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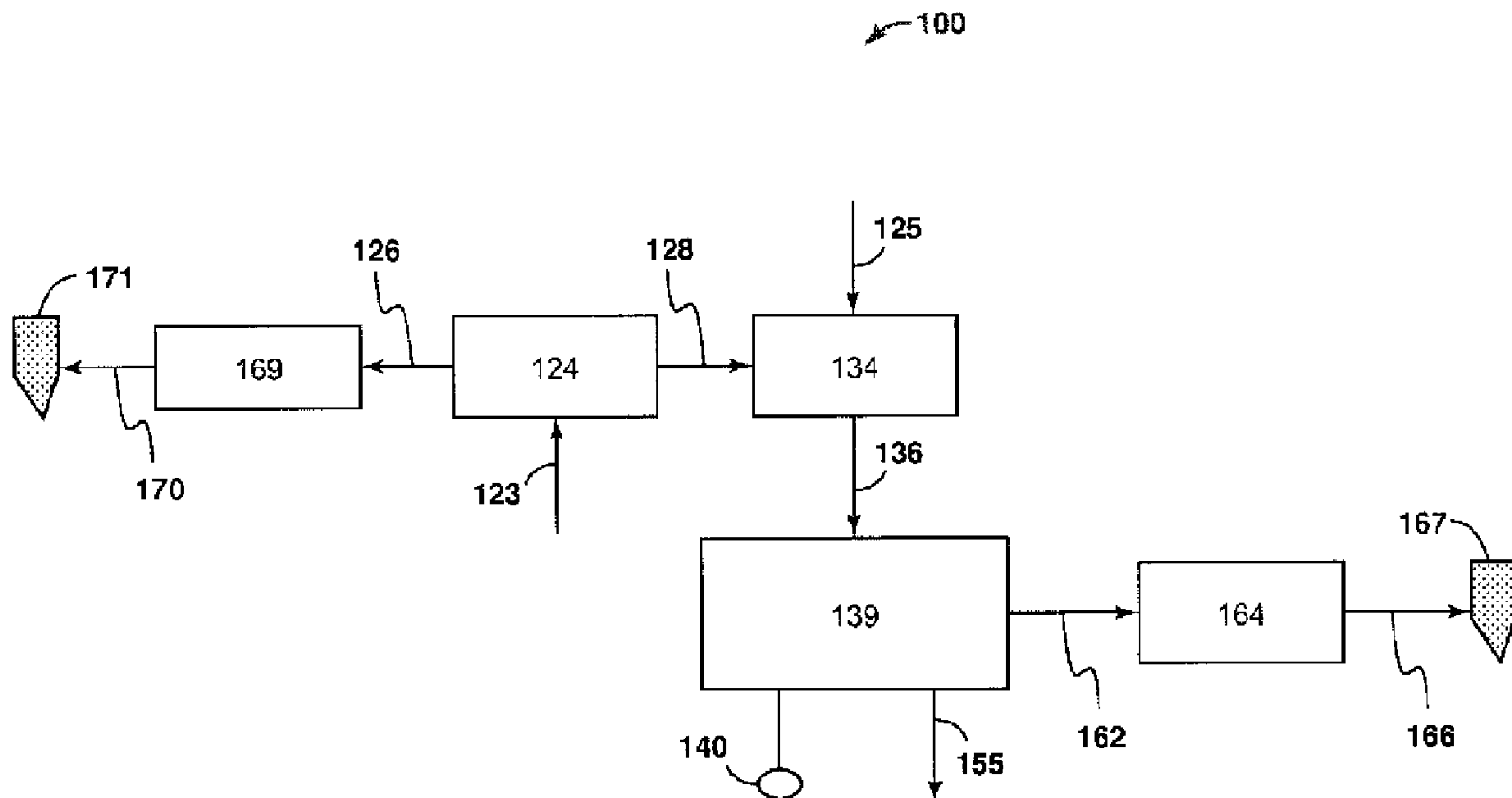
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(54) **Titre : PRODUCTION D'ELECTRICITE A FAIBLE EMISSION ET SYSTEMES ET PROCEDES DE RECUPERATION
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(54) **Title: LOW EMISSION POWER GENERATION AND HYDROCARBON RECOVERY SYSTEMS AND METHODS**



(57) **Abrégé/Abstract:**

Methods and systems for low emission power generation in hydrocarbon recovery processes are provided. One system includes integrated pressure maintenance and miscible flood systems with low emission power generation. An alternative system provides for low emission power generation, carbon sequestration, enhanced oil recovery (EOR), or carbon dioxide sales using a hot gas expander and external combustor. Another alternative system provides for low emission power generation using a gas power turbine to compress air in the inlet compressor and generate power using hot carbon dioxide laden gas in the expander. Other efficiencies may be gained by incorporating heat cross-exchange, a desalination plant, co-generation, and other features.

ABSTRACT

Methods and systems for low emission power generation in hydrocarbon recovery processes are provided. One system includes integrated pressure maintenance and miscible
5 flood systems with low emission power generation. An alternative system provides for low emission power generation, carbon sequestration, enhanced oil recovery (EOR), or carbon dioxide sales using a hot gas expander and external combustor. Another alternative system provides for low emission power generation using a gas power turbine to compress air in the inlet compressor and generate power using hot carbon dioxide laden gas in the expander.
10 Other efficiencies may be gained by incorporating heat cross-exchange, a desalination plant, co-generation, and other features.

LOW EMISSION POWER GENERATION AND HYDROCARBON RECOVERY SYSTEMS AND METHODS

5 [0001] This application is a divisional application of Canadian patent application number 2,715,186 filed March 25, 2009.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0002] Embodiments of the invention relate to low emission power generation in hydrocarbon recovery processes. More particularly, embodiments of the invention relate to
10 methods and apparatuses for utilizing nitrogen, oxygen, carbon dioxide, and hydrocarbon fuel to generate power in a very low emission hydrocarbon recovery process.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0003] This section is intended to introduce various aspects of the art, which may be associated with exemplary embodiments of the present invention. This discussion is believed
15 to assist in providing a framework to facilitate a better understanding of particular aspects of the present invention. Accordingly, it should be understood that this section should be read in this light, and not necessarily as admissions of prior art.

[0004] Many enhanced hydrocarbon recovery operations can be classified as one of the following types: pressure maintenance and miscible flooding. In a pressure maintenance
20 operation, inert gasses such as nitrogen are injected into a primarily gaseous reservoir to maintain at least a minimal pressure in the reservoir to prevent retrograde condensation and improve total recovery. In a miscible flooding operation, miscible gasses such as carbon dioxide are injected into a primarily liquidous reservoir to mix with the liquids, lowering their viscosity and increasing pressure to improve the recovery rate.

25 [0005] Many oil producing countries are experiencing strong domestic growth in power demand and have an interest in enhanced oil recovery (EOR) to improve oil recovery from their reservoirs. Two common EOR techniques include nitrogen (N₂) injection for reservoir pressure maintenance and carbon dioxide (CO₂) injection for miscible flooding for EOR. There is also a global concern regarding green house gas (GHG) emissions. This concern
30 combined with the implementation of cap-and-trade policies in many countries make reducing CO₂ emissions a priority for these and other countries as well as the companies that operate hydrocarbon production systems therein.

[0006] Some approaches to lower CO₂ emissions include fuel de-carbonization or post-combustion capture. However, both of these solutions are expensive and reduce power

generation efficiency, resulting in lower power production, increased fuel demand and increased cost of electricity to meet domestic power demand. Another approach is an oxyfuel gas turbine in a combined cycle (e.g. where exhaust heat from the gas turbine Brayton cycle is captured to make steam and produce additional power in a Rankin cycle). However, there are no commercially available gas turbines that can operate in such a cycle and the power required to produce high purity oxygen significantly reduces the overall efficiency of the process. Several studies have compared these processes and show some of the advantages of each approach. See, e.g. BOLLAND, OLAV, and UNDRUM, HENRIETTE, *Removal of CO₂ from Gas Turbine Power Plants: Evaluation of pre- and post-combustion methods*, SINTEF Group, found at <http://www.energy.sintef.no/publ/xergi/98/3/3art-8-engelsk.htm> (1998).

[0007] U.S. Pat. No. 4,344,486 (the '486 patent) discloses a process of adding substantially pure oxygen to the produced hydrocarbons and carbon dioxide from a liquid producing formation to produce heat or power and re-injecting the carbon dioxide for EOR. The '486 patent discloses separating hydrocarbon liquids from gaseous constituents in a production stream of a liquid producing formation, then mixing the gaseous constituents with substantially pure oxygen and combusting the mixture to produce heat and CO₂. The CO₂ is then injected into the same or a different liquid producing formation. This approach fails to teach or suggest a solution to the efficiency drag from the oxygen plant.

[0008] U.S. Pat. Pub. No. 2007/0237696 (the '696 publication) discloses essentially a combination of the oxy-fuel process and EOR as disclosed in the '486 patent. The '696 publication also requires a stand-alone oxygen plant or air separation plant, and fails to teach or suggest a working gas power turbine configuration.

[0009] As such, there is still a substantial need for a low emission, high efficiency hydrocarbon recovery process.

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SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0010] One embodiment of the present invention discloses an integrated system. The integrated system includes an air separation unit configured to produce a high purity oxygen stream and a high purity nitrogen stream; a gaseous control fuel stream; a combustion unit configured to combust at least the gaseous control fuel stream and the high purity oxygen stream to produce a gaseous combustion stream having carbon dioxide and water; a power generation system configured to receive the gaseous combustion stream having carbon dioxide and water and produce at least a compressed gaseous substantially carbon dioxide stream; a first injector unit configured to inject at least a portion of the compressed gaseous substantially carbon dioxide stream into an enhanced oil recovery reservoir; and a second

injector unit configured to inject at least a portion of the high purity nitrogen stream into a pressure maintenance reservoir. In one embodiment, the power generation system comprises an expander configured to receive the gaseous combustion stream and produce at least one unit of mechanical power and a gaseous exhaust stream; a heat recovery unit configured to receive and cool the gaseous exhaust stream, produce at least one unit of heat energy, and generate at least a volume of water and a cooled gaseous substantially carbon dioxide stream, wherein the heat energy is optionally utilized to generate steam to generate steam power; and a carbon dioxide compressor configured to compress the cooled gaseous substantially carbon dioxide stream to produce the compressed gaseous substantially carbon dioxide stream. The system may also include a first hydrocarbon recovery reservoir configured to produce a first hydrocarbon mixture; and a first hydrocarbon separation unit configured to separate at least liquid hydrocarbons from the first hydrocarbon mixture and produce a first hydrocarbon stream and a secondary gas stream comprising carbon dioxide, wherein the combustion unit is further configured to utilize at least a portion of the secondary gas stream with the gaseous control fuel stream and the high purity oxygen stream to produce the gaseous combustion stream having carbon dioxide and water. The system may further include a second hydrocarbon recovery reservoir configured to produce a second hydrocarbon mixture; and a second hydrocarbon separation unit configured to separate at least liquid hydrocarbons from the second hydrocarbon mixture and produce a second hydrocarbon stream and an inert gas stream comprising nitrogen, wherein the second injector is further configured to inject the inert gas stream into the pressure maintenance reservoir.

[0011] Another embodiment of the present invention discloses a method of improved hydrocarbon recovery. The method includes separating air into a high purity oxygen stream and a high purity nitrogen stream; providing a gaseous control fuel stream; combusting in a combustor, at least the gaseous control fuel stream and the high purity oxygen stream to form a gaseous combustion stream having carbon dioxide and water; receiving the gaseous combustion stream having carbon dioxide and water into a power generation system, wherein the power generation system produces at least a compressed gaseous substantially carbon dioxide stream; injecting at least a portion of the compressed gaseous substantially carbon dioxide stream into an enhanced oil recovery reservoir; and injecting at least a portion of the high purity nitrogen stream into a pressure maintenance reservoir.

