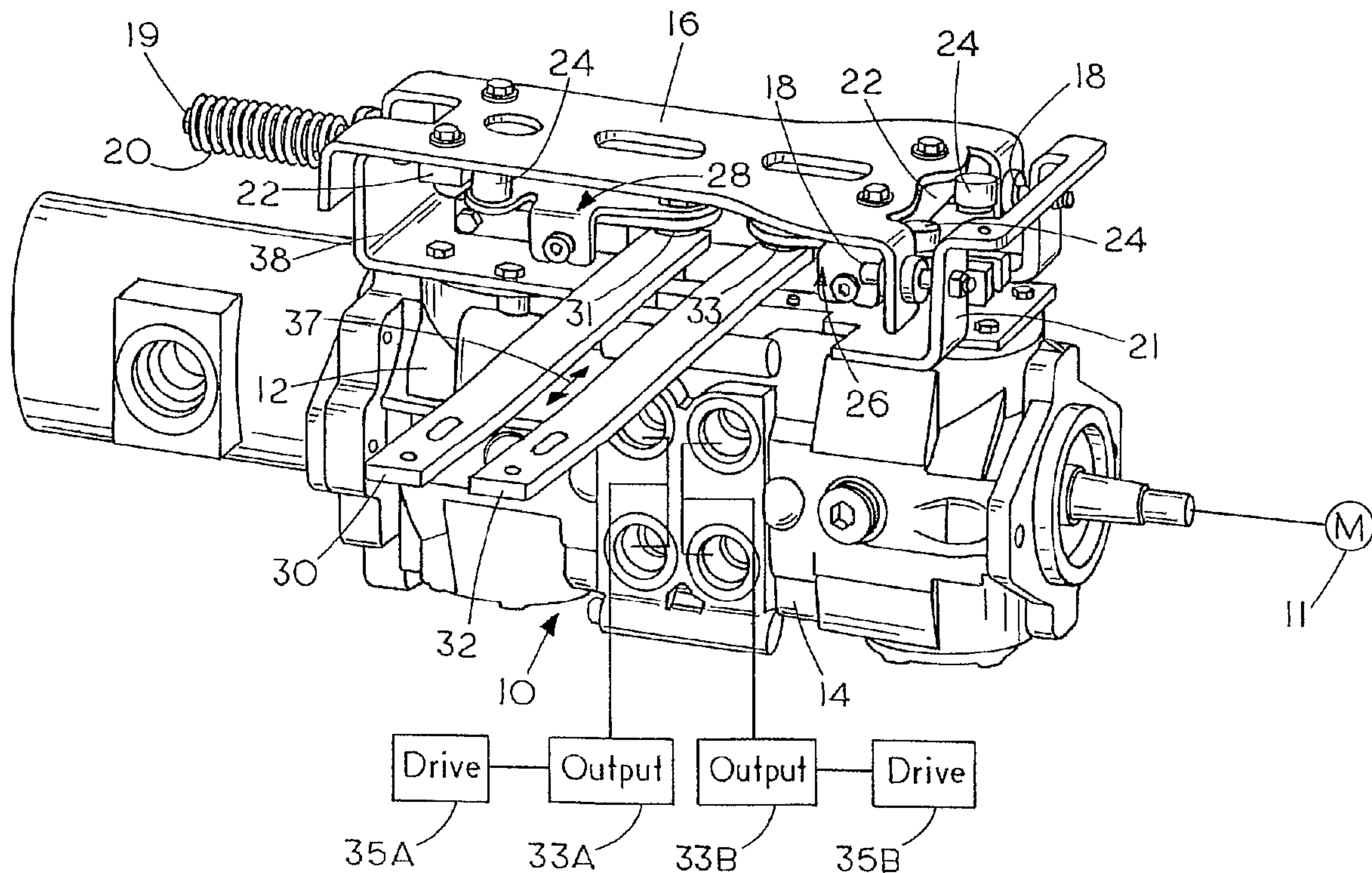




(86) Date de dépôt PCT/PCT Filing Date: 2005/07/06
 (87) Date publication PCT/PCT Publication Date: 2006/02/23
 (85) Entrée phase nationale/National Entry: 2007/01/09
 (86) N° demande PCT/PCT Application No.: US 2005/023935
 (87) N° publication PCT/PCT Publication No.: 2006/019575
 (30) Priorité/Priority: 2004/07/22 (US10/896,802)

(51) Cl.Int./Int.Cl. *B62D 11/18* (2006.01),
G05G 5/05 (2006.01)
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(54) Titre : MECANISME DE REGLAGE POUR LEVIERS DE DIRECTION POUR ENTRAINEMENT HYDROSTATIQUE
 (54) Title: ADJUSTMENT FOR STEERING LEVERS FOR HYDROSTATIC DRIVE



(57) Abrégé/Abstract:

A hydrostatic transmission and steering assembly (10) has a control shaft (36) used to control direction and speed of a controlled motor (11). An adjustable control arm assembly (26) is drivably coupled to the control shaft (36) and is moved by a link (30) that has a centered position. The control arm (26) has two portions (40, 42) that are releasably clamped together. A first arm portion (40) is connected to drive the control shaft (36). A second arm portion (42) is connected to the link (30). The adjustment includes a clamp (50, 52) that will releasably clamp the two arm portions (40, 42) together in a fixed position, and an adjustment screw (66) is used to adjust the relative rotational position of the first and second arm portions (40, 42) to move the first arm portion (40) to position the control shaft (36) in a centered position relative to second arm portion (42), when the second arm portion (42) is in a spring return position. The arm portions (40, 42) are then clamped together.

