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CA 2545040 C 2013/11/19

(11)(21) 2 545 040

(12) BREVET CANADIEN
CANADIAN PATENT

(13) C

(22) Date de dépôt/Filing Date: 2006/04/26

(41) Mise à la disp. pub./Open to Public Insp.: 2007/08/28

(45) Date de délivrance/Issue Date: 2013/11/19

(30) Priorité/Priority: 2006/02/28 (US60/776,930)

(51) Cl.Int./Int.Cl. *A47D 1/00* (2006.01)

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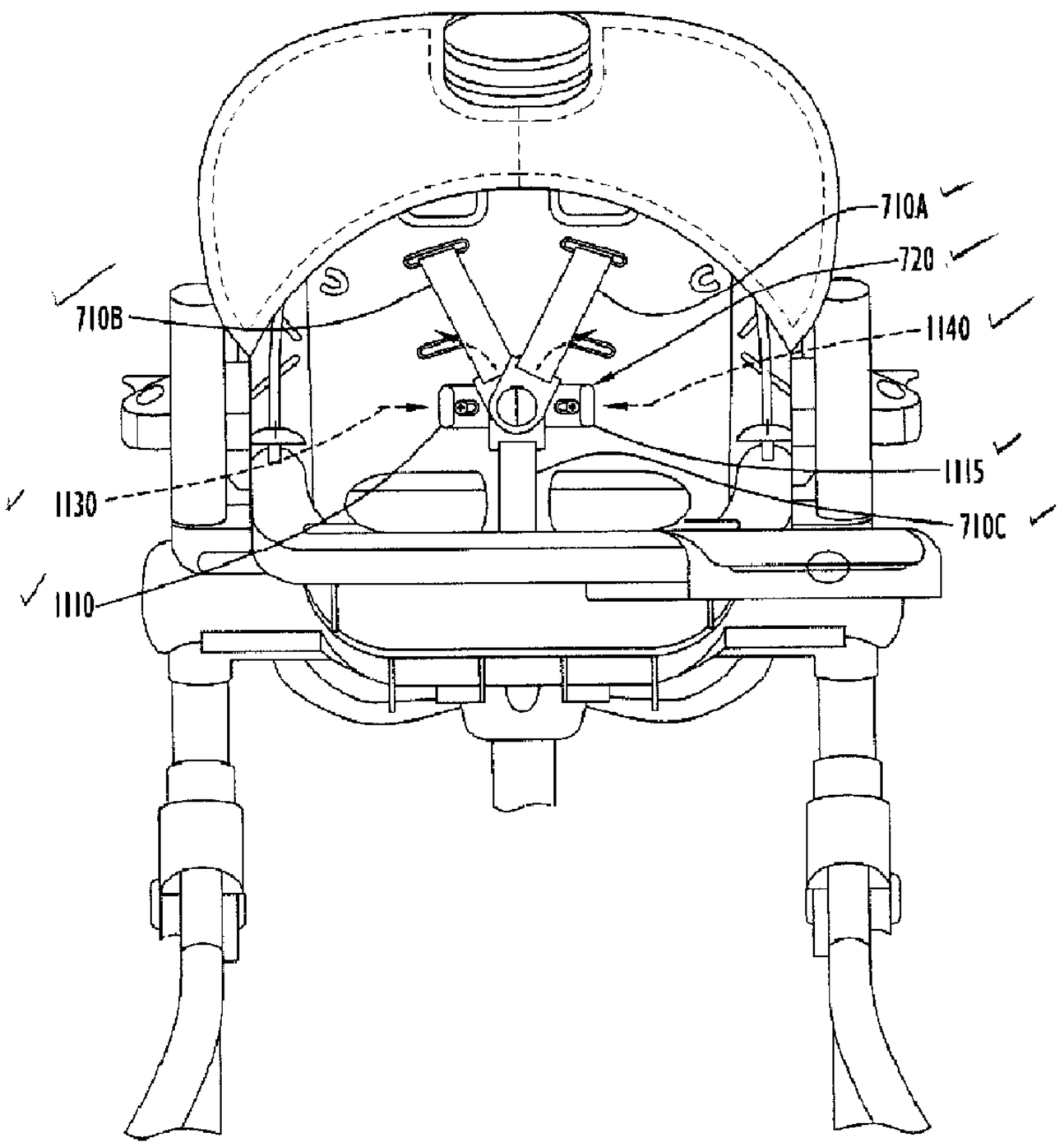
(54) Titre : SIEGE POUR ENFANT AVEC SYSTEME DE RETENUE AMOVIBLE
(54) Title: CHILD SEAT WITH REMOVABLE RESTRAINT SYSTEM



(57) Abrégé/Abstract:
The present invention discloses a child seat comprised of a seat structure and a child restraint system that allows a restraint to be easily removed from the seat structure and cleaned separately and away from the child seat. The restraint system includes a

CA 2545040 C 2013/11/19

(11)(21) 2 545 040

(13) C

(57) Abrégé(suite)/Abstract(continued):
restraint and a restraint release mechanism. The restraint release mechanism is disposed on the outer side of the seat. The restraint is comprised of at least two child restraint straps. On at least one end of each child restraint straps is a restraint release fastener and on the other end of each strap is a child release fastener. The child restraint fasteners can be releasably connected together on the child receiving side of the seat to secure or release a child from the restraint. Each strap passes through a passage in the seat structure so that the restraint release fastener ends of the child restraint straps extend from the child receiving side of the seat to the outer side opposite the child receiving side. The restraint release fasteners are then releasably secured by the restraint release mechanism such that a single actuation of the restraint release mechanism frees all of the restraint release fasteners. The straps can then be pulled through the passages in the seat and the restraints can be taken to a convenient location for cleaning.

ABSTRACT

The present invention discloses a child seat comprised of a seat structure and a child restraint system that allows a restraint to be easily removed from the seat structure and cleaned separately and away from the child seat. The restraint system includes a restraint and a restraint release mechanism. The restraint release mechanism is disposed on the outer side of the seat. The restraint is comprised of at least two child restraint straps. On at least one end of each child restraint straps is a restraint release fastener and on the other end of each strap is a child release fastener. The child restraint fasteners can be releasably connected together on the child receiving side of the seat to secure or release a child from the restraint. Each strap passes through a passage in the seat structure so that the restraint release fastener ends of the child restraint straps extend from the child receiving side of the seat to the outer side opposite the child receiving side. The restraint release fasteners are then releasably secured by the restraint release mechanism such that a single actuation of the restraint release mechanism frees all of the restraint release fasteners. The straps can then be pulled through the passages in the seat and the restraints can be taken to a convenient location for cleaning.

CHILD SEAT WITH REMOVABLE RESTRAINT SYSTEM

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present invention relates to a support structure for a child, and more particularly to a support structure for a child with a removable restraint system.

[0002] Conventional child support structures, such as a highchair are typically used to support young children during feeding and other seated activities. The use of a highchair allows a child to be safely and comfortably positioned at a higher elevation than if the child were placed in a conventional adult seat. This higher, secure, positioning gives parents easier access to the child during activities such as feeding.

[0003] Feeding a young child can be a very messy process. This is especially true if parents are attempting to train a child to be more independent by allowing them more freedom to feed themselves. A child with food covering them and covering their clothes can be removed from a conventional highchair, given a bath and a change of clothes. However, generally, food also covers various child accessible portions of the highchair.

[0004] In particular, most highchair child seats include a child restraint system. The restraint system generally includes restraint straps and some sort of fastening members (buckles, etc.) for fastening the restraint straps to together. The close proximity of the restraint straps and fastening members to the child seated in the highchair makes them a primary target for both dropped food and the child's messy hands and thus, the restraint system is almost always soiled when the highchair is in use. Straps and buckles, designed primarily for restraint (safety) and not for ease of cleaning, generally have many nooks and crannies that give food and other messy substances a place to hide. As a result, the restraint system of the support structure for a child and other parts

of the support structure cannot be easily cleaned and after baby receives a bath and clean clothes, a parent must often place baby in the same seat with a previously soiled restraint system.

[0005] A need therefore exists for a child seat structure that can be easily cleaned in spite of having a type fastener restraint system located within reach of the child and food deposits.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0006] The present invention discloses a highchair with a restraint system that is both easy to remove from the child support device and is easy to clean. The ease of cleaning is greatly facilitated by providing a restraint system that can be easily removed from the child support device and cleaned separately and away from the child support device (e.g., in the kitchen sink or a dishwasher). The structure of the child support device of the present invention is illustrated herein as an easy-to-clean high chair that includes a seat portion and a restraint portion that is removable from the seat portion.

[0007] The seat portion of the child support device of the present invention has a child receiving side on which the child sits and an outer side opposite the child receiving side. While seated, the child has access to the child receiving side and does not have access to the outer side of the seat portion. The seat portion also includes a back rest portion and a seating portion. The back rest portion supports a child's back and the seating portion supports a child's bottom when the child is seated on the child support device.

[0008] The child support device of the present invention also includes a restraint system connected to the seat portion of the child support device. The restraint system of the child support device of the present invention is comprised of at least two straps. Each restraint strap passes through passages in the seat portion of the child support device so that one end of the

straps extends to the child receiving side and the other end extends to the outer side (the side that is not accessible to the seated child). On the child receiving side of the seat portion, one end of one of the straps is releasably connected to another end of another one of the straps. The other end of each strap is releasably connected to a restraint release mechanism on the outer side of the seat portion (again, that is not accessible by the seated child). A child restrained in the seat portion can be released by disconnecting the restraint strap ends disposed on the child receiving side of the seat portion or by utilizing the restraint release mechanism on the outer side of the seat portion. The restraint release mechanism of the child support device of the present invention can be any type of connector that can securely restrain the ends of multiple restraint straps and selectively release at least one of the straps or simultaneously release all of the straps quickly and easily.

[0009] The restraint system of the child support device of the present invention is easily removed from the seat portion by actuating the restraint release mechanism to release the ends of the straps that extend to the outer side of the seat portion (the side of the seat that is not accessible to the child). The straps can then be pulled, from the child receiving side, through the passages in the seat portions and the restraint system can be taken away from the child support device to a convenient location to be cleaned. Food and dirt can then be more easily and thoroughly removed from hard to reach areas of the restraint system of the present invention.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0010] Figure 1 illustrates a perspective view of a child support device in accordance with the present invention standing on a supporting surface and including a dining tray.

[0011] Figure 2A illustrates a perspective view of a back rest portion of the seat of the child support device in accordance with the present invention.

[0012] Figure 2B illustrates a perspective view of a seating portion of the seat of the child support device in accordance with the present invention.

[0013] Figure 3 illustrates a perspective view of a cushioned seat pad for use with the child support device in accordance with the present invention, the seat pad including passages corresponding to the back rest portion of the seat.

[0014] Figure 4 illustrates a perspective view of the seating portion of the seat of the child support device in accordance with of the present invention, the seating portion being connected to the supporting frame of a child support device in accordance with the present invention.

[0015] Figure 5 illustrates a perspective view of the back rest portion of a child support device in accordance with the present invention, the back rest portion being connected to the seating portion of a child support device in accordance with the present invention.

[0016] Figure 6 illustrates a perspective view of a support frame for a child support device in accordance with the present invention including foot members with removable wheels connected to the foot members.

[0017] Figure 7A illustrates a front perspective view of a restraint strap system including a crotch restraint strap positioned to be passed through the seating portion of a child support device in accordance with the present invention, the crotch restraint strap being passed through from the child receiving side to the outer side of the seating member.

[0018] Figure 7B illustrates a rear perspective view of the crotch restraint strap received through the seating portion (from the child receiving side to the outer side) of a child support device in accordance with the present invention.

[0019] Figure 8A illustrates a front perspective view of a restraint strap system including shoulder restraint straps positioned to be passed through the seat back portion of a child support device in accordance with present invention, the shoulder restraint straps being passed through from the child receiving side to the outer side.

[0020] Figure 8B illustrates a rear perspective view of the shoulder restraint straps received through the back rest portion (from the child receiving side to the outer side) of a child support device in accordance with the present invention.

[0021] Figure 9 illustrates a front view of a portion of the restraint strap system in accordance with the present invention, this portion of the restraint strap system being accessible on the child receiving side of the seat of a child support device in accordance with the present invention, the arrows that indicating how the restraint straps are adjusted (tightened or loosened).

[0022] Figure 10 illustrates a front view of the seat of a child support device in accordance with present invention occupied by a child being restrained in the seat by connecting the shoulder and crotch restraint strap ends together on the child receiving side of the child support device.

[0023] Figure 11 illustrates a rear view of the ends of the restraint straps on the outer side of the seat of a child support device in accordance with the present invention showing the restraint straps secured by a restraint release mechanism and illustrating (via the arrows) an actuation motion of the restraint release mechanism to release the restraint straps.

[0024] Figure 12 illustrates an enlarged perspective view of the restraint release mechanism connected to the outer side of the back rest portion of a child support device in accordance with the present invention.

[0025] Figure 13 illustrates a perspective view of the outer side of the back rest portion of a child support device in accordance with the present invention showing the connection members used to secure the restraint release mechanism to the back rest portion.

[0026] Figure 14 illustrates a perspective view of a first slider of the restraint release mechanism of a child support device in accordance with the present invention shown attached to the connection members on the outer side of the back rest portion.

[0027] Figure 15 illustrates an enlarged perspective view of a second slider of the restraint release mechanism of a child support device in accordance with the present invention and a fastener for securing the second slider to the connection members on the outer side of the back rest portion.

[0028] Figure 16 illustrates a rear perspective view of the first and second sliders of the restraint release mechanism of a child support device in accordance with the present invention shown lying on their sides in a generally aligned arrangement and shown in a separated spatial relationship.

[0029] Figure 17 illustrates a rear perspective view of the first and second sliders of the restraint release mechanism of a child support device in accordance with the present invention shown lying on their sides in a generally aligned arrangement and shown in a telescopic spatial relationship.

[0030] Figure 18 illustrates an enlarged rear perspective view of ends of the restraint straps passed through the seat from the child receiving side of the seat to the outer side in accordance with the present invention and positioned to be connected to the restraint release mechanism.

[0031] Figure 19 illustrates an enlarged rear perspective view of the shoulder restraint straps passed through from the child receiving side of the seat to the outer side in accordance with the present invention and the restraint release mechanism being compressed in preparation for receiving the restraint strap ends.

[0032] Figure 20 illustrates an enlarged side perspective view of a trapping neck and a lip of the second slider of the restraint release mechanism in accordance with the present invention.

[0033] Figure 21 illustrates an enlarged rear perspective view showing the first and second sliders of the restraint release mechanism in accordance with the present invention, the sliders being compressed together and the restraint strap ends positioned on the restraint release mechanism to be secured by the restraint release mechanism.

[0034] Figure 22 illustrates an enlarged rear perspective view of the first and second sliders of the restraint release mechanism in accordance with the present invention released to secure the restraint straps on the outer side of the seat.

[0035] Figure 23 illustrates an enlarged rear perspective view of the first and second sliders of the restraint release mechanism in accordance with the present invention compressed to allow a restraint straps to be disconnected from the restraint release mechanism and showing a released shoulder restraint strap.

[0036] Like reference numerals have been used to identify like elements throughout this disclosure.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0037] In accordance with the present invention, a child support device is disclosed. The child support device includes a seat, a tray supported by the seat and a support frame that supports the seat above a supporting surface. The child support device includes a seat with a child receiving side and an outer side opposite the child receiving side. The seat also includes a restraint system for restraining a child sitting in the seat. The restraint system includes restraints and a restraint release mechanism. The restraints include a plurality of straps passable through passages in the seat from the child receiving side to the outer side of the seat. The restraint release mechanism releasably secures ends of the straps to the outer side of the seat. In other words, the restraints are secured to the seat by passing strap ends through passages in the seat from the child receiving side to the outer side and then securing the strap ends of the restraints to the restraint release mechanism. When a parent desires to remove the entire set of restraints from the seat, a single actuation of the restraint release mechanism frees the strap ends and thereby releases the restraints. The restraints can then be pulled back through the passages in the seat from the outer side to the child receiving side and taken to a convenient place for cleaning (e.g., the kitchen sink, dishwasher, etc.).

[0038] Figure 1 illustrates a perspective view of the child support device **100** of the present invention standing on a supporting surface **140** and including a seat portion **110** supporting a tray **120**. The seat portion **110** and the tray **120** are supported above the supporting surface **140** by a support frame **130**. Figure 1 also shows restraints **150** for securing a child to the seat **110**. The restraints **150** are a portion of a child restraint system that includes the restraints **150** and a

restraint release mechanism (shown in Figures 12-23 and discussed more thoroughly below). The child support device **100** of the present invention is composed of various component parts that are designed and constructed for easy initial assembly and for easy adjustability during use.

[0039] Figure 2A illustrates a front perspective view of the child receiving side of a back rest portion **210** of the seat **110** of the present invention. On each side **A** and **B** of the lower portion of the back rest portion **210** are lower seat connection areas **212A** and **212B** respectively. Each lower seat connection area **212A** and **212B** includes pivot members **214A** and **214B** respectively and locking projection members **216A** and **216B** respectively. The restraints **150** are also shown with portions thereof passing through the seat **110**.

