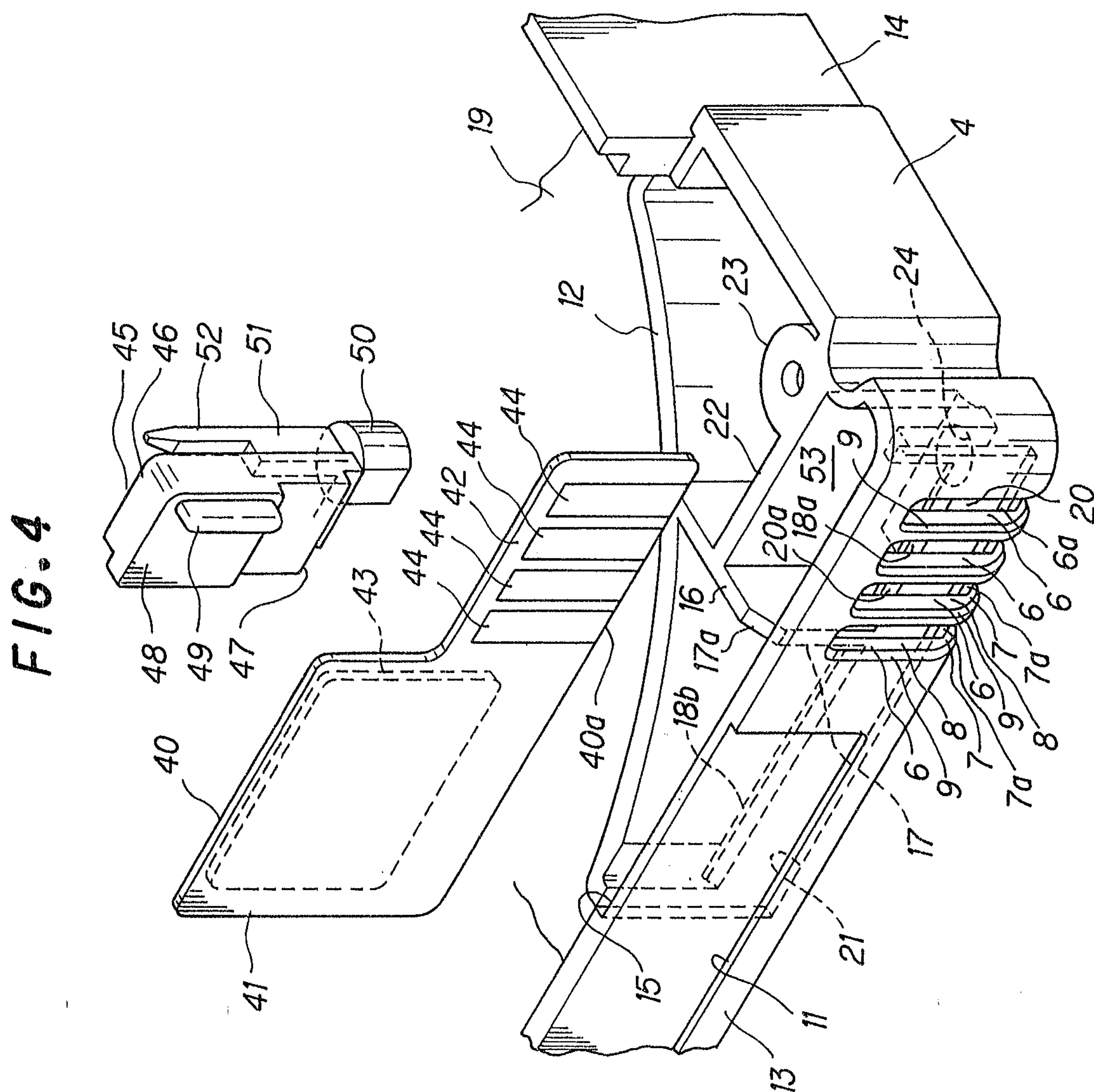


FIG. 5

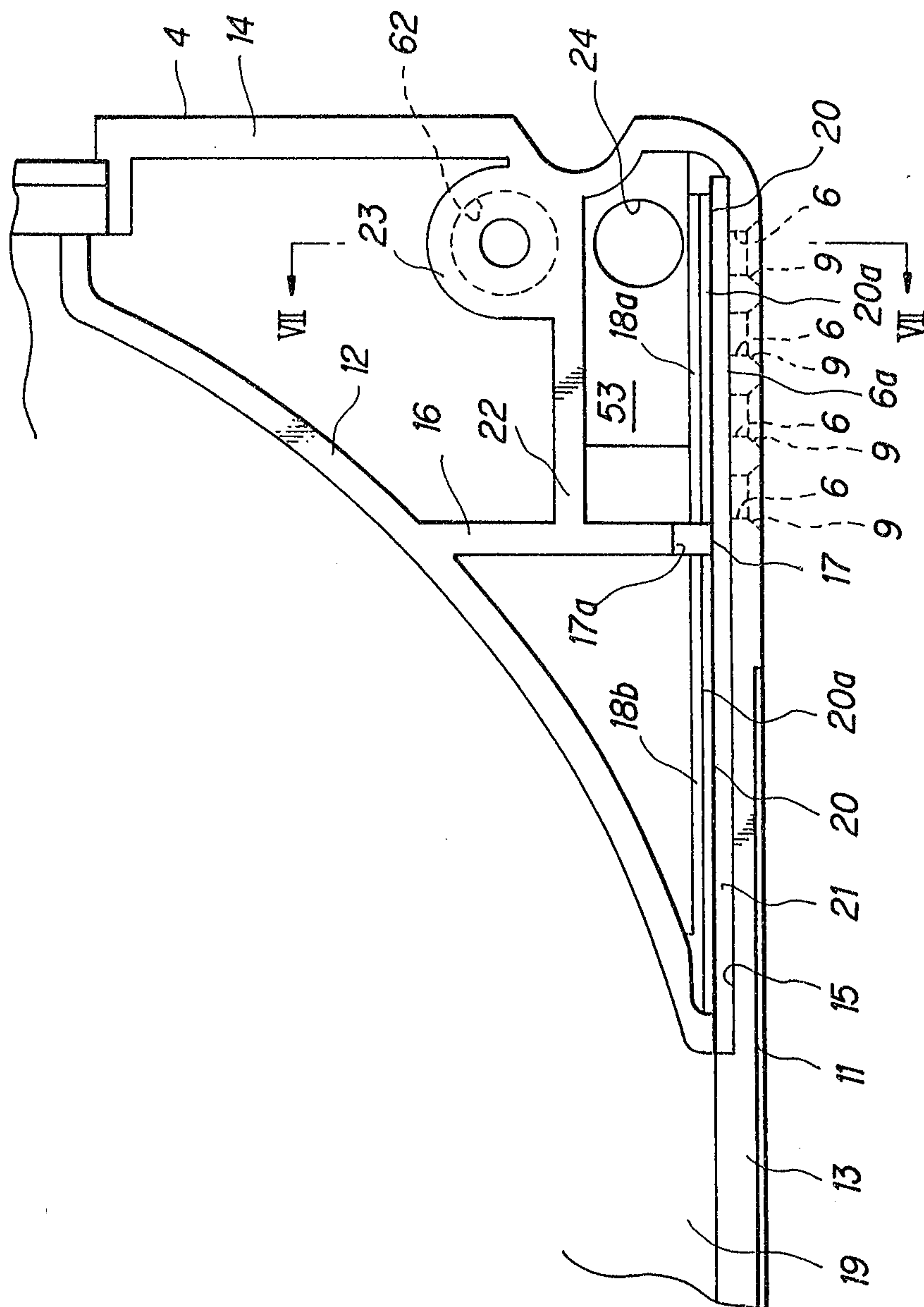


FIG. 6

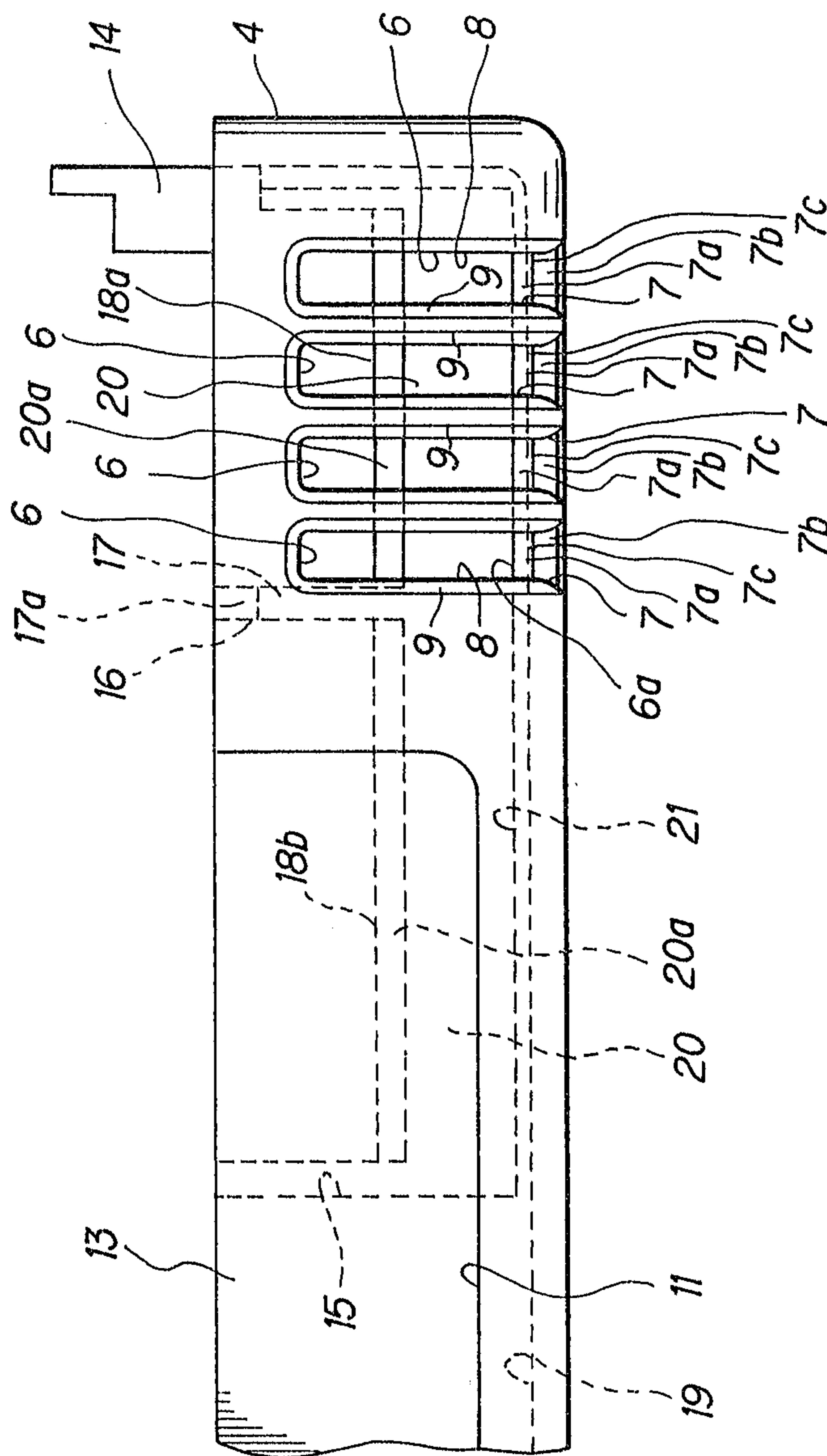