(12) INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(19) World Intellectual Property Organization
International Bureau(43) International Publication Date
23 February 2006 (23.02.2006)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 2006/019575 A1(51) International Patent Classification⁷: **B62D 11/18,**
G05G 5/05(74) Agents: WESTMAN, Nickolas, E. et al.; Westman,
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900 Second Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55402-3319
(US).(21) International Application Number:
PCT/US2005/023935

(22) International Filing Date: 6 July 2005 (06.07.2005)

(25) Filing Language: English

(26) Publication Language: English

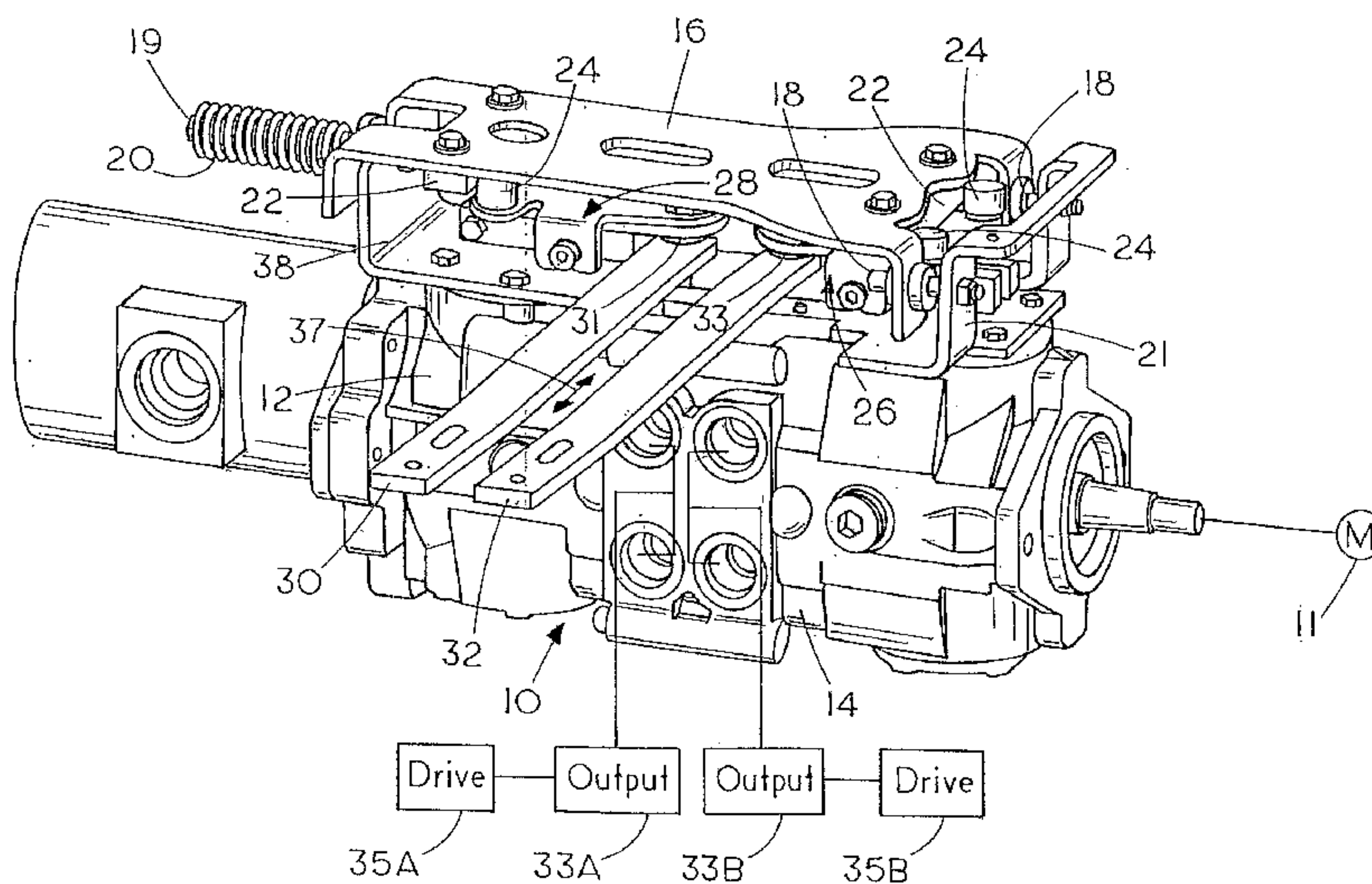
(30) Priority Data:
10/896,802 22 July 2004 (22.07.2004) US(81) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every
kind of national protection available): AE, AG, AL, AM,
AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BW, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN,
CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI,
GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE,
KG, KM, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA,
MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NA, NG, NI, NO, NZ,
OM, PG, PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL,
SM, SY, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC,
VN, YU, ZA, ZM, ZW.(71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): CLARK
EQUIPMENT COMPANY [US/US]; 200 Chestnut Ridge
Road, Woodcliff Lake, NJ 07675-8738 (US).(84) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every
kind of regional protection available): ARIPO (BW, GH,
GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, NA, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM,
ZW), Eurasian (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM),
European (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI,
FR, GB, GR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LT, LU, LV, MC, NL, PL, PT,
RO, SE, SI, SK, TR), OAPI (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA,
GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

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[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: ADJUSTMENT FOR STEERING LEVERS FOR HYDROSTATIC DRIVE



(57) Abstract: A hydrostatic transmission and steering assembly (10) has a control shaft (36) used to control direction and speed of a controlled motor (11). An adjustable control arm assembly (26) is drivably coupled to the control shaft (36) and is moved by a link (30) that has a centered position. The control arm (26) has two portions (40, 42) that are releasably clamped together. A first arm portion (40) is connected to drive the control shaft (36). A second arm portion (42) is connected to the link (30). The adjustment includes a clamp (50, 52) that will releasably clamp the two arm portions (40, 42) together in a fixed position, and an adjustment screw (66) is used to adjust the relative rotational position of the first and second arm portions (40, 42) to move the first arm portion (40) to position the control shaft (36) in a centered position relative to second arm portion (42), when the second arm portion (42) is in a spring return position. The arm portions (40, 42) are then clamped together.

WO 2006/019575 A1

WO 2006/019575 A1



Published:

— *with international search report*

For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

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**ADJUSTMENT FOR STEERING LEVERS FOR
HYDROSTATIC DRIVE**BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a hydrostatic transmission having right and left controllable drive pumps for driving wheels or tracks and for steering a skid steer vehicle. The drive pumps of the hydrostatic transmission each have a control lever for controlling the right and left output shafts for drives on opposite sides of the vehicle. The control levers are spring centered to a neutral position under the force of a single spring. Easily accessible and accurate adjustment devices are provided on the hydrostatic transmission controls for insuring that both the right and left hand drives do not creep when the steering levers are in the neutral position.

The use of hydrostatic transmissions on skid steer vehicles, in particular, skid steer loaders, is well known. Examples of construction include the disclosures in U.S. Patent Nos. 3,605,519 and 4,043,416.