[0040] Figure 2B illustrates a front perspective view of a seating portion **220** of the seat **110** of the child support device **100** of the present invention. On each side **A** and **B** of the upper portion of the seating portion **220** are upper seat connection areas **222A** and **222B**. Each upper seat connection area **222A** and **222B** includes pivot members **224A** and **224B** (not labeled) respectively and locking reception members **226A** and **226B** (not labeled) respectively. The seating portion **220** also includes a crotch post **230** for further securing the child in the seat **110**. Finally, each side of the seating portion **220** has a slide lock connector **240A** and **240B** (discussed further below).

[0041] Figure 3 illustrates a perspective view of a seat pad **300** of the present invention for cushioning the seat **110**. The seat pad **300** is made from any type of soft, durable, cushion material that is safe and comfortable to a child's touch. The seat pad **300** shows upper shoulder restraint passages **310A** and **310B**, lower shoulder restraint passages **320A** and **320B**, a crotch restraint strap passage **330** and a crotch post passage **340**. Each passage **310A**, **310B**, **320A**,

320B, **330** and **340** is associated with a corresponding feature of the seat **110** of the present invention.

[0042] Figure 4 illustrates a perspective view of the seating portion **220** of the child support device **100** of the present invention connecting to the supporting frame **130**. Each side of the supporting frame **130** includes a post **430A** and **430B**. The seating portion **220** is connected to the supporting frame **130** by inserting the appropriate post **430A** or **430B** into the corresponding slide lock connector **240A** or **240B**. Each post **430A** and **430B** has a series of openings (not shown) along the length of the posts. Each slide lock connector **240A** and **240B** has a retractable extension (not shown) and a depressible button **420A** (not labeled) and **420B**. Pressing the depressible button **420A** and **420B** causes the retractable extension (not shown) to retract. When the depressible button **420A** and **420B** is pressed and the retractable extension (not shown) is retracted, the slide lock connector **240A** and **240B** can slide up and down the post **430A** and **430B** to adjust to various heights (thus the overall height of the child support device **100** is fully adjustable). When the depressible buttons **420A** and **420B** are released, each of their retractable extensions project into one of the openings (not shown) to lock the position of each slide lock connector **240A** and **240B** along the post **430A** or **430B**.

[0043] Figure 5 illustrates a front perspective view of the back rest portion **210** of the child support device **100** of the present invention being connected to the seating portion **220** of the child support device **100**. The back rest portion **210** pivotally interconnects with the seating portion **220** to provide for multiple back rest recline positions. The back rest portion **210** has pivot members **214A** and **214B** that, respectively, cooperate with pivot member **224A** and **224B** of the seating member **220**. Each side **A** and **B** has a pin member (not shown) that passes through the pivot members (e.g., through **214A** and **224A** on side **A**) to allow the pivot members

214A (with **224A**) and **214B** (with **224B**), and thus, the back rest portion **210** and seating portion **220** to pivot relative to each other. At each recline position of the back rest portion **210**, the locking projection members **216A** and **216B** mate with separate locking reception members **226A** and **226B** to secure the back rest portion **210** at various angles relative to the seating portion **220**. Thus to assemble the child support device **100** of the present invention, the back rest portion **210** is moved from position **510** to position **520** (into contact with the seating portion **220**.

[0044] Figure 6 illustrates a front perspective view of a seat **110** with the restraints **150** and a child foot rest **630**. Supporting the seat **110** is a seat support frame **130** including foot members **610A-D** with removable casters **620A-D** connected to the respective foot members **610A-D**. Each of the casters **620A-D** includes central hubs **625A-D** between two wheels **628A-D**. The central hubs **625A-D** each includes an extension post (illustrated at **627D**) that is lockably and swivelably received in reception members (illustrated at **629D**) of their respective foot members **610A-D**. Each of the casters **620A-D** also has locking members (illustrated at **626D**) that lock the wheels **628A-D** relative to the central hub **625A-D**. Therefore, activating the locking members **626A-D**, prevents the wheels **628A-D** from moving relative to the central hubs **625A-D**, and consequently, prevents the child support device **100** from moving relative to the supporting surface **140**.

[0045] Figure 7A illustrates a front perspective view of the restraints **150** including a crotch strap **710C**, a left shoulder restraint strap **710A** and a right shoulder restraint strap **710B**. Also illustrated, are a left waist restraint strap 7**50A** and right waist restraint strap **750B**. The restraint straps **710A-C**, **750A**, and **750B** are connected together at a central point by a center connector **700**. Figure 7 shows the crotch restraint strap **710C** positioned to be passed through the seat

member **110** of the present invention from the child receiving side to the outer side (as shown by arrow **715**) through crotch restraint passage **330**. Figure 7B illustrates a rear perspective view of a restraint release mechanism **720** for securing ends of restraint straps **710A-C** together on the outer side of the seat **110**. Also illustrated is a crotch restraint strap **710C** received through the seat **110** of the child support device **100** from the child receiving side, through the seat **110**, to the outer side. Figure 7B shows the end of the crotch restraint strap **710C** positioned to be placed on the restraint release mechanism **720** (as shown by placement arrow **725**).

[0046] Figure 8A illustrates a front perspective view of left shoulder restraint strap **710A** and right shoulder restraint strap **710B** positioned to be passed through upper shoulder passages **310A** and **310B** respectively (as shown by arrows **815A** and **815B**). Both of left and right shoulder restraint straps **710A** and **710B** are then passed through upper shoulder passages **310A** and **310B** from the child receiving side of the seat **110** to the outer side. Figure 8B illustrates a rear perspective view of the right and left shoulder restraint straps **710A** and **710B** received through the seat **110** of the child seat device **100** from the child receiving side to the outer side. Figure 8B also shows the restraint release mechanism **720** for securing the ends of the restraint straps **710A-C**. Also shown is the crotch restraint strap **710C** positioned on the restraint release mechanism **720** and restraint straps **710A** and **710B** passed through to the outer side of the seat **110** and positioned to be connected to the restraint release mechanism **720** (as shown by placement arrows **820A** and **820B**).

[0047] Figure 9 illustrates a view of the restraints **150** on the child receiving side of the seat **110** in accordance with the present invention showing how the restraint straps **710A**, **710B**, **750A**, and **750B** are adjusted. Each restraint strap **710A**, **710B**, **750A**, and **750B** has an adjustment buckle **910A**, **910B**, **920A**, and **920B** respectively, through which the length of portions of the

restraint straps **710A**, **710B**, **750A**, and **750B** can be adjusted. Adjustments to the length of shoulder restraint strap **710A** are accomplished through shoulder buckle **910A**. For example, tightening adjustments are made by pulling restraint strap **710A** in the manner indicated by arrow **D**. Similarly shoulder restraint strap **710B** adjustments are done through shoulder buckle **910B**. Adjustments to the length of waist restraint strap **750A** are done through waist buckle **920A**. For example, tightening adjustments are made by pulling restraint strap **750A** in the manner indicated by arrows **A** and **B**. Similarly waist restraint strap **750B** adjustments are done through waist buckle **920B**. Finally, shoulder restraint strap connector **930A** is connected to waist buckle **920A** and shoulder restraint strap connector **930B** is connected to waist buckle **920B**.

[0048] Figure 10 illustrates a front view of the seat **110** occupied by a child being restrained in the restraints **150** by connecting the waist buckles **920A** and **920B** to the central connector **700**. The central connector **700** shown in Figure 10 is also the mechanism by which a parent releases a child from the restraints **150** while the restraints **150** are connected to the seat **110**. The central connector **700** releasably receives waste buckles **920A** and **920B** in its sides. To remove or restrain a child, the parent actuates the release between the central connector **700** and the waist buckles **920A** and **920B**. As shown, after actuation, the central connector **700** remains attached to the crotch restraint strap **710C** (which now allows removal or placement of the child). When, the central connector **700** disengages from the waist buckles **920A** and **920B** (and the shoulder restraint strap connectors **930A** and **930B**) it also disengages from the waist and shoulder restraint straps **710A**, **710B**, **750A**, and **750B**. This disconnection enbles a parent to removably place a child in the restraints **150** while the restraints **150** remain attached to the seat **110**.

[0049] Figure 11 illustrates a rear view of the crotch restraint strap **710C** and shoulder restraint straps **710A** and **710B** on the outer side of the seat **110** showing the restraints **150** secured on the

outer side by a first slider **1110** and a second slider **1115** of the restraint release mechanism **720**. Figure 11 also shows the actuation motion necessary to either release or connect the restraint straps **710A-C** to the restraint release mechanism **720** (as indicated by the arrows **1130** and **1140**). Enlarged drawings showing the details of the restraint release mechanism **720** and the manner in which the restraint release mechanism **720** facilitates the releasing and restraining of the restraints **150** relative to the seat **110** will be discussed in detail below.

[0050] Figure 12 illustrates a rear enlarged perspective view of the restraint release mechanism **720** connected to the outer side of the back rest **210** of the seat **110** of the present invention. The restraint release mechanism **720** includes a first slider **1110** and a second slider **1115**. The first and second sliders **1110** and **1115** are elongated and are arranged to be aligned in the direction of elongation. On the inner end of the first slider **1110** is a first half post **1230** and on the inner end of the second slider **1115** is a second half post **1235**. Each half post **1230** and **1235** projects outward (away from the seat **110**) from its respective slider **1110** and **1115**. The outer end of the first slider **1110** has a first compression seat **1220** and the outer end of the second slider **1115** has a second compression seat **1225**. Each of the sliders **1110** and **1115** also has one of first and second rimmed apertures **1240** and **1245** therethrough for passing first and second securing fasteners **1250** and **1255** respectively. Fasteners **1250** and **1255** secure the restraint release mechanism **720** to the outer side of the back rest **210** of the seat **110**.

[0051] Figure 13 illustrates a rear perspective view of the outer side of the back rest **210** showing the connection members **1300** used to secure the restraint release mechanism **720** to the outer side of the back rest **210** of the seat **110** of the present invention. The connection members **1300** extend from the outer side of the back rest **210** of the seat **110** and include a fist attachment structure **1310** and a second attachment structure **1315** (for respectively connecting the first

slider **1110** and second slider **1115** to the seat **110**). The connection members **1300** also include a biasing member holder **1350**. Each attachment structure includes one of fastener receivers **1320** and **1325** each respectively including one of receiver openings **1330** and **1335**. To fasten the sliders **1110** and **1115** to the outer side of the seat **110**, the fasteners **1250** and **1255** respectively pass through the rimmed apertures **1240** and **1245** and through the receiver openings **1330** and **1335** of the fastener receivers **1320** and **1325**. Fasteners **1250** and **1255** are secured firmly to the fastener receivers **1320** and **1325**, but the fasteners **1250** and **1255** are not tightened enough to prevent the sliders **1110** and **1115** from easily sliding relative to the fasteners **1250** and **1255**. Figure 13 also illustrates a biasing member holder **1350** for securing a biasing member **1360** (e.g., a spring). The biasing member holder **1350** includes a first spring access slot **1370A** and an opposite side second spring access slot **1370B**. In the illustrated embodiment, the connection members **1300** are integrally molded with the seat **110**, although the connection members **1300** may be separately formed.

[0052] Figure 14 illustrates a perspective view of the first slider **1110** of the restraint release mechanism **720** shown attached to the connection members **1300** of the seat **110** of the present invention by the fastener **1250**. A first bias member contact portion **1410** of the first slider **1110** is aligned with the first spring access slot **1370A**. A second bias member contact **1415** (shown in figure 16) of the second slider **1115** is aligned with the second spring access slot **1370B**. As a result, when a force is applied to slide the first slider **1110** in an inward direction (as shown by arrows **1130** and **1140** in Figure 11), the first bias member contact **1410** also moves inward through the first spring access slot **1370A** to contact and compress the biasing member **1360**. When the force is removed from the slider **1110**, the stored energy in the biasing member **1360** forces the slider **1110** back to its original position.

[0053] Figure 15 illustrates an enlarged perspective view of the second slider **1115** of the restraint release mechanism **720** and a fastener **1255** for securing the second movable portion to the outer side of the seat **110** of the present invention. The second slider **1115** has an alignment extension **1510** for extending in telescopic relation to a portion of the first slider **1110** to further insure axial alignment. The alignment extension **1510** also includes a reception slot **1520** to accommodate the first bias member contact **1410** when an external force compresses the first and second sliders **1110** and **1115** axially together. Figure 15 also illustrates grips **1527** on the compression seat **1225** of the second slider **1115** for ensuring firm finger contact during compression.

[0054] Figure 16 illustrates a rear perspective view of the inner sides of first and second sliders **1110** and **1115** of the restraint release mechanism **720** of the present invention shown lying on their sides in a generally aligned and separated spatial relationship. The alignment extension **1510** of the second slider **1115** is shown positioned to be slid into the first slider **1110**. The reception slot **1520** of the alignment member **1510** is also shown positioned to receive the first bias member contact **1410** of the first slider **1110**. Figure 16 also clearly illustrates how the first and second bias member contacts **1410** and **1415** align to, respectively slide through first and second spring access slots **1370A** and **1370B** to compress the biasing member **1360** on both sides of the biasing member **1360**.

[0055] Figure 17 illustrates an enlarged perspective view of the first and second sliders **1110** and **1115** of the restraint release mechanism **720** shown lying on their sides in a generally aligned and telescopic spatial relationship. More clearly shown is how the alignment member **1510** of the second slider **1115** is telescoped within the first slider **1110**. Also illustrated is how the first and second bias member contacts **1410** and **1415** are moved closer together (as compared to Figure

16) to compress the biasing member **1360** that would be located therebetween when the restraint release mechanism **720** is fully assembled on the connection members **1300**. In addition, reception slot **1520** is shown ready to receive first bias member contact **1410**.

[0056] Figure 18 illustrates an enlarged rear perspective view of the restraint straps **710A-C** of restraint **150** passed through the seat **110** from the child receiving side to the outer side and positioned to be connected to the restraint release mechanism **720**. A number of fasteners **1810A-C** are connected to the ends of restraint straps **710A-C**. Each fastener includes an aperture **1820A-C** therein. In addition, restraint release mechanism **720** stands at rest with a gap **1830** between the first half post **1230** and the second half post **1235**. In this position, the gap **1830** prevents the apertures **1820A-C** (of fasteners **1810A-C**) from being placed over the first half post **1230** and the second half post **1235** (i.e., they are too far apart to be placed in the apertures **1820A-C**).

[0057] Figure 19 illustrates an enlarged perspective rear view of the shoulder restraint straps **710A** and **710B** of the restraints **150** passed through the seat **110** from the child receiving side to the outer side. As illustrated, the compression seats **1220** and **1225** of the restraint release mechanism **720** are being compressed in preparation for receiving the restraints. Compression of the restraint release mechanism **720** eliminates the gap **1830** between the first half post **1230** and the second half post **1235** and arranges the first half post **1230** and the second half post **1235** in a compact adjacent manner in preparation for receiving the fasteners **1810A** and **1820B**.

[0058] Figure 20 illustrates an enlarged side perspective view of a trapping lip **2010** on the second half post **1235** of the second slider **1115** of the restraint release mechanism **720**. First and second half posts **1230** and **1235** also each have a neck **2020** and **2025** (not shown in Figure 20) on which fasteners **1810A-C** are received while being trapped by the trapping lip **2010**. The first

half post **1230** of the first slider **1110** also has a similar opposite trapping lip **2005** (not shown in Figure 20). The function of the trapping lips **2005** and **2010** will be explained in more detail below with respect to Figure 23.

[0059] Figure 21 illustrates an enlarged rear perspective view showing the first and second sliders **1110** and **1115** of the restraint release mechanism **720** being held together by compressing the compression seats **1220** and **1225** of the first and second sliders **1110** and **1115**. The compressed adjacent arrangement of the first and second half posts **1230** and **1235** allow the fasteners **1810A-C** of the restraints **150** to be positioned over the first and second half posts **1230** and **1235** of the restraint release mechanism **720**.

[0060] Figure 22 illustrates an enlarged rear perspective view of the first and second sliders **1110** and **1115** of the restraint release mechanism **720** released to secure the restraints **150** on the outer side of the seat **110** of the present invention. When the compressive force is released, the biasing member **1360** forces the first and second bias member contacts **1410** and **1415** apart, and thus, forces the first and second half posts **1230** and **1235** apart. The fasteners **1810A-C** that have been placed on the first and second half posts **1230** and **1235** become trapped on the necks **2020** and **2025** of the first and second half posts **1230** and **1235** and are held in place by the trapping lips **2005** and **2010**. When the first and second half posts **1230** and **1235** are released and the fasteners **1810A-C** are properly trapped on necks **2020** and **2025** under the trapping lips **2005** and **2010**, the first and second half posts **1230** and **1235** separate again to reform gap **1830**. As shown in Figure 22, the distance between compression seats **1220** and **1225** can be chosen to be greater than a child's fingers can span (to prevent a young sibling from accidentally releasing the restraints **150**). Furthermore, the restraint release mechanism **720** can be designed to prevent fasteners **1810A-C** from being removed if only one of the sliders **1110** and **1115** is compressed.

[0061] Figure 23 illustrates an enlarged rear perspective view of the first and second sliders **1110** and **1115** of the restraint release mechanism **720** compressed to allow the fasteners **1810A-C** to be removed from the restraint release mechanism **720** and showing fastener **1810B** released from the restraint release mechanism **720**. After the first and second sliders **1110** and **1115** are compressed, all of the fasteners **1810A-C** can be removed from the restraint release mechanism **720**. The restraints **150** can then be removed from the seat **110** by pulling the restraint straps **710A-C** out of the seat passages **310A**, **310B** and **330** from the outer side to the child receiving side and completely removing the restraint s**150** from the seat **110** to be cleaned.