FIG. 7

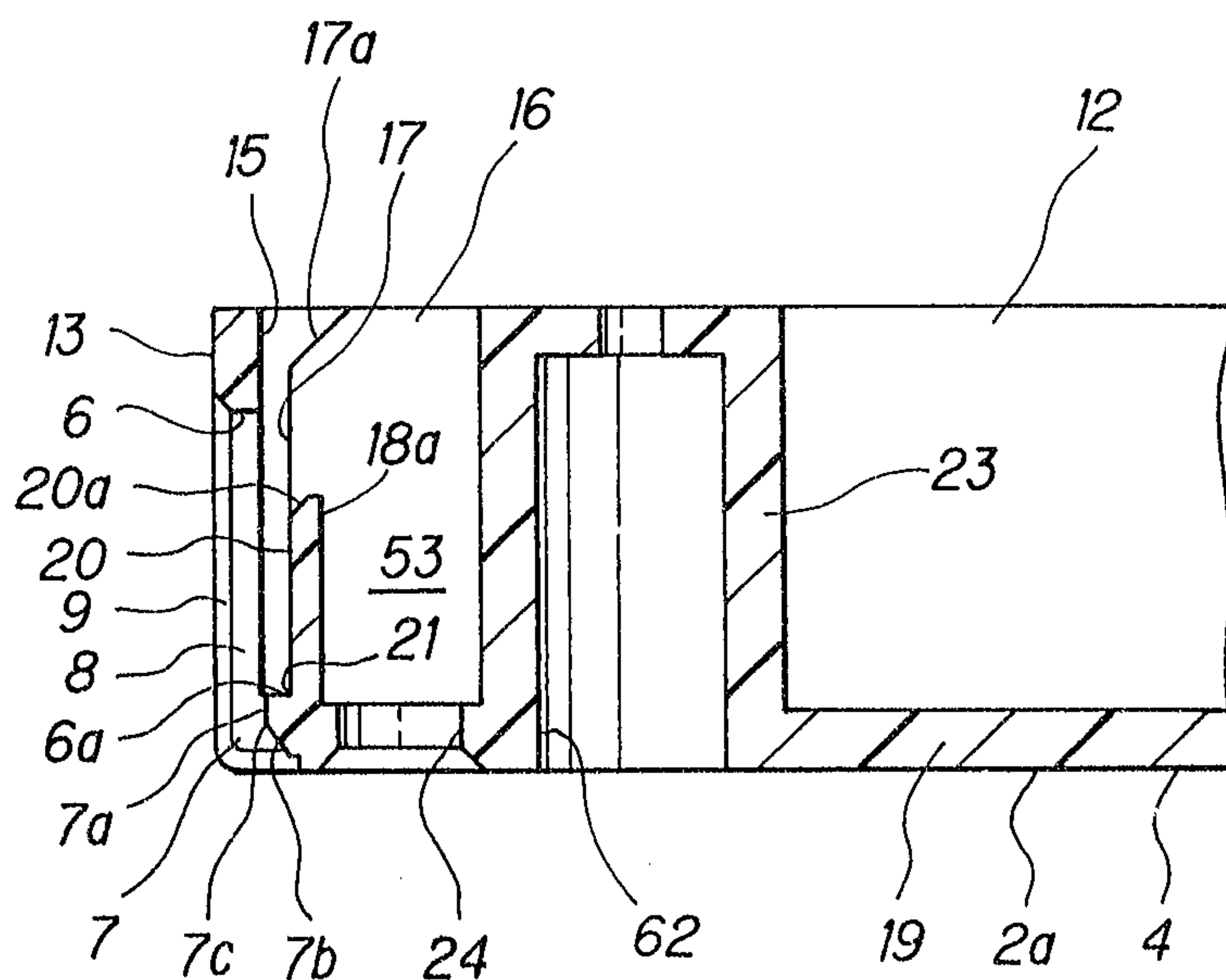


FIG. 9

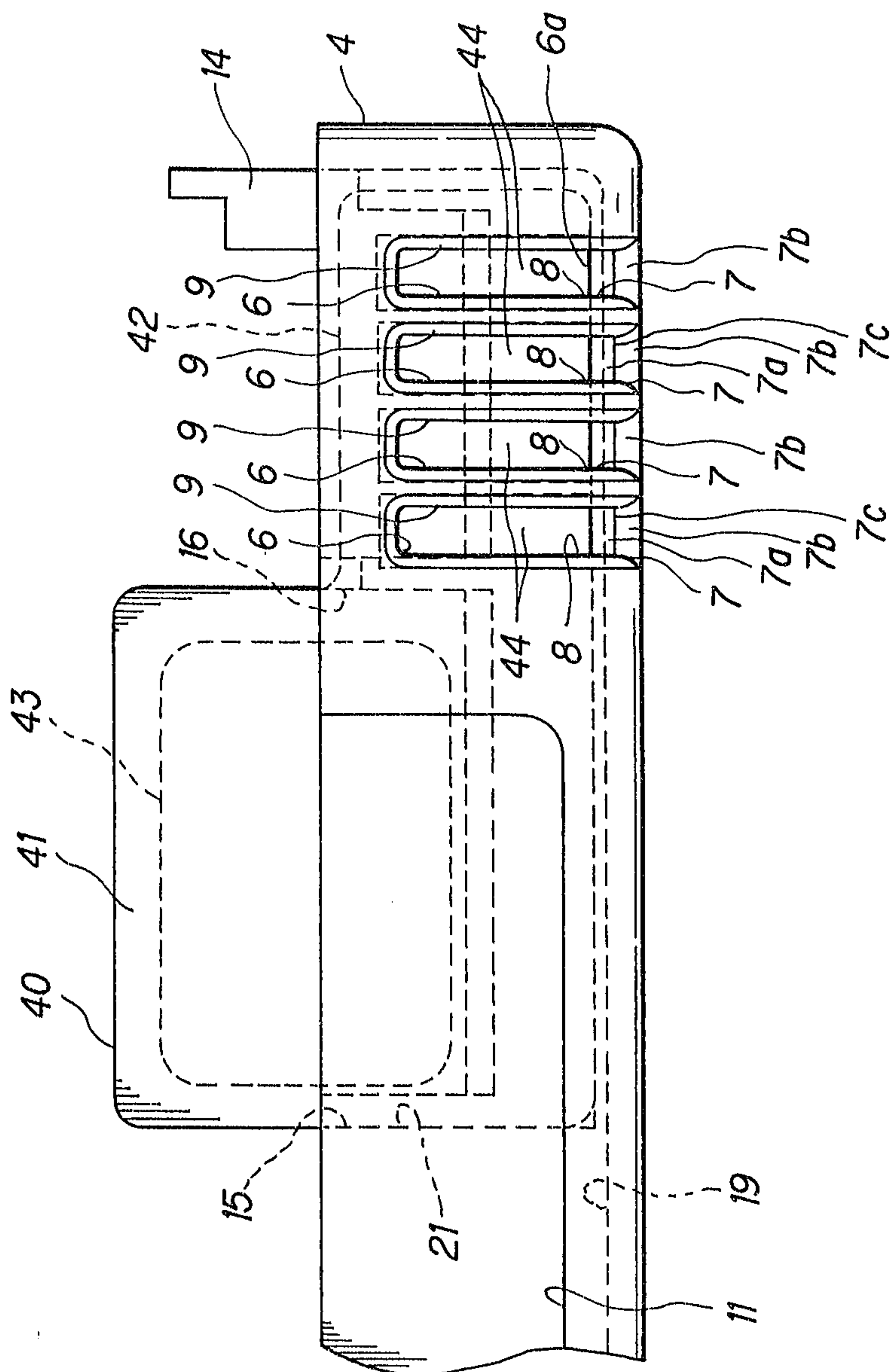


FIG. 10

