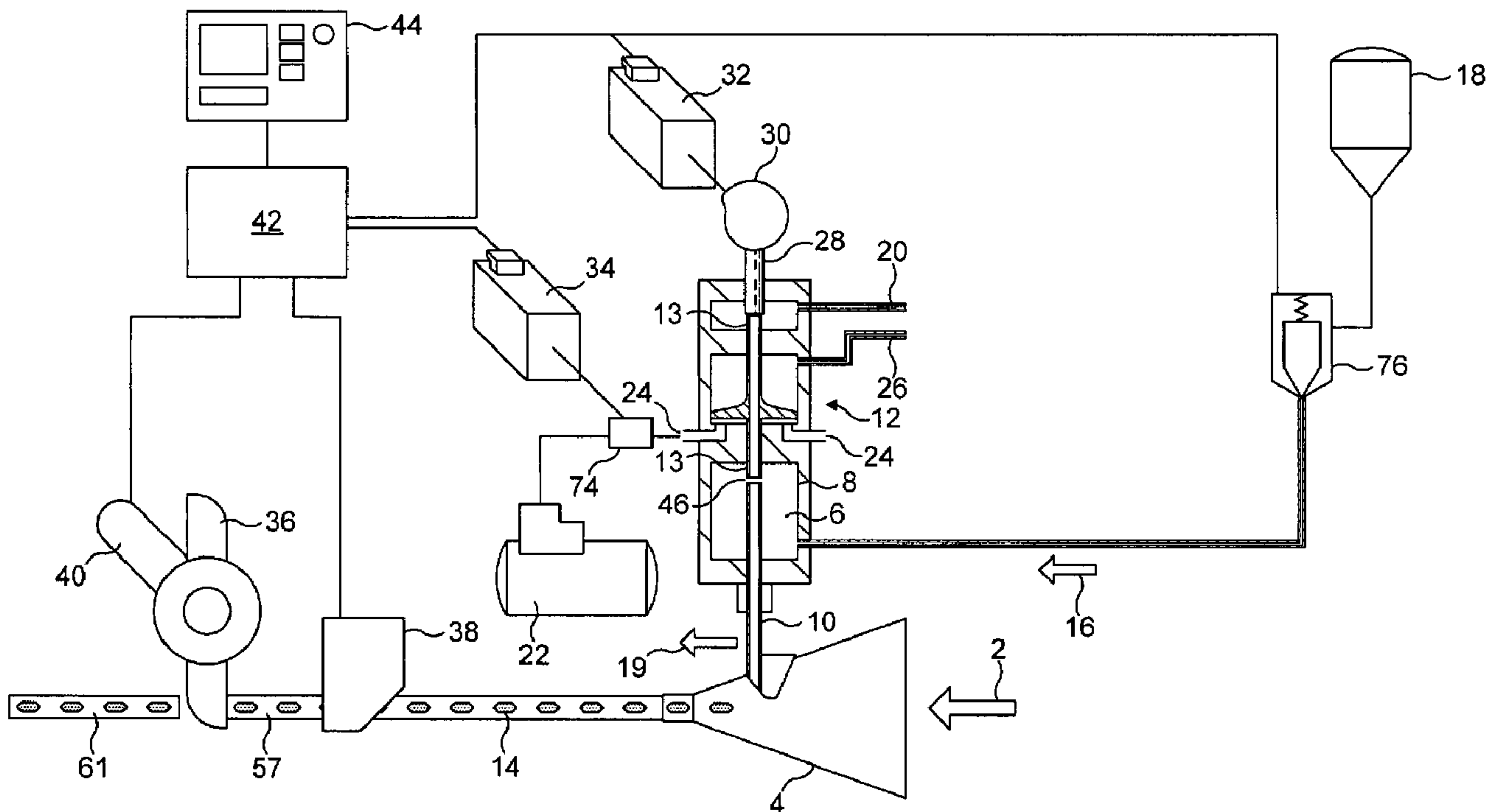




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(54) Titre : PRODUCTION DE FILTRE POUR FUMEE DE TABAC
 (54) Title: TOBACCO SMOKE FILTER PRODUCTION



(57) Abrégé/Abstract:

A method and apparatus for tobacco smoke filter production wherein a train (2) of tobacco smoke filtering material, whilst continuously advanced longitudinally, is gathered towards rod shape and then shaped to and secured in rod form (57), and wherein there is discontinuous pneumatic injection of particulate additive (6) through an injector conduit (10) laterally into the gathering material to form separate additive pockets (14) embedded in and spaced along the continuously produced rod (57).

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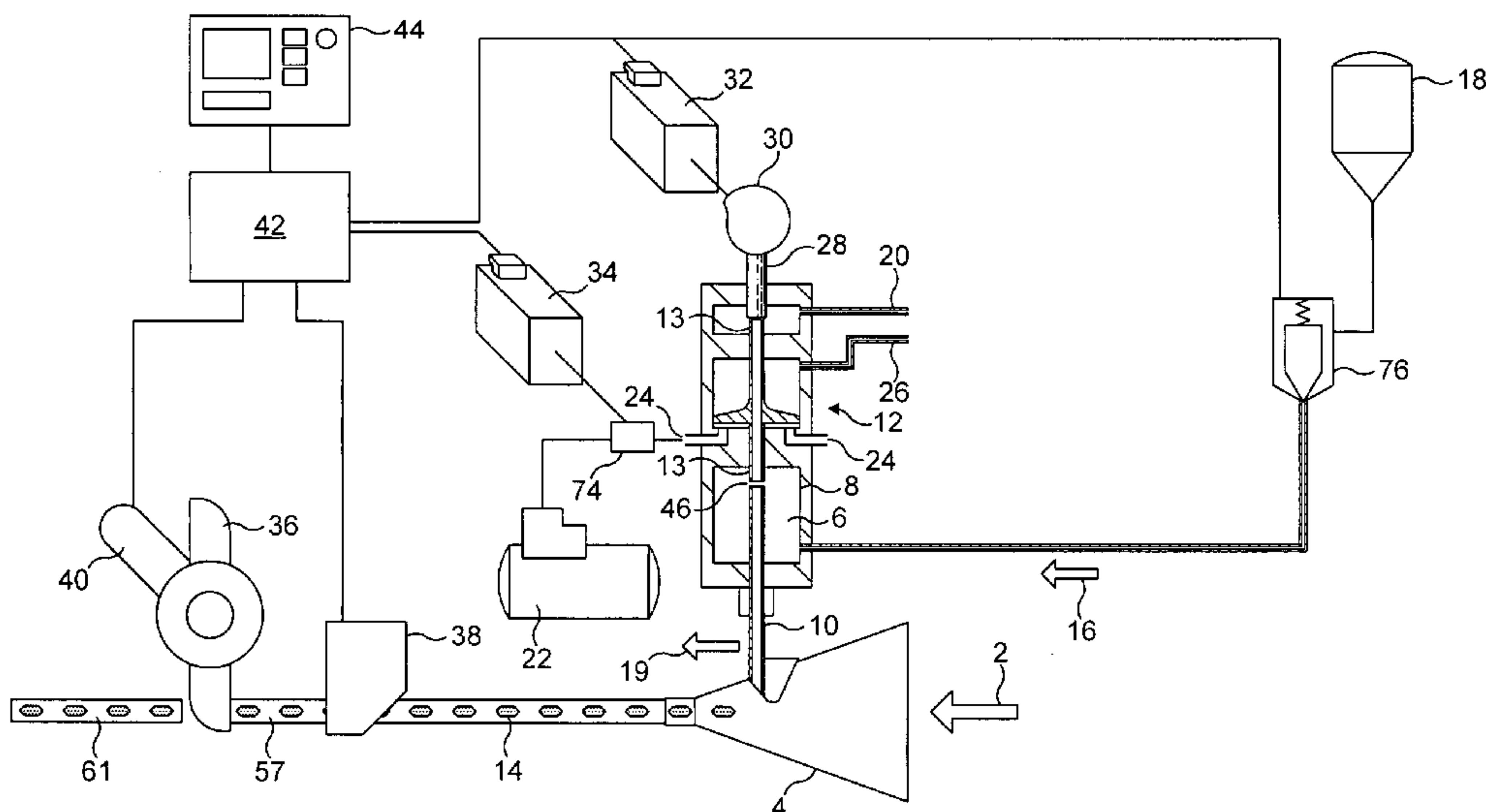
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(54) Title: TOBACCO SMOKE FILTER PRODUCTION