[0012] In a third embodiment of the present invention, a low emission power generation system is disclosed. The system includes a first hydrocarbon recovery reservoir configured to produce a first hydrocarbon mixture; a first hydrocarbon separation unit configured to

separate at least liquid hydrocarbons from the first hydrocarbon mixture and produce a first hydrocarbon stream and a secondary gas stream comprising carbon dioxide; a gaseous control fuel stream; a high purity oxygen stream; an external combustor configured to combust a combination of the gaseous control fuel stream, the high purity oxygen stream, and the secondary gas stream comprising carbon dioxide to produce a gaseous combustion stream; a hot gas expander configured to receive the gaseous combustion stream and produce at least one unit of mechanical power and a gaseous exhaust stream having at least a carbon dioxide component and a water component; and a handling system configured to condition the gaseous exhaust stream to substantially remove the water component therefrom and utilize at least a portion of the carbon dioxide component.

[0013] In a fourth embodiment of the present invention, a method of generating low emission power is provided. The method includes producing a first hydrocarbon mixture from a first hydrocarbon recovery reservoir; separating the first hydrocarbon mixture into a first hydrocarbon stream and a secondary gas stream comprising carbon dioxide; providing a high purity oxygen stream; providing a gaseous control fuel stream; combusting, in an external combustor, a combination of at least the high purity oxygen stream and the gaseous control fuel stream to produce a gaseous combustion stream having carbon dioxide and water; expanding the gaseous combustion stream in a hot gas expander to produce at least one unit of mechanical power and a gaseous exhaust stream having a water component and a carbon dioxide component; removing at least a portion of the water component from the gaseous exhaust stream; and utilizing at least a portion of the carbon dioxide component of the exhaust stream.

[0014] In a fifth embodiment of the present invention, a low emission power generation system is disclosed. The system includes a first hydrocarbon recovery reservoir configured to produce a first hydrocarbon mixture; a first hydrocarbon separation unit configured to separate at least liquid hydrocarbons from the liquid hydrocarbon mixture and produce a first hydrocarbon stream and a secondary gas stream comprising carbon dioxide; a gaseous control fuel stream; an air separation unit configured to provide at least a high purity oxygen stream; a combustor configured to combust a combination of the gaseous control fuel stream, the high purity oxygen stream, and the secondary gas stream comprising carbon dioxide to produce a gaseous combustion stream; and a gas power turbine. The gas power turbine includes an inlet compressor, wherein the inlet compressor is configured to compress atmospheric air to send to the air separation unit; and an expander configured to receive the gaseous combustion stream and produce at least one unit of mechanical power and a gaseous

exhaust stream having at least a carbon dioxide component and a water component. The power generation system further includes a handling system configured to condition the gaseous exhaust stream to substantially remove the water component of the gaseous exhaust stream and utilize at least a portion of the carbon dioxide component of the gaseous exhaust stream.

[0015] In a sixth embodiment of the present invention, a method of low emission power generation is provided. The method includes producing a first hydrocarbon mixture from a first hydrocarbon recovery reservoir; separating the first hydrocarbon mixture into a first hydrocarbon stream and a secondary gas stream comprising carbon dioxide; separating air in an air separation unit configured to produce at least a high purity oxygen stream; providing a gaseous control fuel stream; combusting, in a combustor, a combination of at least the high purity oxygen stream and the gaseous control fuel stream to produce a gaseous combustion stream having carbon dioxide and water; compressing air in an inlet compressor of a gas power turbine to form a compressed air stream; providing the compressed air stream to the air separation unit; expanding the gaseous combustion stream in an expander of the gas power turbine to produce at least one unit of mechanical power and a gaseous exhaust stream having at least a water component and a carbon dioxide component; removing at least a portion of the water component from the gaseous exhaust stream; and utilizing at least a portion of the carbon dioxide component.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0016] The foregoing and other advantages of the present invention may become apparent upon reviewing the following detailed description and drawings of non-limiting examples of embodiments in which:

[0017] FIGs. 1A-1B illustrate an integrated system for low emission power generation and hydrocarbon recovery of the present invention;

[0018] FIG. 2 illustrates a schematic of an exemplary combustor as it might be configured for use in the system of FIGs. 1A-1B.

[0019] FIG. 3 is an exemplary flow chart of a method of operating the system of FIGs. 1A-1B;

[0020] FIG. 4 is an illustration of another embodiment of the low emission power generation system of FIGs. 1A-1B;

[0021] FIG. 5 is an exemplary flow chart of a method of operating the system of FIG. 4;

[0022] FIG. 6 is an illustration of yet another embodiment of the low emission power generation system of FIGs. 1A-1B; and

[0023] FIG. 7 is an exemplary flow chart of a method of operating the system of FIG. 6.

[0024] FIGs. 8A-8C are illustrations of additional alternative embodiments of the low emission power generation system of FIGs. 1A-1B.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

5 [0025] In the following detailed description section, the specific embodiments of the present invention are described in connection with preferred embodiments. However, to the extent that the following description is specific to a particular embodiment or a particular use of the present invention, this is intended to be for exemplary purposes only and simply provides a description of the exemplary embodiments. Accordingly, the invention is not
10 limited to the specific embodiments described below, but rather, it includes all alternatives, modifications, and equivalents falling within the true spirit and scope of the appended claims.

[0026] At least one benefit of the system is integration of two types of recovery processes to produce two types of injection gas (nitrogen and CO₂) for additional hydrocarbon recovery. To accomplish this air is first compressed. The heat generated during compression
15 may be captured and used for power generation or salt water desalination. The cool compressed air is then sent to an air separation unit (ASU). The ASU produces a nitrogen stream and an oxygen stream. The oxygen is combined with fuel gas and CO₂ and used for the combustion of hydrocarbons. The products of combustion are then sent to an expander to produce power, which may be a hot gas expander or an expander of a gas power turbine
20 (which may be on an integrated shaft with a power generator or driving a separate generator). The exhaust gas from the expander is then used to either heat the CO₂ going to the combustor to improve cycle efficiency, to produce steam that can be used for additional power production or salt water desalination or for both heating the CO₂ going to the combustor increasing the efficiency and for power and /or desalinization. The products of the
25 combustion (CO₂ and water) are then further cooled to condense the water and produce a CO₂ stream that can be recycled in the system optionally to pre-mix with the oxygen stream for dilution thereof, sequestered, used in enhanced oil recovery (EOR), or sold to a third party.

[0027] Embodiments of the presently disclosed systems and processes may be used to produce ultra low emission electric power and CO₂ for EOR. By utilizing the CO₂ normally
30 recycled back for additional EOR in a power cycle, electric power can be produced with little or no NO_x or CO₂ being emitted to the atmosphere. The CO₂ and light hydrocarbons from the normal EOR recovery system are compressed and combusted with oxygen and other fuel gas, then expanded in a hot gas expander to produce electric power. Additional power may also be produced by heat recovery on the exhaust gases from the hot gas expander in a

condensing steam cycle such as a heat recovery steam generator (HRSG). Since the products of stoichiometric combustion are only CO₂ and water, a high purity CO₂ stream can be produced by cooling the flue gas and condensing the water out of the stream. The result of this process is the production of power and the manufacturing of additional CO₂. The CO₂ stream (minus a recycle component in some embodiments) is then sent back to the EOR facilities for additional compression and re-injection back into the wells for additional oil recovery.

5 [0028] Although it is possible to produce nitrogen for reservoir pressure maintenance and carbon dioxide for EOR completely independently, embodiments of the disclosed systems and methods take advantage of the synergies that are possible when both nitrogen and carbon dioxide are produced in an integrated process to accomplish the production of these gases at a much lower cost while also producing power and /or desalinated water with ultra low emissions. Note, that if EOR utilization is not possible, the CO₂ produced by the power production can be purged from the recycle stream and sequestered or stored. This allows the various embodiments to be utilized for power production with ultra-low emissions.

10 [0029] In a typical gas well pressure enhancement or maintenance operation, nitrogen is generally produced by separating it from air (c.g. in an ASU) to reach the specification on the nitrogen stream required for injection into the wells. Such a process produces an enriched oxygen stream that is vented back into the atmosphere. By adding a relatively small amount of incremental power and investment to the ASU, the air can be separated into both a high purity nitrogen and a high purity oxygen stream. To produce inexpensive CO₂ a high purity oxygen stream is desirable. If combustion occurs with significant amounts of nitrogen present, then expensive and energy intensive processing equipment would be required to separate the CO₂ from the other gases, such as nitrous oxides (NO_x). Many of the presently disclosed embodiments of the invention use a high purity oxygen stream to combust hydrocarbons and produce CO₂ and water. The water separation is accomplished by simply cooling the products of combustion.

25 [0030] In one exemplary embodiment of the high purity oxygen stream may be utilized to produce inexpensive CO₂ and water. Lower purity oxygen has two implications. First, the combustion products based on low purity oxygen become relatively expensive to separate - the extreme being combustion products based on air as the oxidant. This may result in flue gas separation which is prohibitively expensive. Secondly, the lower heat capacity of the resulting flue gas reduces the overall thermodynamic advantage of the disclosed embodiments. The level of oxygen purity required to maximize project economics will vary

from project to project. In general, the level of purity required may not be less than 50%. This may be accomplished with air separation processes such as is based on membranes or on cryogenic processes. In particular, one embodiment of the disclosed systems utilizes air separation units (ASUs) based on cryogenic separation or separation utilizing a mole sieve.

5 At the low end of the oxygen purity spectrum for the cryogenic-based ASU is an ASU design optimized for high-purity nitrogen production, resulting in oxygen purity below 70%. This stream may contain nitrogen levels greater than 20%. At the other end of the spectrum is an ASU design optimized for high-purity oxygen production in which even Argon is separated from the oxygen, resulting in oxygen purity close to 100%.

10 **[0031]** In some embodiments of the present disclosure, the ASU is a cryogenic process for separating nitrogen and oxygen from air. The cost associated with the ASU depends on the desired purity of the products. Producing 99.5% pure oxygen requires a significant increase in capital and horsepower compared to an ASU that produces 95% oxygen. Therefore, the purity of the oxygen that is used in the oxy-fuel combustion should be limited
15 based on the specification of the products of combustion. If a high purity CO₂ stream is required then high purity oxygen may be required. If the products of combustion are vented then lower purity oxygen can be utilized.

[0032] In one embodiment, the combustion is done at elevated pressure, so that additional power can be produced by expanding the products of combustion across the expander. The
20 efficiency of a Brayton cycle is a function of the pressure ratio across the expander and the inlet temperature to the expander. Therefore, moving to higher-pressure ratios and higher expander inlet temperatures increases gas turbine efficiency. The inlet temperature to the expander may be limited by material considerations and cooling of the part surfaces. In some instances, gas reserves have high wellhead pressures (e.g. from about 1,000 pounds per
25 square inch (psi) to about 6,000 psi) and high concentrations of inert gases, so no boost compressor may be required. Using these types of fuels in a high pressure combustor and then expanding them in the expander section can result in high efficiencies and provide an economical way for utilizing such reserves. Depending on the well head pressure available, the expansion may also be stopped at an elevated pressure to reduce the cost associated with
30 compressing the CO₂ for EOR or sequestering. For example, having the expander exhaust a 1 barg (1 bar gage or about 14.5 psig) compared to just a few inches of water of positive pressure can save almost 25% of the compression energy required to get the CO₂ to critical conditions (at or above the critical point – about 31°C and about 73.8 barg or 1,070 psig). Increasing the expander backpressure to 5 barg (about 72.5 psig) saves about 55% of the

compression energy and increasing the backpressure to 10 barg (about 145 psig) saves about 70% of the CO₂ compression energy.

[0033] The combustor utilized could be similar to those used in the gasification process where oxygen and hydrocarbons react in a reducing atmosphere using steam to moderate the temperature. In the present invention, CO₂ would be used in place of the steam to moderate the temperature. Using steam is expensive and would also result in the formation of additional hydrogen in the products of combustion which is not desired in the present cycle. By mixing the CO₂ with the oxygen, it may also be possible to use a more conventional diffusion type combustor similar to those used in existing gas turbines where CO₂ would be used instead of air to cool the combustion liners. Combustion at near stoichiometric conditions (or "slightly rich" combustion) is preferred to eliminate the cost of excess oxygen removal. Commercial technologies are currently available for oxygen removal if leaner combustion is required for flame stability.