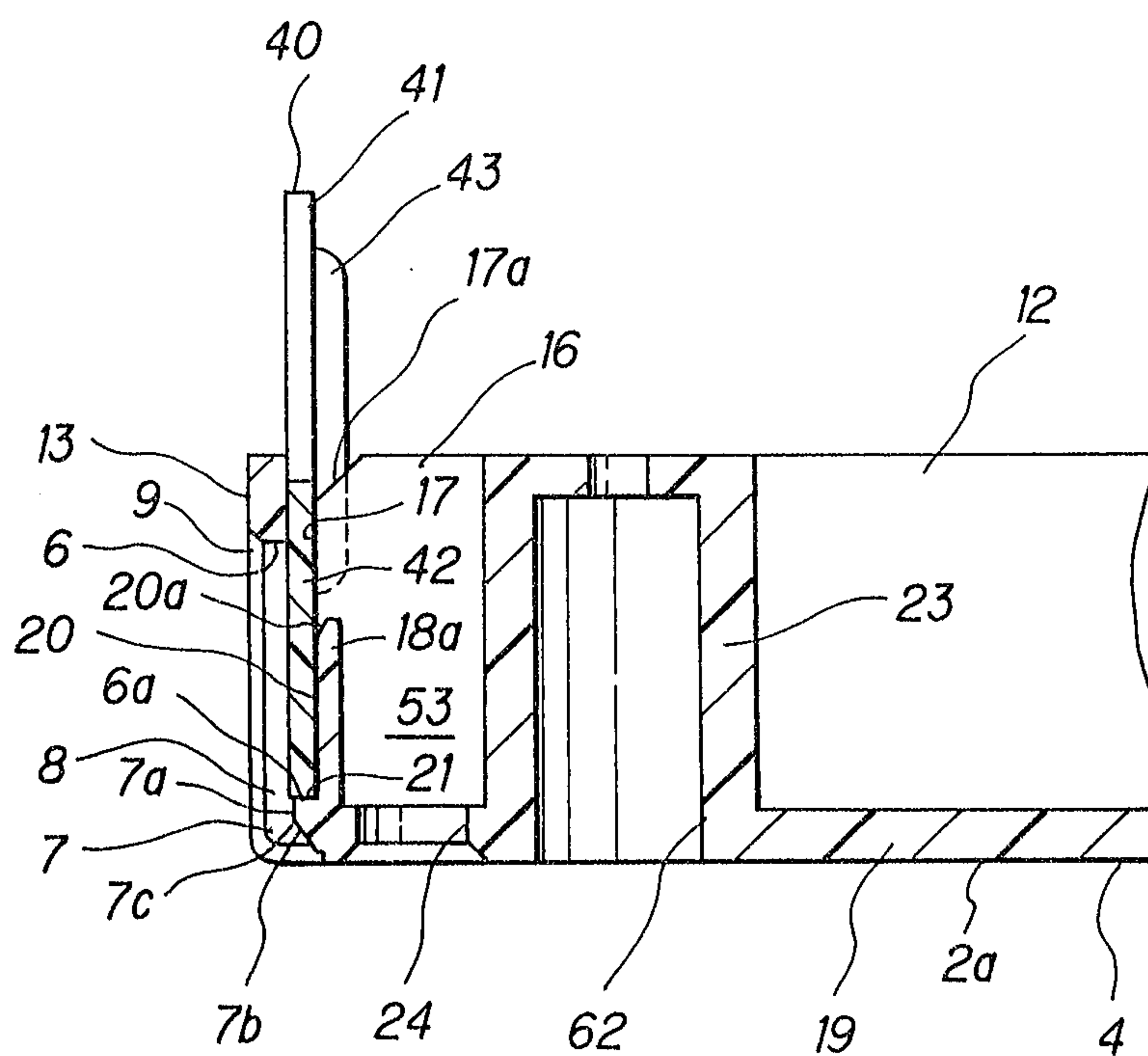


FIG. 11

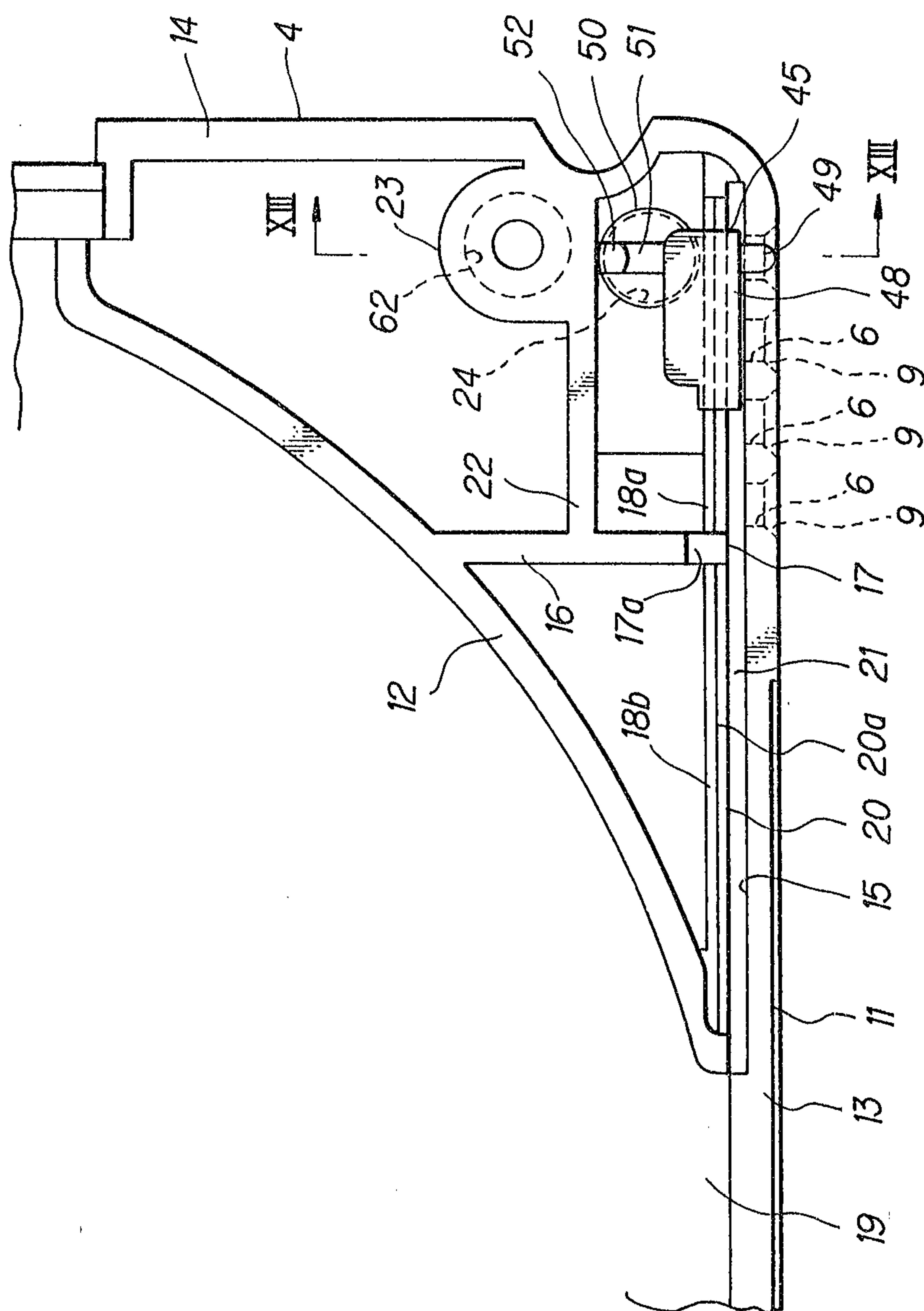


FIG. 12

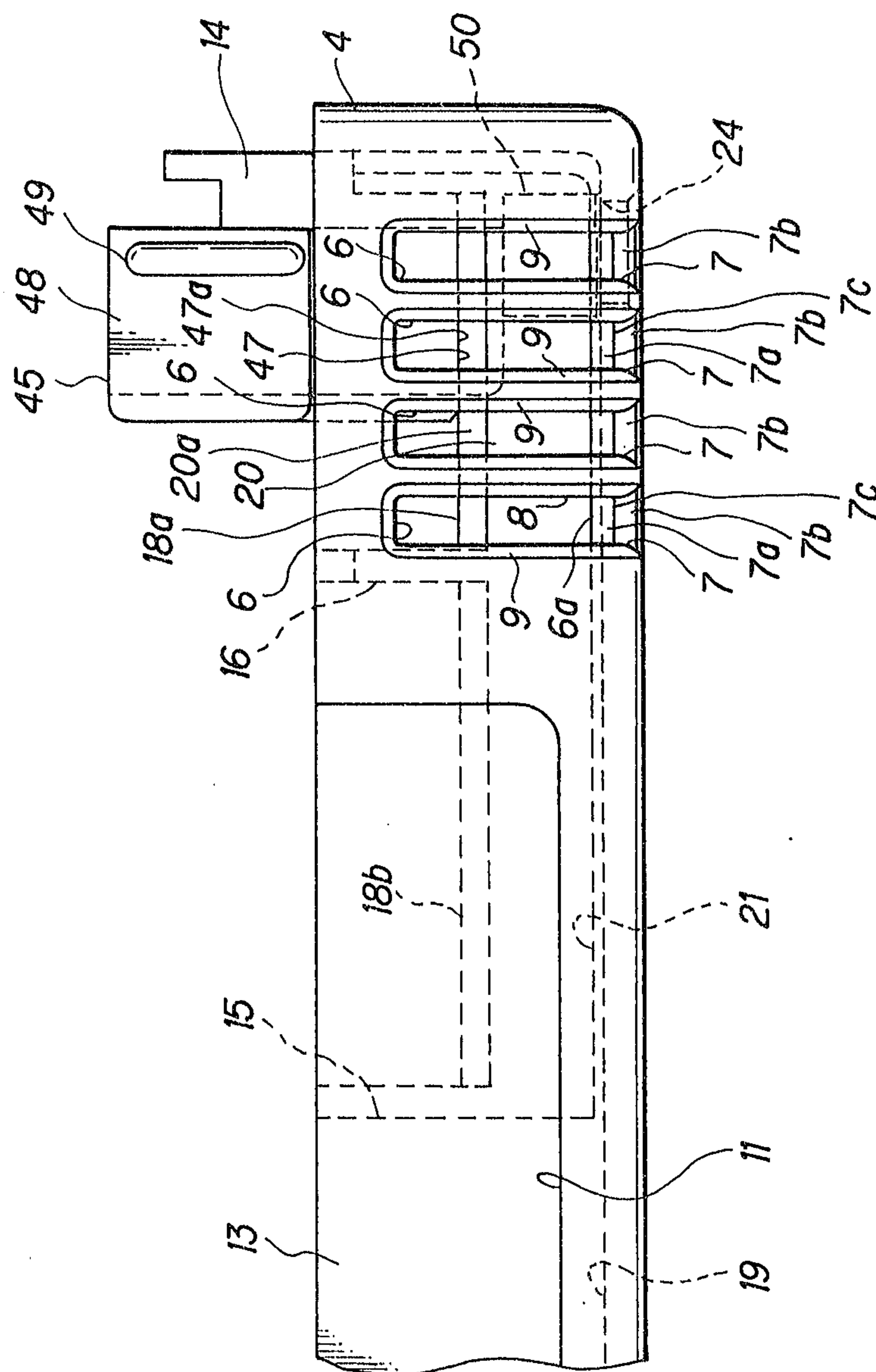