(57) Abstract: A method and apparatus for tobacco smoke filter production wherein a train (2) of tobacco smoke filtering material, whilst continuously advanced longitudinally, is gathered towards rod shape and then shaped to and secured in rod form (57), and wherein there is discontinuous pneumatic injection of particulate additive (6) through an injector conduit (10) laterally into the gathering material to form separate additive pockets (14) embedded in and spaced along the continuously produced rod (57).

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TOBACCO SMOKE FILTER PRODUCTION

This invention concerns tobacco smoke filters and provides a method of tobacco smoke filter production wherein a train of tobacco smoke filtering material is continuously advanced longitudinally, the advancing filtering material is gathered towards rod shape, the gathered advancing filtering material is shaped to and secured in rod form, and the resulting continuously produced rod of filtering material may be cut into finite lengths, and wherein there is discontinuous pneumatic injection of particulate additive (e.g. through an injector barrel or conduit, which is preferably stationary) laterally into the advancing gathering filter material to form separate additive pockets embedded in and longitudinally spaced along the continuously produced rod. In some embodiments separate pockets of particulate additive are sequentially pneumatically injected (e.g. through a fixed injector conduit) laterally into the advancing gathering filtering material to become embedded in and longitudinally spaced along the continuously produced rod.

Apparatus according to the invention for the manufacture of tobacco smoke filters comprises means for continuously advancing a train of tobacco smoke filtering material longitudinally, a device for gathering the advancing filtering material, a plugmaker for shaping and securing the advancing gathered filtering material in rod form, optional cutting means for transversely cutting the continuously produced rod into finite lengths, a pneumatic injector conduit (usually fixed) connectable to means for supplying particulate additive thereto, and pneumatic injection means for discontinuously admitting particulate additive into the injector conduit and moving it therealong, the injector conduit extending laterally of and into the path of the filtering material for discharge transversely of

and within the gathering device. In some embodiments the pneumatic injection means conveys separate pockets of particulate additive from said supplying means sequentially along the injector conduit (which is usually stationary).

Gas used for pneumatic particle injection may be vented from the gathering filtering material. Additionally or instead some, most or all of the gas used for pneumatic particle injection may be vented or withdrawn from upstream of the point of particle injection. In all cases the impetus or momentum or kinetic energy pneumatically imparted to the particles intended for pocket formation (as distinct from unwanted fines and/or other dust) is sufficient to ensure their travel to and injection into the gathering filtering material. It is thus to be understood that all references herein to "pneumatic conveyance", "pneumatic injection", "pneumatic conveyance and injection" and the like apply, where the context allows, not only to cases where some or all of said gas passes into the gathering filtering material along with the particles, but also to those where little or none does because most or all has vented or been extracted upstream. Reducing or avoiding the release of pneumatic injection gas into the gathering filtering material can reduce or prevent the scattering or dispersal of injected particles within said material and so improve the sharpness of pocket definition and separation in the product rod.

Passage and injection of the particulate additive transversely of (rather than axially along), and especially radially of, the filtering material path permits reduction or minimising of the time and distance of pneumatic conveyance of the additive into the filtering material, and hence can ensure that the resulting additive pockets are separate and can optimise the accuracy, reliability and controllability of the embedded additive pockets. Injection transverse to,

especially radially of, the machine direction can minimise dispersal of injected additive particles longitudinally of the rod and so reduce or eliminate the occurrence of unwanted stray injected particles between pockets or at (or too near to) the ends of cut filter lengths.

5 The pneumatic conveyance of the particulate additive to the point of injection is preferably as short as practically possible, and hence is suitably rectilinear or substantially so; for example, said path may be as little as 170 mm. long, more advantageously 150 mm. or less, for filters of conventional size and content as indicated hereinafter. In particularly preferred embodiments said path
10 may be about 135 mm. long or even less; the use of an injector conduit to extend from an external particle supply into the gathering device does of course impose a practical minimum length. Lateral pneumatic conveyance and injection of the particulate additive may be substantially radially of (i.e. at right angles to) the axis of the advancing gathering filtering material; in this case the pneumatic
15 conveyance path of the particulate additive will be through the wall of the device used to effect the gathering. Lateral pneumatic conveyance and injection of the particulate additive could instead be non-perpendicular to the axis of the filtering material path; when such conveyance and injection are in the same general direction as the advance of the filtering material, the pneumatic conveyance path
20 of the particles could then be obliquely through the open upstream mouth of the gathering device rather than through its wall.