[0034] Referring now to the figures, FIGs. 1A-1B illustrate an integrated system for low emission power generation and hydrocarbon recovery of the present invention. In FIG. 1A, the system 100 comprises an air separation unit 124 to produce a high purity oxygen stream 128 and a high purity nitrogen stream 126 from an atmospheric air stream 123, and a gaseous control fuel stream 125. A combustor 134 is also provided, which combusts at least a combination of the oxygen stream 128 and the fuel stream 125 to produce a gaseous combustion stream 136. A power generation system 139 receives the combustion stream 136 and produces water 155, power 140, and a compressed gaseous substantially carbon dioxide stream 162, which is sent to injection compressors 164 to form an injection stream 166 for injection in an enhanced oil recovery reservoir or carbon dioxide sequestration location 167. The nitrogen stream 126 is sent to injection compressor 169 to form injection stream 170 for injection in a pressure maintenance reservoir or a nitrogen storage location 171.

[0035] FIG. 1B illustrates an exemplary embodiment of the system 100. The system 101 includes a first hydrocarbon recovery reservoir 102 that produces a first mixed fluid hydrocarbon production stream 103, and includes a separation unit 104, a liquid hydrocarbon product stream 106, a secondary gaseous feed stream 108 comprising some carbon dioxide (CO₂) and light hydrocarbons (e.g. methane, ethane, etc.), which may be mixed with a recycle stream 160 to form low energy (e.g. low BTU) stream 109 comprising substantially CO₂ (e.g. from about 60 volume percent to about 95 vol %), at least one compression unit 110A-110X, which includes a compressor and may include a cooling unit to compress and cool the low energy stream 109 to provide a first compressed low energy gaseous stream 112. The system

100 further includes a second hydrocarbon recovery reservoir **113** to produce a second mixed fluid hydrocarbon production stream **114**, a second separation unit **116**, a hydrocarbon product stream **118** and an inert gas feed stream **120** comprising substantially nitrogen (N_2) (e.g. from about 70 volume percent to about 100 vol%). The system **100** also includes an air inlet stream **121**, which is compressed in compressor **122** to form a compressed air inlet stream **123** feeding an air separation unit **124** to produce a high purity nitrogen stream (e.g. from about 85 vol% to about 100 vol%) **126** and a high purity oxygen stream (e.g. from about 70 vol% to about 100 vol%) **128**. The high purity oxygen stream **128** is burned with a gaseous control fuel stream **125** in a combustor **134**. The low energy gaseous stream **112** is also introduced into the combustor **134** for temperature control, mass flow, and possibly for partial combustion of a portion of the hydrocarbons in the stream **112**.

[0036] The combination of the high purity oxygen stream **128** and the gaseous control fuel stream **125** in the combustor **134** is configured to maintain a minimum adiabatic flame temperature and flame stability to combust all or nearly all of the oxygen in the enriched oxygen fuel stream **128** (e.g. a stoichiometric reaction is preferred). In terms of heating value, the oxygen stream **128** has no heating value, the control fuel stream **125** has relatively high value (e.g. from at least 300 British thermal units per standard cubic foot (BTU/scf) to about 900 BTU/scf or from about 500 BTU/scf to about 700 BTU/scf) and the low energy stream **112** has a relatively low heating value (e.g. from about 100 BTU/scf to about 450 BTU/scf or from about 150 BTU/scf to about 300 BTU/scf). Note that where the control fuel stream **125** is pre-mixed with the low energy stream **112**, the heating value of the mixed stream may be from about 200 BTU/scf to about 500 BTU/scf. The combustion of the streams **112**, **125**, and **128** produces a gaseous combustion stream **136**, which may be mixed with low energy gas side stream **112'** to provide cooling to form an expander inlet stream **137**, which is fed to an expander **138** to generate mechanical power **140** and a gaseous exhaust stream **142**. Note that the expander **138** may be an expander on a power gas turbine or a hot gas expander.

[0037] The gaseous exhaust stream **142** may substantially comprise carbon dioxide and vaporized water and is sent to a heat recovery steam generator (HRSG) **144** or a similar device. The HRSG **144** generates a steam stream **146**, which may be sent to a steam turbine **150** to generate additional power **152** and the cooled exhaust gas **148** is sent to a cooling unit **154**, which produces a water dropout stream **155** and a substantially carbon dioxide stream **156**. The substantially carbon dioxide stream **156** is sent to compressors **158** configured to form a compressed carbon dioxide stream **162**, which is sent to well injection compressors

164, where the stream 162 is compressed to form a highly compressed carbon dioxide stream 166 for injection into an enhanced oil recovery (EOR) reservoir 167. Meanwhile, the inert gas feed stream 120 may be mixed with the high purity nitrogen stream 126 to form pressure maintenance stream 168, which may be compressed in compressor 169 to form injection stream 170 for injection into pressure maintenance reservoir or nitrogen storage 171.

[0038] Although four reservoirs 101, 113, 167, and 171 are referenced, the reservoirs may all be the same reservoir, be two, three or four different reservoirs, and may include multiple reservoirs for injection or production. Further, the content of the production streams 102 and 114 will likely change over time, particularly at "break-through" where the injected gases begin to be produced.

[0039] In general, the EOR reservoir 167 is a reservoir or a portion of a reservoir that comprises substantially liquid hydrocarbons such as crude oil and is generally located over an aquifer. The liquid hydrocarbons are miscible with injected compressed carbon dioxide stream 166 at the proper temperature and pressure. High CO₂ concentrations (e.g. up to about 90 volume % or greater) are preferred in such a miscible flooding operation because the CO₂ acts as a dilute to lower the viscosity of the oil and as a solvent to remove the oil from the formation rock, and other reasons. In addition, less power is needed to pump the gas 166 into the reservoir if it properly mixes. Oxygen levels in the injection stream 166 are preferably kept very low.

[0040] In general, the pressure maintenance reservoir 171 is a reservoir or a portion of a reservoir that includes a gas cap above an oil producing formation. As the liquids are produced, the gas cap pressure and formation pressure is reduced, resulting in lower production and possibly retrograde condensation in the gas portion. The injected gas 170 is configured to maintain the pressure in the reservoir to at least maintain recovery pressure and avoid retrograde condensation. Miscibility is not an issue in such an operation. As such, inert gasses like nitrogen are preferred. In the special, exemplary case where at least the injection reservoirs 167 and 171 are the same, the nitrogen may be injected into the gas cap of the reservoir and the carbon dioxide is used as a miscible injectant for EOR in the same reservoir.

[0041] The production streams 103 and 114 may be the same or different or include production from multiple reservoirs and may include any variety of light and heavy liquid and gaseous hydrocarbon components as well as other non-hydrocarbon components such as carbon dioxide, hydrogen sulfide, nitrogen, carbonyl sulfide, and combination thereof. During initial or early stage production, it is expected that there will be significantly more

heavy hydrocarbon components than sour or non-hydrocarbon components in the production streams **103** and **114**. Exemplary contents of the sweet streams **103** and **114** comprise from at least about 70 mol percent (%) hydrocarbons to about 99 mol % hydrocarbons, from about 1 mol % to about 5 mol % CO₂, from about 0 mol % N₂ to about 5 mol % N₂, and some other components.

[0042] As hydrocarbons are produced and particularly once gas breakthrough occurs, the compositions may change drastically. For example, after CO₂ breakthrough, an exemplary production stream **103** or **114** may have the following contents: about 5 mol percent (%) hydrocarbons to about 60 mol % hydrocarbons, from about 40 mol % to about 95 mol % CO₂, from about 0 mol % N₂ to about 10 mol % N₂, and some other components. After nitrogen breakthrough, an exemplary production stream **103** or **114** may have the following contents: about 5 mol percent (%) hydrocarbons to about 60 mol % hydrocarbons, from about 5 mol % to about 20 mol % CO₂, from about 40 mol % N₂ to about 95 mol % N₂, and some other components. Note that breakthrough is a transient process rather than a step-wise process resulting in a relatively fast, but gradual increase in the amount of breakthrough gas produced. For example, a reservoir may steadily produce about 5 mol % CO₂ during early production, then produce an increasing amount of CO₂ during a transition period (from a month to several years) until the CO₂ production reaches a high steady state production of about 95 mol % CO₂.

[0043] The separation units **104** and **116** may be the same unit, different units, or each comprise multiple units in series or parallel depending on the contents of the production streams **103** and **114**, respectively. The separation units **104** and **116** may comprise any known technology for hydrocarbon separation, such as, for example: refrigeration, lean oil absorption, adsorption onto a solid sorbent like silica gel, adsorptive kinetic separation, cryogenic separation, or some combination of these processes. Further, once breakthrough occurs, the separation components, facilities, and processes will likely require adjustment, de-bottleneck, or total replacement to account for the differences in production stream contents.

[0044] The first and second hydrocarbon product streams **106** and **118** may comprise light and heavy hydrocarbons, such as propane, butane, pentane, hexanes, or aromatics, natural gasoline, and even crude oil. The product streams **106** and **118** are preferably sent downstream for further processing and sale or other utilization, but a portion of the streams **106'** and **118'** may be utilized in the system **100**. After separation, the remaining gaseous streams **108** and **120** will have the contents of the production streams **103** and **114** respectively, but with the heavier hydrocarbons removed by the separation units **104** and **116**.

[0045] The following table provides exemplary compositions of the gaseous streams **112**, **125**, **128**, **136**, **137**, and **162** (and molar flow ratios of the incoming streams **112**, **125**, and **128**) for the embodiment of the system **100** in which the substantially carbon dioxide stream **156** is injected into a hydrocarbon recovery reservoir in an enhanced oil recovery operation and after CO₂ break-through. The flow ratio for streams **112**, **125**, and **128** are in volume fractions.

TABLE 1

	CO2-rich Fuel (112)	Control Fuel (125)	O2 stream (128)	Combustion Prod (136)	Expander Inlet (137)	Injection Stream (162)
H2O	0.0000	0.0000	0.00000	0.2337	0.0707	0.0000
N2	0.0085	0.0000	0.00000	0.0057	0.0076	0.0082
O2	0.0000	0.0000	0.95587	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
CO2	0.8816	0.0000	0.00151	0.7484	0.8413	0.9053
C1	0.0521	1.0000	0.00000	0.0001	0.0363	0.0391
C2	0.0276	0.0000	0.00000	0.0000	0.0192	0.0207
C3	0.0125	0.0000	0.00000	0.0000	0.0087	0.0093
iC4	0.0040	0.0000	0.00000	0.0000	0.0028	0.0030
nC4	0.0059	0.0000	0.00000	0.0000	0.0041	0.0044
iC5	0.0036	0.0000	0.00000	0.0000	0.0025	0.0027
nC5	0.0011	0.0000	0.00000	0.0000	0.0008	0.0009
C6	0.0032	0.0000	0.00000	0.0000	0.0022	0.0024
Ar	0.0000	0.0000	0.04262	0.0122	0.0037	0.0040
Flow ratio	775.6	1.0	74.4			

[0046] In some embodiments where the initial gaseous stream **103** or **108** is at a high enough pressure, the compressors **110A-110X** may not be needed. In other embodiments, the compressors **110A-110X** may include from one to four centrifugal compressors **110A-110D**, which may include intercoolers between them, there may be a single axial compressor **110**, or some combination depending on system requirements and economics. As noted, higher pressures in the combustor **134** and expander **138** may improve overall efficiency of the system **101**. For example, the expander exhaust **142** may be from about 1 barg to about 10 barg or about 4 barg to about 6 barg or about 5 barg. It is contemplated that a person of ordinary skill in the art has been provided with sufficient information to engineer the compressors **110A-110X**, the combustor **134**, and the expander **134** to obtain a higher pressure expander exhaust in accordance with the present disclosure.