FIG. 13

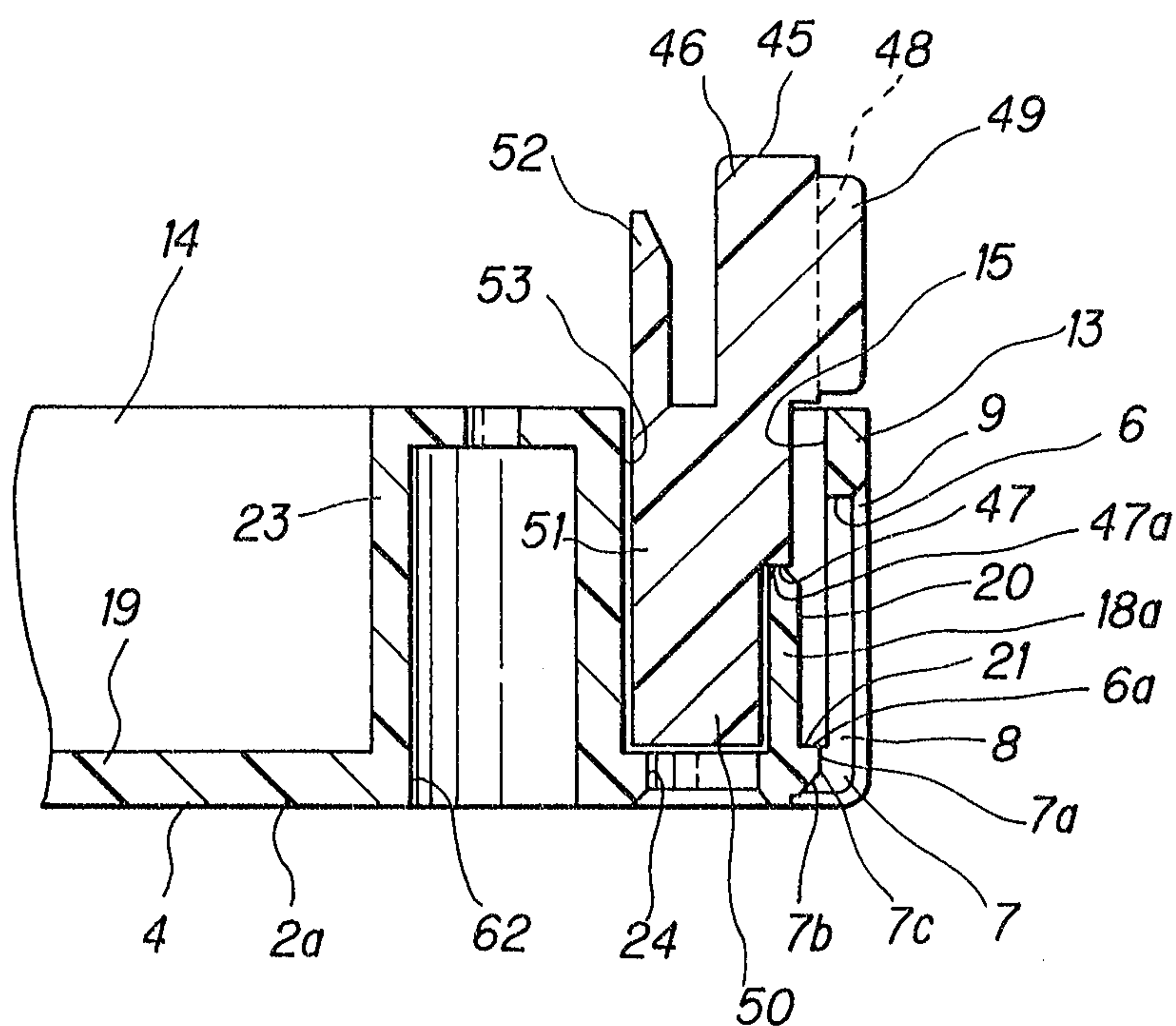


FIG. 14

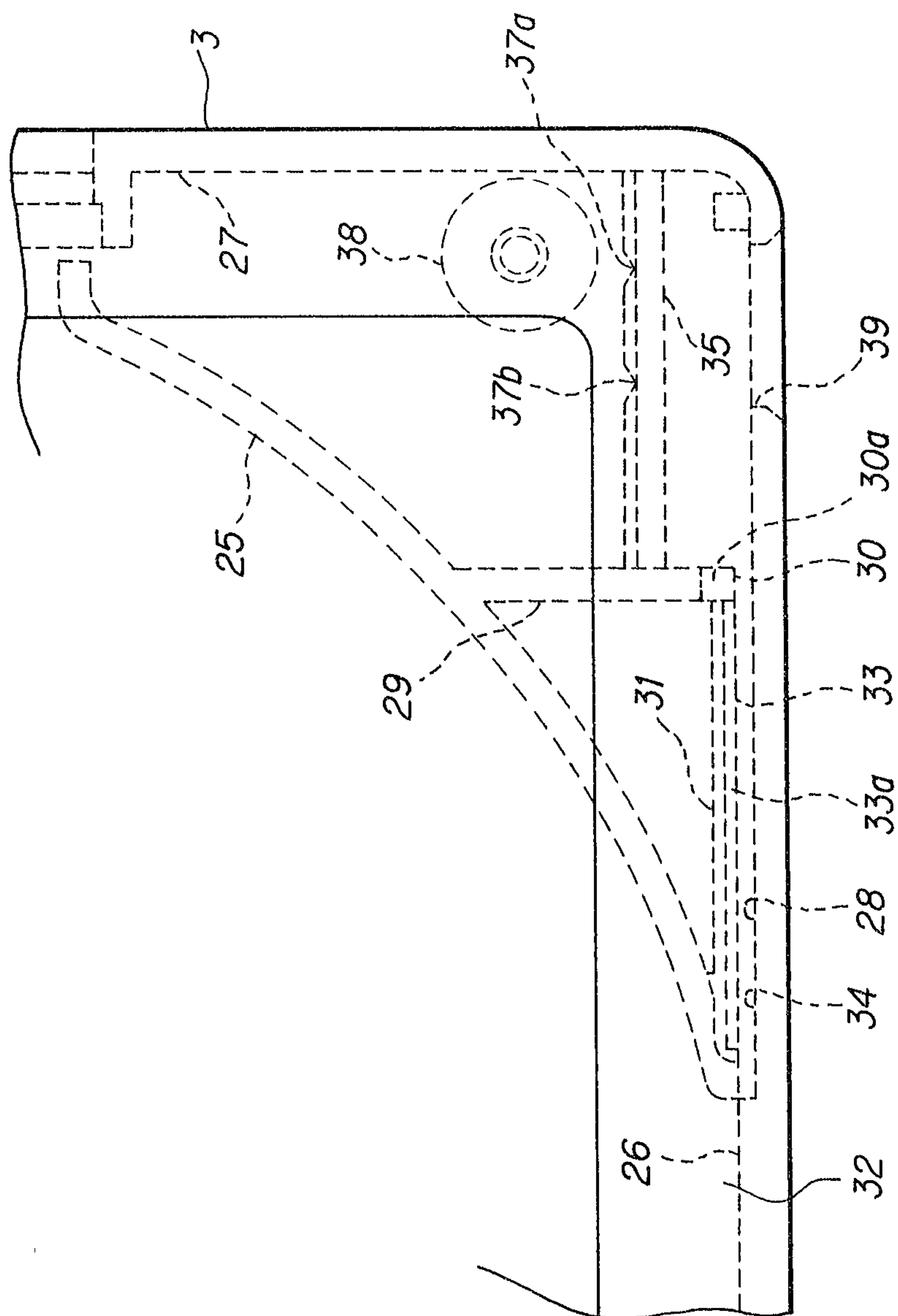