Obtaining an accurate adjustment for the neutral or non-driving positions of the levers relative to the neutral positions of the transmission drive pumps is needed, or the vehicle will "creep" when the levers are in a neutral position. Before the present invention, the adjustment devices have generally required substantial skill and were not easily accessed. The present invention comprises

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structure that permits simple and accurate adjustments.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a hydrostatic transmission drive system for adjusting the position of the transmission controls relative to the position of a control link which is in a neutral or spring return position. The hydrostatic transmission has separate pump controls to control outputs that couple to right and left hand side drives, respectively. Each pump control comprises a control shaft that is moved by a separate steering lever and steering link. The control shaft for the respective pump has an arm assembly connected thereto so that movement of an outer end of the arm assembly rotates the shaft. The respective arm assemblies in turn are connected to and moved by the steering links and levers.

Each control arm assembly includes two sections that are releasably clamped together. One arm section is connected to the control shaft and the other arm section is connected to the steering link. The arm sections are precisely adjustable relative to each other and will permit centering the control shaft of the hydrostatic pump or transmission to its neutral position by adjusting the position of the one arm section when the steering link and lever connected to other arm sections have returned to the spring loaded centered position, and while holding

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the other arm section from moving. The draft or creep of the vehicle can then be eliminated.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a hydrostatic transmission drive assembly showing two hydrostatic pumps with control links from speed control and steering levers illustrated;

Figure 2 is a front elevational view of the control shaft portion of one of the hydrostatic pumps of the hydrostatic transmission;

Figure 3 is a perspective view of the control shaft and control arm assembly of Figure 2;

Figure 4 is an exploded view of the control arm assembly shown in Figure 3;

Figure 5 is a first bottom plan view of the control arm of Figure 3, to illustrate an adjustment screw utilized for adjusting two sections of the control arm assembly;

Figure 6 is a second bottom plan view showing the adjustment of the control arm in a first position;

Figure 7 is a third bottom plan similar to Figure 6 showing the adjustment of the control arm assembly in a substantially centered position; and

Figure 8 is a fourth bottom plan view similar to Figures 6 and 7 with the control arm assembly shown adjusted to a position in opposite direction from Figure 6.

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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Figure 1 illustrates a hydrostatic transmission and steering assembly 10 used with skid steer vehicles, in particular, with separate variable speed, reversible hydrostatic pumps 12 and 14 that are joined together with a central block, and are powered from suitable power sources such as internal combustion engine, as is well known. The hydrostatic transmission assembly 10 has a top spring centering plate 16 that has one end slidably mounted on support studs 18 on one side of the hydrostatic transmission assembly 10, and the other end of plate 16 is supported for sliding on a spring bolt 19 on the other side of the transmission. The studs 18 and spring bolt 19 are mounted on support brackets 38 and 21 that is fixed to the transmission. A spring 20 is positioned on bolt 19 and urges the centering plate 16 to the right in Figure 1. This force urges centering bars 22 that are carried on the centering plate 16 to bear against laterally spaced apart trunions 24 that are mounted onto the respective control arm assemblies 26 and 28. The top centering plate 16 is a centering mechanism for the control arm assemblies 26 and 28. The spring force on the centering plate 16 causes the control arm assemblies 26 and 28 and the hydrostatic pump control shafts to be spring loaded to a central or neutral position.

Each of the control arm assemblies 26 and 28 has a separate steering link 30 and 32,

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respectively, connected thereto with pivot bolts 31 and 33. As will be explained, the pivot bolts are attached to the ends of top plates of the arm assemblies. The speed control and steering links in
5 turn are connected to speed control and steering levers (not shown) that are operated by an operator of the vehicle and which will cause the links 30 and 32 to move back and forth under operator control as indicated by a double arrow 37. The links and levers
10 will be called steering links and steering levers for convenience.

The hydrostatic pumps have trunion or control shafts 36 that extend up through the bracket plate 38 that supports the centering plate 16. The
15 rotation of the trunion or control shafts 36 about an upright axis causes the hydrostatic pumps to provide their outputs 33A and 33B as a function of the control shaft position. The rotation of the trunion control shaft in opposite directions from a central
20 position causes the hydrostatic pump outputs to reverse, and the output flow and thus the speed of connected drive motors or drives 35A and 35B is proportioned to the displacement of the trunion shafts from center.

25 The respective control arm assemblies 26 and 28 are adjustable, so that in the spring loaded centered position of the control centering plate and arm assemblies, determined by spring 20, and by the centering trunions 24 engaged by the centering bars

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22, the trunion shafts 37 will be in neutral. The control arm assemblies 26 and 28 are each formed as two arm sections that are adjustable relative to each other. One control arm assembly will be shown in
5 detail, and the other control arm assembly is a mirror image of the one shown.

As illustrated in Figure 2, arm assembly 28 includes a bottom pintel arm 40 that receives and mounts onto the trunion shaft 36 for the hydrostatic
10 pump 12. The bottom pintel arm 40 has a split hub end that is clamped onto the trunion shaft 36 with a bolt, as can be seen in Figures 2 and 4. The top pintel arm 42 is made to overlie and is adjustably secured (or releasably clampable) to the bottom
15 pintel arm 40. The top pintle arm 42 is an assembly of two plates held together, including an upper arm plate 44 and a lower arm plate 46. At the outer end of the top pintel arm 42, the respective steering link, namely link 30 as shown in Figure 4, is mounted
20 with the pivot bolt 31 to the top pintel arm, so that when the steering link 30 is moved in a longitudinal direction as indicated by the double arrow 37 (Figure 3), the steering arm assembly 26 or 28 will be pivoted (the top and bottom pintle arms are clamped
25 together in use), and the trunion shaft 36 for the respective pump will be pivoted about an upright axis to change the pump output.

The centering trunions 24 that are engaged by the bars 22 on the spring loaded centering plate

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16 for centering the trunion shaft 36 are laterally spaced as shown in Figures 3 and 4, for example. The bar 22 on the respective end of the spring loaded centering plate 16 bears against both of the trunions 5 24 for each control arm assembly when the arm assembly is centered. When the arm assemblies are not centered, one trunion 24 will be engaged before the other and the force will create a moment about the axis of the trunion shaft 36 to center the 10 control arm assembly and rotate the trunion shaft 36 under the spring load.

The top pintel arm 42 is mounted to overlies the bottom pintel arm 40, and is held on the end of the trunion shaft with a first clamp screw or bolt 50 15 that threads into a threaded axial bore in the trunion shaft 36. The screw 50 will clamp the top pintel arm 42 down onto the top of the trunion shaft 36. The top pintel arm can pivot about the bolt 50 and thus the axis of the trunion shaft (when the bolt 20 is loosened) relative to the trunion shaft 36 and the bottom pintel arm 40. The bottom pintel arm 40 is fixed on the trunion shaft 36 because of the square shape of the shaft and the bore on the bottom pintel arm 40 that receives the trunion shaft.