[0047] In additional embodiments, it may be desirable to keep the stream **112** at higher temperatures for mixing and combustion in the combustor **134**. Stream **112** may be heated by cross-exchange with hot exhaust gas stream **136** or **142** (if stream **142** is used, it may be compressed prior to the cross exchange), heat generated by one of the other compressors in the system **100** (e.g. compressor **122**, compressor **158**, or compressor **164**), or the HRSG **144**.

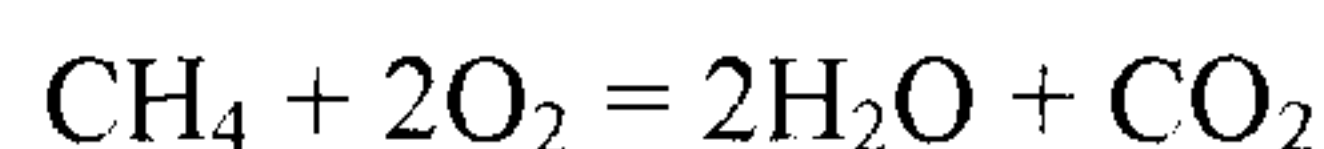
A temperature sufficient to improve the efficiency of combustion in the combustor **134** is preferred. In one embodiment, the sour gas stream **112** may be from about 50 degrees Celsius ($^{\circ}\text{C}$) to about 500 $^{\circ}\text{C}$ upon entering the combustor **134**.

[0048] The combustor **134** may be a standard external combustor or may be a customized or modified combustor. Examples of applicable combustor types include an oxyClaus burner, a partial oxidation (POX) burner, auto-thermal reforming (ATR) burner, diffusion burners, lean-premix combustors, and piloted combustors. Note that each burner type may require some modification to work with a substantially CO_2 stream. In the diffusion flame combustor (or “burner”) the fuel and the oxidant mix and combustion takes place simultaneously in the primary combustion zone. Diffusion combustors generate regions of near-stoichiometric fuel/air mixtures where the temperatures are very high. In pre-mix combustors, fuel and air are thoroughly mixed in an initial stage resulting in a uniform, lean, unburned fuel/air mixture that is delivered to a secondary stage where the combustion reaction takes place. Lean-premix combustors are now common in gas turbines due to lower flame temperatures, which produces lower NO_x emissions. In the piloted combustor a hot flamed pilot ensures that the lean fuel oxidant mixture surrounding it maintains stable combustion. These piloted combustors are typically used in aircraft engines and for fuels that may not be able to maintain stable combustion on their own.

[0049] FIG. 2 illustrates a schematic of an exemplary combustor **134** as it might be configured for use in the system **100**. As such, FIG. 2 may be best understood with reference to FIGs. 1A-1B. This embodiment of the combustor **134** may be referred to as an “oxygen combustor” and includes a combustion chamber **200**, a gas mixing chamber (or atomizer) **202**, a burner nozzle **206**, secondary gas inlets **204A-204B** and an outer wall (or shroud) **210**.

[0050] In one exemplary embodiment, the atomizer **202** and nozzles **204A-204B** and **206** may be configured to mix the natural gas stream **125** with an oxidizing stream comprising the sour gas stream **112** and the high purity oxygen stream **128** in a highly turbulent manner to ensure a homogeneous mixture is achieved. During operation, the flame **208** produces temperatures up to about 2,200 $^{\circ}\text{C}$. With the addition of the cooling gas **112**, the exhaust gas **212** is expected to be up to about 1,400 $^{\circ}\text{C}$. Additional cooling gas **112** may be introduced via the outer wall **210** generating a sort of “gas envelope” to keep the wall of the chamber **200** notably cooler than the flame **208**. In one exemplary embodiment, the cooling stream **112** may be stripped of hydrocarbons to minimize soot formation, if necessary. In another exemplary embodiment, the combustion takes place at higher than atmospheric pressure. The

reaction generates water (vapor) and carbon dioxide as shown by the equations below (the carbon dioxide entering the chamber generally remains unreacted):



[0051] The combustion process is characterized by a high fuel to oxidizer ratio, far
5 beyond the stoichiometric ratio resulting in an ultra rich combustion process. Control of the combustion reaction may be accomplished by accurately metering the oxygen 128 and natural gas 125 to the combustor 134. Temperature is also used to update the fuel and oxygen flow control. In a preferred embodiment including EOR, the fuel 125 and oxygen 128 is metered to produce just below a stoichiometric mixture, preferably on the rich side to avoid as much
10 oxygen as possible in the resulting stream 136. Feedback control based on the products of combustion may be used to update the fuel and oxygen ratios.

[0052] A typical partial oxidation (POX) burner mixes natural gas 125 with a steam oxidizing stream 146 in a homogeneous mixture. The addition of steam is not only to moderate the reaction temperature but also to produce additional hydrogen in the reaction.
15 The partial oxidation process is characterized by a high fuel to oxidizer ratio, far beyond the stoichiometric ratio. POX is an example of an ultra rich combustion process.

[0053] A typical oxyClaus burner (not shown) comprises multiple sour gas burners surrounding a central start-up burner muffle. Each sour gas burner would include a feed or “lance” from the oxygen stream 128, the low energy stream 112, and the control fuel stream
20 125. Temperatures could be up to about 2,200 °C (about 1,900 K) or even higher. The combined feed streams 128, 112, and 125 may form a very hot oxygen flame surrounded by a cooler envelope of gas, such as from control stream 112’.

[0054] In a typical thermal auto-thermal reforming (ATR) process (not shown) a mixture of natural gas-steam (e.g. 125 and 146) and oxygen 128 is fed to the combustor 134. Partial
25 oxidation reactions occur in a combustion zone and then the products pass through a catalyst bed, where reforming reactions occur. The ATR reactor consists of a refractory lined pressure vessel with a burner, a combustion chamber and a catalyst bed. It has a design similar to that of the POX reactor, but also contains a catalyst bed. The produced syngas temperature is about 1,300 Kelvin (K) as compared to 1,650 K for the POX reactor. This
30 reduction in the syngas temperature is important because the catalyst does not support higher temperature values. ATR can produce significantly higher H₂ to CO ratios in the syngas and is also a soot free operation.

[0055] In a typical diffusion burner arrangement (not shown), the fuel and oxidant (a diluted mixture of less than about 30 volume percent (vol%) oxygen 128 and substantially

pure carbon dioxide) are mixed in a very turbulent manner to get a homogeneous mixture and promote complete combustion. The present system **100** would use substantially pure CO₂ to dilute the oxidant and provide temperature control. Although the low energy gas stream **112** may be sufficiently pure, it would likely require more cleanup via a mole sieve, membrane, or
 5 other process (not shown) prior to use as a dilute in this type of system. The external combustor **134** can be sized to provide the residence time required for the combustion to go to completion and result in the low oxygen levels required for the EOR application.

[0056] FIG. 3 is an exemplary flow chart of a method of producing hydrocarbons in an efficient, low emission system like the one shown in FIGs. 1A-1B. As such, FIG. 3 may be
 10 best understood with reference to FIGs. 1A-1B. The method **300** includes separating air to form an high purity oxygen stream and a high purity nitrogen stream **302**, providing a gaseous control fuel stream **304**, combusting the control fuel and the high purity oxygen stream to form a combustion stream having CO₂ and H₂O **306**, receiving the combustion stream into a power generation system to produce at least a compressed gaseous substantially
 15 carbon dioxide stream **308**, injecting the compressed gaseous substantially carbon dioxide stream into an enhanced oil recovery reservoir **310**, and injecting the high purity nitrogen stream into an enhanced nitrogen substitution reservoir **312**.

[0057] Multiple alternative embodiments of the present invention are possible, some of which are described in more detail herein, others of which should be apparent to one of skill
 20 in the art. In one alternative embodiment, the water stream **155** may be routed to the HRSG **144** via line **155'** to generate more steam **146**. In another alternative embodiment, the gaseous control fuel stream **125** is comprised at least partially of hydrocarbon stream **118'**, a derivative stream of hydrocarbon stream **118**. Such a configuration provides another integration synergy and may lower the overall operating cost of the system **100**. A further
 25 alternative embodiment includes taking a slip stream **108'** from the low energy stream **109** to provide CO₂ to the injection compressors **164** for EOR. Such an approach may allow EOR early in a process before other elements of the system **100** are in place, or may simply allow balancing of the various streams **109** and **162** depending on the requirements of the system **100**.

30 [0058] In another alternative embodiment, stream **108** may be routed directly to the combustor **134** or the gaseous control fuel stream **125** to pre-mix therewith for safety or control reasons. In the pre-mix configuration, the carbon dioxide recycle stream **160** may be substantially hydrocarbon free such that stream **160** may be usable as a temperature control diluent in the combustor **134**.

[0059] In another alternative embodiment, all or a portion of the compressed carbon dioxide stream **160** is recycled to the low energy stream **109**. This particular embodiment may be useful early in the operation of the system **100**, for example, before EOR activities are needed. In such a case, it may be beneficial to provide additional quantities of CO₂ to the combustor **134** for temperature control and mass flow control purposes to generate more power **140** for sale or use. In particular, if there is little or no EOR activity, power is not needed for the compressors **164**, which frees up the low emission generated power **140** for sale or another purpose. This alternative power cycle may also be beneficial for producing large quantities of CO₂ for sale or simply accumulating or sequestering the CO₂ until needed for EOR or other purposes.

[0060] The following table provides exemplary compositions of the gaseous streams **112**, **125**, **128**, **136**, **137**, and **160** (and molar flow ratios of the incoming streams **112**, **125**, and **128**) for the alternative recycle case in which the substantially carbon dioxide stream **156** is recycled to the combustor **134** via line **160**.

TABLE 2

	Recycle Stream (160)	Fuel (125)	O2 stream (128)	Combustion Prod (136)	Expander Inlet (137)	Recycle Stream (160)
H2O	0.00000	0.0000	0.00000	0.2326	0.08043	0.00000
N2	0.00000	0.0000	0.00000	0.0000	0.00000	0.00000
O2	0.00000	0.0000	0.95587	0.0000	0.00000	0.00000
CO2	0.91840	0.0000	0.00151	0.7047	0.84453	0.91840
C1	0.00005	1.0000	0.00000	0.0001	0.00005	0.00005
C2	0.00000	0.0000	0.00000	0.0001	0.00000	0.00000
C3	0.00000	0.0000	0.00000	0.0000	0.00000	0.00000
iC4	0.00000	0.0000	0.00000	0.0000	0.00000	0.00000
nC4	0.00000	0.0000	0.00000	0.0000	0.00000	0.00000
iC5	0.00000	0.0000	0.00000	0.0000	0.00000	0.00000
nC5	0.00000	0.0000	0.00000	0.0000	0.00000	0.00000
C6	0.00000	0.0000	0.00000	0.0000	0.00000	0.00000
Ar	0.08155	0.0000	0.04262	0.0626	0.07499	0.08155
Flow ratio	21.8	1.0	2.1			

[0061] As should be apparent from the table, the complete recycle embodiment of the system **100** results in slightly higher CO₂ concentration than the full injection case set forth in Table 1 above and also includes a higher molar flow rate resulting in the production of notably more CO₂ than in the injection case.

[0062] Combustion stability is an important aspect of the present invention. Although there are many possible approaches to providing stable combustion at stoichiometric or near stoichiometric conditions, many of these approaches are limited or technically infeasible. Preheating the gaseous control fuel stream **125** and low energy streams **112** and **112'** and

controlling the oxygen **128** and CO₂ mixture concentration are all likely approaches to ensuring combustion stability. One possible embodiment of the system **100** includes redirecting a portion of the gaseous exhaust stream **142** or the gaseous combustion stream **136** to heat the streams **125**, **112**, and **112'**.