For sale and subsequent use, the initial continuously produced rod will usually have to be cut into lengths, preferably as part of the continuous process or apparatus operation. To ensure the required spacing between cuts along the
25 continuously produced rod, and their required general positioning (e.g. between

rather than through embedded pockets of particulate additive so that the cut filter rods have clean end appearance), it is preferred for a cutter to be geared to the throughput of the filtering material (e.g. to the machine drive) and for operation of the injection to be synchronised with the cutter – the injector preferably being the
5 slave of the cutter. Within such synchronisation, however, the pneumatic conveyance and injection operations may be adjustable to achieve a more specific required positioning of the embedded pockets along the cut rods – e.g. towards the centres or the ends of the cut rods.

In filters according to the invention the embedded additive pockets can be
10 fully enclosed in the matrix of filtering material, and are compact but may taper towards one or both ends – e.g. may be of a generally ellipsoidal configuration. In the initially produced rod the embedded pockets of additive may have even longitudinal spacing. It may be preferred, however, to have other pocket
15 dispositions – e.g. relatively close longitudinal spacing alternating with longer spacing - it being possible to achieve this by appropriate adjustment of the timing and pattern of the injections; this can facilitate the provision of eventual single filters with a single embedded additive pocket close to one end (preferably the tobacco end in a filter cigarette) and remote from the other end (preferably the buccal end), as explained below with reference to Figure 4 of the accompanying
20 drawings. The individual filters according to the invention will usually each have a single embedded particulate additive pocket, but there could instead be a plurality of smaller longitudinally spaced such pockets in an individual filter. A filter according to the invention may be attached end-to-end to a wrapped tobacco rod (e.g. by ring tipping or a full tipping overwrap) in a filter cigarette
25 according to the invention.

Any filter or filter cigarette according to the invention may be ventilated. Thus if the filter has its own plugwrap the latter may be of inherently air-permeable material and/or provided with ventilation holes or larger apertures, and may be exposed when used with ring tipping in a filter cigarette. A ventilating full
5 tipping overwrap may likewise be inherently air-permeable or provided with ventilation holes, and in ventilated products where both filter plugwrap and tipping overwrap are present ventilation through the overwrap will usually be in register with that through the plugwrap. Ventilation holes through a filter plugwrap, or through a tipping overwrap, or through both simultaneously, may be made by
10 laser perforation during filter or filter cigarette production. Where ventilation in a filter or filter cigarette according to the invention is localised longitudinally of the product, this localisation is preferably to one or two regions selected from upstream of, downstream of, and in register with the or a particulate additive pocket, depending upon the ventilation and filtering performances required;
15 ventilation upstream of and/or in register with a particulate additive pocket is frequently preferred. There could be ventilation between pockets when two or more are present. There may be ventilation only into the tobacco rod, only into the filter, or into both. The degree of ventilation may be 50% or less (e.g. 40 or 30% or lower) but is preferably over 50% (e.g. 60% or 70% or higher) – as
20 measured in the fashion standard in the art.

The invention permits the efficient manufacture in a single-pass continuous operation of commercially acceptable composite filters having distinct particulate and filtering matrix portions.

The additive particles employed in the invention may be of any of smoker-
25 acceptable material, but will normally be from those conventionally used in

tobacco smoke filter production, including sorbents (e.g. selected from activated carbon, silica gel, sepiolite, alumina, ion exchange material etc), pH modifiers (e.g. alkaline material such as sodium carbonate, acidic materials), and flavourants. They will usually be sorbent particles, preferably carbon particles –
5 especially activated carbon granules. Mixtures of different particulates can be employed. Flavourant, e.g. menthol, may be carried by substrate (e.g. sorbent) particles.

The filtering material forming the rod matrix within which the additive pockets are embedded may likewise be selected from any of those materials
10 (usually filamentary, fibrous, web or extruded) conventionally employed for tobacco smoke filter manufacture. Natural or synthetic filamentary tow, e.g. of cotton or plastics such as polyethylene or polypropylene, but especially cellulose acetate filamentary tow, is the preferred filter matrix material, but other conventional materials, e.g. natural or synthetic staple fibres, cotton wool, web
15 material such as paper (usually creped) and synthetic non-wovens, and extruded material (e.g. starch, synthetic foams) can be used additionally or instead. The shaping and securing of the filter material in rod form may involve applying a conventional plugwrap (which may be air-permeable or –impermeable) secured by a lapped and stuck seam in the usual way; where the filtering material
20 incorporates a heat-activatable adhesive, application of heat during rod formation can bind the filtering material together to provide a rod which is coherent and dimensionally stable without a plugwrap – though a plugwrap may still be provided if preferred.

The particulate additive is usually held in a reservoir under pneumatic
25 pressure, which feeds it into an injector conduit or barrel. It is convenient for

such injector conduit or barrel to extend through the reservoir; this provides a compact and efficient system and can minimise the pneumatic travel distance and time of additive through the injector into the gathering filtering material.

In some preferred embodiments the additive particles pass continuously
5 into a pneumatic injector conduit to which sequential pulses of conveyor gas are supplied for said discontinuous injection; thus sequential pulses of pressurised conveyor gas may carry respective sequential spaced pockets of the particulate additive laterally into the gathering filtering material. The size and spacing of the embedded additive pockets in the rod product depend, for a given rate of filtering
10 material throughput, on the frequency of the pulses and the rate of feed of the additive particles (e.g. from a reservoir as above) to the conduit.

In other embodiments the additive particles are fed discontinuously into a pneumatic injector conduit via a valve which repeatedly moves or changes between open and closed positions, and the particulate additive entering the
15 conduit whilst the valve is open is moved along the conduit by a stream of conveyor gas for said discontinuous lateral injections. Thus the particles may be fed from a reservoir or other supply means into an injector conduit through a said valve, a high velocity (and/or high volume flow rate) stream of carrier gas being passed continuously through the injector conduit so that when a pocket of
20 particulate additive enters whilst the valve is momentarily open it is separately conveyed along the injector conduit and injected laterally into the gathering filtering material. However, although the valve opens only momentarily, a stream of particles may in fact pass continuously therethrough over a finite period whilst it is open (e.g. increasing and then decreasing if it opens and closes
25 progressively), and the speed of pneumatic conveyance and injection may be so

high that each particle as it enters the conduit is transferred virtually instantaneously into the gathering filter material where pocket formation occurs. In all cases, the speed of pneumatic conveyance and injection, relative to the slower longitudinal advance of the filtering material, permits the formation of a product rod with compact and well-defined additive pockets spaced along its length. Operation of the valve is preferably controlled by a cutter to avoid cutting through pockets, but precise positioning of pockets lengthwise of the cut rods may be achieved by adjustment of the synchronised valve operation regime. For given conveyance and injection speed the size of the embedded pockets depends on the rate of feed of additive particles into the conduit (which may in turn depend largely on the size of the open valve inlet) and the timing and speed of operation of the valve (which may for example be operated electrically or pneumatically); and pocket spacing depends on the timing of valve operation.