25 A second clamp screw or bolt 52 is positioned so that it will pass through a large slot 54 in the upper arm plate 44 of the top pintel arm 42, and extends through a slot 56 (Figure 4) in the lower arm plate 46 of the top pintel arm 42.

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The clamp bolt 52 is aligned with a threaded bore 58 near the outer end of bottom pintel arm 40. Clamp bolt 52 has a washer 53 under its head. The washer fits into the slot 54, but will
5 clamp against the sides of the slots 56 in the lower arm plate 46, so the bolt 52 will clamp the top arm 42 and lower arm 40 together, when it is threaded into this bore. The top pintel arm 42 can thus be clamped tightly against the bottom pintel arm 40 by
10 use of the clamp bolts 50 and 52, so the pintel arms move as a unit.

The upper plate 44 of the top pintel arm has a pair of downwardly depending flanges 60 and 62, along the sides that overlie and are spaced from the
15 sides of the lower pintel arm 40. The flanges have open bottom slots 64 at their lower edges. The slots 64 align with threaded bores 65 in the sides of the bottom pintel arm 40. The slots have a wider upper portion (Figure 4) to permit the angular adjustment
20 of the pintel arms that will be explained. An adjustment screw 66, which has a head 66A and a flange 66B spaced from the head can be threaded into a side bore 65. The upper plate flange 60 is positioned in the slot 66C formed by the head 66A and
25 the flange 66B on the adjustment screw 66 as the screw is threaded into the bore.

It can be seen that the open ended slot 64 forms a type of a saddle. The slot 64 in the flange 60 is slipped over the screw between the head 66A and

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the flange 66B. Then, depending on the direction of
threading of the adjustment screw 66, either the head
66A or flange 66B will bear against the depending
flange 60 (or flange 62 on the opposite side) and
5 will cause the lower pintel arm 40 to be shifted
relative to the upper pintel arm 42. The upper
pintel arm 42 pivots about the axis of the trunion
control shaft 36 on the respective hydrostatic pump
or transmission.

10 The trunion shaft 36 is the drive and speed
control shaft for the respective hydrostatic pumps.
After the steering links have been centered with the
centering plate 16 and spring 20 and related
mechanism, the top pintel arm is held in the spring
15 centered position. Arm clamp bolts 50 and 52 can be
loosened. Then the bottom pintel arm 40 can be
adjusted relative to the top pintle arm 42 by
rotating screw 66 to shift the bottom pintel arm 40
and the trunion shaft 36 for the respective
20 hydrostatic pump relative to the top pintel arm 42.
This adjustment is carried out until the trunion
shaft 36 is in fact in a neutral or off (no drive)
position. This will mean that there would be no
drive or output from the respective hydrostatic pump
25 forming part of the hydrostatic transmission.

Once the neutral position of the trunion
shaft has been reached, the top pintel arm 42 is then
clamped onto the bottom pintel arm 40 with the clamp
bolts 50 and 52 to securely hold the two pintel arms

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together to form the pintle arm assembly 28. Movement for drive direction and speed is by moving the steering links, but it is insured that the spring centering mechanism will center the trunion shafts of
5 the hydrostatic transmission to insure that the pumps are in neutral.

Figures 6, 7 and 8 are illustrations of bottom views of the pintle arm assembly 28 comprising top and bottom pintle arms 40 and 42, showing
10 different angular positions of the top and bottom pintle arms relative to each other. Figure 6 shows the adjustment screw 66 threaded into the bore 65 to shift the top and bottom pintle arms in a first angular direction from the line 70 between the center
15 axis of the trunion shaft 36 and the center of pivot bolt 31 connected to the steering link 31. The adjusted angle between line 70 and a center line 72 of the bottom pintle arm 40 is indicated by double arrows 74.

20 Figure 7 shows the adjustment screw 66 adjusted so that the bottom pintle arm 40 is in approximately a centered position relative to the line 70 between the center axis of the trunion shaft 36 and the center axis of the pivot bolt 31 for the
25 steering link.

Figure 8 shows the adjustment screw 66 threaded outwardly to shift the bottom pintle arm 40 relative to the top pintle arm 42 in an opposite direction from that shown in Figure 6. The

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adjustment angle is indicated by double arrows 76 in Figure 8.

Once the adjustment to a null or zero position has been made with the adjustment screw 66, the clamp bolts 50 and 52 are tightened down so that the top and bottom pintel arms 40 and 42 are clamped as a unit and any movement of the steering links 30 or 32 will cause pivoting of the respective trunion shaft 36 and provides an output of the hydrostatic transmission.

Only one adjustment screw 66 is needed for each pintel arm assembly. The adjustment screw is used on the forward side of the pintel arms for ease of access for adjustment. Two flanges 60 and 62 are provided on the two sides of top pintel arm 44, so the arm can be used on the trunion shaft of either one of the hydrostatic pumps, and still have the adjustment flange to a selected side of the vehicle so it is accessible.

Thus, the creep adjustment, to adjust the pintle arm of each pump to neutral is quickly, easily and precisely made by having the threaded adjustment screw acting between two pintel arm sections that are releasables to be relatively pivotable about the axis of the trunion or control shaft of the hydrostatic transmission, and which then can be clamped together for operation.

Although the present invention has been described with reference to preferred embodiments,

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workers skilled in the art will recognize that changes may be made in form and detail without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention.

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WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A control arm assembly for pivoting a control shaft of a drive element, the drive element having a centered shaft position, and the control arm assembly being controlled externally of the drive element and urged to an arm centered position, the control arm assembly having a first arm portion fixed to the control shaft, and a second arm portion moveably mounted relative to the first arm portion and fixable in position relative to the first arm portion, the second arm portion being moveable to shift an outer end of the second arm portion relative to a radial reference line extending from a pivot axis of the control shaft.
2. The control arm assembly of claim 1 and an adjustment screw that threadably adjusts a position between the first and second arm portions.
3. The control arm assembly of claim 2 and further comprising an external control link connected to an end of the second arm portion.
4. The control arm assembly of claim 2, wherein the second arm portion comprises a first arm plate mounted on the control shaft, and a second arm plate fixedly mounted over the first arm plate, the second arm plate having at least one flange depending therefrom and aligned with and spaced from a side surface of the first arm portion, the adjustment screw passing through an opening in the flange and

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threading into a bore in the side surface of the first arm portion.