5 [0063] Some alternative combustion options include adding hydrogen to the gaseous control fuel stream **125** or the low energy gaseous stream **112** as disclosed in U.S. Pat. No. 6,298,652. It may also be economical to add heavier hydrocarbons (C₂+) to the gaseous control fuel stream **125** or the low energy gaseous stream **112** to ensure combustion stability. These heavier hydrocarbons may be purchased separately or may be provided via line **118'**.
 10 Adding such fuels may require additional clean up facilities, so the economics of such an approach should be carefully considered.

[0064] In still another alternative embodiment, the heat recovery in the HRSG **144** may occur at elevated pressure. In such a process, the volume of the gaseous exhaust stream **142** can be significantly reduced and the water condenses out at a higher temperature; this makes
 15 the removal of the water easier to accomplish and the heat of condensation available at a higher temperature which is more valuable for power generation **152** or desalination (not shown).

[0065] FIG. 4 is an illustration of another embodiment of the low emission power generation system of FIGs. 1A-1B. As such, FIG. 4 may be best understood with reference to
 20 FIGs. 1A-1B. The system **400** includes a hydrocarbon recovery reservoir **102** that produces a first mixed fluid hydrocarbon production stream **103**, and includes a separation unit **104**, a liquid hydrocarbon product stream **106**, a secondary gaseous feed stream **108** comprising some CO₂ and light hydrocarbons, which may be mixed with a recycle stream **160** to form low energy stream **109** comprising substantially CO₂, at least one compression unit **110A**-
 25 **110X**, which includes a compressor and may include a cooling unit to compress and cool the low energy gaseous feed stream **109** to provide a first compressed low energy gaseous stream **112**. The system **400** further includes an external combustor **410** to combine and combust a high purity oxygen stream **128** and a control fuel stream **125** with the compressed low energy gas stream **112** to produce a gaseous combustion stream **136**, which may be mixed with a
 30 compressed low energy side stream **112'** to form expander inlet stream **137**. A hot gas expander **420** is provided, which receives the expander inlet stream **137** to produce power **140** and an expanded exhaust stream **142**, which may be sent to an HRSG **144** to generate steam **146** and power **152** via steam turbine **150**. After steam generation, the stream **148** may be sent to a cooling unit **154** to condense and drop out the water component **155** to form

substantially carbon dioxide stream **156**, which is sent to a CO₂ compressor **158**, then recycled via line **160** or sent to an injection compressor **164** via line **162** for injection into EOR reservoir **167**. Note that a portion of stream **156** may be recycled while the remainder is injected.

5 [0066] The hot gas expander **420** may be a commercially available unit, such as the FEX-125 or similar model from General Electric. However, the expander **420** may also be a slightly modified unit to handle the substantially CO₂ fluid **136** at the expected temperatures and pressures. In one exemplary embodiment, a plurality of hot gas expanders **420A-420X** would be aligned in parallel. Although some modification is expected, the high pressure hot
 10 gas expander **420** is a more robust device than an integrated gas power turbine. For example, using a substantially CO₂ working fluid **136** in a gas power turbine poses difficult and unsolved thermodynamic and operational issues that may require a ground-up turbine re-design. *See, e.g.* U.S. Pat. App. No. 2007/0237696 and SNARHEIM, DAGFINN, ET AL., *Control Design for a Gas Turbine Cycle with CO₂ Capture Capabilities*, 16th IFAC World Congress,
 15 Prague, Czech Rep., July 2005. A hot gas expander, however, does not have the complexity of the gas power turbine. The use of a hot gas expander results in increased degrees of freedom to optimize the system for improved performance. For example, the operating pressure may be elevated for increased thermodynamic efficiency of the Brayton power cycle. For these and other reasons, the hot gas expander **420** may be more suitable to run on
 20 the substantially CO₂ working fluid exhaust gas **136** or **137** than a gas power turbine and may not require a new design.

[0067] FIG. 5 is an exemplary method of operating the system of FIG. 4. As such, FIG. 5 may be best understood with reference to FIGs. 1A-1B and 4. The process **500** includes producing and separating **502** a hydrocarbon stream **102** to form a compressed low energy
 25 gas stream **112**, providing **504** a high purity oxygen stream **128**, providing **506** a gaseous control fuel stream **125**, combusting **508**, in an external combustor **410**, a combination of at least the high purity oxygen stream **128** and the gaseous control fuel stream **125** to produce a gaseous combustion stream **136** having carbon dioxide and water, expanding **510** the gaseous combustion stream **136** or **137** in a hot gas expander **420** to produce at least one unit of
 30 mechanical power **140** and a gaseous exhaust stream **142**, removing **512** at least a portion of the water component **155** from the gaseous exhaust stream **148**, and utilizing **514** at least a portion of the resulting carbon dioxide component **156**.

[0068] FIG. 6 is an illustration of another embodiment of the low emission power generation system of FIG. 4. As such, FIG. 6 may be best understood with reference to FIGs.

1A-1B and 4. The system **600** includes many of the same components as the systems **100**, **101** and **400**. However, system **600** utilizes a gas power turbine **620** in place of the hot gas expander **420**. The turbine inlet compressor **605** is configured to receive atmospheric air **121**, is connected to the expander **620** by a shaft or similar mechanism **605** and includes a
 5 combustor **610**.

[0069] In such a system **600**, the gas power turbine would still utilize the compressed low energy gas stream **112** as working fluid to cool the system because the compressed air **123** from the inlet compressor **605** is utilized in the air separation unit **124**. In one particular embodiment, the volumetric flow of the compressed air stream **123** would produce a high
 10 purity oxygen stream **128** that substantially matches the amount of oxygen needed for a stoichiometric reaction in the combustor **134**.

[0070] FIG. 7 is an exemplary method of operating the system of FIG. 6. As such, FIG. 7 may be best understood with reference to FIGs. 1A-1B and 6. The process **700** includes producing and separating **702** a hydrocarbon stream **102** to form a compressed low energy
 15 gas stream **112**, separating air **704** in an air separation unit **124** configured to produce at least an high purity oxygen stream **128**, providing **706** a gaseous control fuel stream **125**, combusting **708**, in a combustor **610**, a combination of at least the high purity oxygen stream **128** and the gaseous control fuel stream **125** to produce a gaseous combustion stream **136** having carbon dioxide and water, expanding **710** the gaseous combustion stream **136** or **137**
 20 in an expander of the gas turbine **620** to produce at least one unit of mechanical power **140** and a gaseous exhaust stream **142**, compressing air **712** in an inlet compressor of the gas power turbine **605** to form a compressed air stream **123**, providing **714** the compressed air stream **123** to the air separation unit **124**, removing **716** at least a portion of the water component **155** from the gaseous exhaust stream **148**, and utilizing **718** at least a portion of
 25 the resulting carbon dioxide component **156**.

[0071] FIGs. 8A-8C are illustrations of additional alternative embodiments of the low emission power generation system of FIGs. 1A-1B. As such, FIGs. 8A-8C may be best understood with reference to FIGs. 1A-1B. FIG. 8A illustrates a system **800** for producing hydrocarbons in which a compressed low energy gas stream **802** from compressors **110a-**
 30 **110x** may be routed by the HRSG **144** to thermally condition (e.g. cool) the low energy gas stream **802** prior to mixing and combusting in combustor **134**. The system **800** further includes a shaft **804** between the compressors **110a-110x** and the expander **138** to form a power turbine. Additionally, cooling unit **154** produces a substantially carbon dioxide stream **806**, which may be at least partially recycled to compressors **110a-110x** and/or diverted to

stream **808** to compressors **164** for injection and/or sequestration, storage, or venting. Once a recycle loop is established via line **806**, line **108** may not be necessary, except for makeup low value fuel amounts. In yet another alternative embodiment, line **108** may be diverted directly to the combustor **134** as a diluent or to line **125** to pre-mix the gaseous streams **108** and **125** prior to combustion. FIG. 8B illustrates a system **820** that is very similar to system **800**, except that substantially carbon dioxide stream **808B** is diverted from stream **802**. FIG. 8C illustrates a system **840** that is very similar to system **820**, except that it does not integrate the compressors **110a-110x** with expander **138** via shaft **804**.

10 [0072] It is preferable to avoid expensive and energy intensive CO₂ separation equipment in any of the systems **100**, **101**, **400**, **600**, **800**, **820**, or **840**. To accomplish this goal, the purity of the oxygen stream **128** may be sufficient to limit the presence of impurities to avoid additional separation equipment or processes.

[0073] In some embodiments, at least a portion of the systems **100**, **101**, **400**, **600**, 15 **800**, **820**, or **840** may be located on an offshore barge or platform. In such a system, the power may be utilized offshore or onshore and at least one of the reservoirs **113**, **171**, **102**, and **167** may also be located in an offshore location.

[0074] In some embodiments of the disclosed systems and methods, fuel contaminants may also be considered. Only fuels that produce byproducts that can meet the EOR 20 specification or fuels that are at a significantly high enough economic advantage so that the processing equipment to remove them can be justified should be considered.

[0075] Where a market exists for Argon, the additional cost, power, and complexity for its separation in the ASU **124** may be justified.

[0076] While the present invention may be susceptible to various modifications and 25 alternative forms, the exemplary embodiments discussed above have been shown only by way of example. However, it should again be understood that the invention is not intended to be limited to the particular embodiments disclosed herein. Indeed, the present invention includes all alternatives, modifications, and equivalents falling within the scope of the appended claims. The scope of the claims should not be limited by particular embodiments set forth herein, but should be construed in a manner consistent with the specification as a 30 whole.

CLAIMS:

1. A low emission power generation system, comprising:
 - a first hydrocarbon recovery reservoir configured to produce a first hydrocarbon mixture;
 - a first hydrocarbon separation unit configured to separate at least liquid hydrocarbons from the first hydrocarbon mixture and produce a first hydrocarbon stream and a secondary gas stream comprising carbon dioxide;
 - a gaseous control fuel stream;
 - a oxygen stream;
 - an external combustor configured to combust a combination of the gaseous control fuel stream, the oxygen stream, and the secondary gas stream comprising carbon dioxide to produce a gaseous combustion stream;
 - a hot gas expander configured to receive the gaseous combustion stream and produce at least one unit of mechanical power and a gaseous exhaust stream having at least a carbon dioxide component and a water component;
 - a handling system configured to condition the gaseous exhaust stream to substantially remove the water component therefrom and utilize at least a portion of the carbon dioxide component, the handling system comprising:
 - a heat recovery unit configured to receive the gaseous exhaust stream and produce a volume of water, a cooled gaseous carbon dioxide stream, and heat energy;
 - a compressor configured to compress the cooled gaseous carbon dioxide stream to produce a compressed gaseous carbon dioxide stream; and
 - a recycle loop configured to direct at least a portion of the compressed gaseous carbon dioxide stream to at least one of the external combustor and the secondary gas stream comprising carbon dioxide;
 - wherein the gaseous carbon dioxide stream comprises from about 60 vol% carbon dioxide to about 95 vol% carbon dioxide.

