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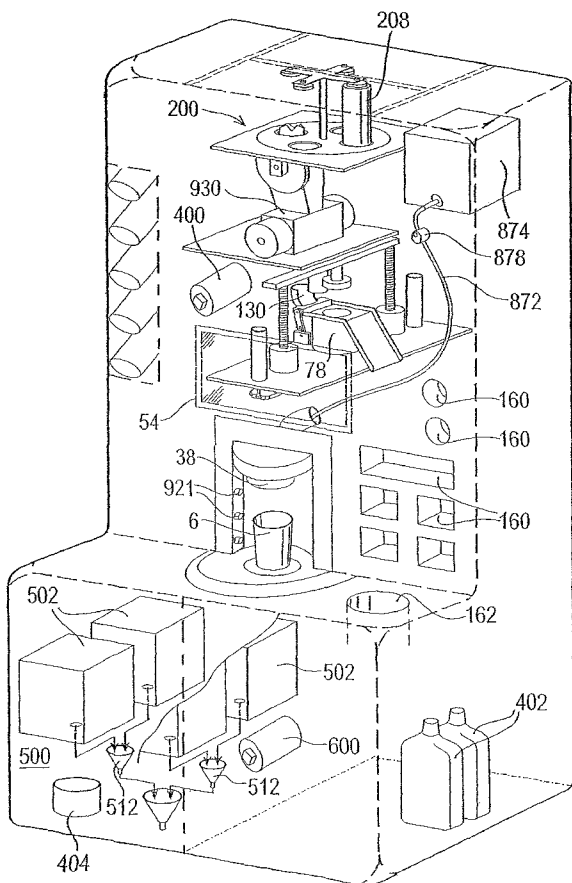
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[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: APPARATUS FOR PREPARING BEVERAGES



(57) Abstract: Various forms of apparatus (1) for preparing and dispensing beverages, preferably based on coffee, can receive instructions from a customer and deliver the beverage automatically. The apparatus is preferably capable of fully automatic cleaning in a cleaning cycle in which a cleaning agent is flushed through the lines (62, 64), and the apparatus is preferably arranged to ensure that not only are the lines cleaned properly but that no cleaning agent can be dispensed. The apparatus includes a brewer assembly (78) having a chamber (81) in which freshly ground coffee can be introduced and either espresso or filter coffee can be automatically prepared by passing hot water through the chamber and removing the spent coffee grounds. The coffee may be stored as coffee beans in sealed containers (208) that can automatically be pierced to release the beans which are ground immediately before preparation of the beverage. The apparatus also includes a cup-size detector (921) for ensuring that the customer offers a cup to the apparatus that is of a size appropriate to the beverage selected.

WO 2006/090183 A8



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