[0062] Thus, it is intended that the present invention cover the modifications and variations of this invention that come within the scope of the appended claims and their equivalents. For example, it is to be understood that terms such as "left", "right" "top", "bottom", "front", "rear", "side", "height", "length", "width", "upper", "lower", "interior", "exterior", "inner", "outer" and the like as may be used herein, merely describe points of reference and do not limit the present invention to any particular orientation or configuration.

The embodiments of the present invention for which an exclusive property or privilege is claimed are defined as follows:

1. A child seat comprising:

a seat including a child receiving side and an outer side opposite said child receiving side, said seat including a seating portion and a back rest portion, said seat also including passages through said seat for receiving child restraint straps, said passages passing from said child receiving side to said outer side;

a restraint including at least two child restraint straps, each of said child restraint straps including a restraint release fastener disposed on at least a first end of said child restraint straps,

a restraint release mechanism for releasably securing said restraint by securing at least two of said restraint release fasteners of said child restraint straps, said restraint release mechanism being fastened to said outer side of said seat and including a slider for actuating said restraint release mechanism to release all of said restraint release fasteners and child restraint straps with a single actuation of said slider, and

wherein said slider includes a compression seat and a biasing member and wherein said compression seat is pressed to move said slider against a force of said biasing member to position said slider to receive or release said restraint release fasteners,

and wherein said slider also includes a fastener receiving portion for removeably and securably receiving said restraint release fasteners of said child restraint straps.

2. The child seat of claim 1 wherein, said child restraint straps of said restraint include child release fasteners disposed on second ends of said child restraint straps opposite to said restraint release fasteners to allow said second ends of said child restraint straps to be releasably fastened together on said child receiving side of said seat.

3. The child seat of claim 1 wherein, when said fastener receiving portion receives said restraint release fasteners, release of said slider allows said biasing member to force said slider to secure said restraint release fasteners of said child restraint straps on said fastener receiving portion, and compression of said slider against the force of said biasing member allows said restraint release fasteners of said child restraint straps to be removed from said fastener receiving portion.

4. The child seat of claim 3 wherein:

said slider of said restraint release mechanism is composed of at least two sliders separated by the force of said biasing member; and

said fastener receiving portion of said slider is composed of a fastener receiving portion on each said slider.

5. A method of securing a child restraint to a child seat comprising the steps of:

providing a child seat having a child receiving side and an outer side opposite said child receiving side, said child seat further including passages for receiving child restraints through said seat from said child receiving side and outer side;

providing at least two child restraint straps, each including a restraint release fastener at an end thereof;

providing a restraint release mechanism for releasably securing said restraint by securing at least two of said restraint release fasteners of said child restraint straps, said restraint release mechanism including a slider for actuating said restraint release mechanism to release all of said restraint release fasteners and child restraint straps with a single actuation of said slider;

disposing said restraint release mechanism on said outer side of said child seat;

passing said ends of said child restraint straps through said passages of said child seat such that said restraint release fasteners are located on said outer side of said child seat;

connecting said restraint release fasteners to said restraint release mechanism; and

actuating said restraint release mechanism in a single actuation to release all of said fasteners of said child restraints

wherein said slider includes a compression seat and a biasing member and wherein said compression seat is pressed to move said slider against a force of said biasing member to position said slider to receive or release said restraint release fasteners,

and wherein said slider also includes a fastener receiving portion for removeably and securably receiving said restraint release fasteners of said child restraint straps.

6. The method of claim 5 further including the step of providing said child restraint straps with child release fasteners at ends of said child restraint straps opposite the ends

having the restraint release fasteners, said child release fasteners releasably connected together for releasably securing a child in said seat.

7. The child seat of claim 4, wherein:

a fastener receiving portion of one slider is disposed proximate to a fastener receiving portion of another slider when the sliders are moved toward each other;

each of the restraint release fasteners includes an aperture; and

the fastener receiving portions of the sliders are disposed in the apertures when the restraint release fasteners are coupled to the restraint release mechanism.

8. The child seat of claim 1, further comprising a support frame connected to said seat for supporting said seat above a supporting surface.

9. The child seat of claim 8, wherein said seating portion includes at least a first slide lock connector, said support frame having at least a first post slidably securable in said first slide lock connector, said first slide lock connector securable in a selected position along said first post to adjust a height of said seating portion relative to the supporting surface.

10. The child seat of claim 1, wherein said back rest portion is pivotally connected to said seating portion.

11. The child seat of claim 1, further comprising a crotch post extending upwardly from said seating portion on said child receiving side.

12. The child seat of claim 1, further comprising a foot rest connected to and extending downwardly from said outer side of said seat.

13. The child seat of claim 1, wherein said restraint release mechanism further comprises a second slider having a second fastener receiving portion, said fastener receiving portions of said sliders biased away from each other via said biasing member and movable toward each other against said force of said biasing member, said restraint release fasteners receivable on said fastener receiving portions when said sliders are moved toward each other and securable thereon when said sliders are biased away from each other via said biasing member.

14. The child seat of claim 13, wherein each of said restraint release fasteners includes an aperture receivable and securable on said fastener receiving portions.

15. The child seat of claim 13, wherein each of said fastener receiving portions is configured as a half post having a neck extending outwardly from a corresponding one of said sliders and a trapping lip extending outwardly from a distal end of said neck.