2. The system of claim 1, wherein the heat energy is utilized to generate steam, wherein at least a portion of the steam is utilized to generate steam power.
3. The system of claim 2, wherein at least a portion of the compressed gaseous carbon dioxide stream is utilized in a system selected from the group consisting of: a system for injection of at least a portion of the compressed gaseous carbon dioxide stream into one of an enhanced oil recovery reservoir and a carbon dioxide sequestration location, a system for redirection of at least a portion of the compressed gaseous carbon dioxide stream to one of a carbon capture location, a venting location, a carbon dioxide sales location, and any combination thereof.
4. The system of claim 1, wherein the external combustor is selected from the group consisting of: an oxygen combustor, a pre-mix combustor, a piloted combustor, a partial oxidation (POX) combustor, a diffusion burner, an autothermal reformer, and an oxyClaus reaction furnace burner.
5. A method of generating low emission power, comprising:
 - producing a first hydrocarbon mixture from a first hydrocarbon recovery reservoir;
 - separating the first hydrocarbon mixture into a first hydrocarbon stream and a secondary gas stream comprising carbon dioxide;
 - providing a oxygen stream;
 - providing a gaseous control fuel stream;
 - combusting, in an external combustor, a combination of at least the oxygen stream and the gaseous control fuel stream to produce a gaseous combustion stream having carbon dioxide and water;
 - expanding the gaseous combustion stream in a hot gas expander to produce at least one unit of mechanical power and a gaseous exhaust stream having a water component and a carbon dioxide component;
 - removing at least a portion of the water component from the gaseous exhaust stream;
 - utilizing at least a portion of the carbon dioxide component of the exhaust stream;

cooling the gaseous exhaust stream in a heat recovery unit, wherein the cooling produces a volume of water, a cooled gaseous carbon dioxide stream, and heat energy;

compressing the cooled gaseous carbon dioxide stream to produce a compressed gaseous carbon dioxide stream; and

recycling at least a portion of the compressed gaseous carbon dioxide stream to at least one of the external combustor and the secondary gas stream comprising carbon dioxide;

wherein the gaseous carbon dioxide stream comprises from about 60 vol% carbon dioxide to about 95 vol% carbon dioxide.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein the heat energy is utilized to generate steam, wherein at least a portion of the steam is utilized to generate steam power.

7. The method of claim 6, wherein at least a portion of the compressed gaseous carbon dioxide stream is utilized in a process selected from the group consisting of: injecting at least a portion of the compressed gaseous carbon dioxide stream into at least one of an enhanced oil recovery reservoir and a carbon dioxide sequestration location, redirecting at least a portion of the compressed gaseous carbon dioxide stream to one of a carbon capture location and a carbon dioxide sales location, and any combination thereof.