5. The control arm assembly of claim 4, wherein said second arm portion is mounted over an outer end of the control shaft, and is movable about a central axis of the control shaft, and an adjustment slot on the second arm portion, a clamp screw, a threaded bore in the first arm portion aligned with the adjustment slot for receiving the clamp screw, the clamp screw passing through the adjustment slot and being threadable into the bore to clamp the second arm portion relative to the first arm portion.

6. The control arm assembly of claim 2, wherein said second arm portion has at least one flange that depends therefrom and overlaps a side of the first arm portion, the adjustment screw passing through the flange and threadably engaging a threaded bore of the first arm portion, wherein threading the adjustment screw moves the flange selectively toward or away from the side of the first arm portion.

7. The control arm of claim 5, wherein said first and second arms have generally planar mating surfaces that clamp together.

8. A centering system for a hydrostatic drive on a vehicle, said hydrostatic drive having a controllable output that is controlled in response to a position of a rotatable trunion shaft, a link for controlling movement of the trunion shaft, an arm

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assembly mounted on the trunion shaft and extending outwardly therefrom, said arm assembly comprising a first arm portion and a second arm portion, the first arm portion being connected to drive the trunion shaft, the second arm portion being mounted on the first arm portion and moveable relative to the first arm portion about a central axis of the trunion shaft, the first and second arm portions being releasably clampable together, a link connected to an outer end of the second arm portion, and a threadable screw for adjusting the relative positions between the first and second arm portions such that when the outer end of the second arm portion is held in a reference position by the link, and the screw is rotated, the first arm portion is moved relative to the second arm portion to move the trunion shaft to a desired position.

9. The centering system of claim 8, wherein said adjustment screw comprises a screw threadable into a bore in a side surface of the first arm portion, and being coupled to a flange connected to the second arm portion that moves as the screw is threaded in the bore on the first arm portion.

10. The centering system of claim 9 and a clamp to releasably clamp the first and second arm portions together.

11. The centering system of claim 9, wherein said adjustment screw has a fixed radial collar spaced from a head of the screw to form an annular

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slot adjacent the head of the screw, the flange of the second arm portion having a slot that fits over the screw with surfaces of the flange in the slot on the screw so that the screw moves the flange when the screw is rotated in either one of two directions of rotation.