As indicated generally above, pneumatic conveyor gas may be vented from the filtering material before the latter is condensed to rod form – e.g. with the help of escape holes through the wall of the gathering device. Such gas may additionally or instead be vented laterally from an injection conduit or barrel upstream of its particle outlet (and preferably from outside of the filtering material or outside of a gathering device), with or without the positive assistance of applied suction; especially when such lateral venting is by vacuum outflow, the rate of gas extraction can be sufficiently high to let little or none of the conveyor gas reach and exit from the particle outlet, and hence to obviate the need for venting from the gathering filtering material; a high volumetric rate of such vacuum outflow (e.g. higher than the volumetric inflow rate) upstream of particle injection can reduce or prevent the injection of unwanted dust and additive fines into the gathering filtering material – whilst the larger additive particles for pocket

formation, readily accelerated by the conveyor gas stream to high speeds (e.g. 100 to 200 m/sec. or higher), continue to and through the particle injection outlet without undue velocity reduction.

In all circumstances pneumatic particle conveyance and injection radially
5 of the filtering material path has the advantages indicated above. However, the
above-described feature of substantially instantaneous pneumatic transport of
successive particles into the filtering material, with pocket formation occurring
only in the filtering material and being complete only after injection, can also
usefully be employed for discontinuous particle injection with pneumatic particle
10 conveyance and/or injection non-perpendicular to (including axially of) the filtering
material path. Likewise the venting or extraction of pneumatic conveyor gas from
upstream of particle injection can also usefully be employed for discontinuous
particle injection with pneumatic particle conveyance and/or injection non-
perpendicular to (including axially of) the filtering material path; vacuum
15 withdrawal of such gas upstream of such particle injection, especially at high
volumetric outflow rate, can be particularly appropriate for good product quality in
these circumstances. Accordingly in another aspect of the invention there are
provided a process and machine for making a tobacco smoke filter rod having
separate pockets of particulate additive embedded therein and longitudinally
20 spaced therealong, in which a train of tobacco smoke filter material is
continuously advanced longitudinally, the advancing material is gathered towards
rod shape, particulate additive is pneumatically injected into the advancing
gathering material by use of a stream of conveyor gas, and the advancing
gathering material with injected additive is shaped to and held in rod form, and
25 wherein the particulate additive is fed discontinuously into the conveyor gas
stream by means, e.g. a valve which moves or changes repeatedly between

open and closed positions, which repeatedly and intermittently feeds the additive continuously, and for each feed period the individual particles for injection, immediately on entering the conveyor gas stream, are transferred substantially instantaneously thereby into the gathering advancing filter material where they accumulate to form a corresponding said separate embedded pocket; and a further aspect of the invention provides a process and apparatus in which a longitudinally advancing train of tobacco smoke filter material is gathered towards rod shape and then shaped and secured in rod form, particulate additive is pneumatically injected discontinuously into the gathering material to form separate additive pockets embedded in and spaced along the product rod, and pneumatic injection gas is vented or extracted from upstream of the point of particle injection, usually outside of the gathering filtering material and preferably outside of a device used to effect the gathering. In each of these aspects of the invention, any or all of the other method and apparatus features as disclosed above and hereinafter (e.g. related to additive conveyance and/or injection transversely of the machine direction, use of an injector conduit which may be fixed or stationary, conveyor/injection gas venting and/or extraction details, numerical values, suitable additive and filter materials, etc.) can be used unless precluded by the broad aspect definition.

In a broad aspect, then, the present invention relates to a method of tobacco smoke filter production wherein a train of tobacco smoke filtering material is continuously advanced longitudinally, the advancing filtering material is gathered towards rod shape, and the gathered advancing filtering material is shaped to and secured in rod form, and wherein there is discontinuous pneumatic injection of particulate additive laterally into the advancing gathering filtering material to form separate additive pockets embedded in and longitudinally spaced along the continuously produced rod.

In another broad aspect, the present invention relates to an apparatus for the manufacture of tobacco smoke filters comprising means for continuously advancing a train of tobacco smoke filtering material longitudinally, a device for gathering the advancing filtering material, a plugmaker for shaping and securing the advancing gathered filtering material in rod form, a pneumatic injector conduit connectable to means for supplying

particulate additive thereto, and pneumatic injection means for moving a discontinuously admitting of particulate additive into the injector conduit and moving it therealong, the injector conduit extending laterally of and into the path of the filtering material for discharge transversely of and within the gathering device.

5 The invention is illustrated, by way of example only, by the following description in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, in which like numerals denote like items and in which:

FIGURE 1 is a schematic illustration of the relevant parts of a conventional cigarette filter rod making machine;

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FIGURE 2 schematically illustrates the radial injection of particulate additive in cigarette filter rod manufacture according to the present invention;

FIGURES 3(a) and 3(b) schematically show more detail of an embodiment of injection means for use according to the invention as in Fig.2; and

5 **FIGURE 4** schematically illustrates options for disposition of the particulate additive pockets in multiple length filter rods made according to the invention.

In the conventional system shown in Fig.1, a spread tow 2 of plasticised cellulose acetate filaments, which has been subjected to the usual pre-treatment
10 stages (not shown), is gathered towards rod shape by funnels 27, 28 as it advances to plugmaker 55, which forms it continuously into elongate filter rod 57. Plugwrap 52 from a supply roll 50, and the tow 2, are conveyed through the plugmaker 55 on and by a conveyor 54 which also wraps plugwrap 52 around the rod as the rod is formed and secures it in place by means of a lapped and stuck
15 seam. Rod 57 passes from conveyor 54 via rolls 58, 59 to a cutting device 60 which severs the formed rod into finite lengths 61.