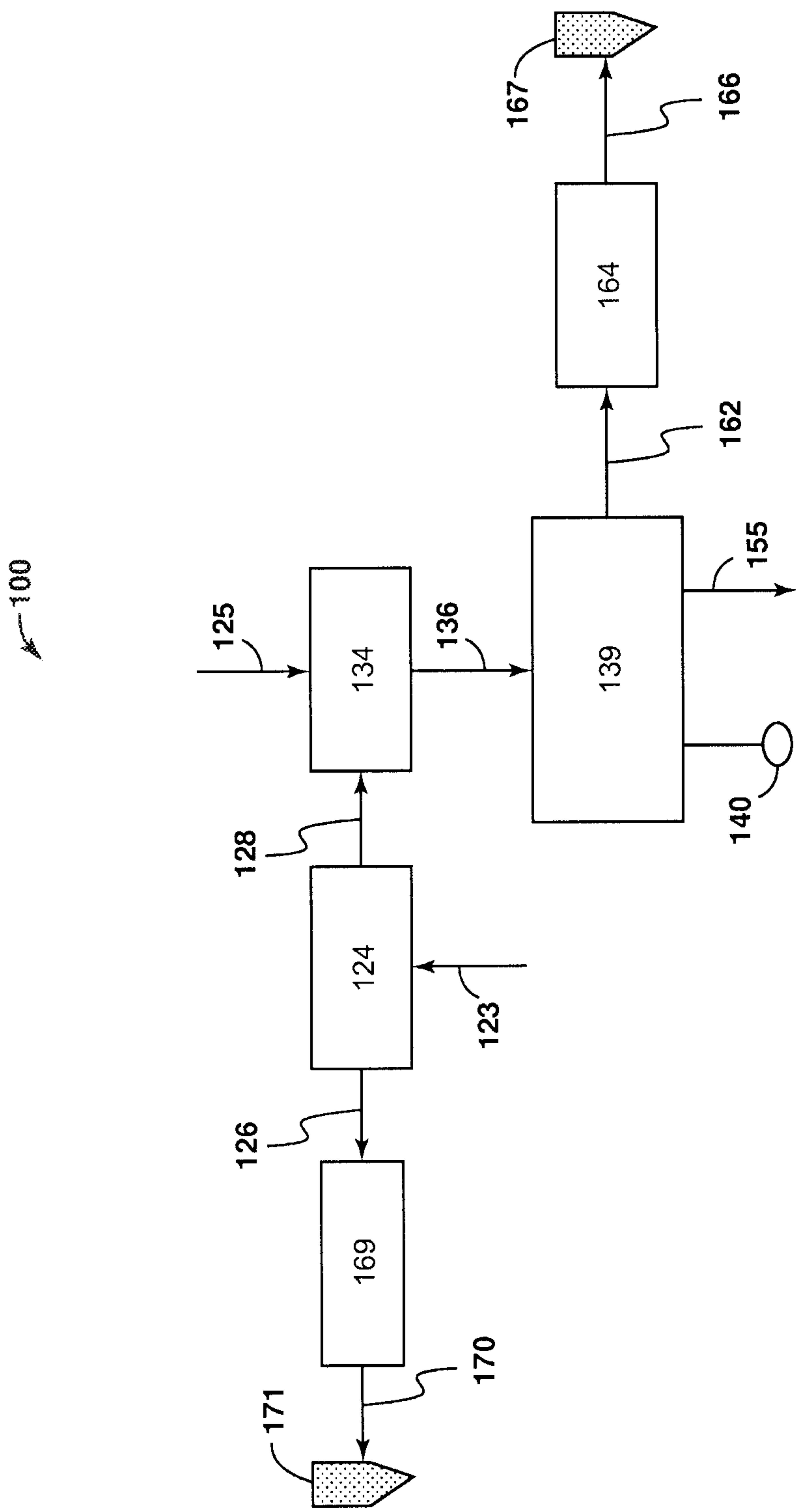


FIG. 1A

2/11

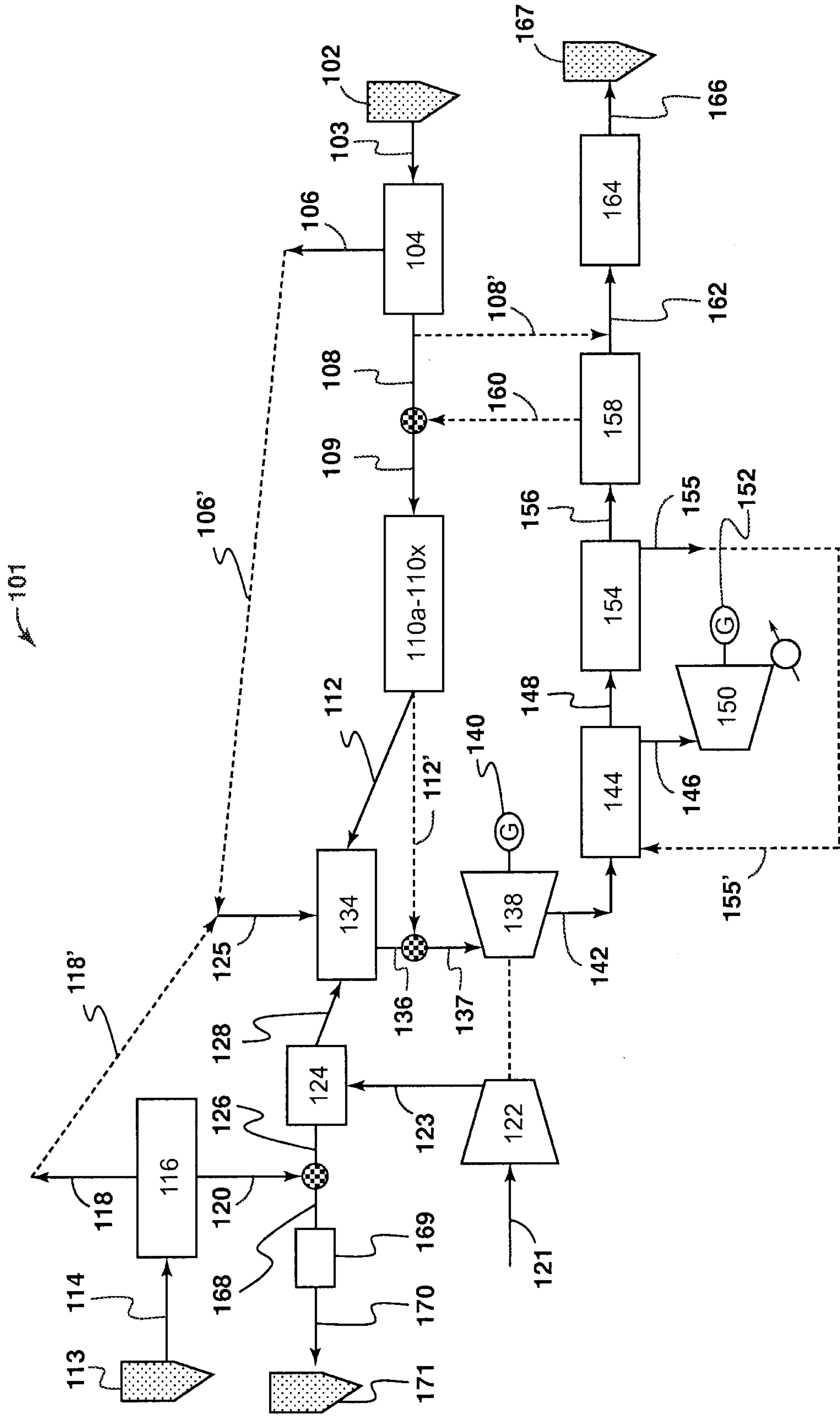


FIG. 1B

134

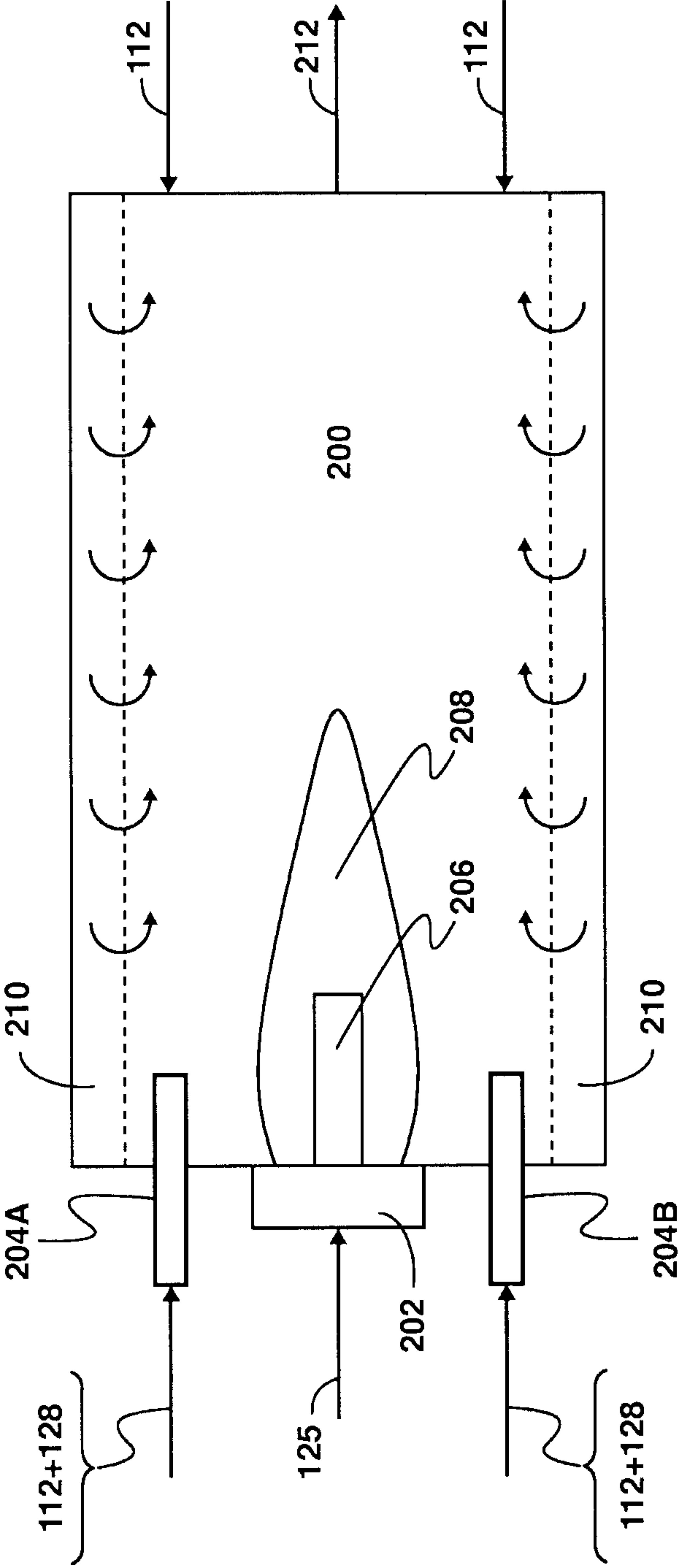


FIG. 2

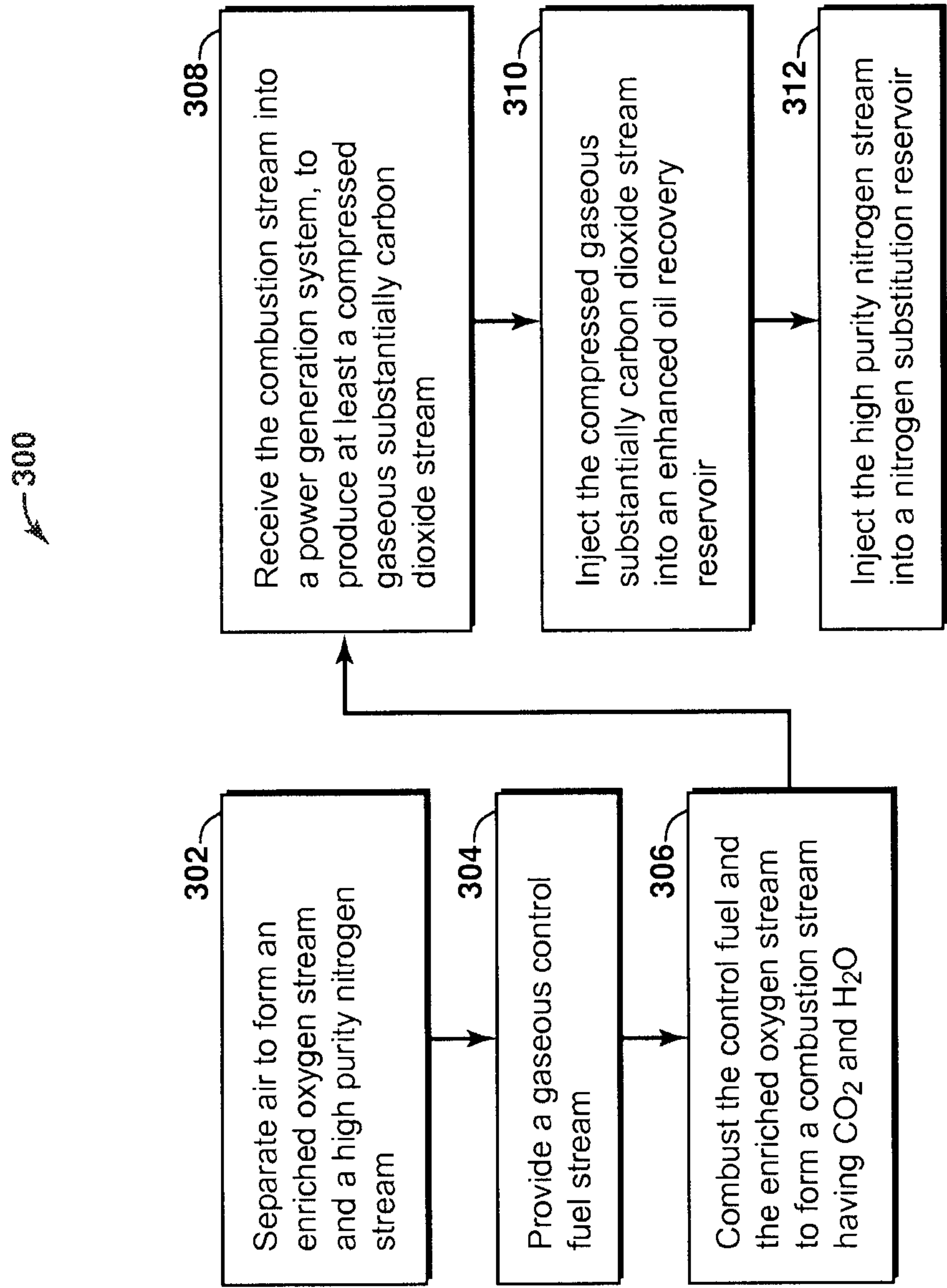


FIG. 3

400