FIG. 15

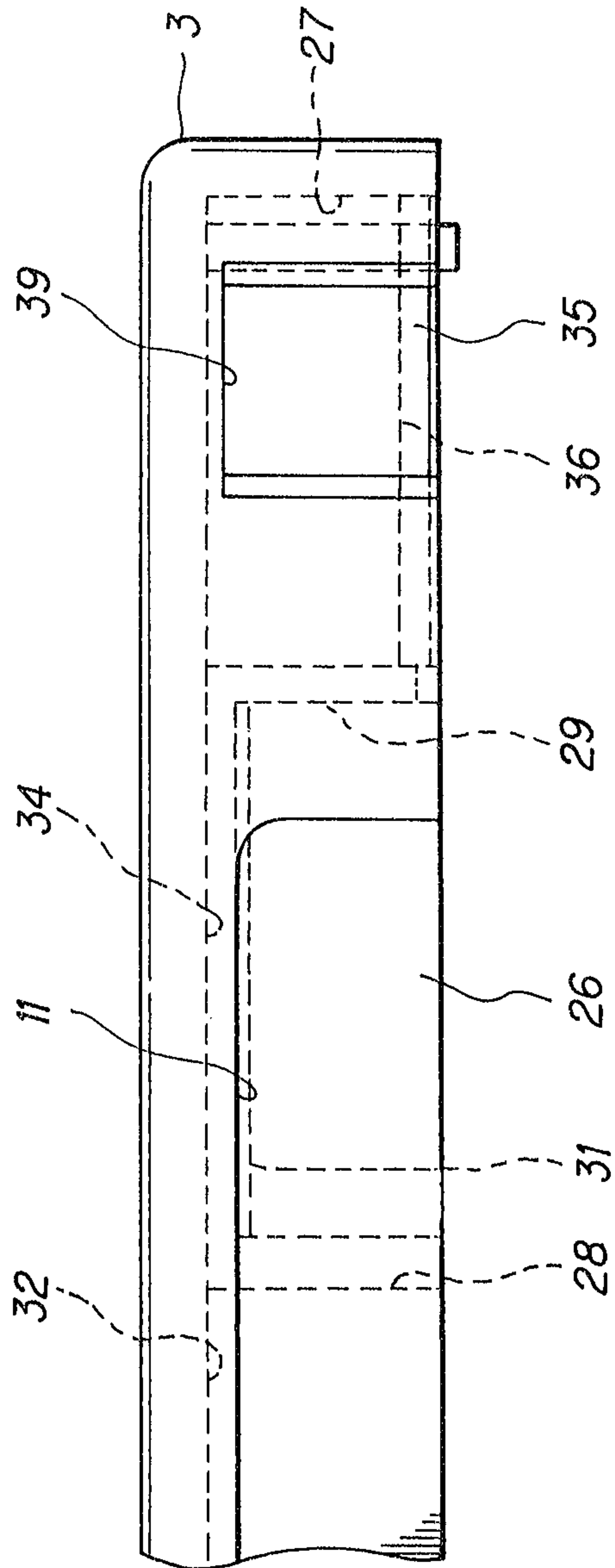


FIG. 16

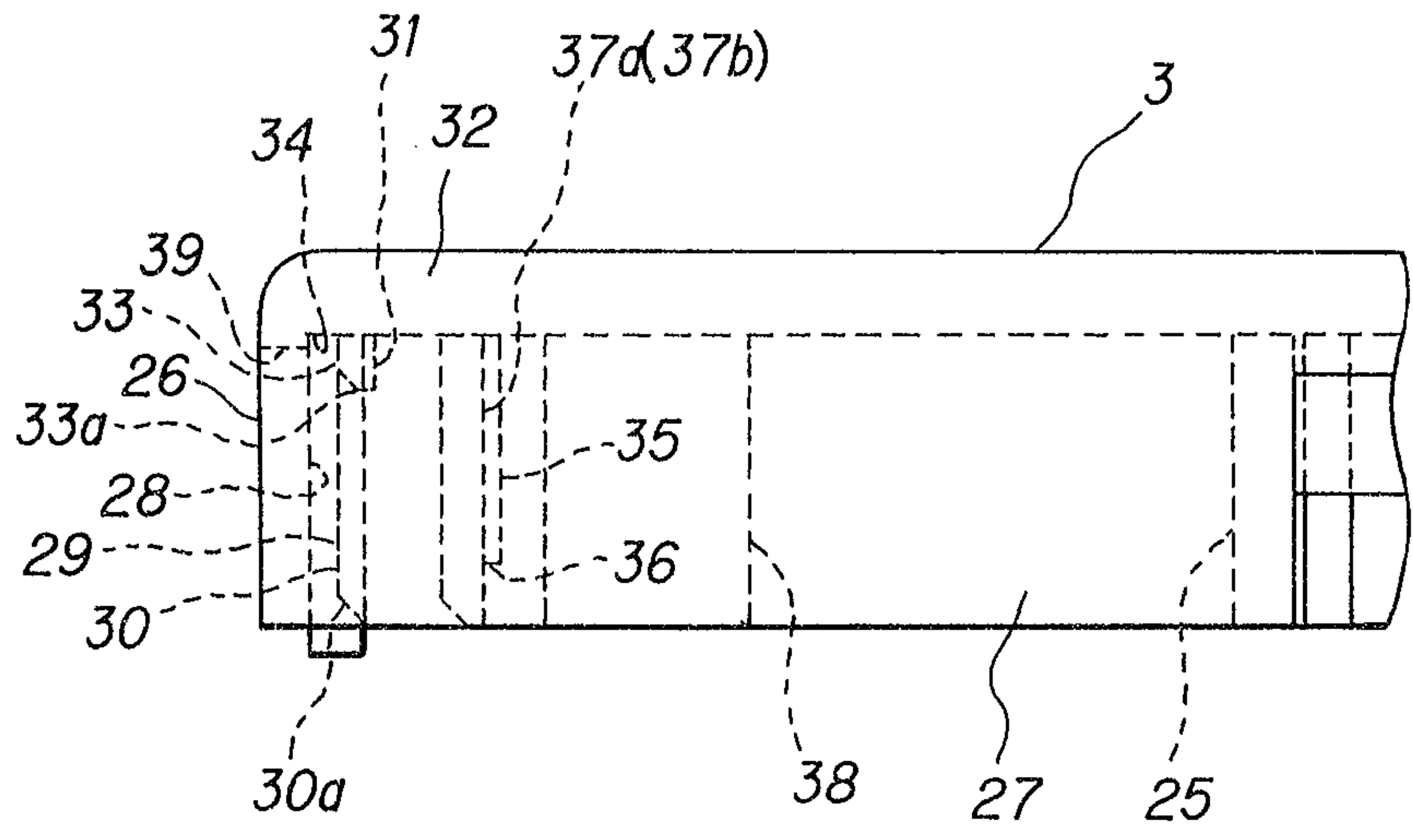


FIG. 17