The gathering or condensing means 27, 28 of Fig.1 could be replaced by a single gathering funnel or the like. Such a single gathering funnel 4 is shown in Fig.2, where 2 is the tow supply as in Fig.1 but the plugmaker etc. of Fig.1 is
20 omitted for clarity. In Fig.2 carbon granules 6 from a supply reservoir 8 are discontinuously injected radially into the gathering tow in funnel 4 through injector barrel 10 by means of an injection mechanism 12 shown in more detail in Fig.3. The carbon granules are conveyed pneumatically along injector barrel 10 and exit the barrel to form pockets 14 embedded in and spaced along the continuously

produced filter rod 57; whilst pockets 14 are shown in Fig.2, they would of course not be visible in the rod in practice. The carbon supply 16 to reservoir 8 is maintained under pneumatic feeding pressure from main tank 18. Air pulse generator 74, controlled by electric motor 34, receives high pressure air from compressor 22 and directs rapidly repeating high pressure air pulses into injection mechanism 12 at 24 to correspondingly repeatedly re-open a valve of mechanism 12, the valve being closed between said pressure pulses by constant push-back air pressure from 26. In operation, the valve thus oscillates to repeatedly shut and re-open very rapidly. As the valve opens momentarily at 46 and until it closes shortly thereafter, carbon granules enter barrel 10 from reservoir 8; entering particles are immediately separately carried rapidly along barrel 10 and injected radially into the gathering tow by a high velocity flow (e.g. 100 to 200 or more metres/second) of driving or conveying air which is passed continuously into barrel 10 from 20, and virtually instantaneous conveyance and injection of entering granules continues until the valve closes to momentarily stop the granule feed; carbon granules are thus discontinuously injected radially into the passing tow to form spaced additive pockets 14 in the product filter rod; the tow throughput and the speed and timing of pneumatic injection are such that the tow advances only a short distance during each injection, facilitating formation of a product rod with well-defined spaced granule pockets. The stroke, or opening travel, of the valve of injection mechanism 12 is limited by a stop 28 whose position is determined by cam 30 adjustable by an electric motor 32 controlled by flow rate controller 76. A cutting device 36 severs the continually produced rod 57 to finite lengths such as those shown at 61, these usually being an even multiple of (e.g. 2 or 4 or 6 times) the length of the eventual individual filters. The cutting device 36, by way of infrared registration cell 38, encoder 40 and

controller 42 with user interface 44, is synchronised with the tow feed and controls synchronised operation of the injection mechanism to ensure cutting only between the embedded pockets and not through a pocket.

If conveying air from 20 enters funnel 4 it may be vented from the filtering material before the latter is fully shaped to rod form, e.g. via apertures (not shown) through the wall of funnel 4. Additionally or instead there may be venting or extraction of conveyor gas laterally out of barrel 10 between valve opening 46 and the granule injection outlet. Thus arrow 19 indicates such optional gas venting or extraction outside of the gathering filtering material and funnel 4; this could be by way of an outlet port or ports (not shown) through the wall of conduit 10, or through piping (not shown) connecting the interior of conduit 10 to a vacuum source; in the latter case the volumetric vacuum outflow rate may be high enough (e.g. greater than the volumetric inflow rate from 20) to remove unwanted dust and carbon fines but without unduly affecting injection of the larger granules for pocket formation.

The injection device 12 of Fig.2 is shown more clearly in Figs.3 (a) and 3(b) in which its valve 13, 48 is shown respectively open and closed at 46. Fig.3 (a) shows carbon granules entering injector barrel 10 through the opening at 46 (see also Fig.2) of valve 13, 48 within the reservoir 8. A high pressure air pulse at 24 is shown acting on piston 48 of valve 13 to push it back into the air-spring chamber 70 against the push-back pressure from 26, momentarily opening the valve at 46, to the extent permitted by stop 28, to allow the entry of carbon granules into injector barrel 10. Fig.3(a) indicates granules 6 dispersed into a relatively diffuse stream by their rapid pneumatic conveyance away from the valve inlet 46. On cessation of the high pressure air pulse at 24, then as shown

in Fig.3 (b), the push-back pressure from 26 recloses the valve with exhaust air venting at 72 and with the carbon granules having been carried away and injected radially into the gathering tow through barrel 10 by the constant supply of driving air from 20. Fig. 3(b) indicates the final few granules 6 which entered 5 conduit 10 immediately before full closure of the valve at 46. It is emphasised that the representation of granules 6 in conduit 10 of Figs. 3(a) and (b) is purely schematic. The position of adjustable stop 28 determines the maximum size of inlet 46 of the valve; for given operating conditions (reservoir pressure, valve movement speed, and time for which the valve is fully open) product pocket size 10 is thus simply adjusted by adjustment of stop 28.

In the embodiment and modifications thereof described above with reference to the drawings, the injector barrel 10 extends radially of the axis of the filtering material path, but it could instead be non-perpendicular to the axis – e.g. extending obliquely through the open upstream mouth of the gathering device to 15 within the gathering tow.

Different patterns of embedded additive pockets in the product rod can be obtained by adjustment of the pattern of air pulses at 24 and hence of the pattern of opening and closing of the valve of the injection mechanism. Fig.4 illustrates three possibilities for additive pocket location in filter rods according to the 20 present invention. The illustrated quadruple length rods supplied for filter cigarette manufacture would normally be severed first along line B to give two double length rods; each double length rod would then have two tobacco rods attached thereto, one at each end, followed by cutting along line A to yield two filter cigarettes. In option (a) the fully enclosed pockets 14 are equally and 25 uniformly spaced along the rod, and in the eventual individual filter on a filter

cigarette the pocket 14 would be centrally located. In option (b), the valve of the injection mechanism is operated to give alternating close and wide spacing of succeeding pockets 14, and the initial cutting of the multiple length rod from the continuously produced product is such that, in the filter cigarette product made as

5 described above, the additive pocket of the individual filter is displaced towards the buccal end. Preferred is option (c), where the continuously produced rod has the same pocket pattern as for (b), but the initial cutting to give the multiple length rod is such that the eventual individual filter has the particulate additive pocket 14 displaced towards the tobacco end and remote from the buccal end; this reduces

10 or eliminates risk of carbon marring the appearance or taste of the filter cigarette. Preferred filter rods of the invention, as illustrated, have the filter material matrix free of stray injected particles, and the matrix and additive pockets substantially free of dust and additive fines. The representation of the additive pockets in Figure 4 is diagrammatic; in practice each pocket preferably has a more curved

15 surface, being generally ellipsoidal or rugby ball-shaped.

The method and apparatus according to the invention can produce composite additive - carrying filters of conventional size, carbon content and performance. The individual product filters may for example be of conventional circumference (e.g. about 25mm) and length (e.g. down to 27 or 25mm long) and

20 have a conventional carbon content of about 15 to 35mg – or an even higher carbon content of up to 60 mg; for longer tips, higher carbon content is possible. The filters have a filtering performance similar to that for conventional dual filters of the same carbon content. Each particulate additive pocket, in a rod of 25 to 32mm length, may for example be from 10 to 18mm long with a diameter of 3 to

25 4mm which may reduce somewhat towards each end. The continuous single-pass method and apparatus of the invention can be operated efficiently at

commercial speed (e.g. over 200m per min); transverse, e.g. radial, pneumatic conveyance and injection of the particulate additive maintains separation and maximises accurate location and confinement of the pockets thus reducing or eliminating rejects or variable quality product due to additive dispersal or to
5 pocket coalescence; this is because the transverse pneumatic travel path can be short – for example, in the illustrated device the distance from valve inlet 46 to the point of injection may be only about 135 mm., and even shorter distances are feasible.