16. The child seat of claim 13, wherein said sliders are axially aligned.

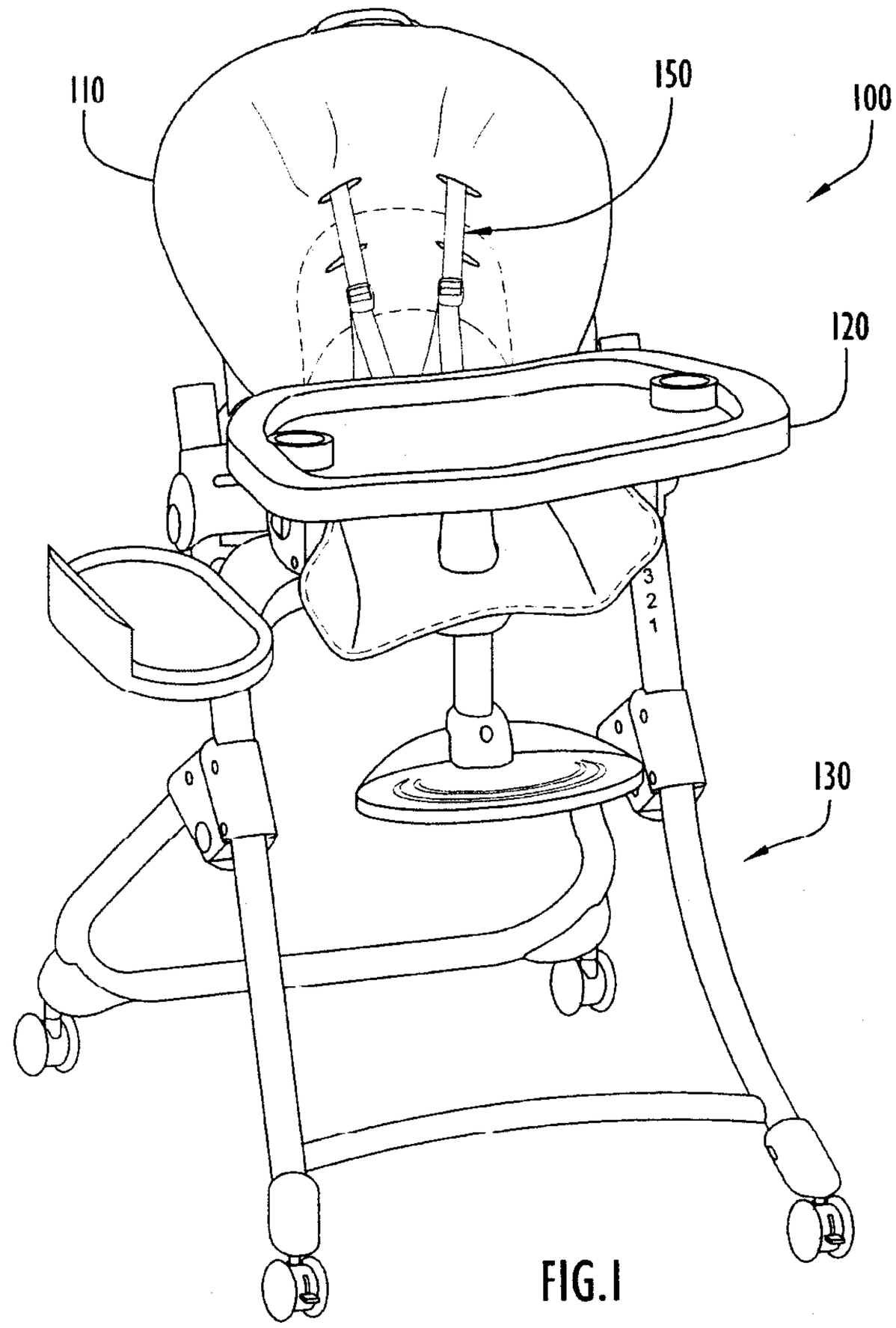


FIG.1

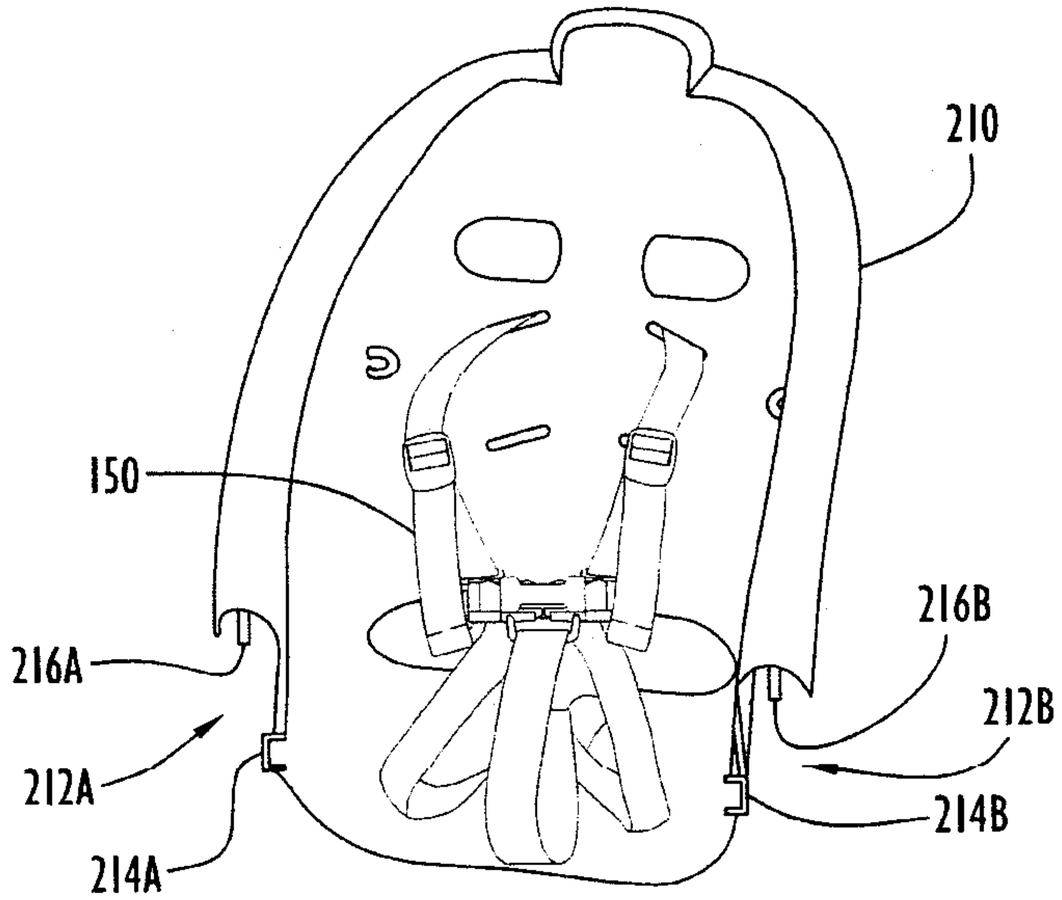

210
150
216B
216A
212B
212A
214B
214A

FIG.2A

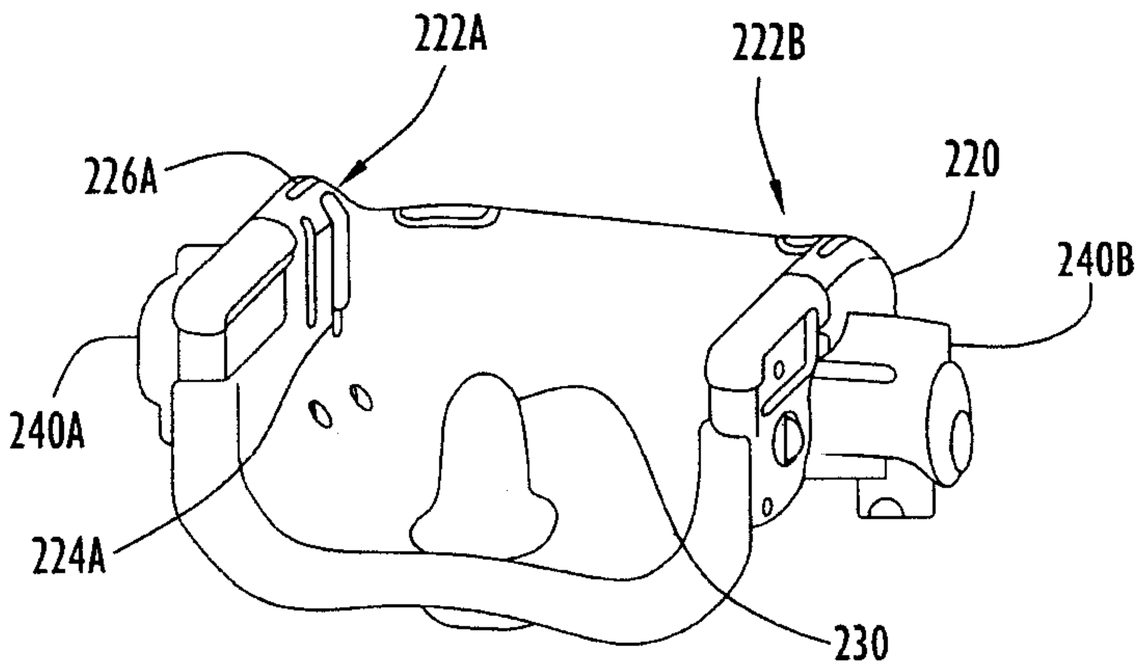

222A
222B
226A
220
240B
240A
224A
230

FIG.2B

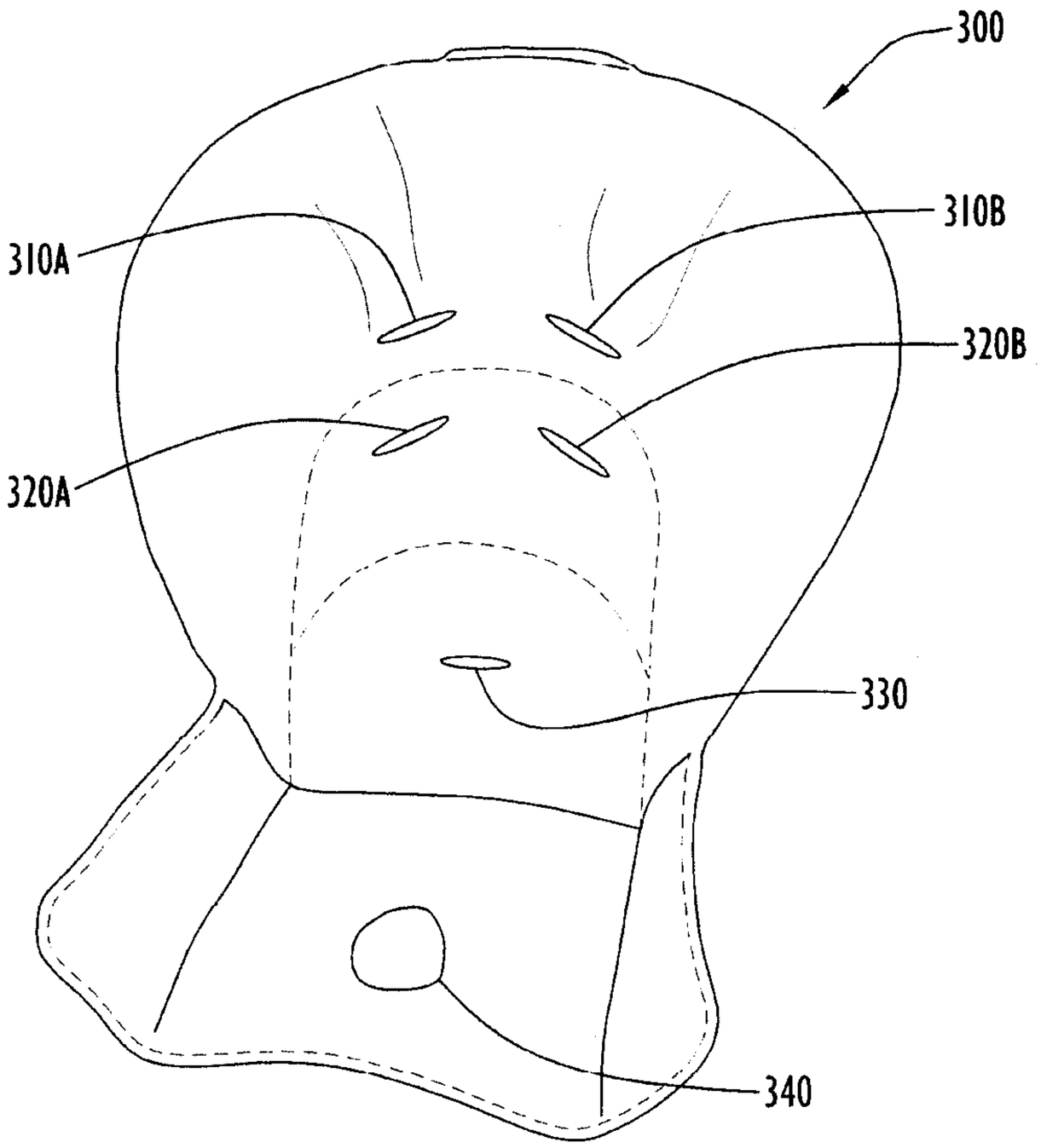


FIG.3

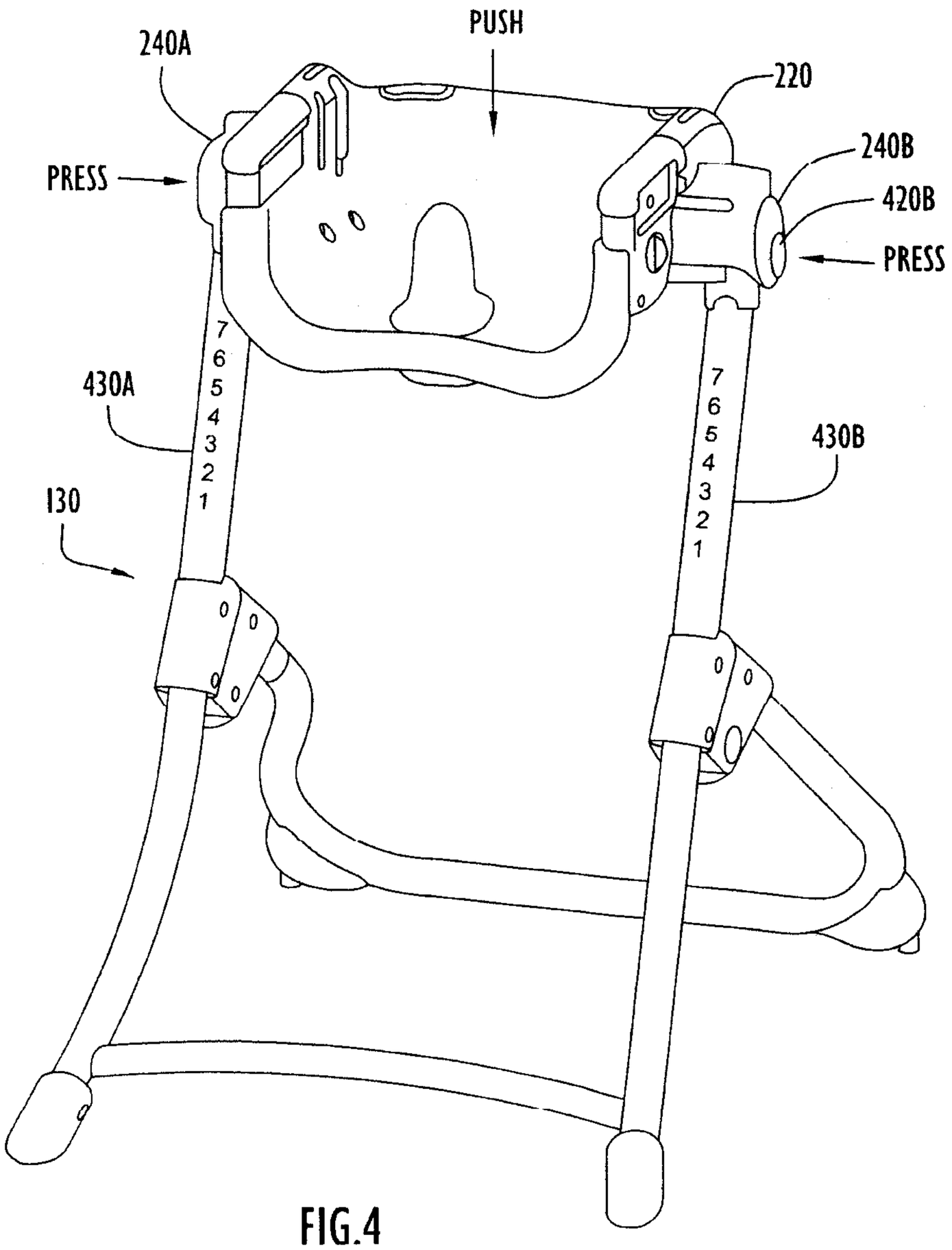


FIG.4

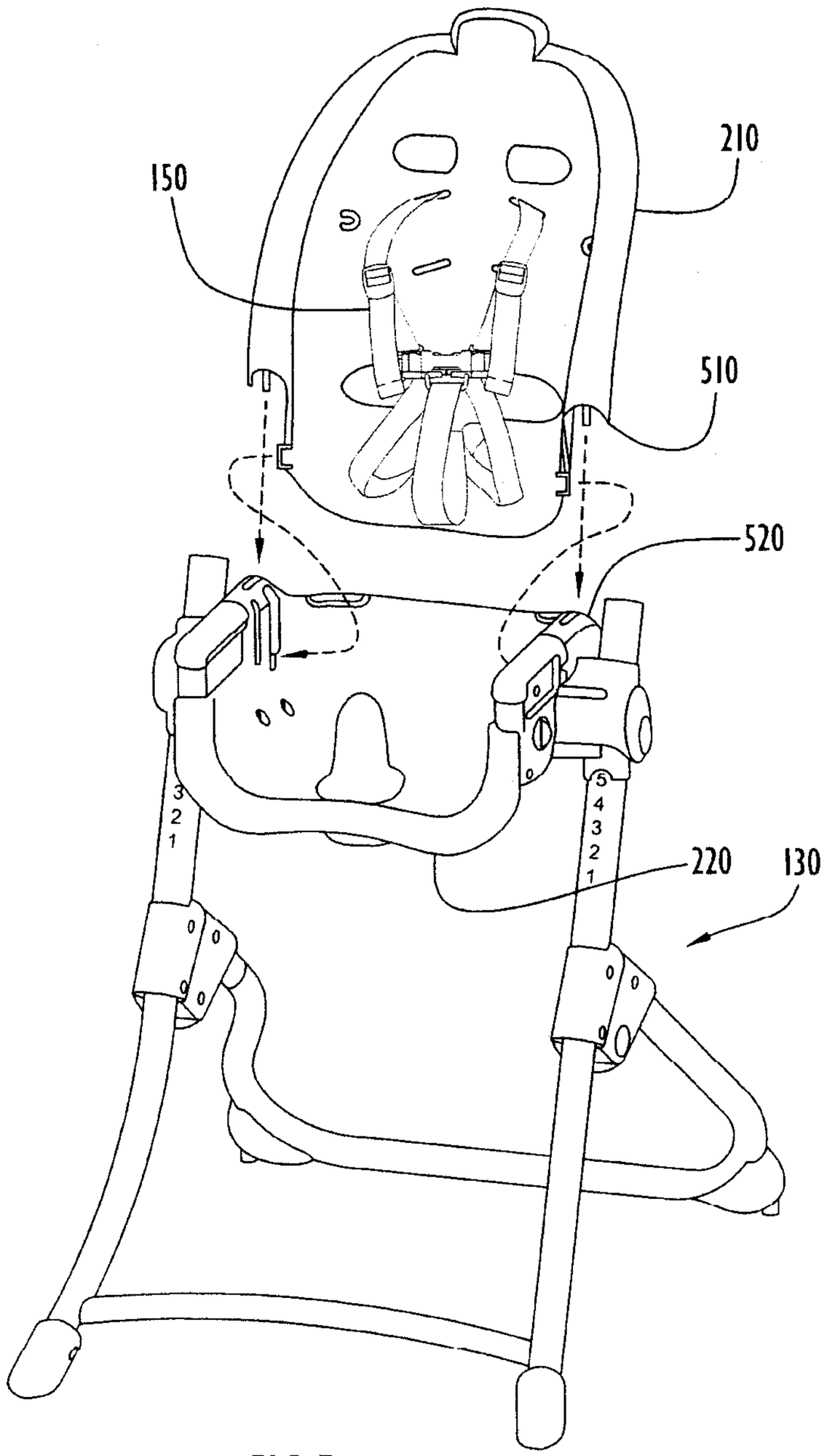


FIG.5

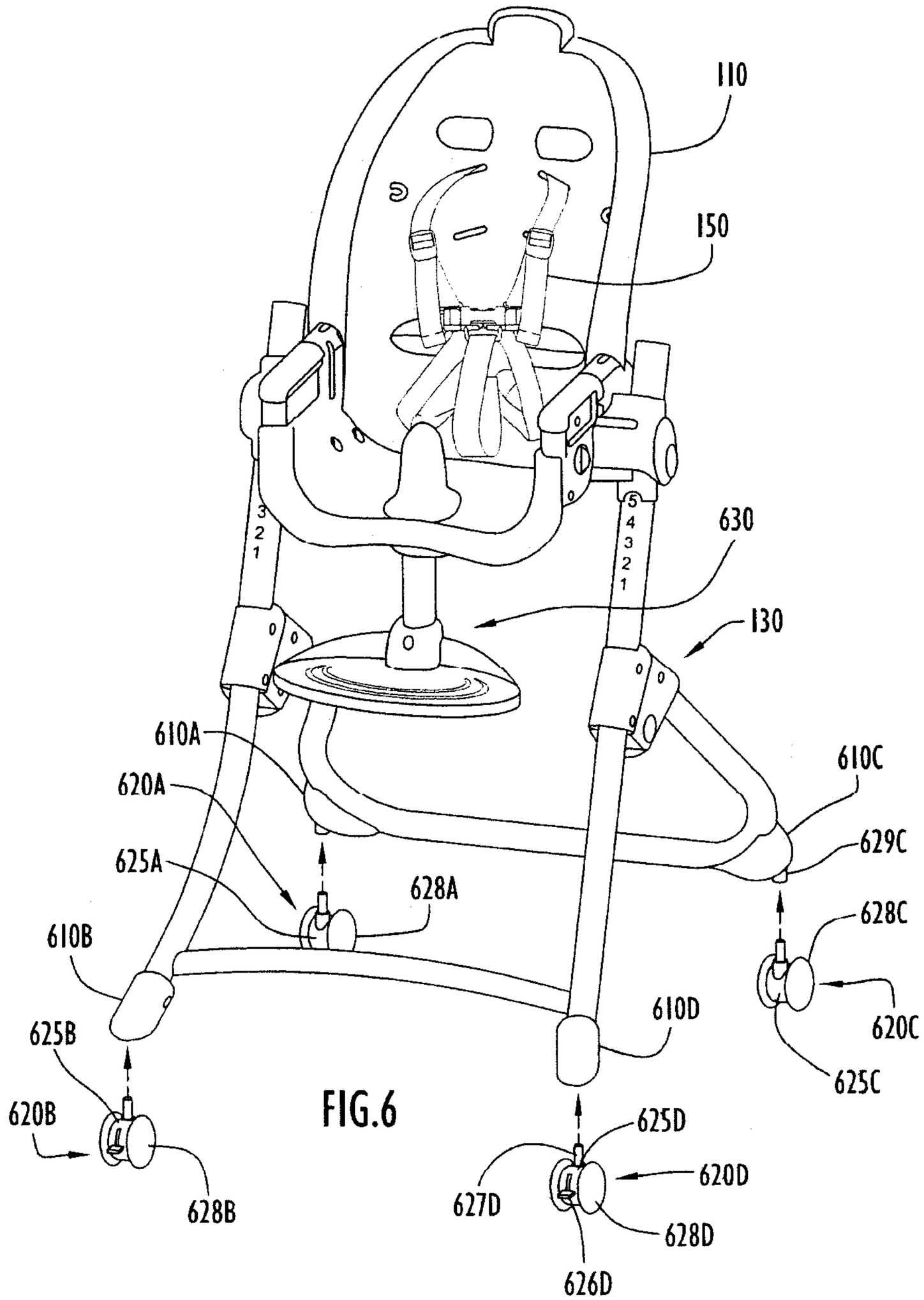

110
150
630
130
610A
620A
625A
628A
610B
625B
620B
628B
610C
629C
628C
620C
625C
610D
625D
620D
627D
628D
626D
3
2
1
5
4
3
2
1