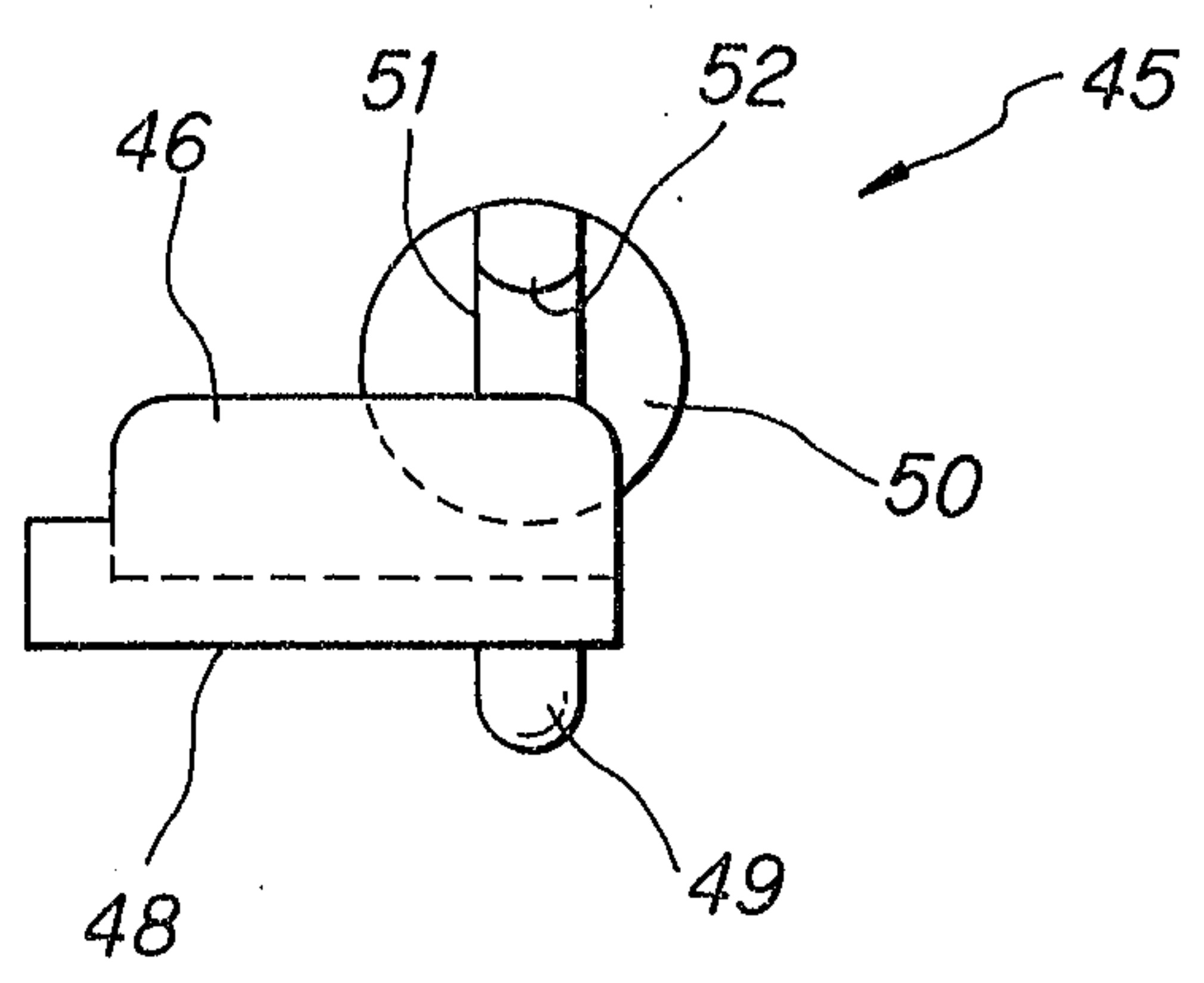


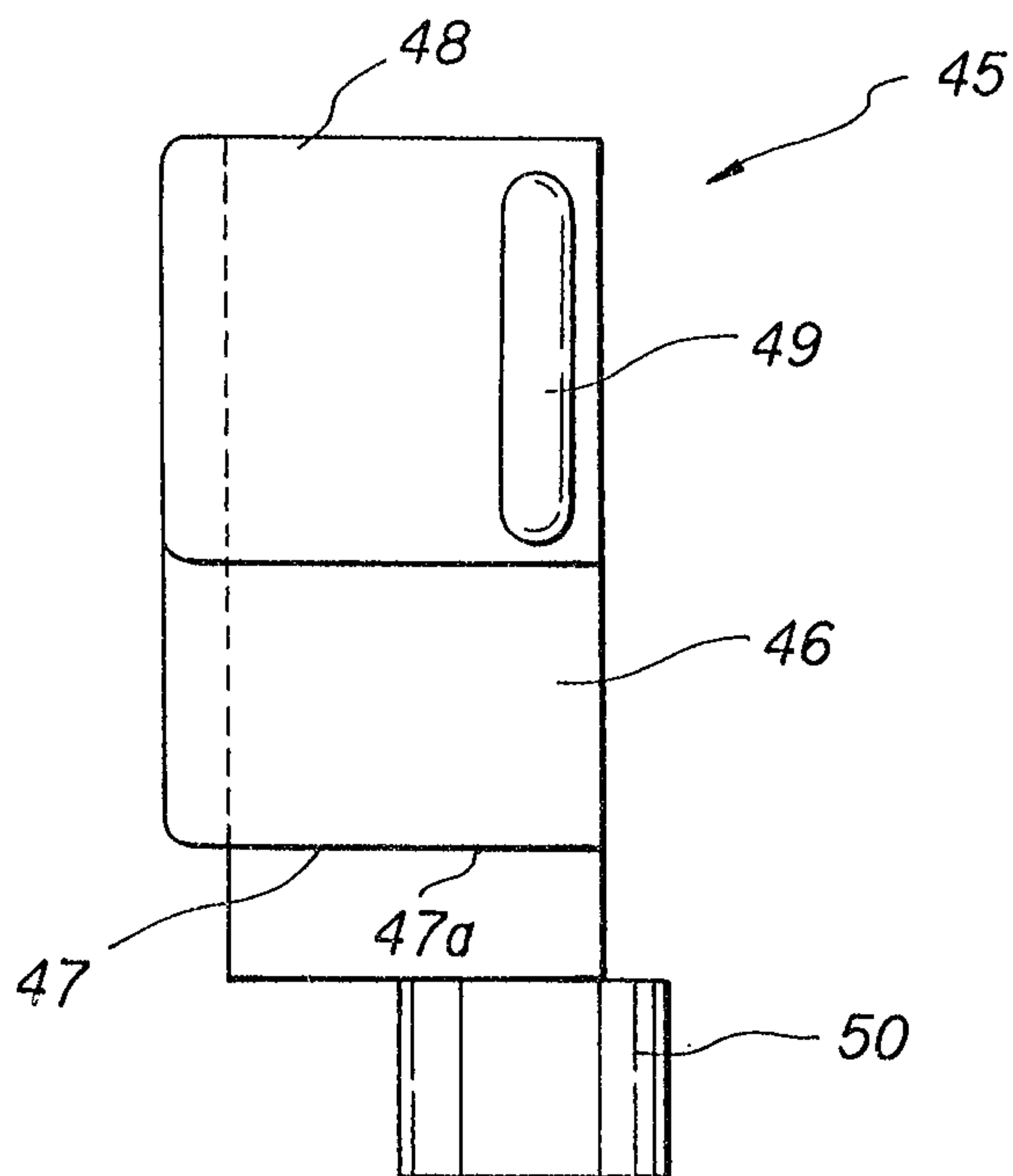
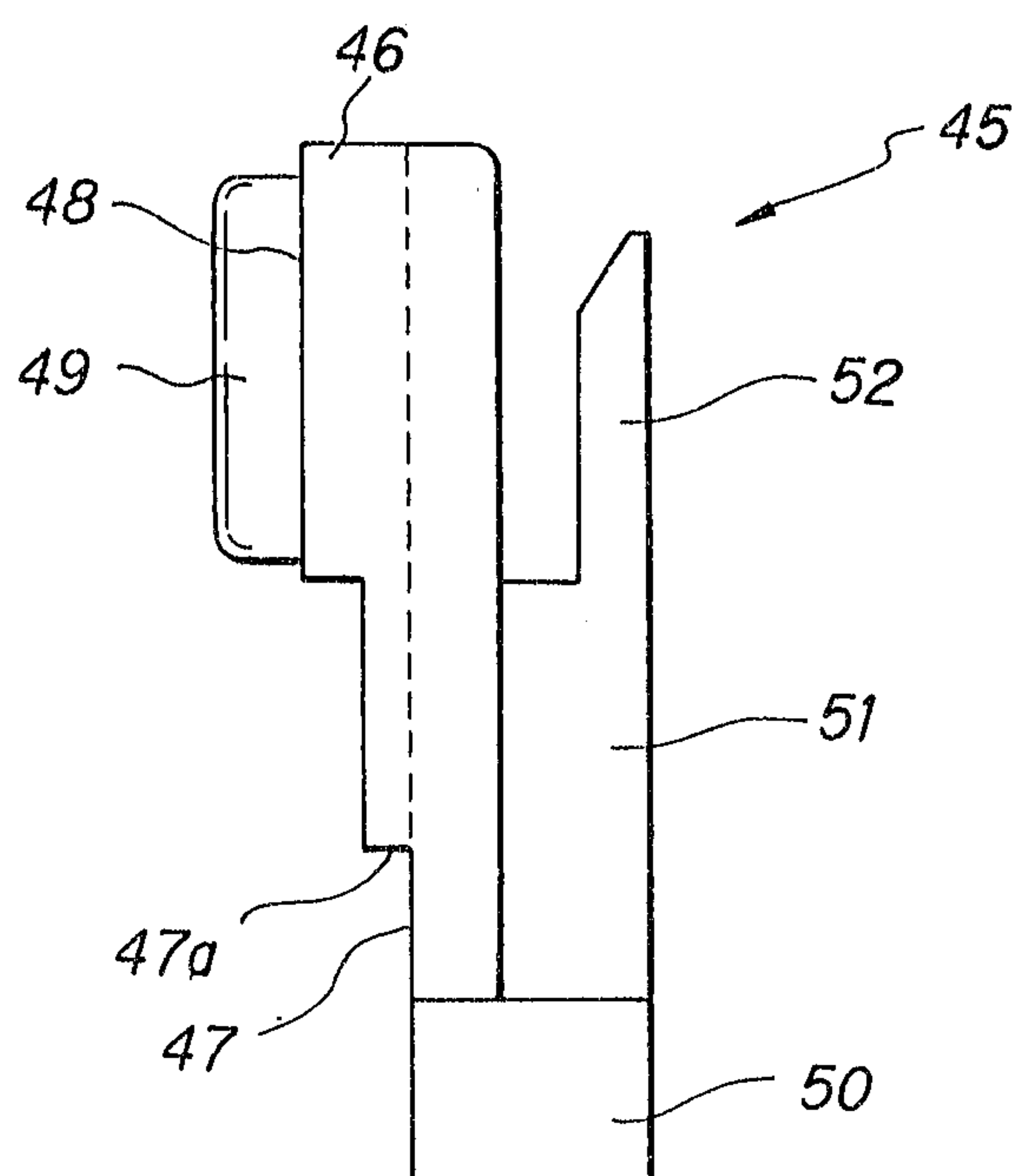
FIG. 18**FIG. 19**