The pneumatic injection device employed in the present method and
10 apparatus is advantageous in itself, being compact and efficient and readily fittable to most or all conventional cigarette filter making machines. Thus such fitting to conventional machinery requires at most minor modification or replacement of the gathering funnel to accommodate a lateral injector barrel or conduit, and/or perhaps to provide additional vents for exhaust of pneumatic
15 injection gas; and even such minor modifications may not be needed if the injector barrel is to extend obliquely or axially of and through the open mouth of the gathering device and/or there is provision for lateral extraction of conveyor gas upstream of the particle outlet of the injector barrel and outside of the gathering device. Accordingly, the invention also provides a device for use in
20 injecting particulate additive into a train of tobacco smoke filtering material, the device comprising an injector conduit mountable to extend into (and preferably transversely of) such train and having a valve for discontinuous supply of particulate additive to the conduit, means for repeatedly opening and closing the valve so that particulate additive can enter the conduit when the valve is open,
25 and means for receiving a constant high velocity stream of conveyor gas into the injector conduit to convey said supplied particulate additive along the conduit for

discontinuous pneumatic injection into such train. The valve is preferably the same as or similar to that illustrated in Figs.2 and 3, as is the means for oscillating it between open and closed positions. The additive supply is preferably from a reservoir for receiving and holding particulate additive under
5 pneumatic pressure, and more preferably the injector conduit extends through the reservoir. The device can have, upstream of the particle outlet of the conduit, means for venting or extracting conveyor gas as described above and for the purposes indicated above.

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CLAIMS:

- 1 . A method of tobacco smoke filter production wherein a train of tobacco smoke filtering material is continuously advanced longitudinally, the advancing filtering material is gathered towards rod shape, and the gathered advancing filtering material is shaped to and secured in rod form, and wherein there is discontinuous pneumatic injection of particulate additive laterally into the advancing gathering filtering material to form separate additive pockets embedded in and longitudinally spaced along the continuously produced rod.
- 5
2. A method according to claim 1 in which particulate additive passes continuously into a pneumatic injector conduit to which sequential pulses of conveyor gas are supplied for said discontinuous lateral injection.
- 10
3. A method according to claim 1 in which the particulate additive is fed discontinuously into a pneumatic injector conduit via a valve which repeatedly opens and closes and the particulate additive entering the conduit whilst the valve is open is conveyed along the conduit by a stream of conveyor gas for said discontinuous lateral injection.
- 15
4. A method according to any one of claims 1, 2 or 3 including venting from the gathering filtering material gas used for the lateral pneumatic injection.
- 20
5. A method according to any of any one of claims 1 to 4 wherein gas used for the pneumatic lateral injection is vented from upstream of the point of particle injection.
6. A method according to any one of claims 1 to 5 wherein the lateral injection is non-perpendicular to the direction in which of the filtering material is longitudinally advancing.
- 25

7. Apparatus for the manufacture of tobacco smoke filters comprising means for continuously advancing a train of tobacco smoke filtering material longitudinally, a device for gathering the advancing filtering material, a plugmaker for shaping and securing the advancing gathered filtering material in rod form, a pneumatic injector conduit connectable to means for supplying particulate additive thereto, and pneumatic injection means for moving a discontinuously admitting of particulate additive into the injector conduit and moving it therealong, the injector conduit extending laterally of and into the path of the filtering material for discharge transversely of and within the gathering device.
8. Apparatus according to claim 7 wherein the supplying means comprises a reservoir for holding particulate additive and feeding it to the injector conduit, and means for maintaining the reservoir under pneumatic feeding pressure.
9. Apparatus according to claim 8 wherein the injector conduit extends through the reservoir.
10. Apparatus according to any one of claims 7 to 9 wherein the pneumatic injection means includes means for supplying sequential pulses of conveyor gas to the injector conduit to move the particulate additive discontinuously through the injector conduit to within the gathering device.
11. Apparatus according to any one of claims 7 to 9 wherein the pneumatic injection means comprises a valve between said supplying means and said injector conduit, means for repeatedly opening and closing said valve so that particulate additive enters the conduit whilst the valve is momentarily open, and means for passing a stream of carrier gas through the injector conduit to move the entering additive along the injector conduit into the gathering device.

12. Apparatus according to any one of claims 7 to 11 wherein the gathering device has means for venting pneumatic injection gas therefrom.

13. Apparatus according to any one of claims 7 to 12 including means for venting gas used for the lateral pneumatic injection from the injector conduit upstream of its particle outlet.

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14. Apparatus according to any one of claims 7 to 13 wherein the laterally extending injector conduit is non-perpendicular to the direction in which the filtering material is longitudinally advancing.

10 15. A tobacco smoke filter obtained by a method or apparatus according to any one of claims 1 to 10 comprising a rod-shaped matrix of tobacco smoke filtering material having fully enclosed therewithin an ellipsoidal pocket of particulate additive.

15 16. A filter according to claim 15 one having a said pocket of particulate additive closer to one end than to the other.