FIG.6

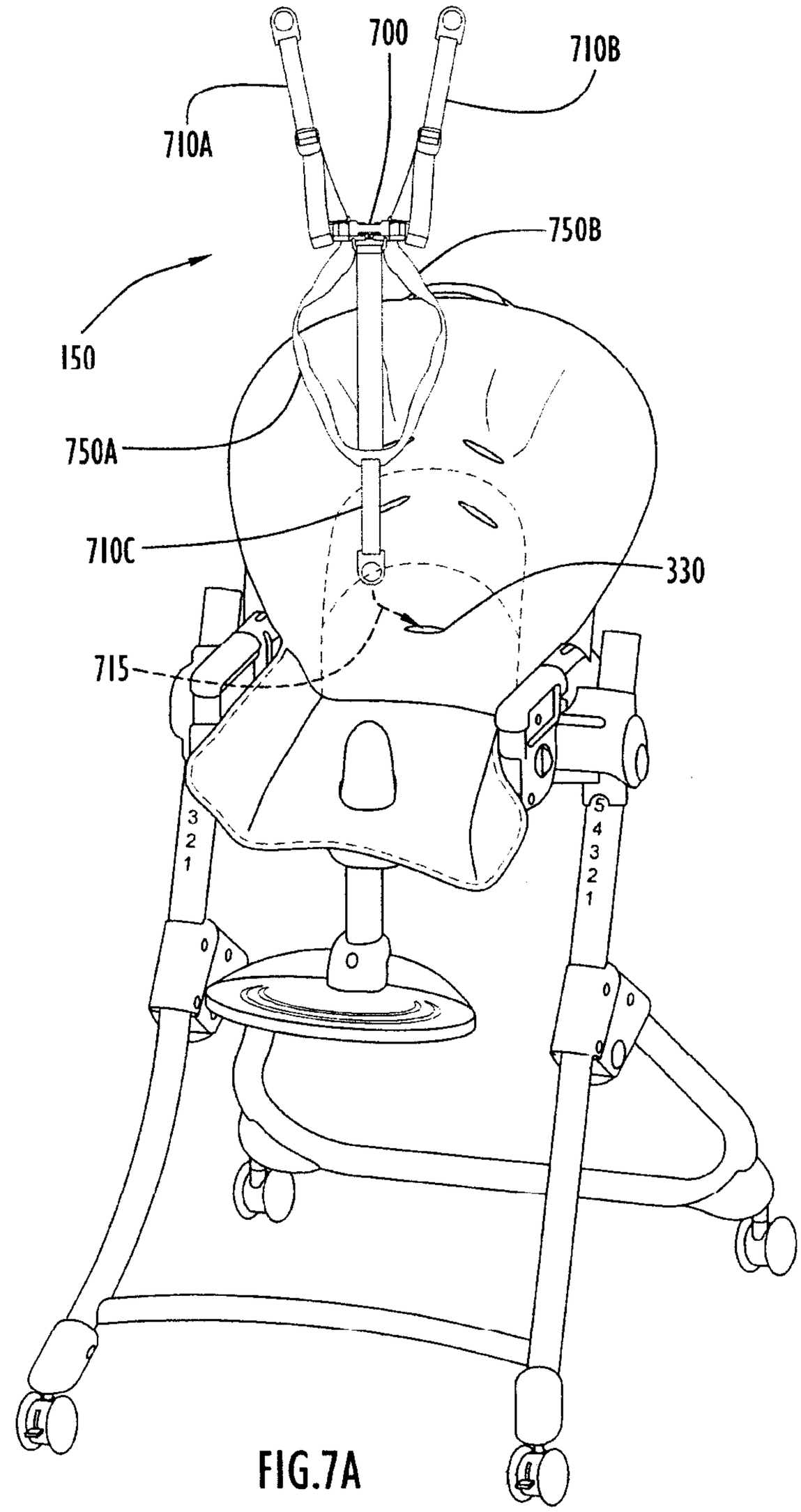


FIG.7A

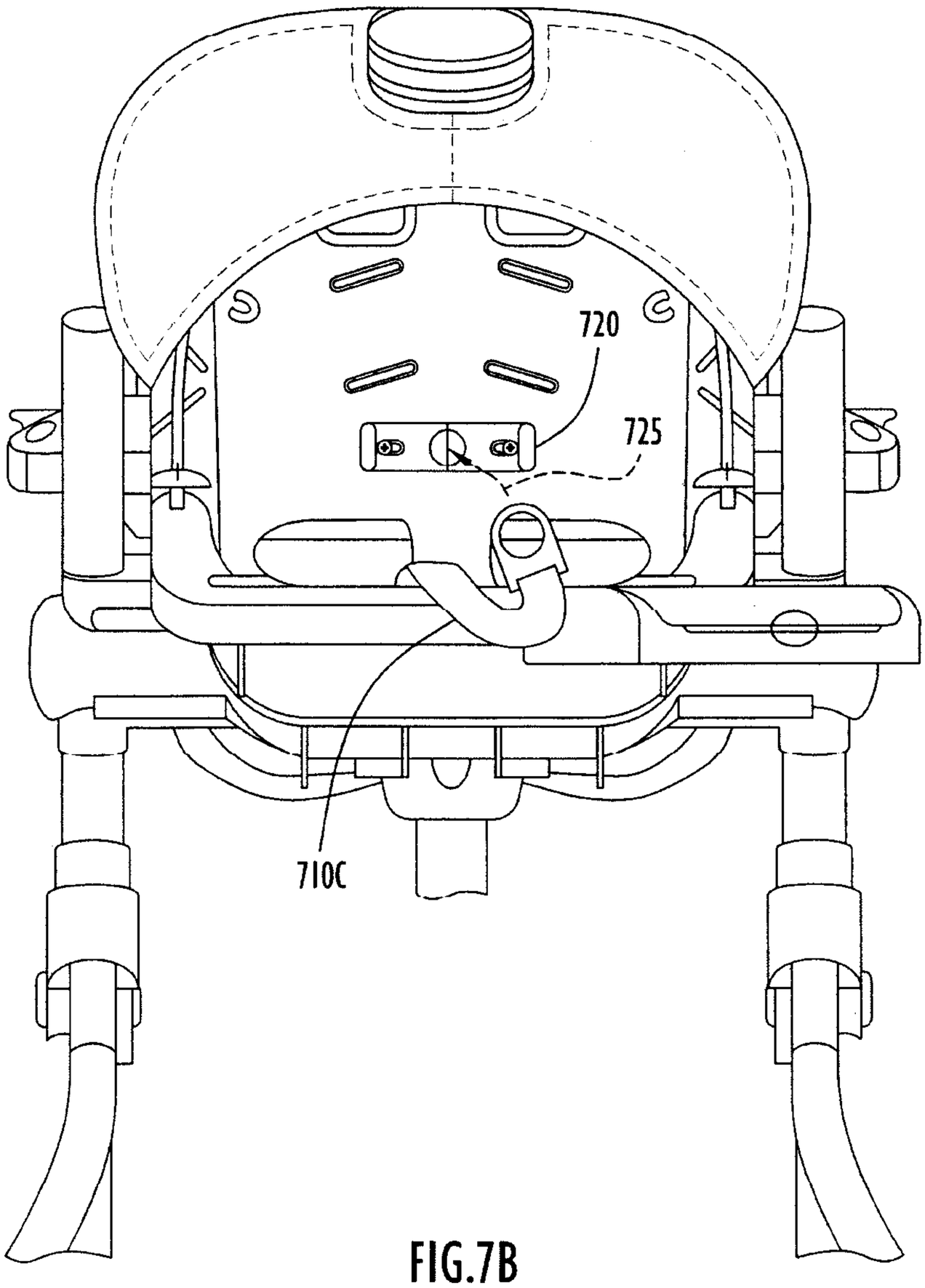


FIG.7B

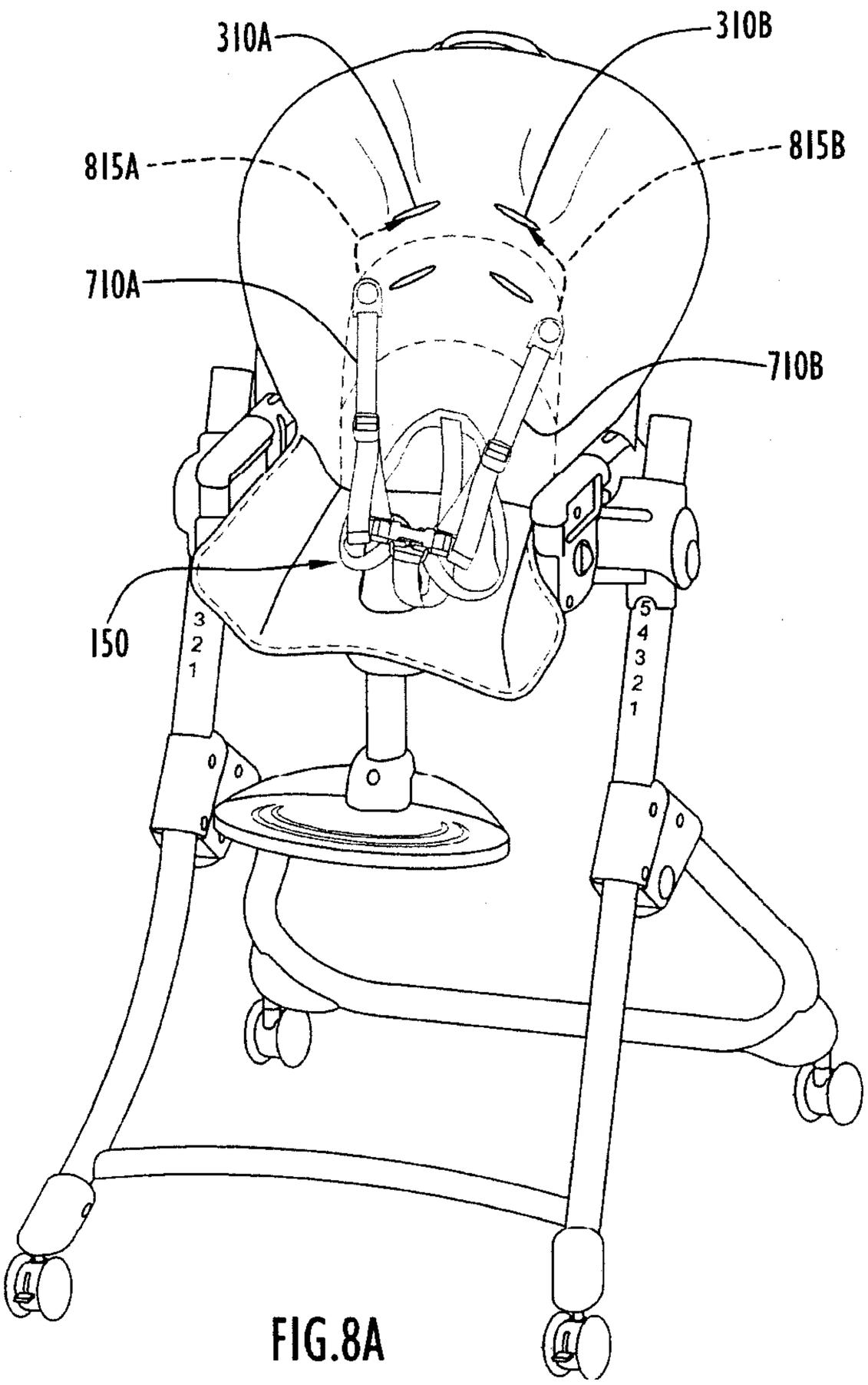


FIG.8A

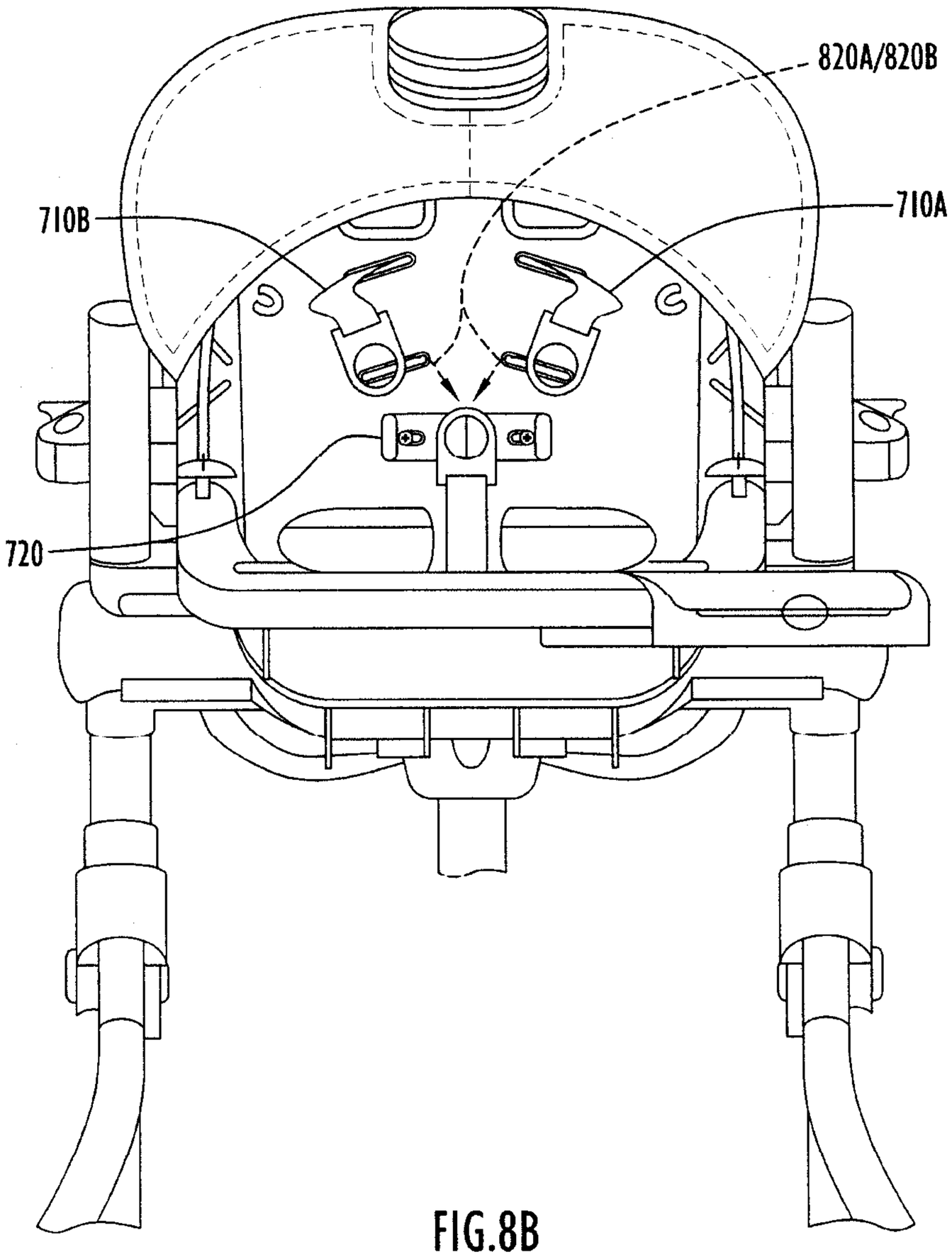


FIG.8B

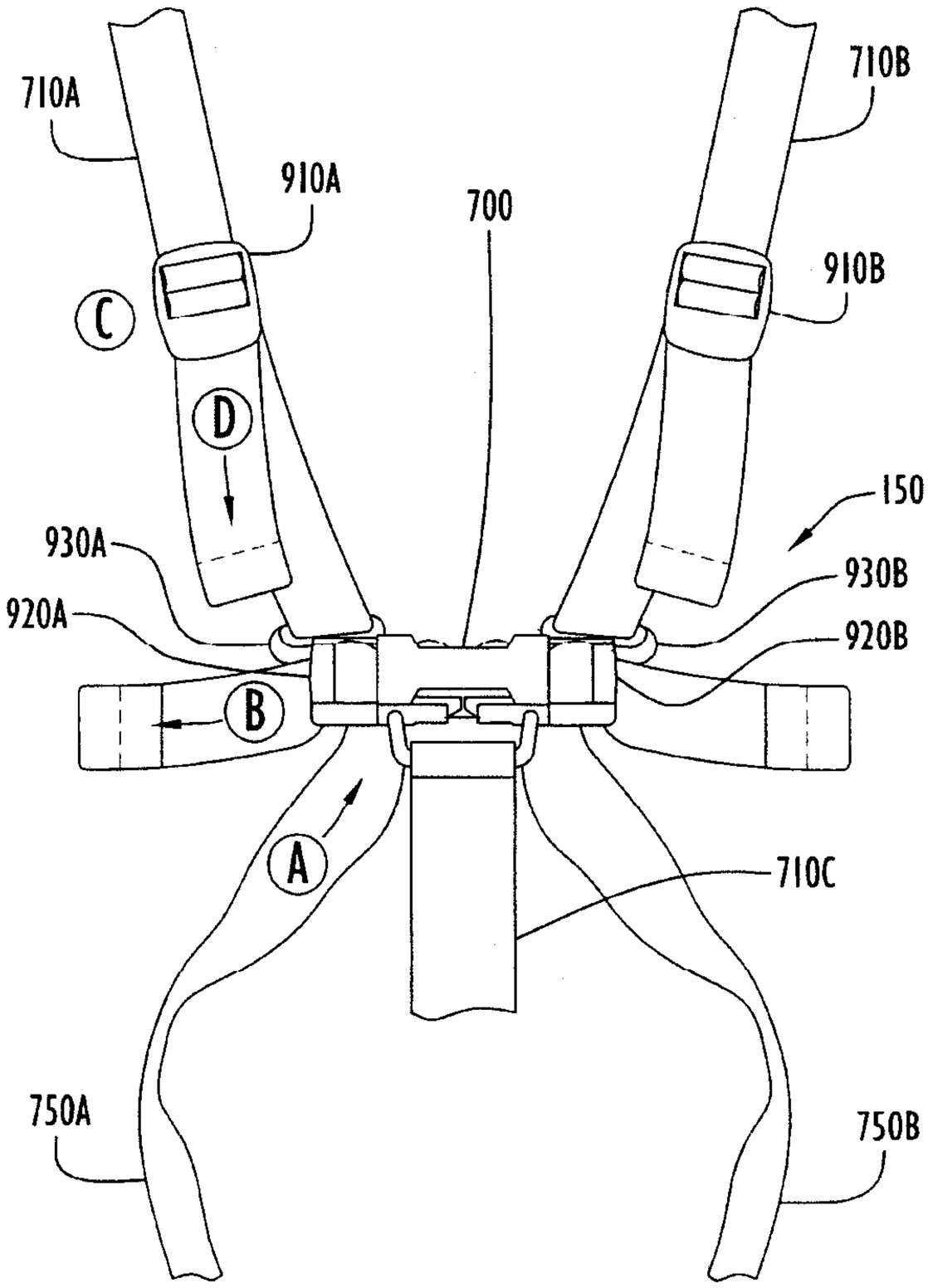

710A
910A
700
710B
910B
C
D
150
930A
930B
920A
920B
B
A
710C