FIG. 20

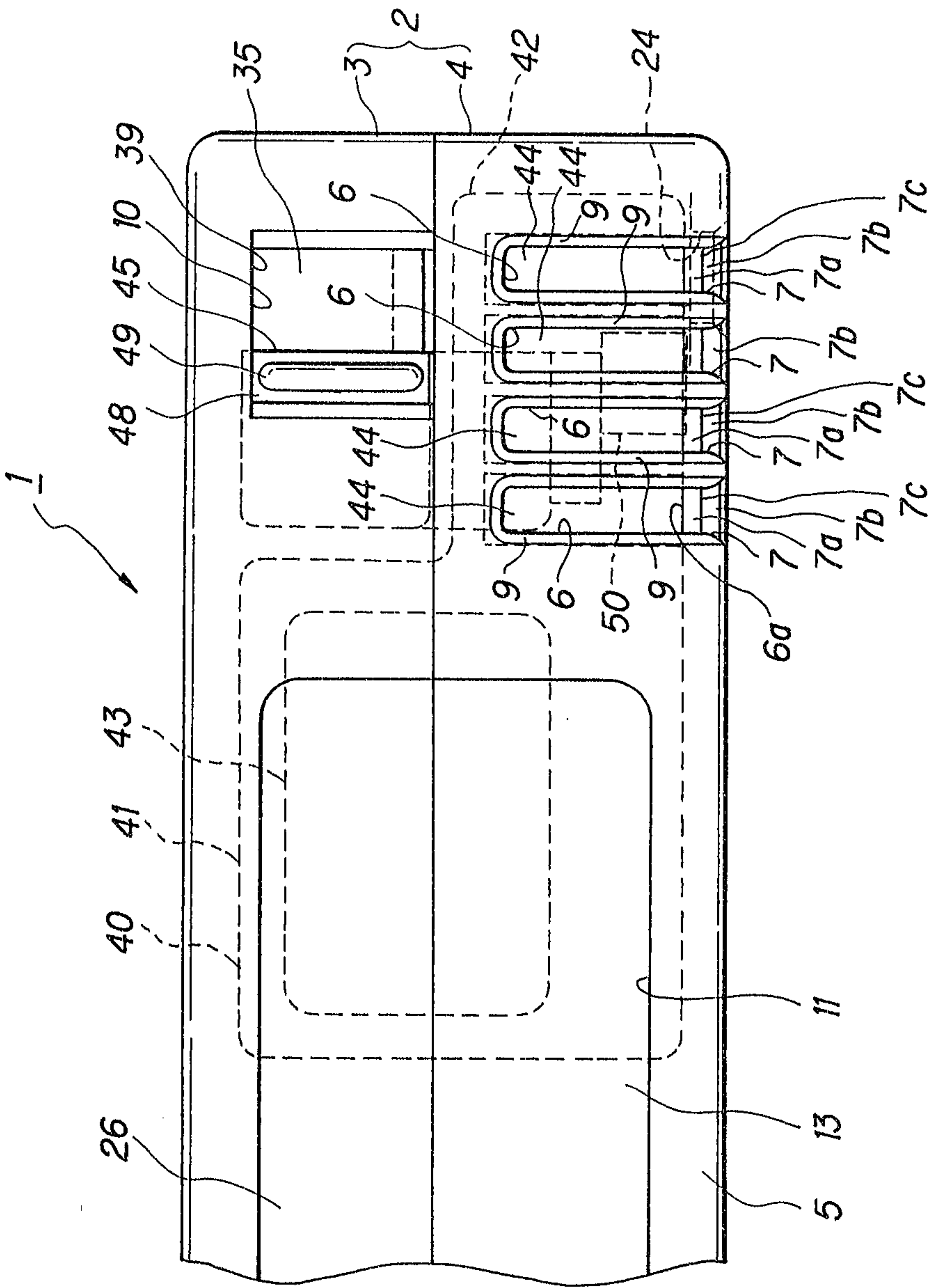


FIG. 22

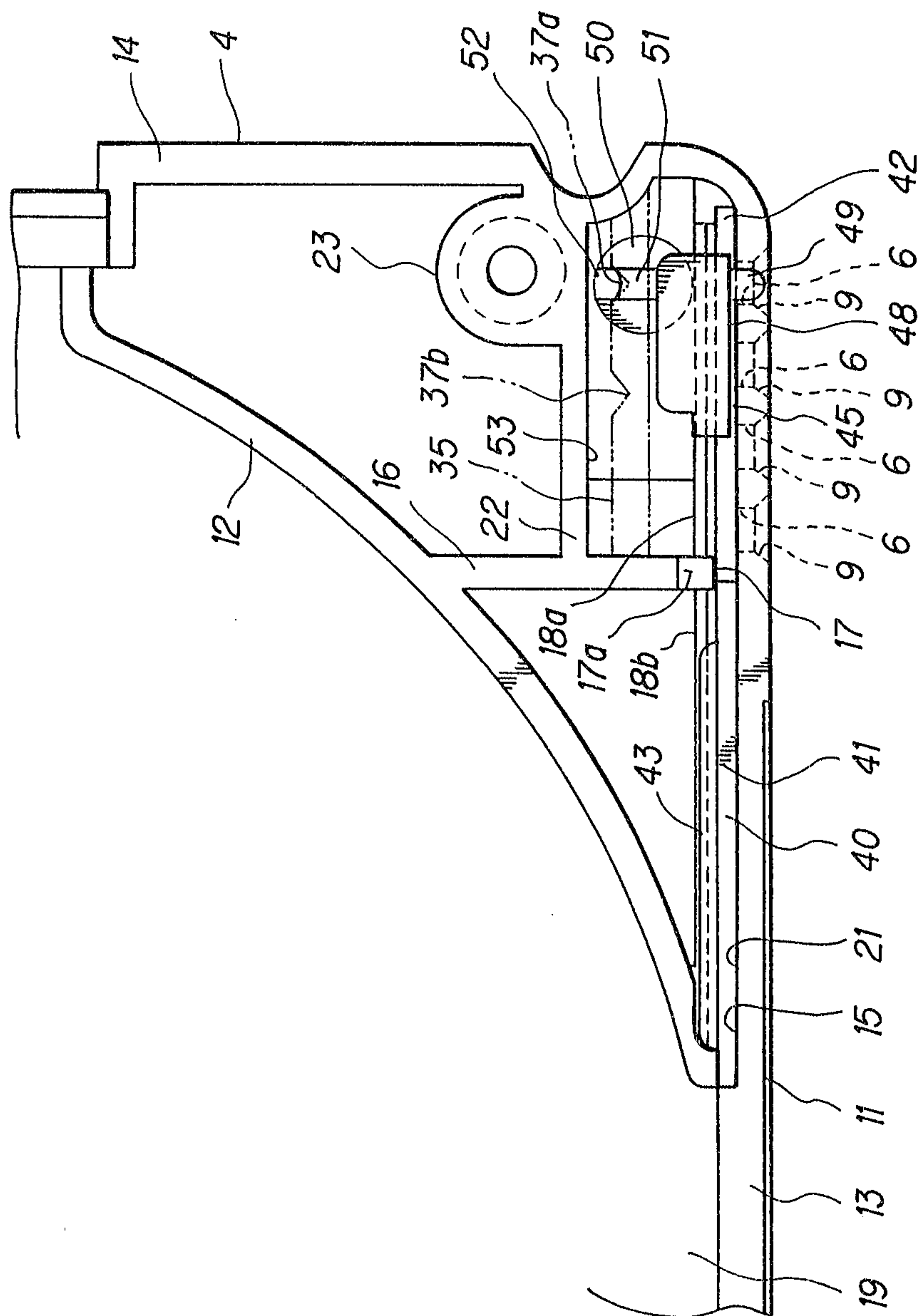