FIG. 2

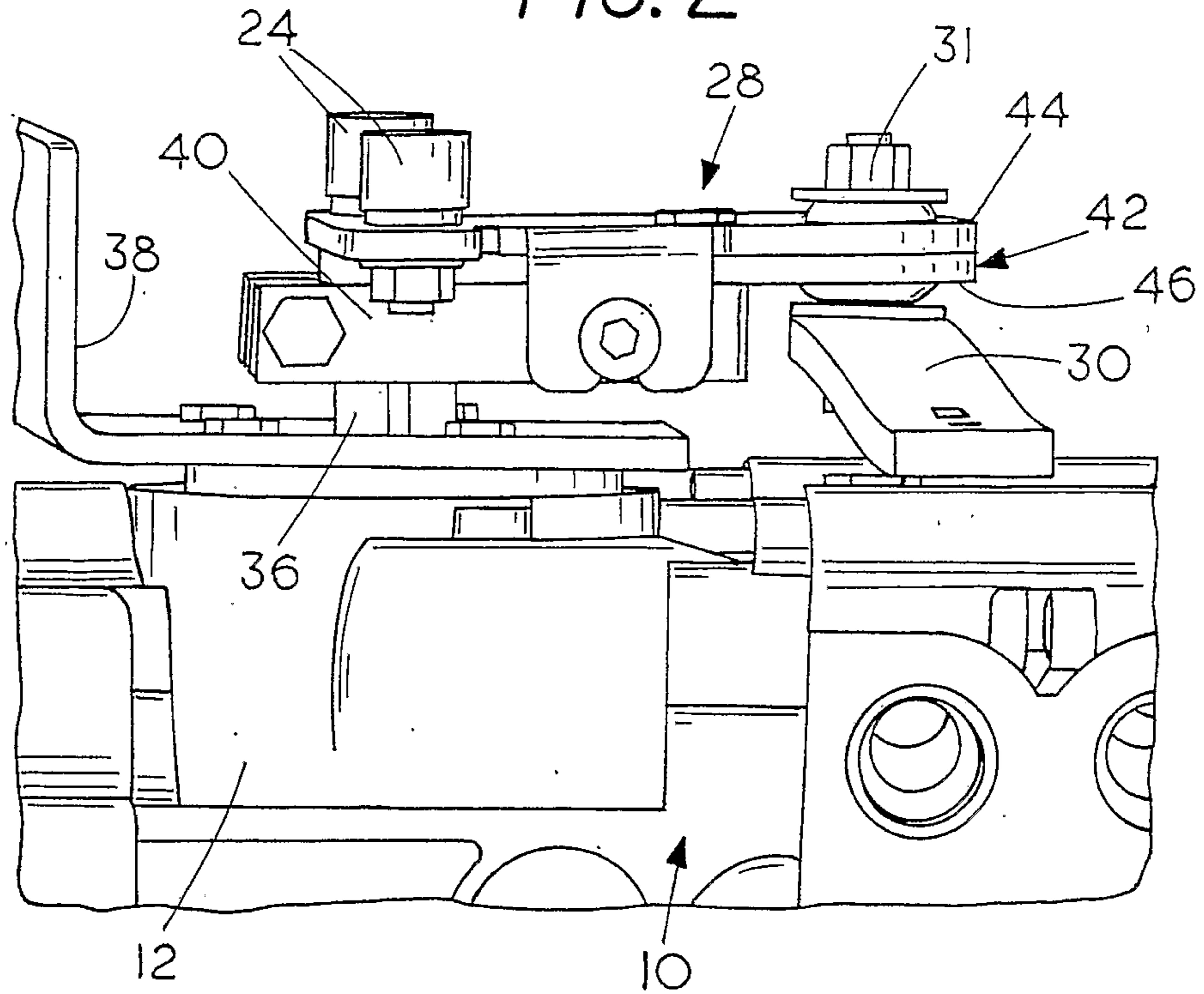


FIG. 3

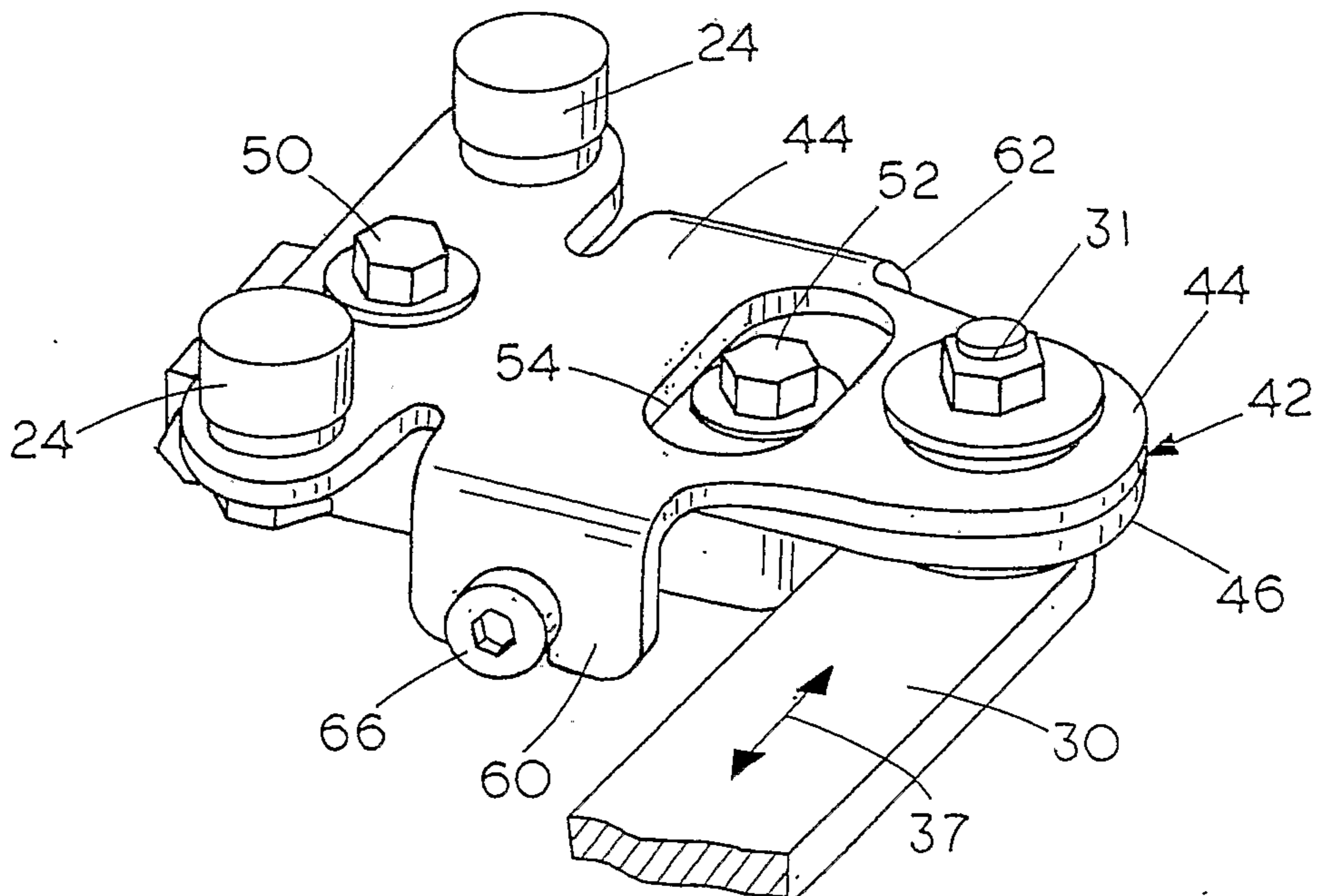