750A
750B

FIG.9

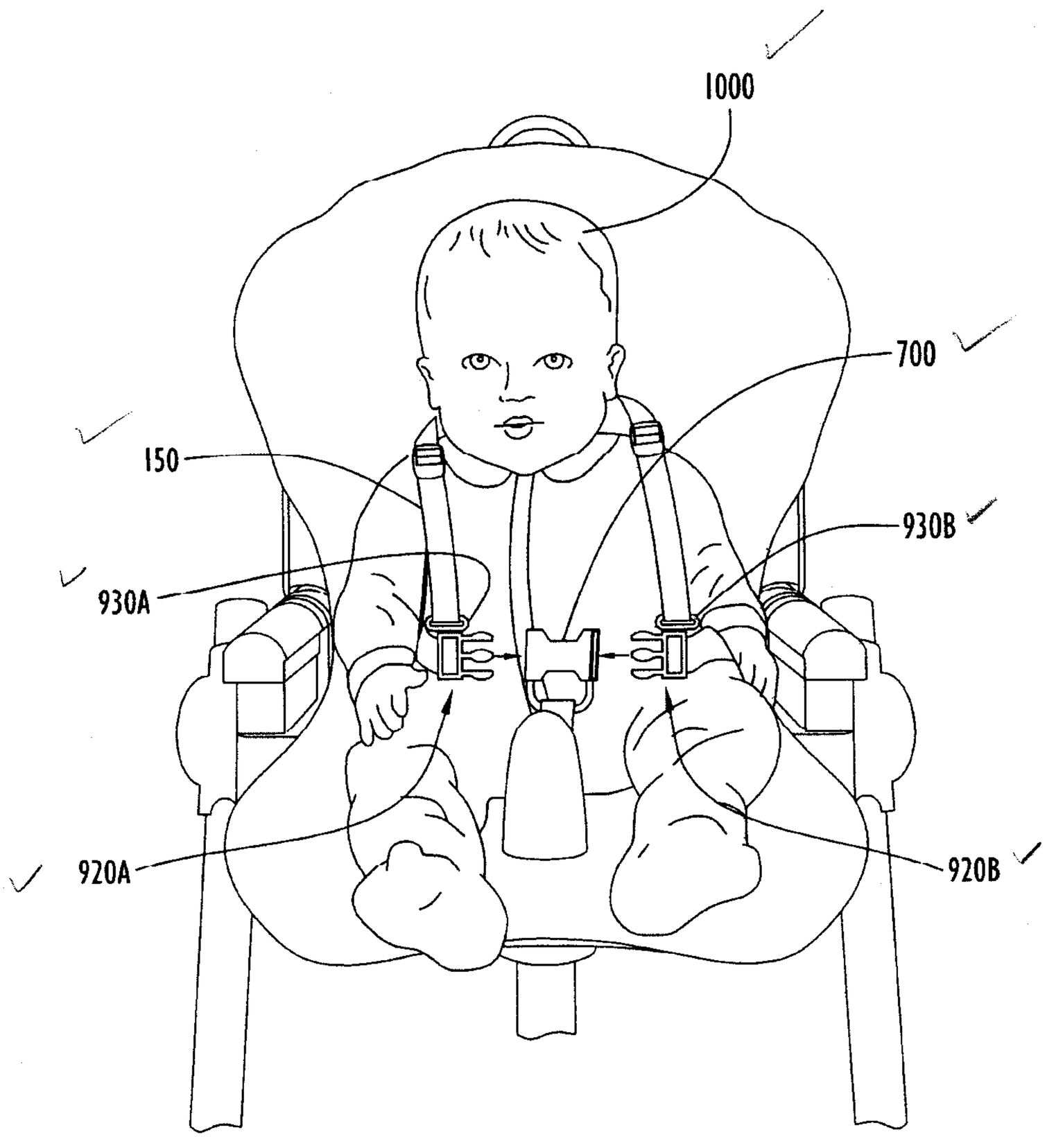


FIG.10

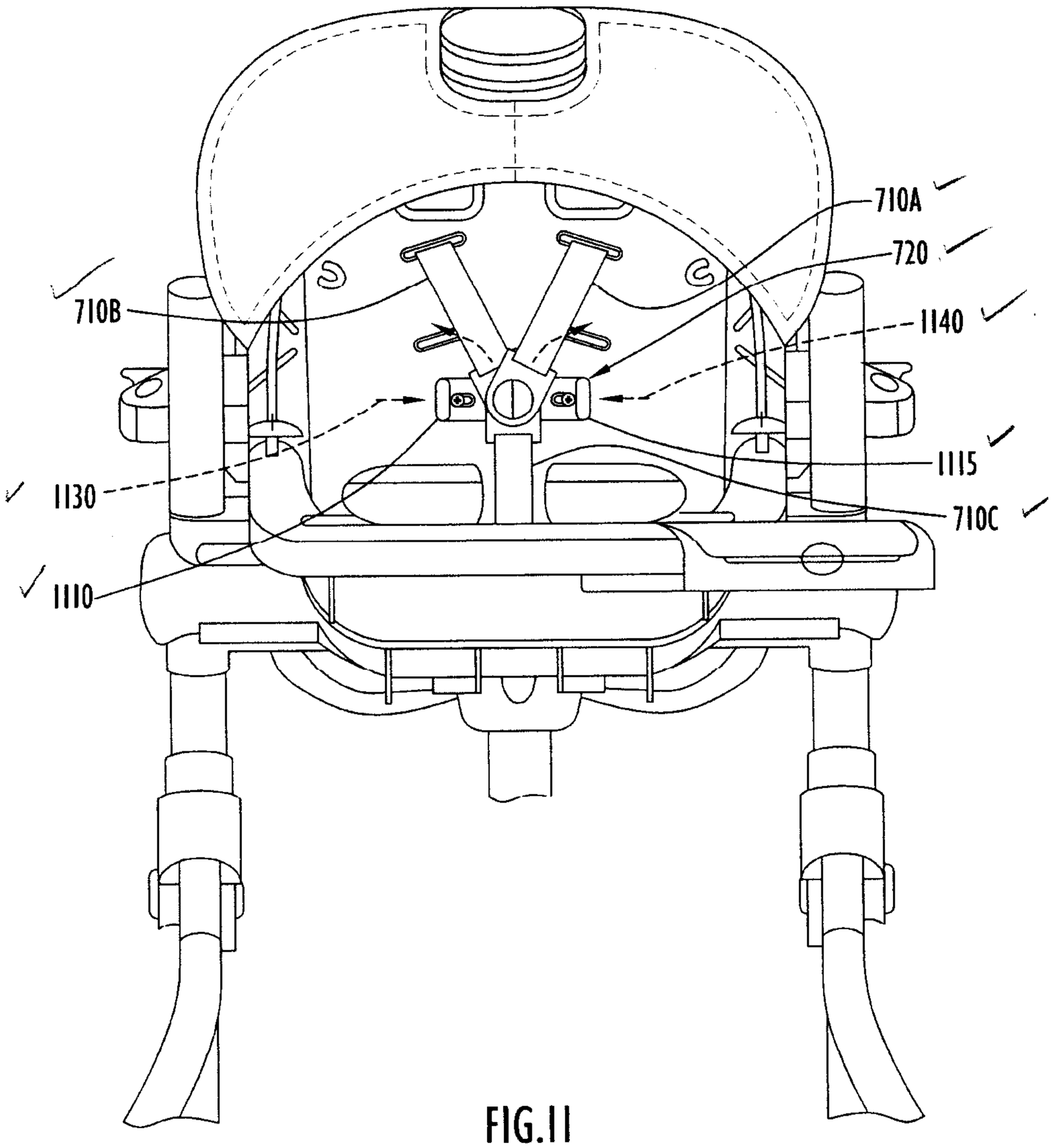


FIG.11

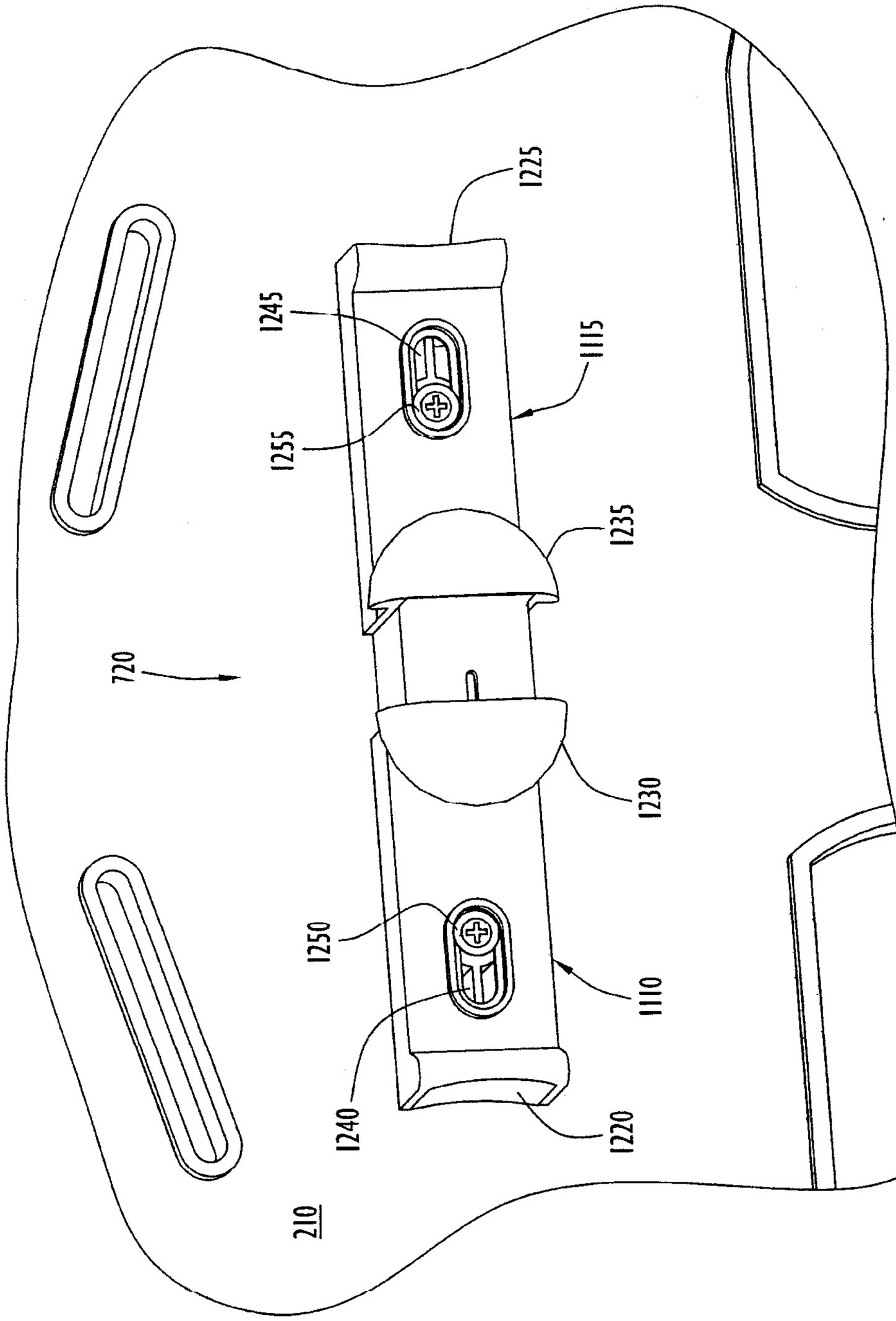


FIG.12

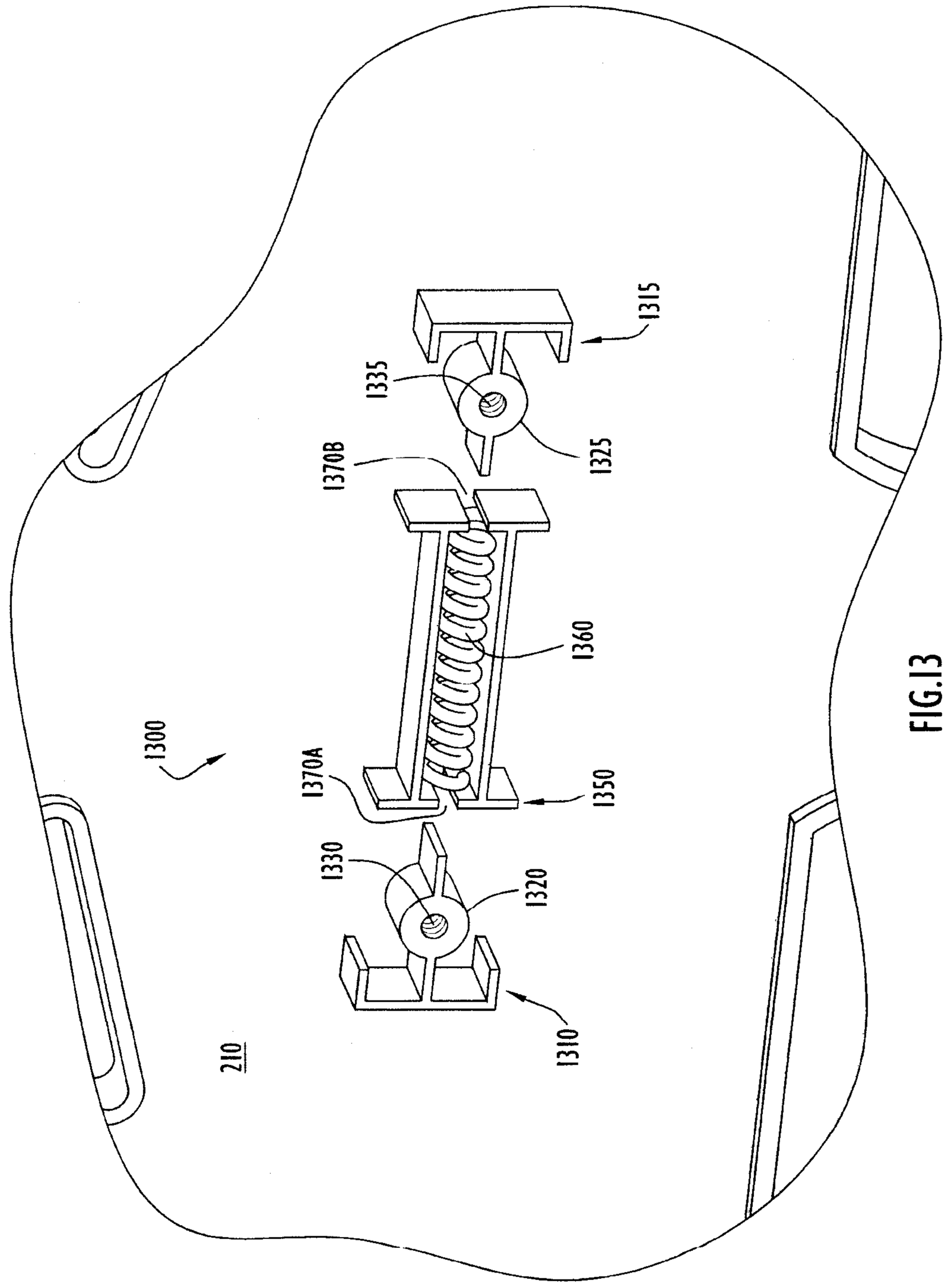


FIG.13

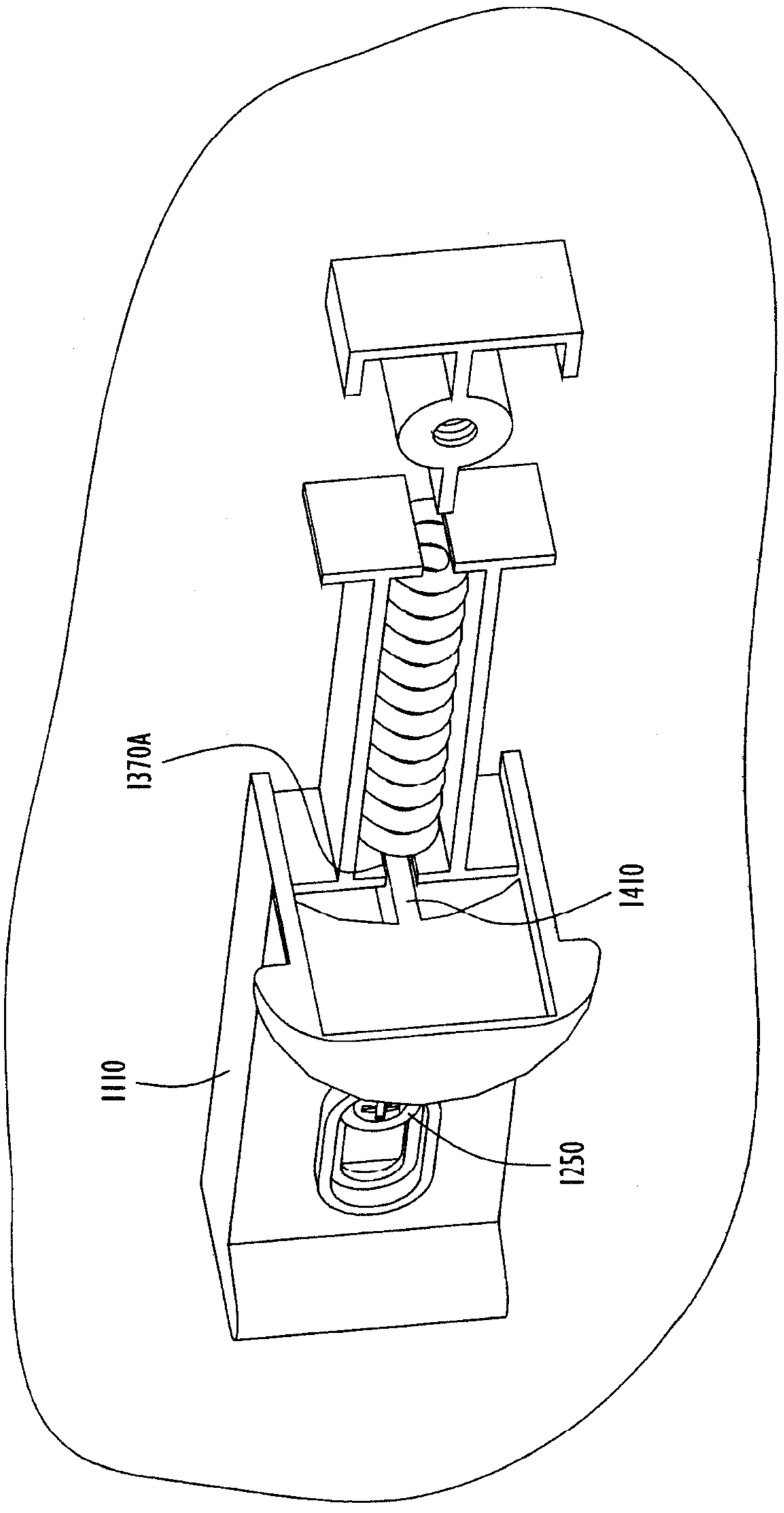


FIG.14

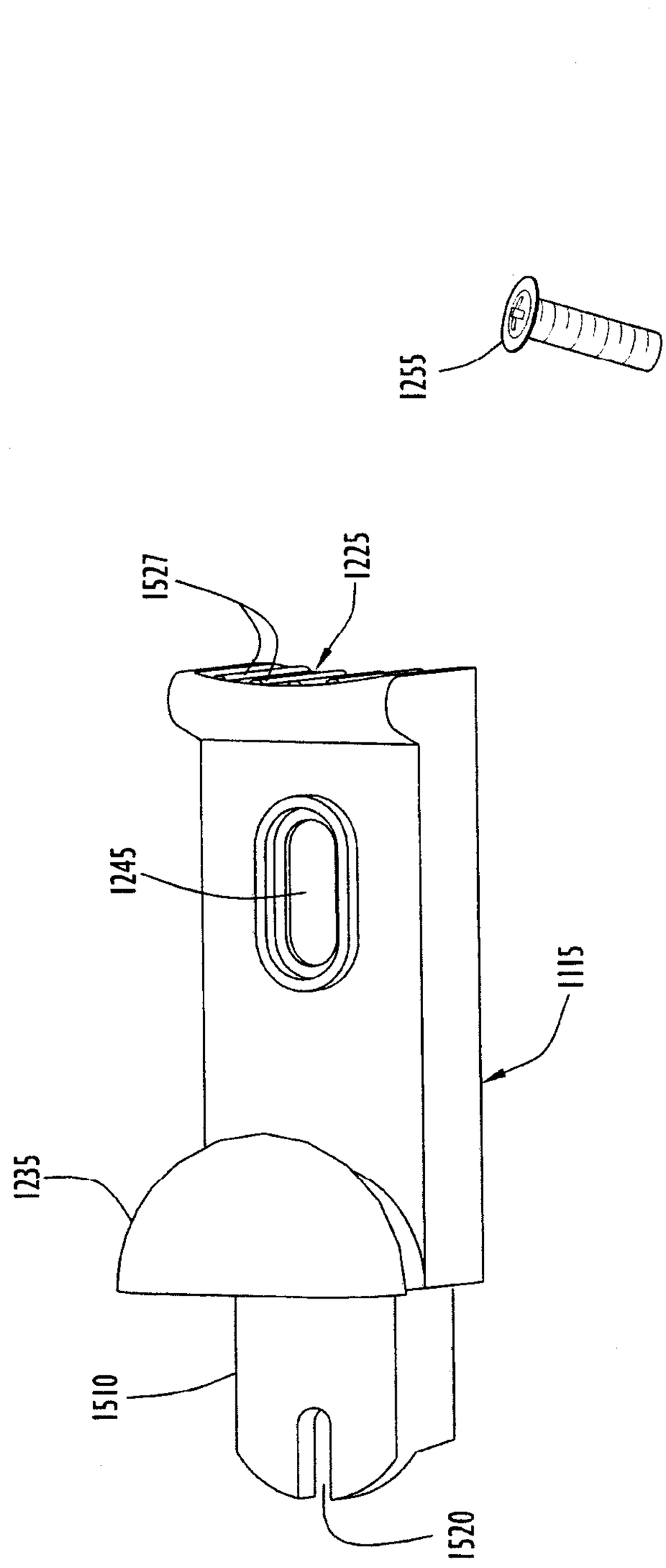