FIG. 24

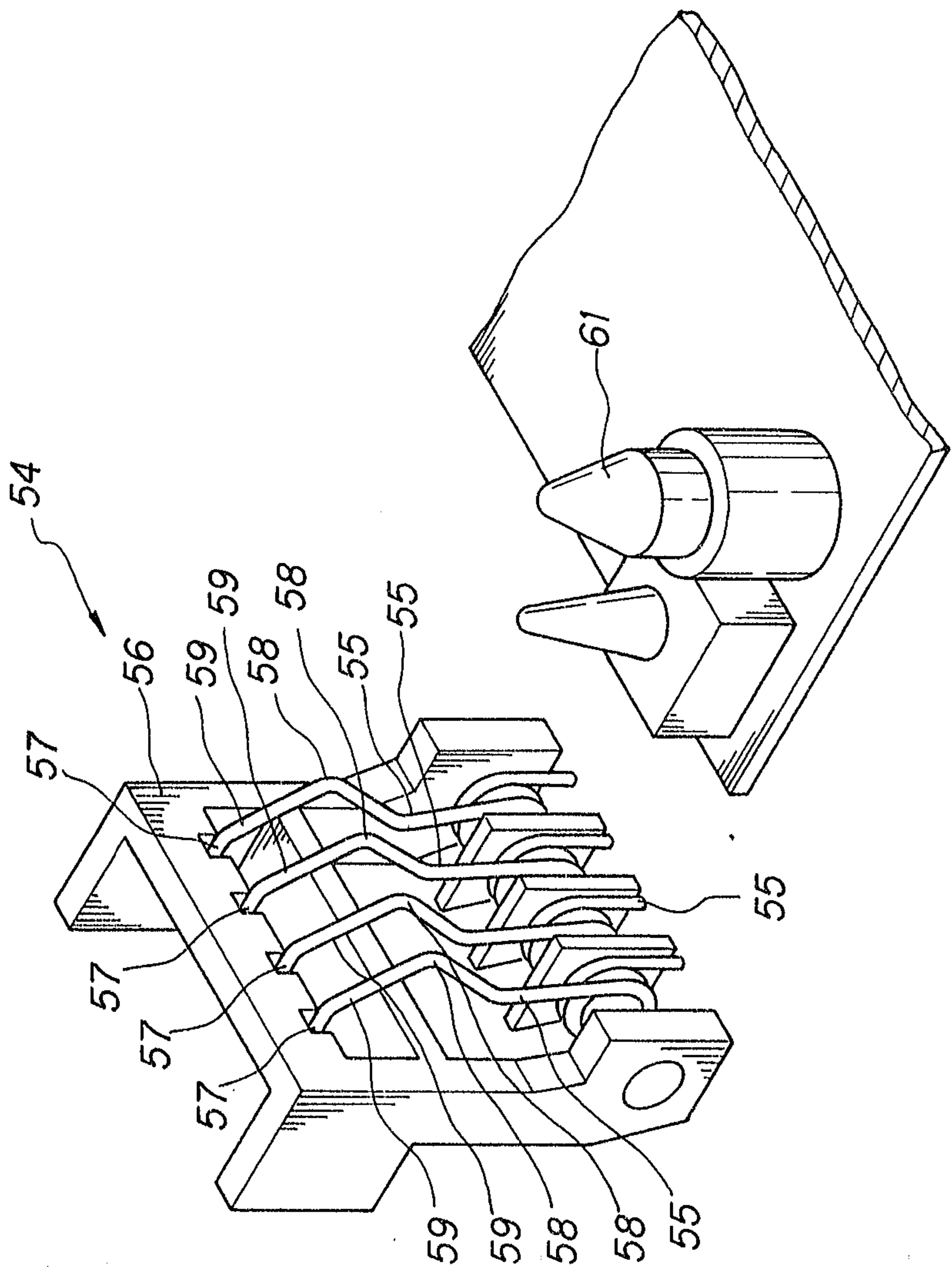


FIG. 26

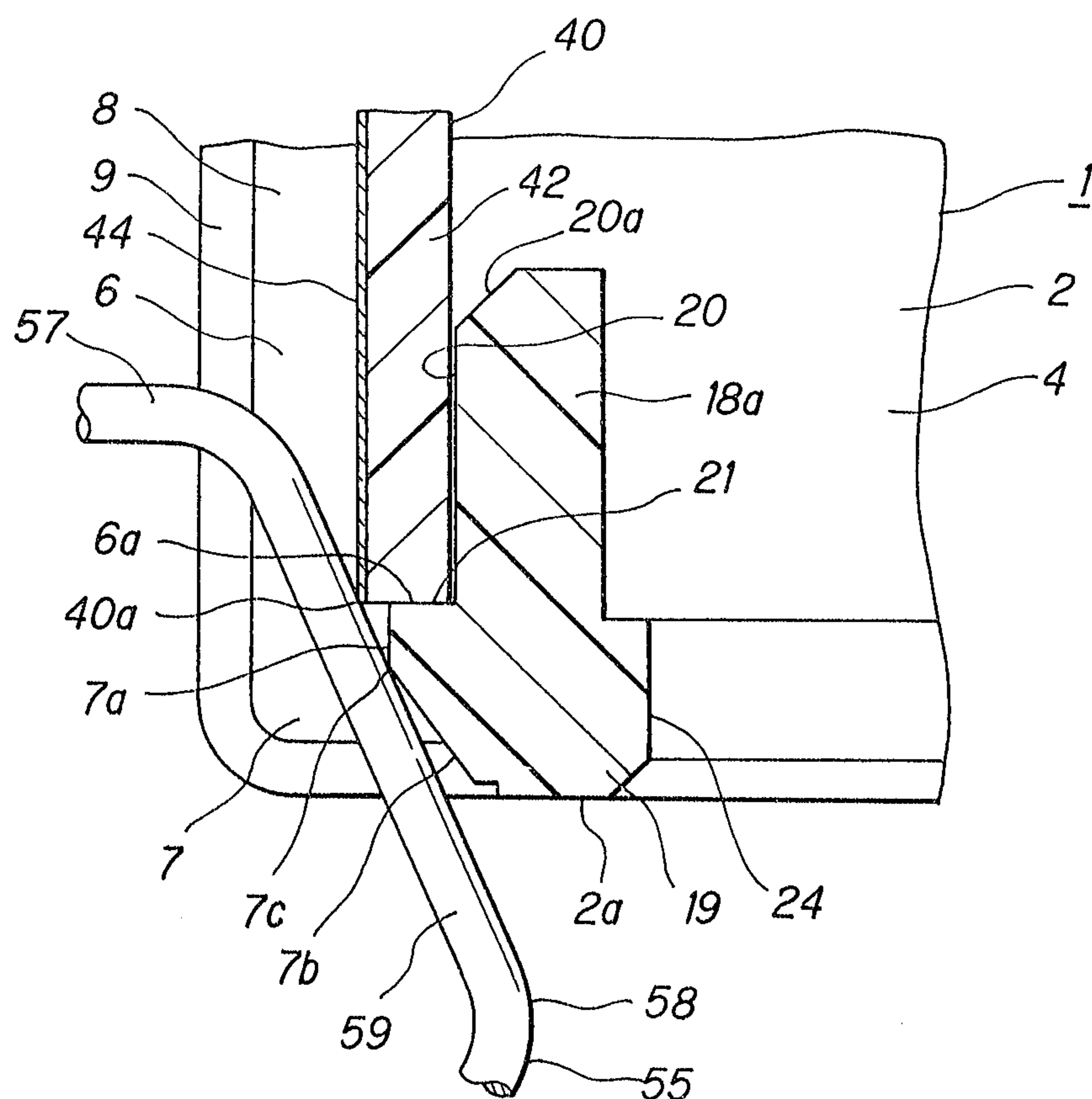


FIG. 29