FIG. 5

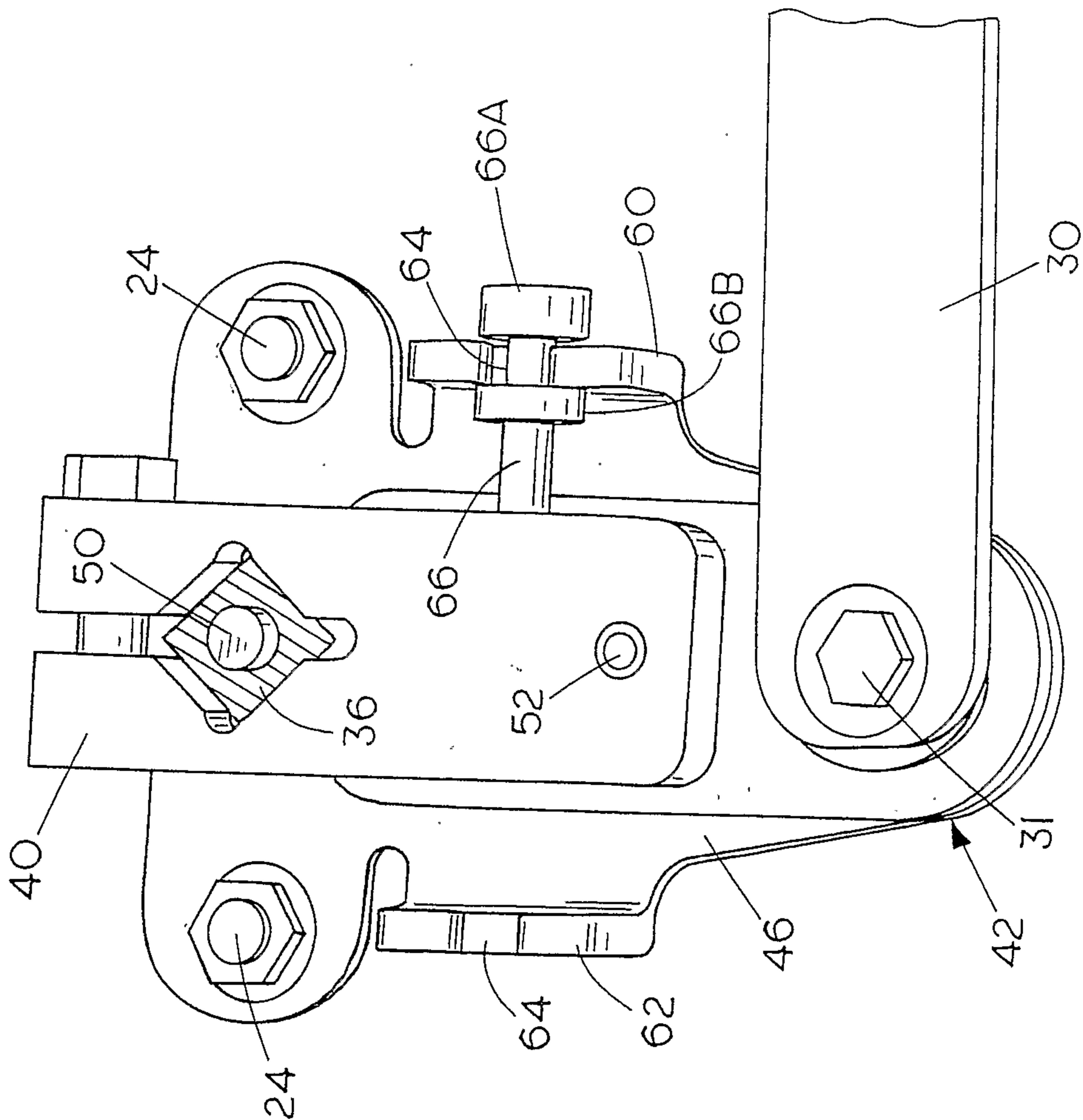


FIG. 4

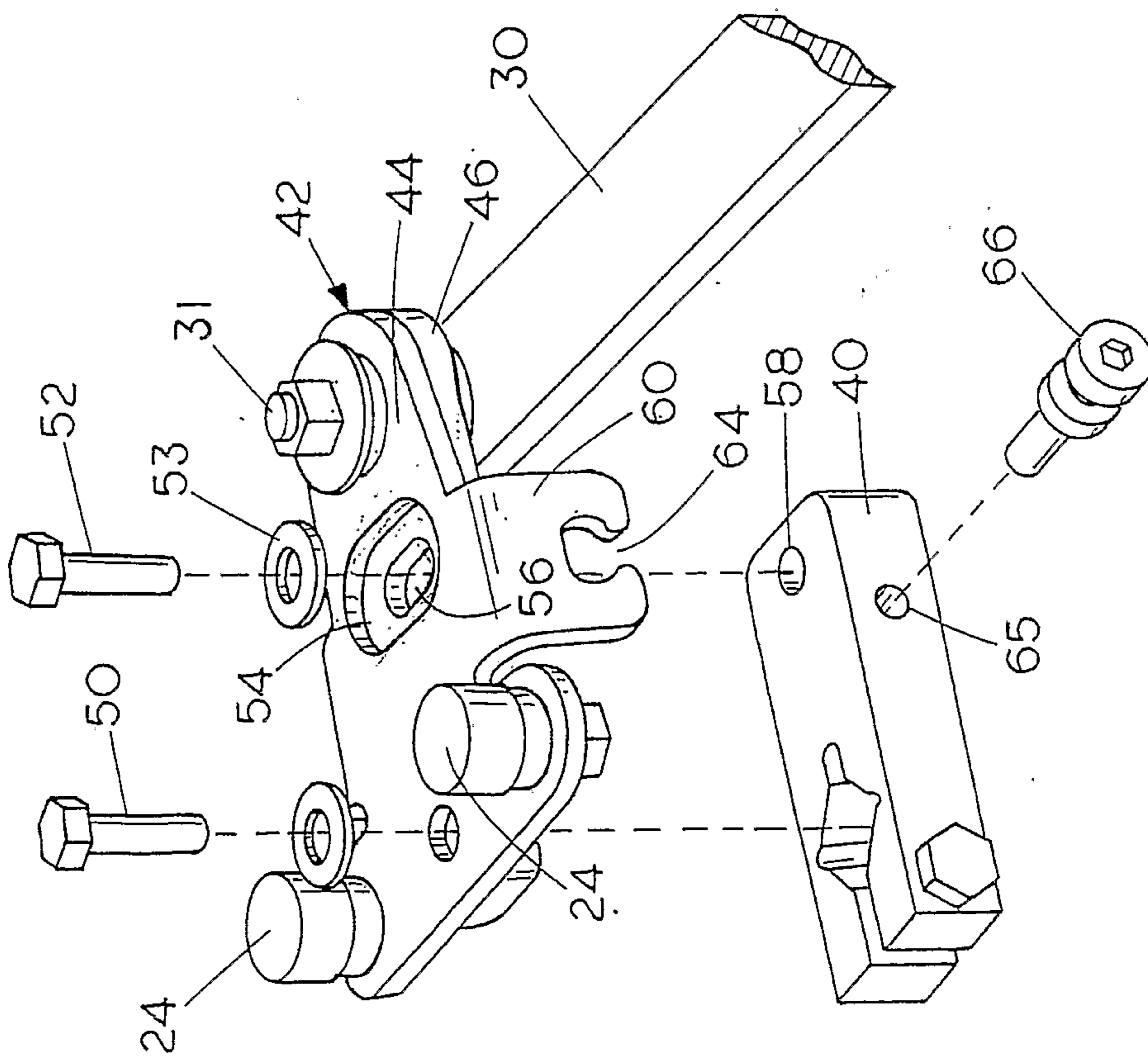


FIG. 6