17. A filter cigarette having a filter according to claim 15 or 16.

18. A ventilated filter or filter cigarette according to any one of claims 15 to 17.

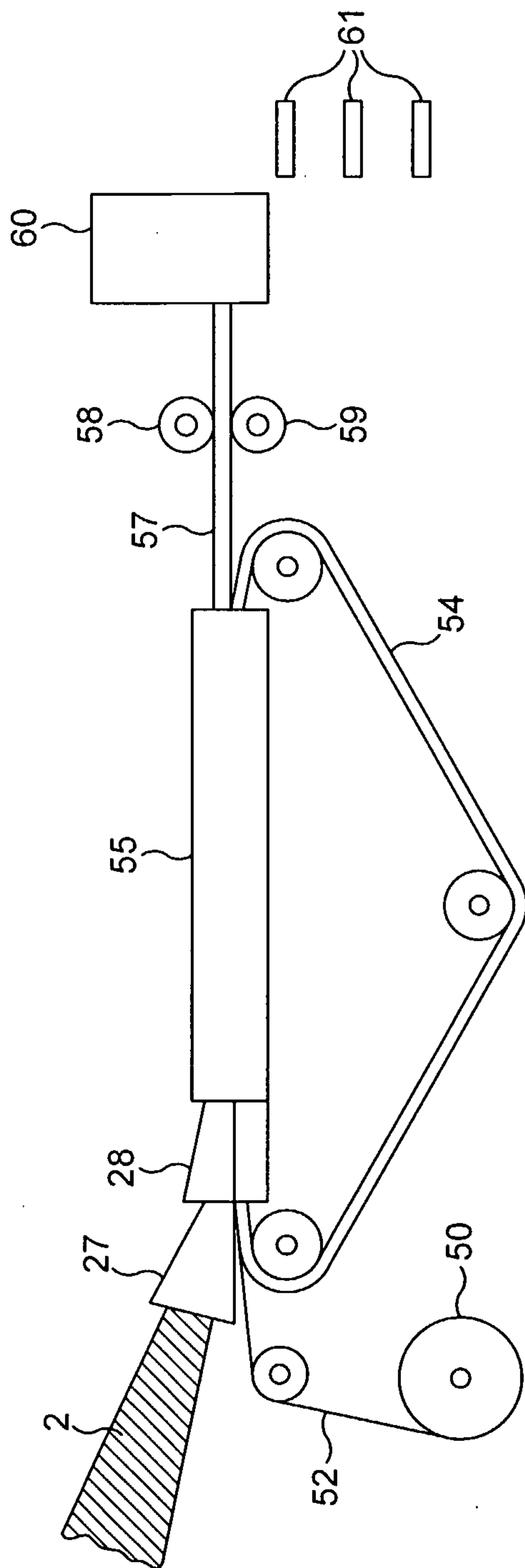


FIG. 1

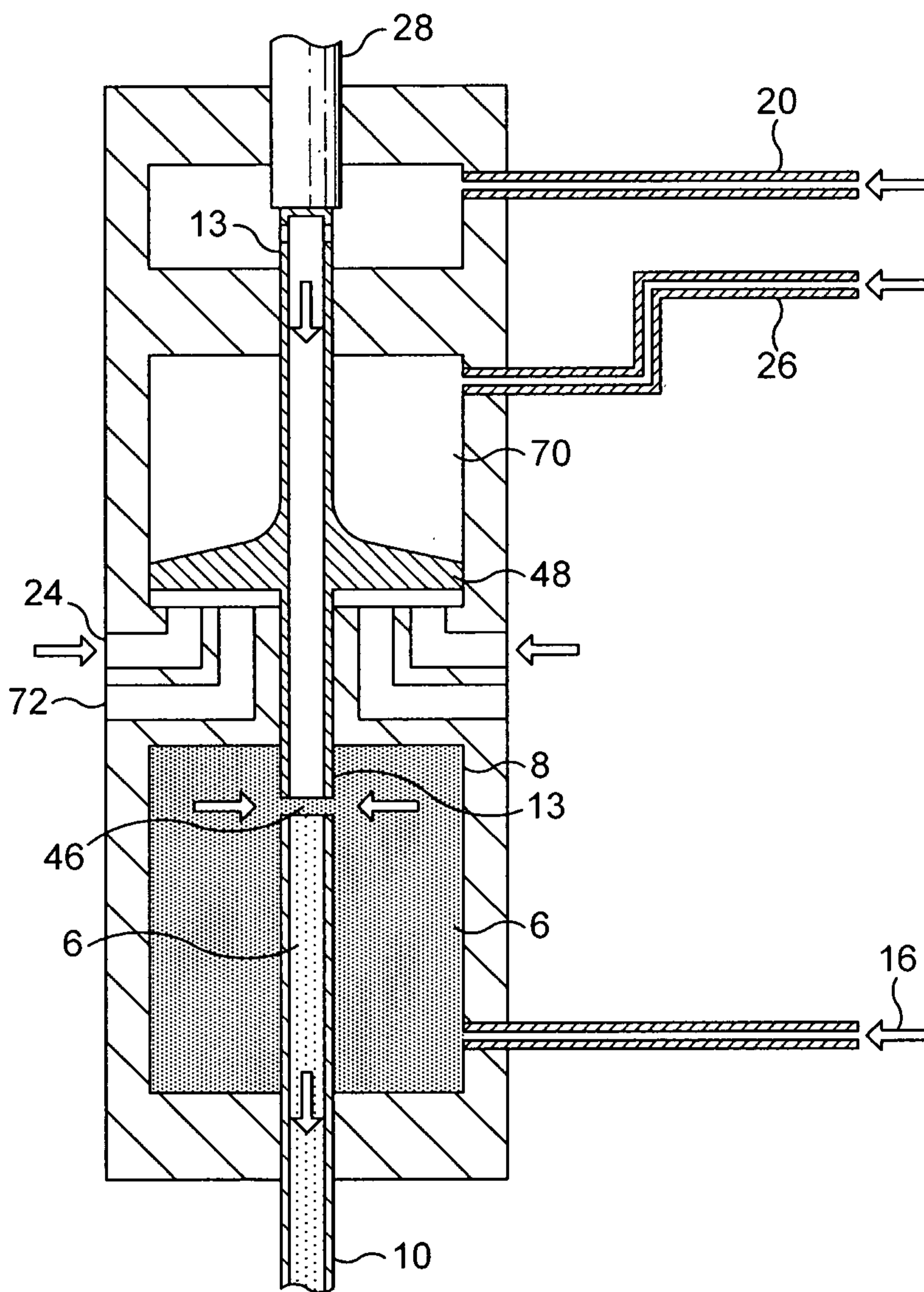


FIG. 3(a)