FIG.15

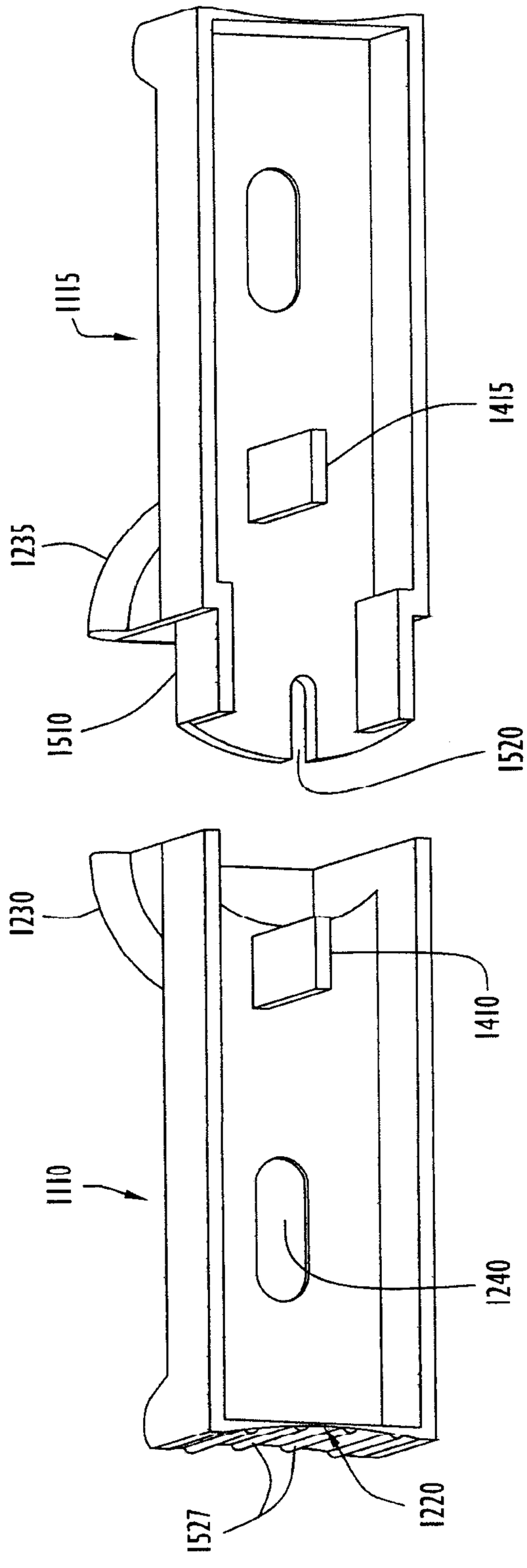


FIG.16

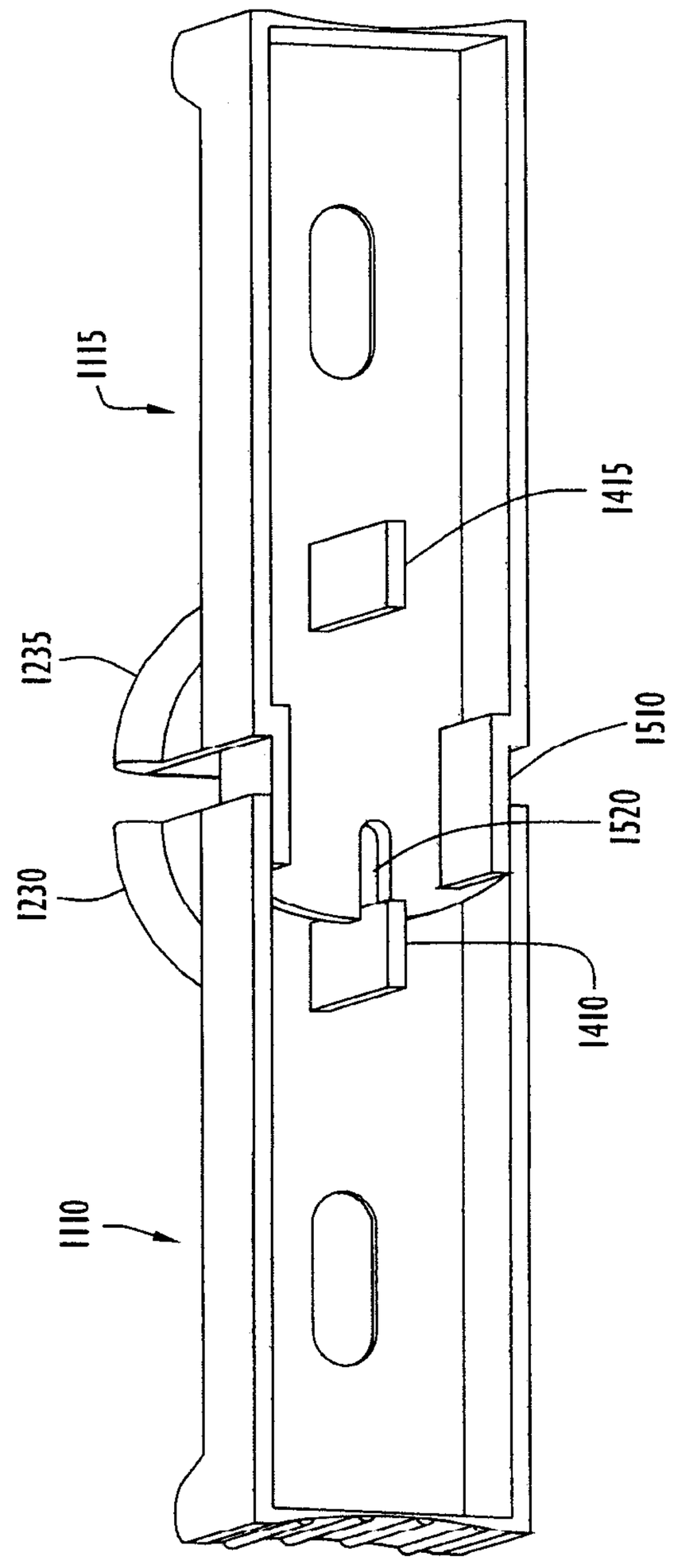


FIG.17

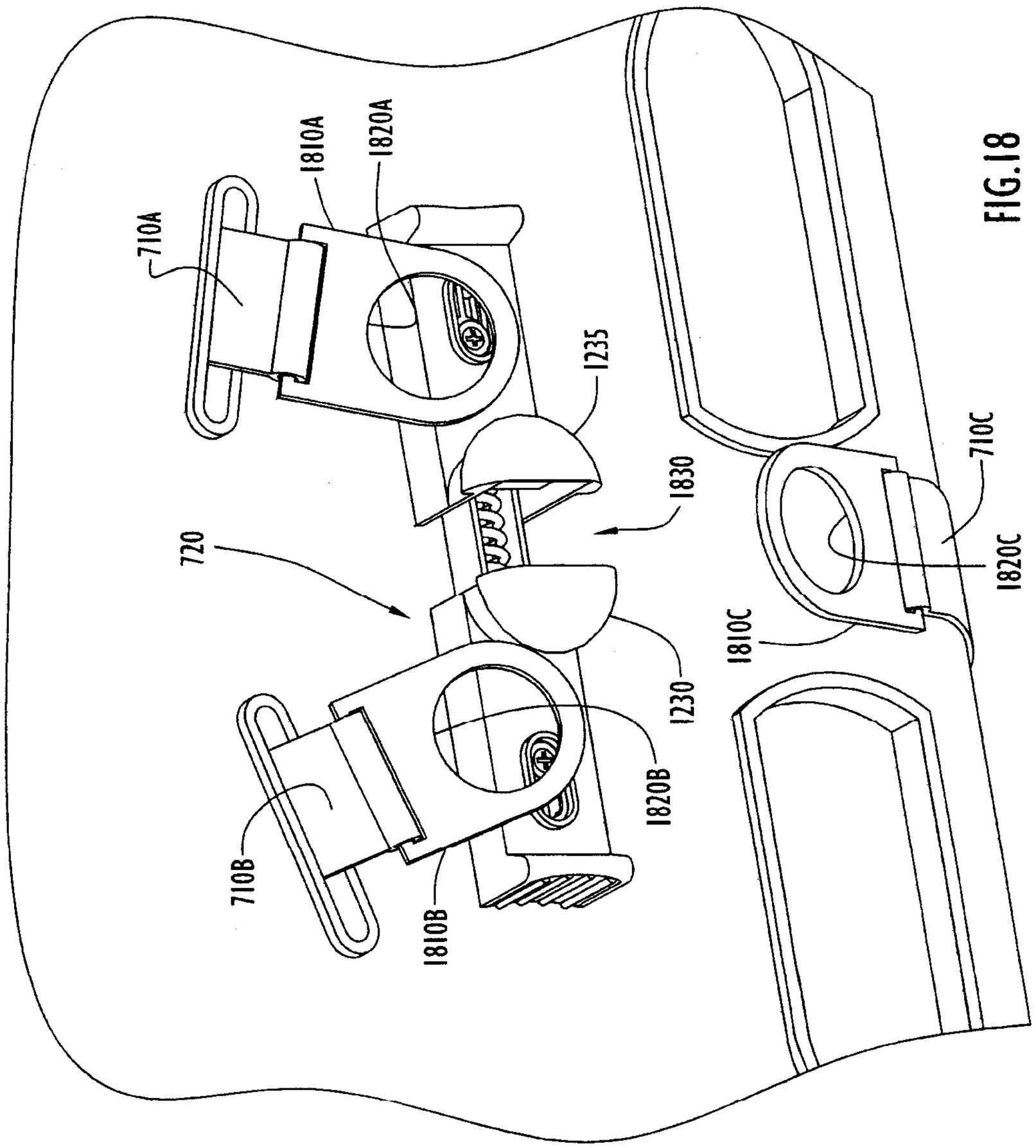

710A
1810A
1820A
1235
1830
720
710C
1820C
1810C
1230
1820B
710B
1810B

FIG.18

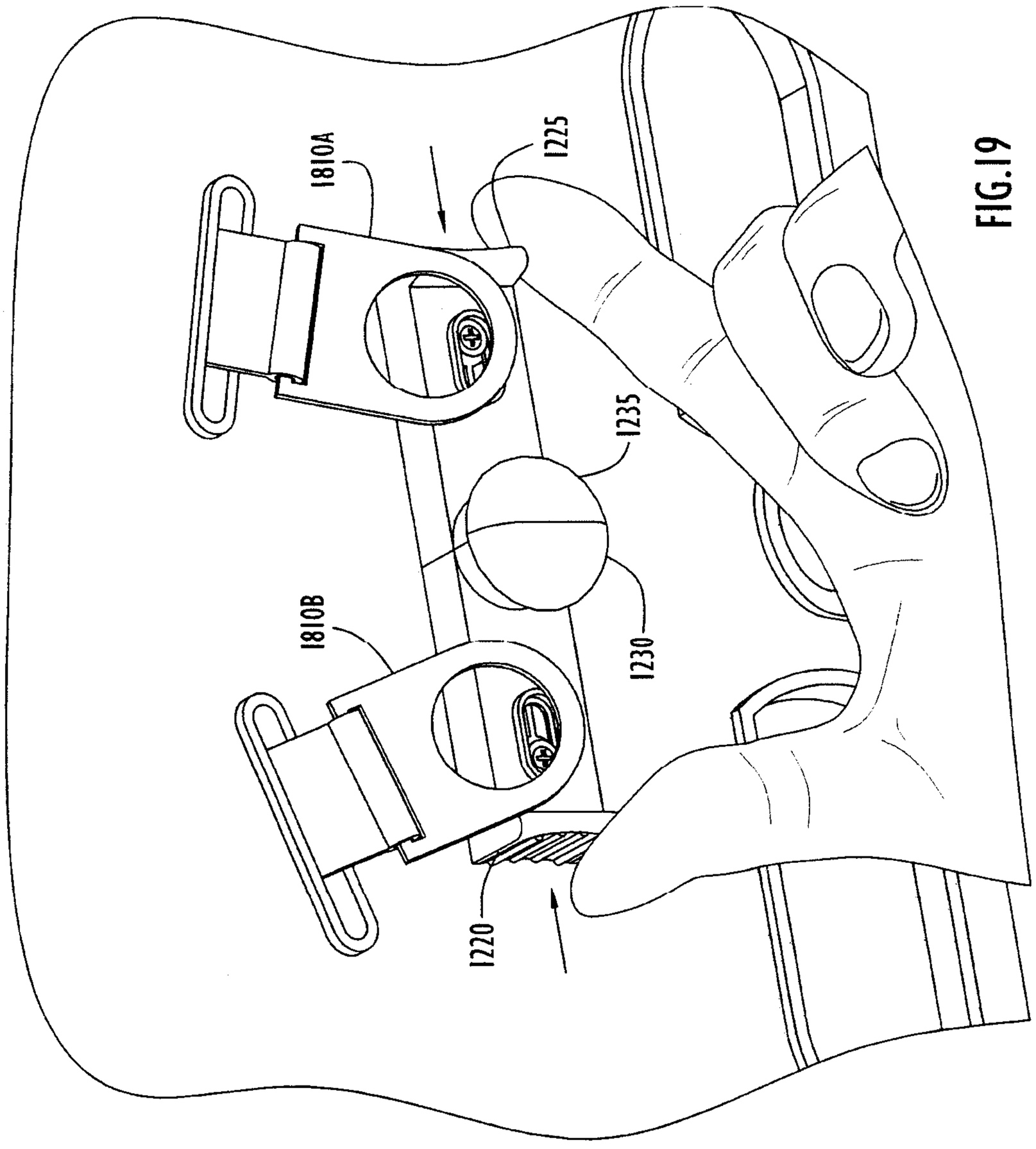


FIG.19

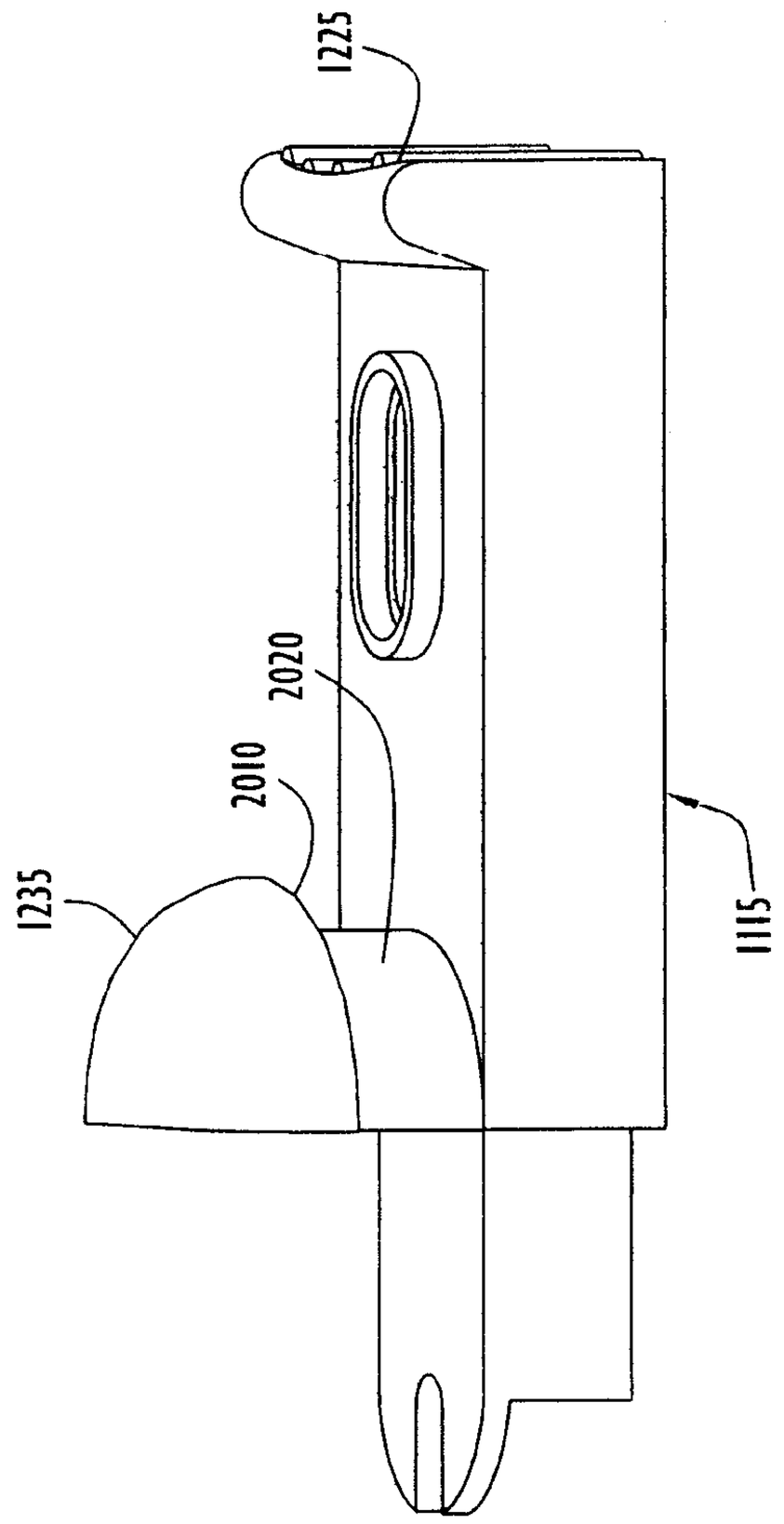