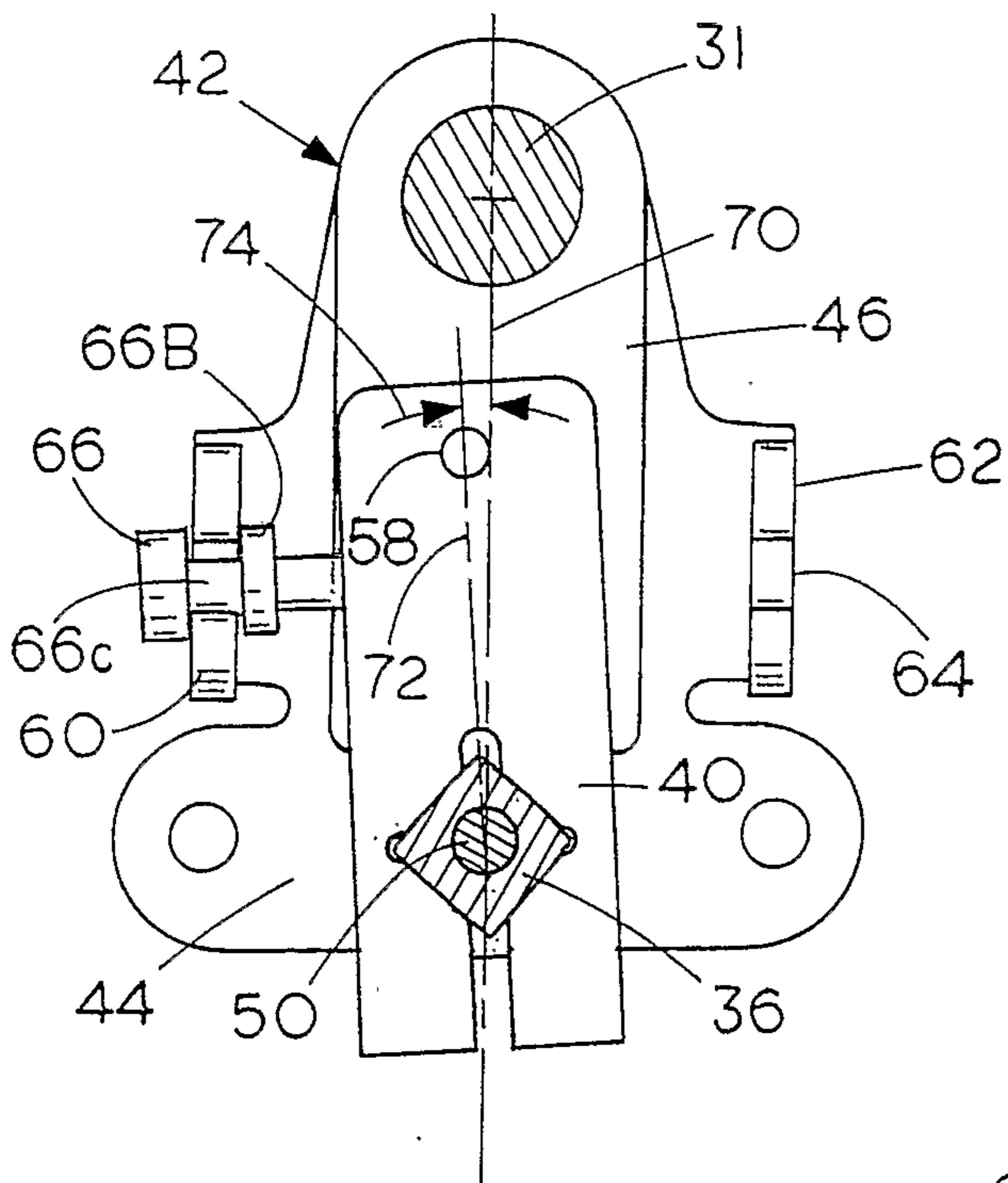


FIG. 7

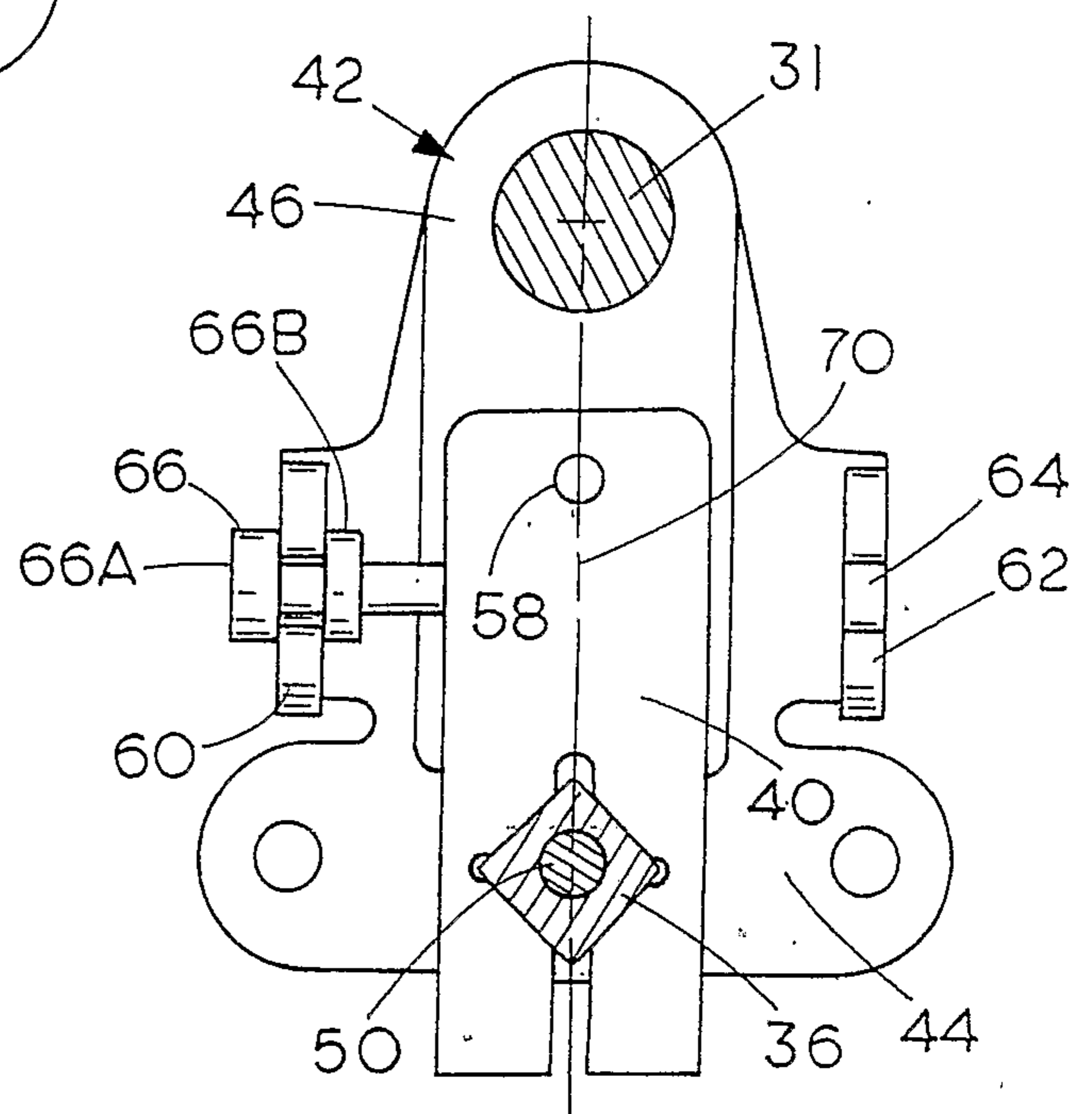


FIG. 8