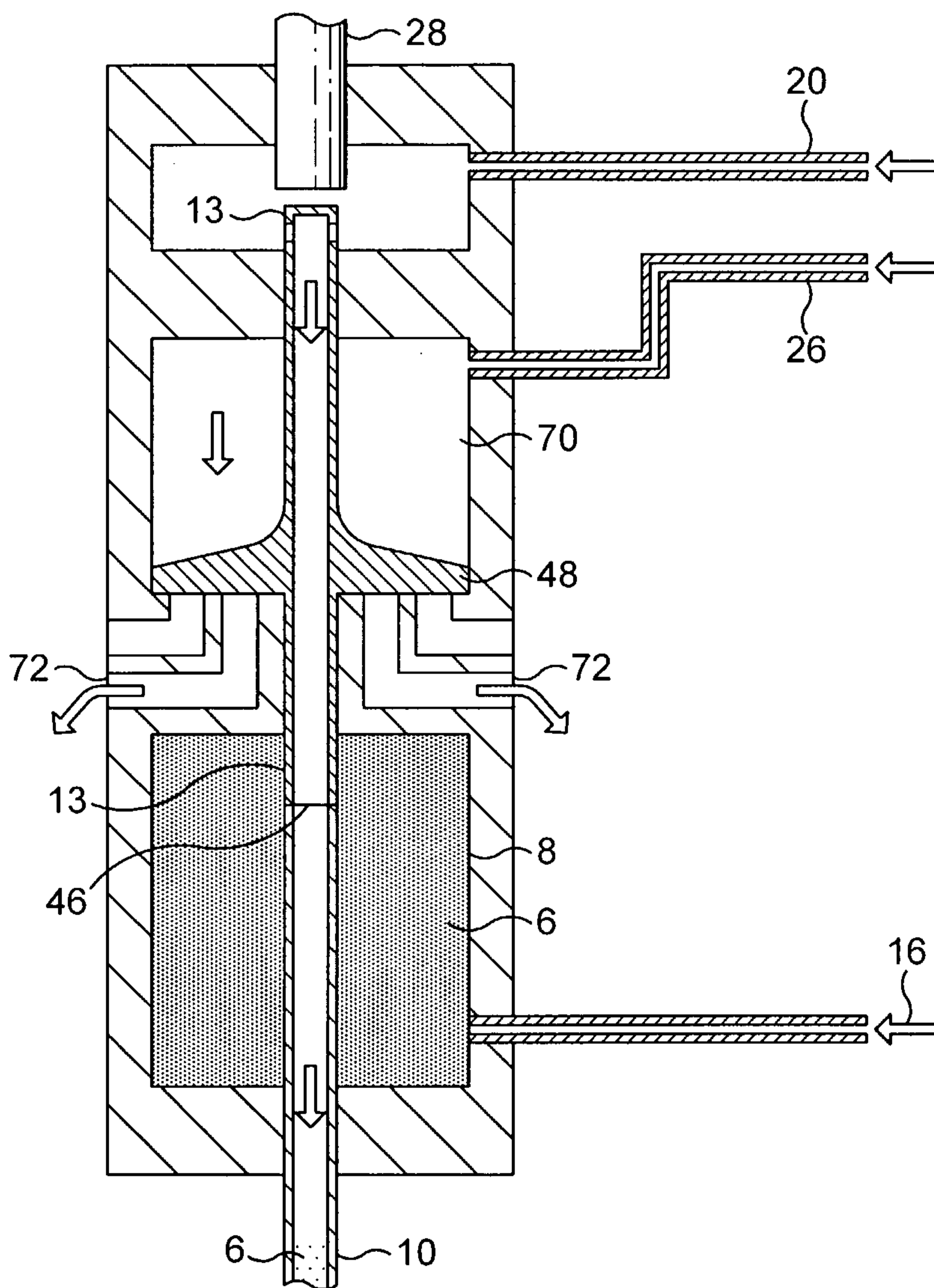


FIG. 3(b)

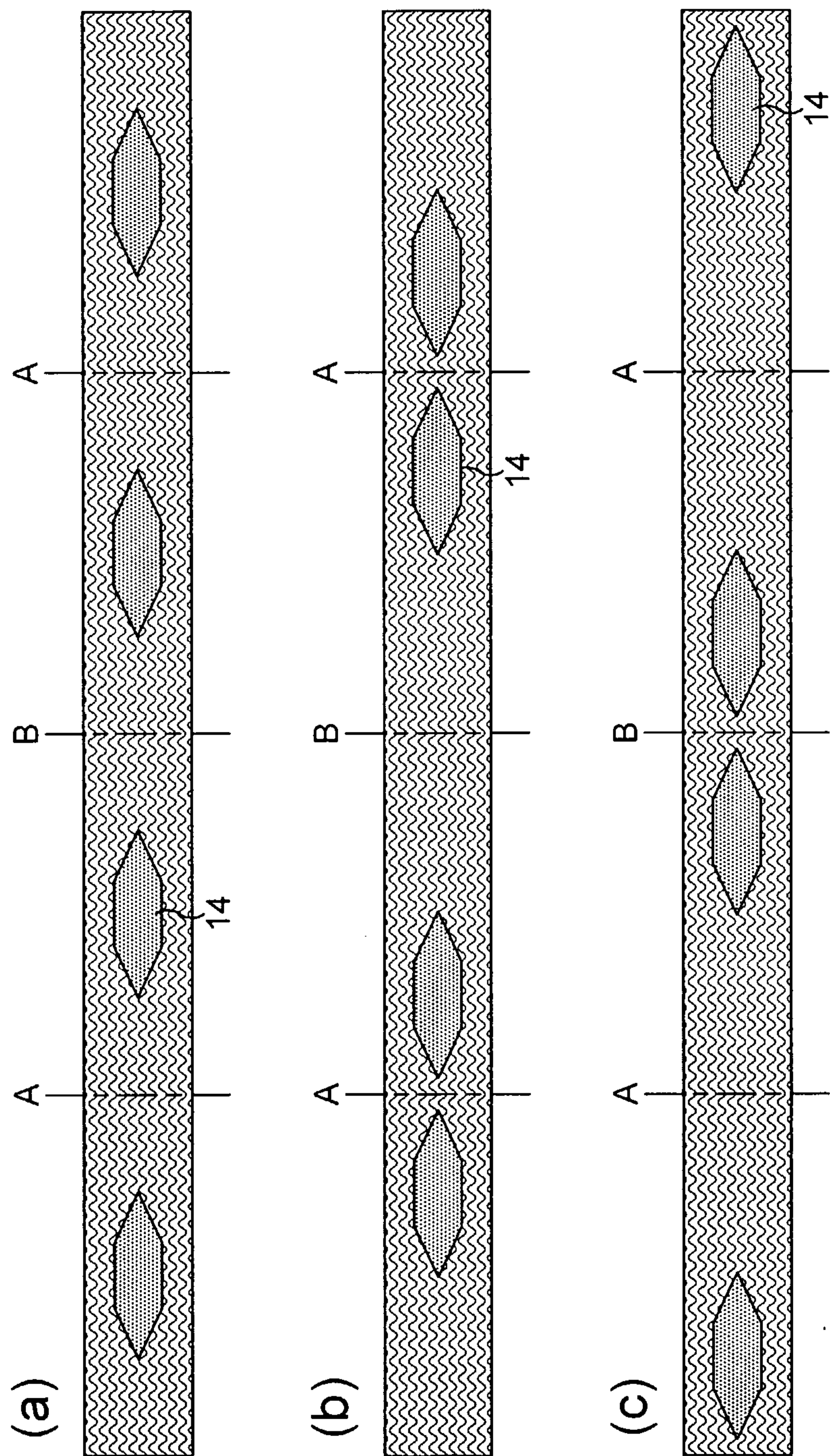


FIG. 4