FIG.20

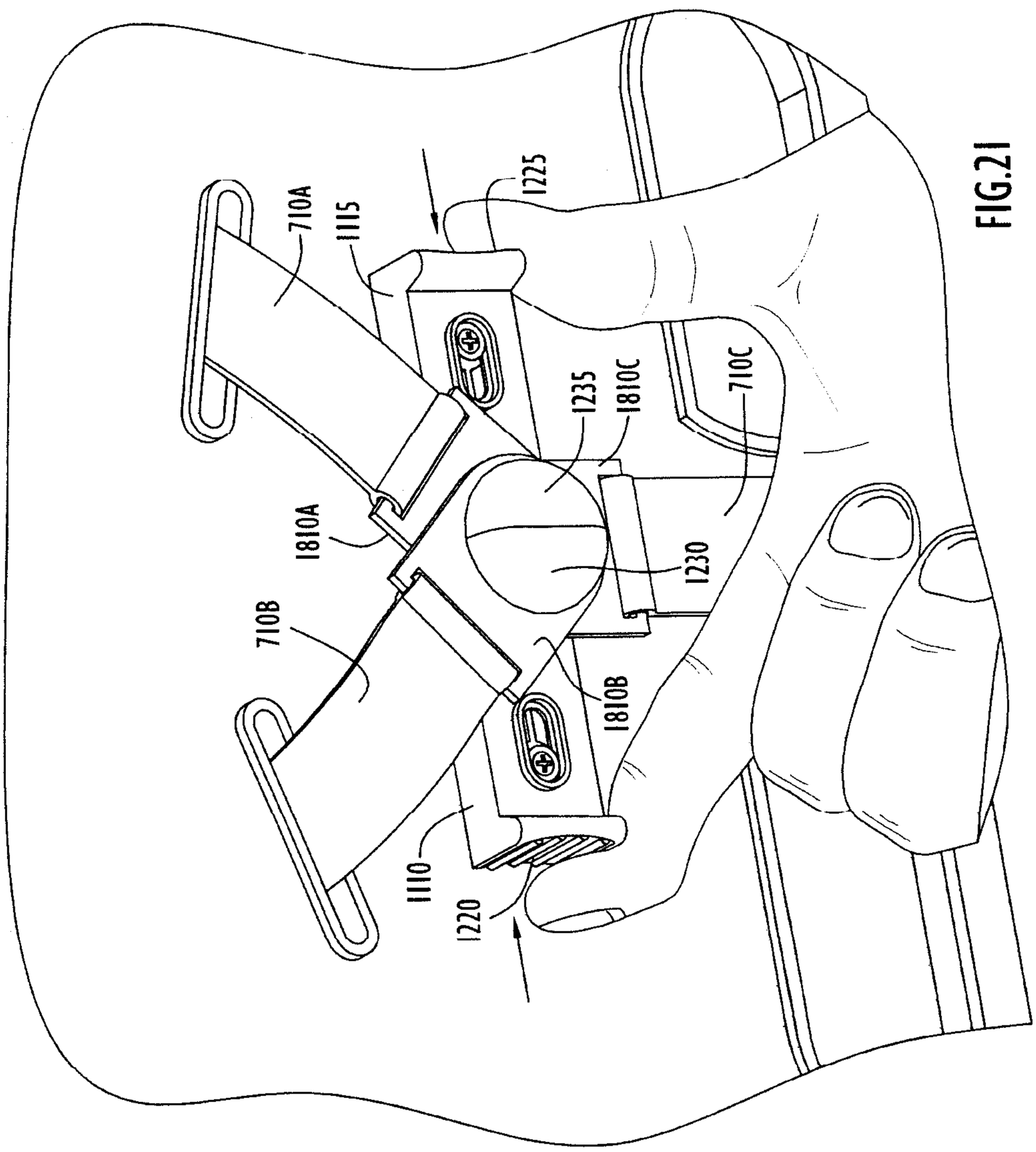

710A
1115
1225
1235
1810C
710C
1810A
1230
710B
1810B
1110
1220

FIG.21

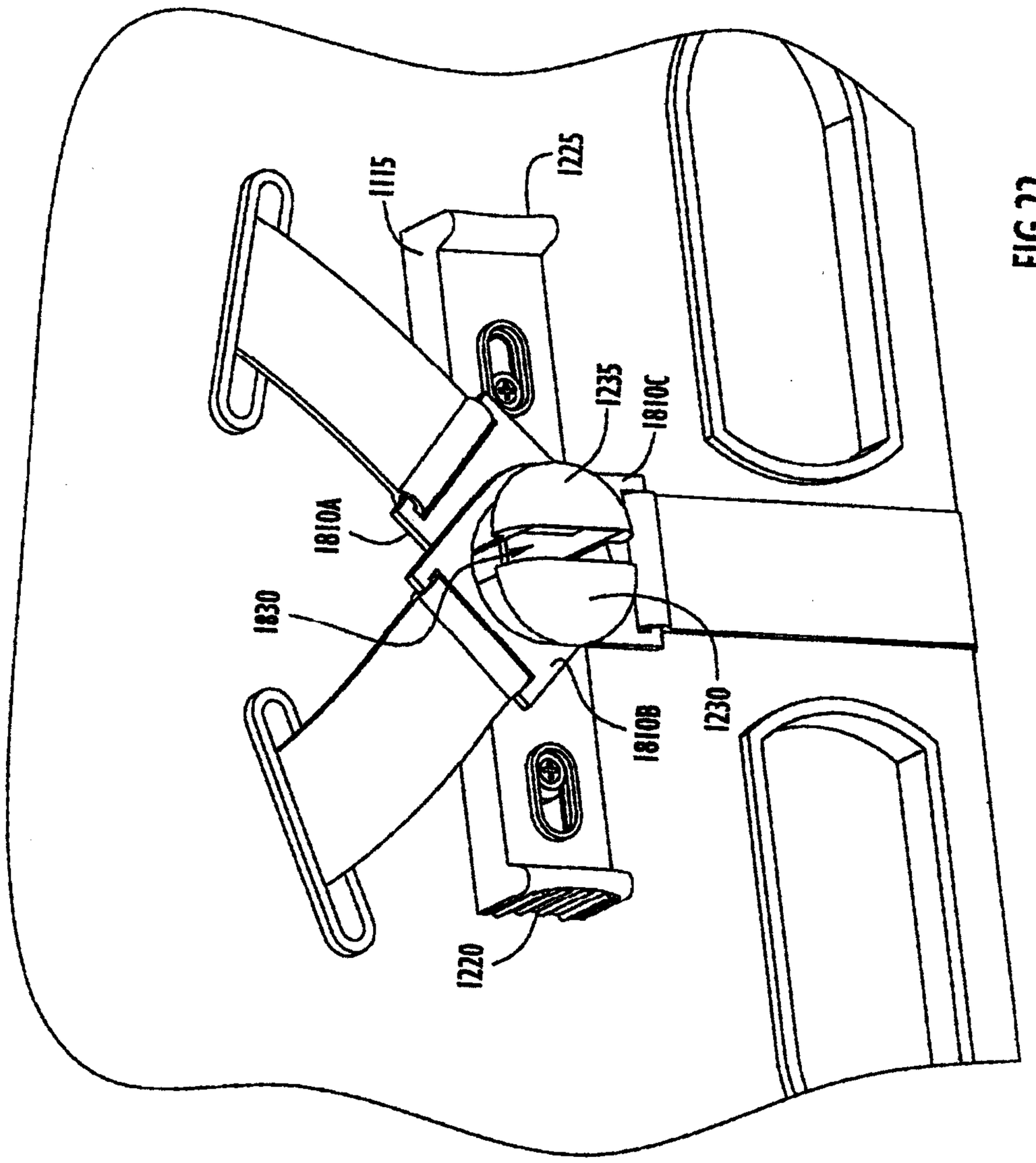


FIG.22

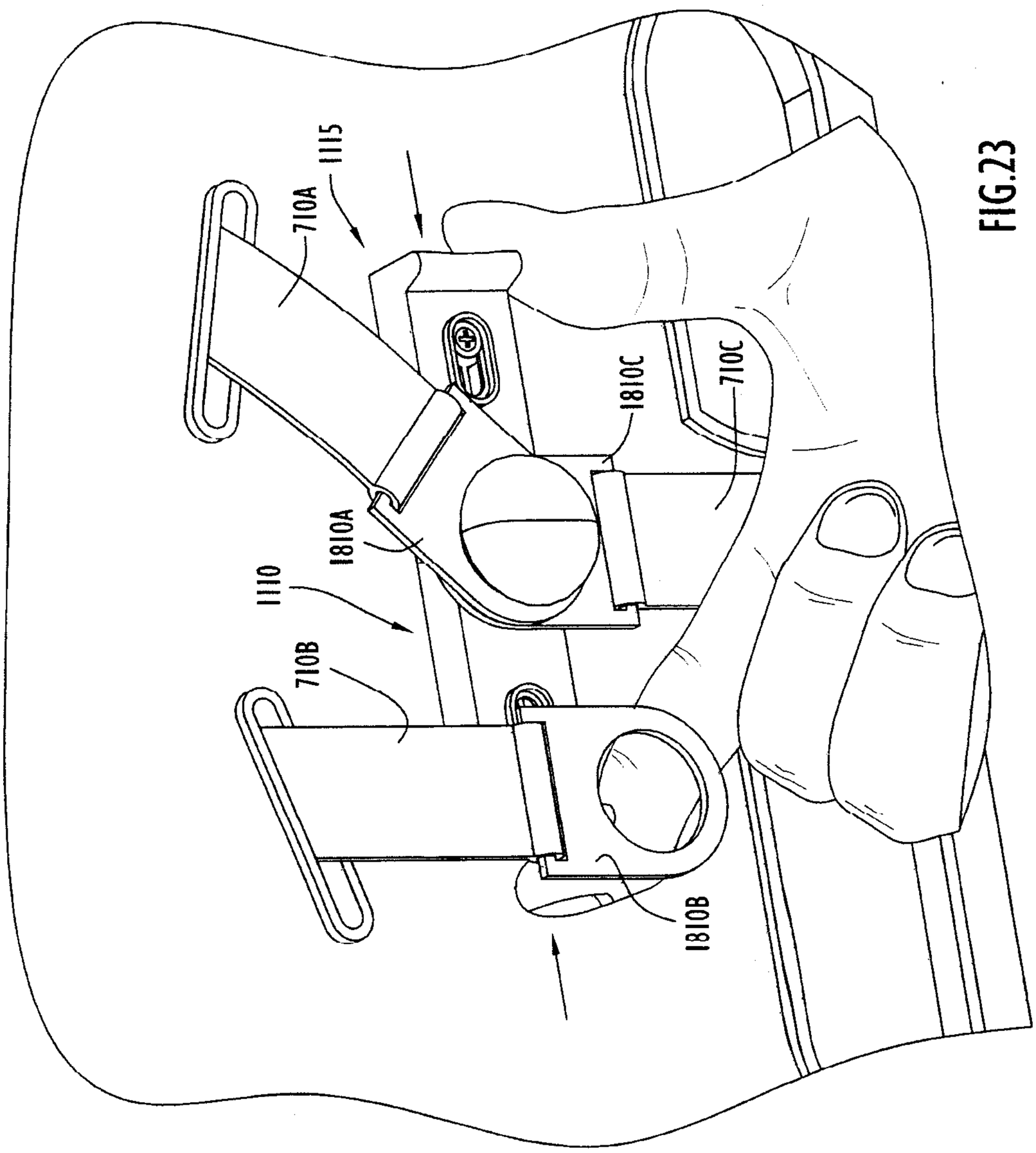
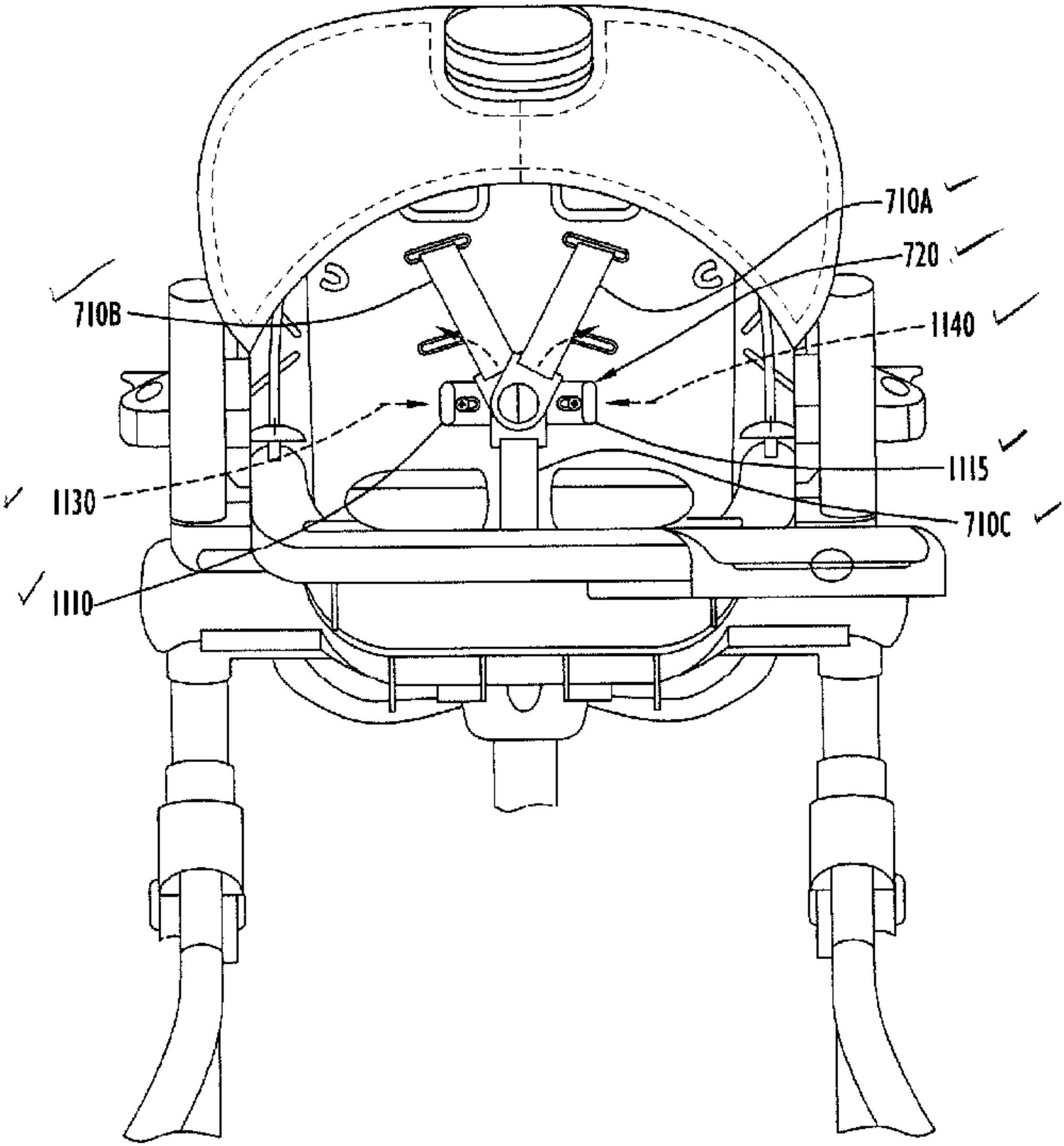


FIG.23


710A
720
710B
1140
1115
1130
710C
1110