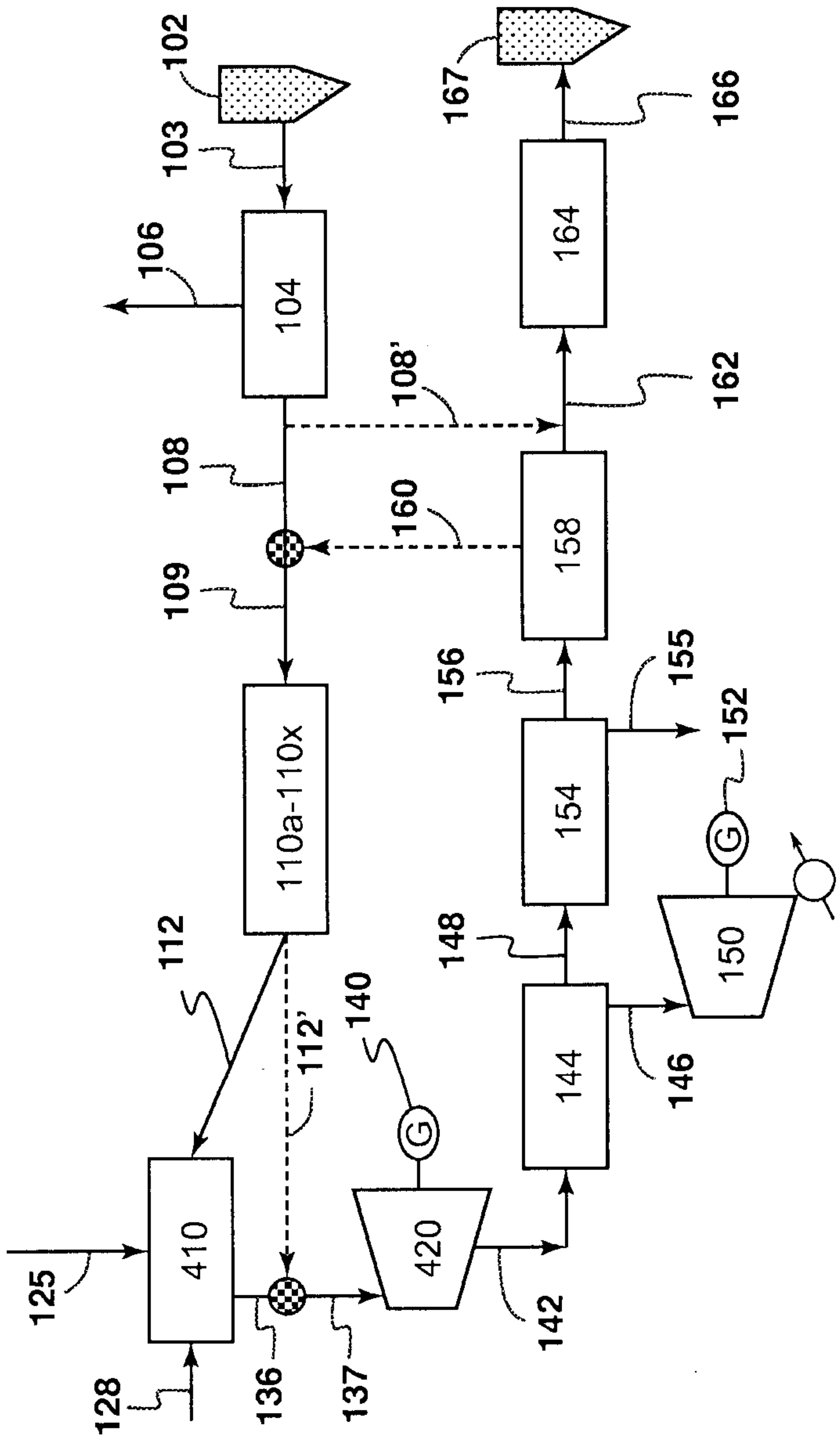


FIG. 4

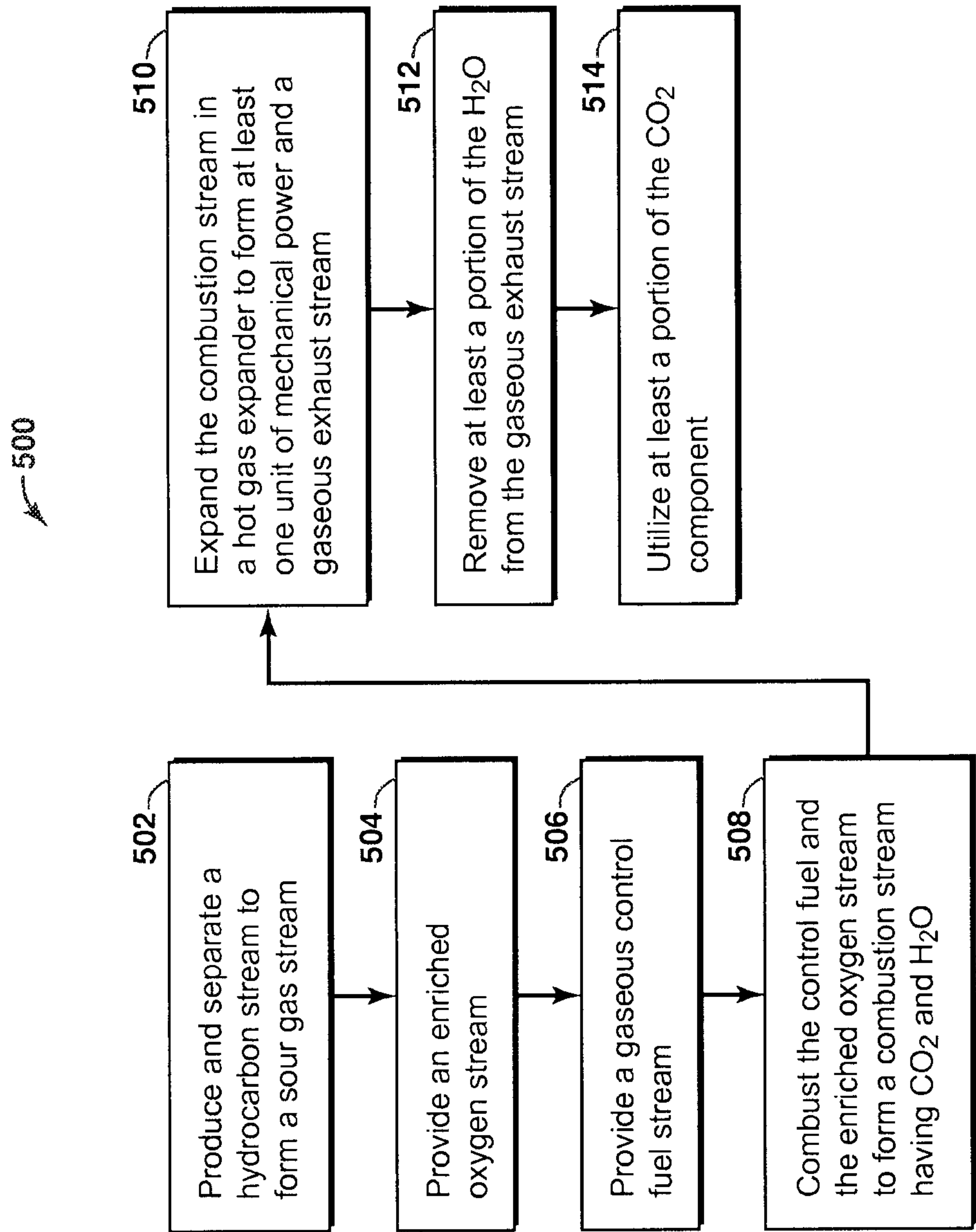


FIG. 5

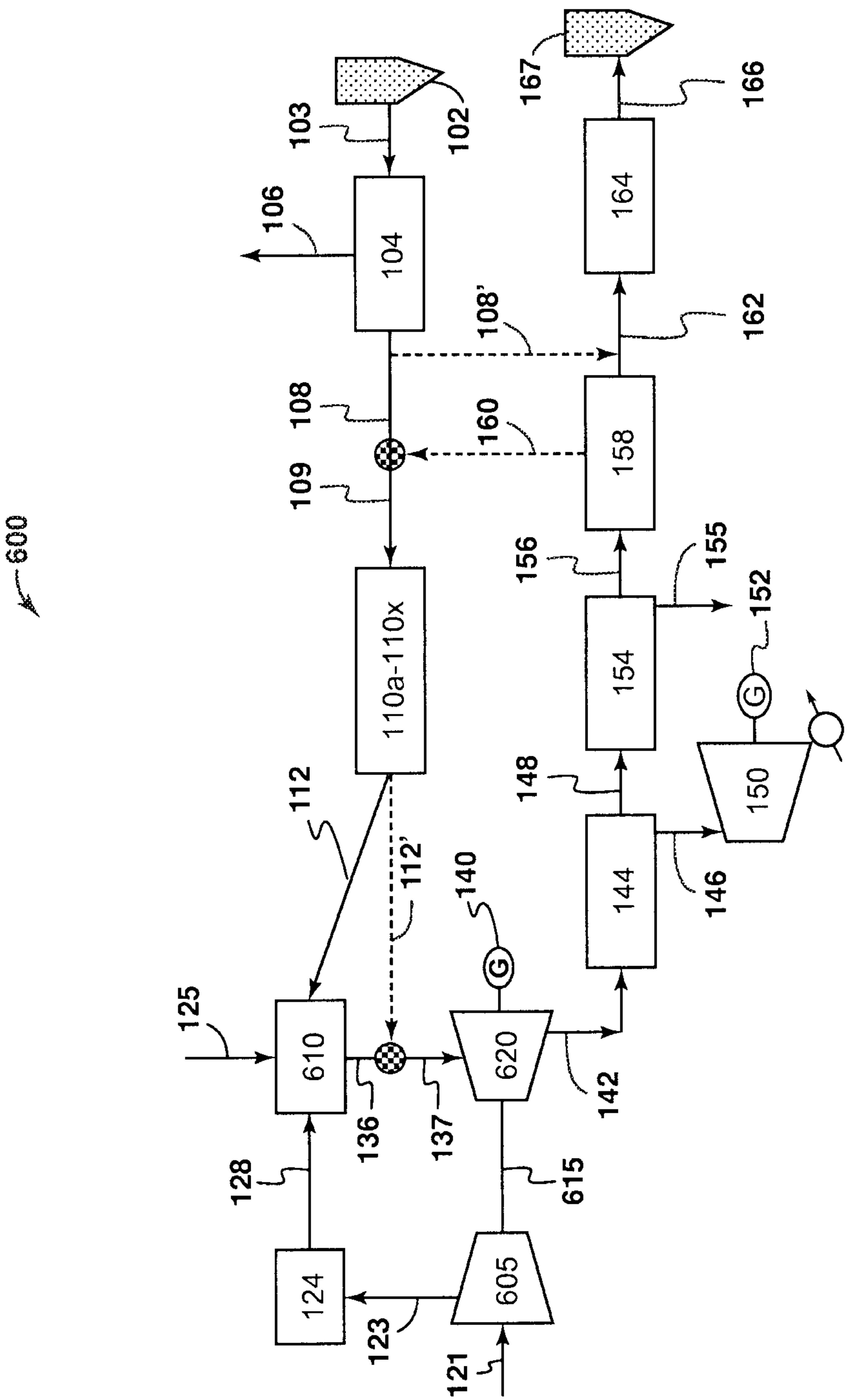


FIG. 6

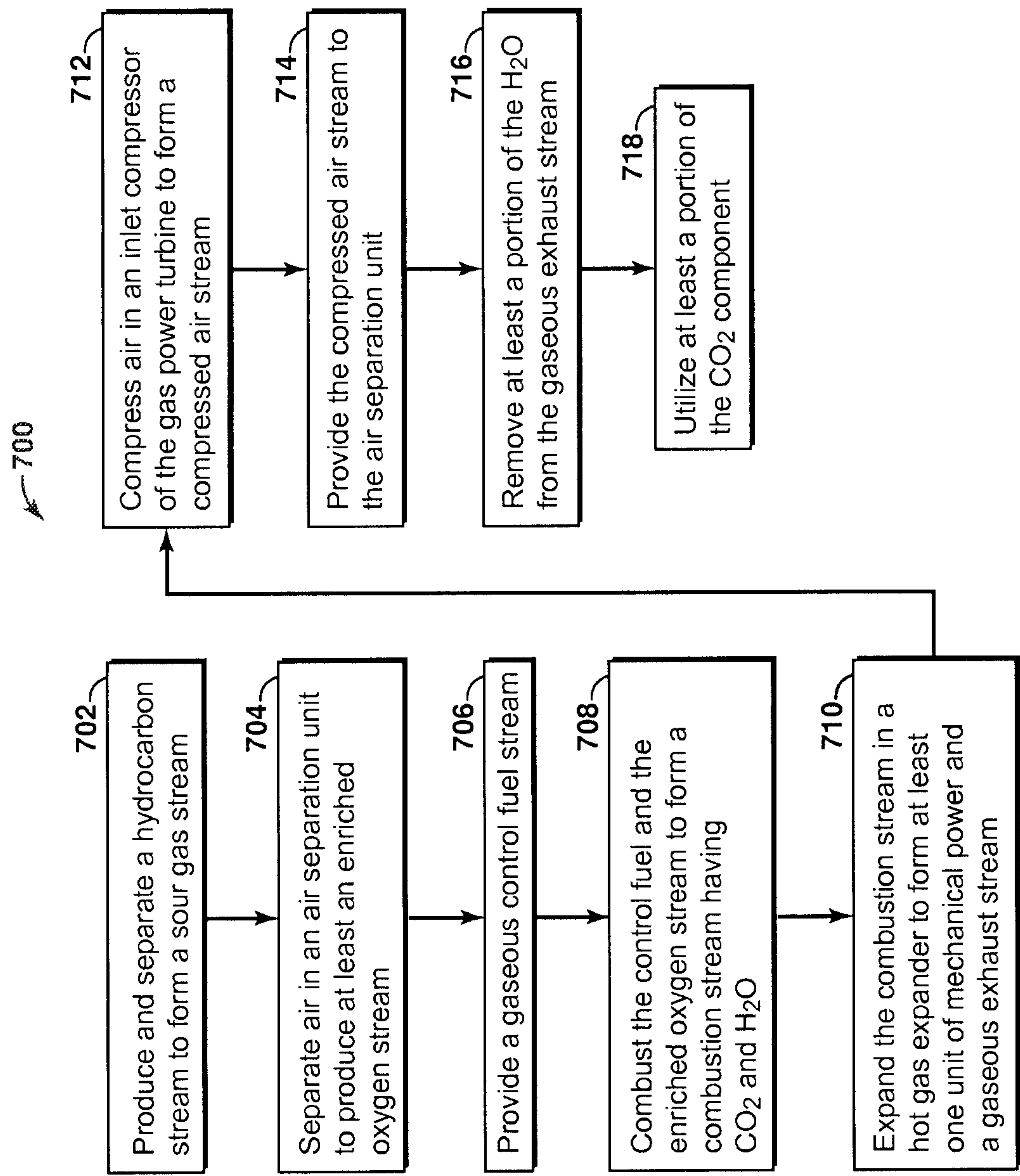


FIG. 7

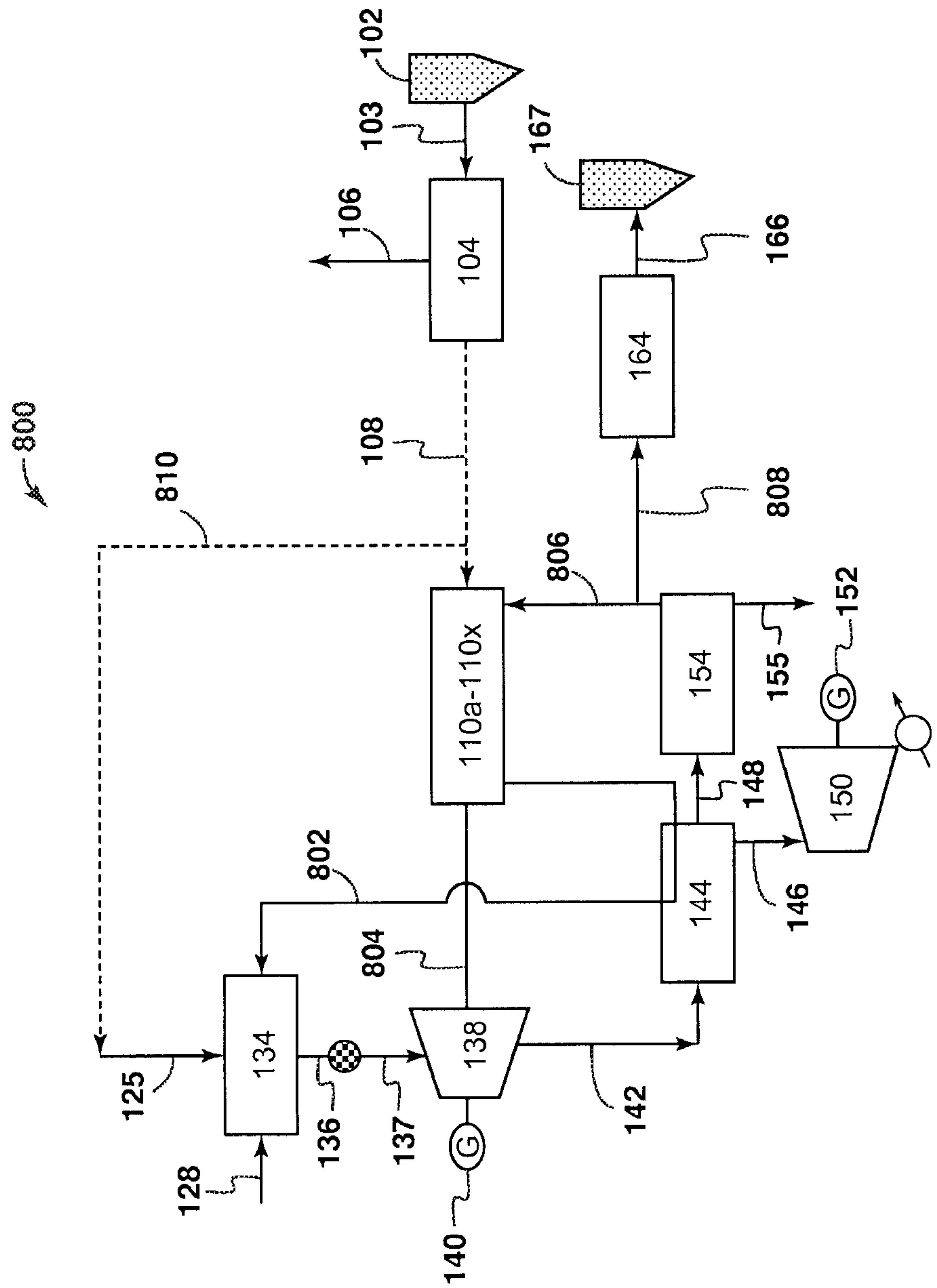


FIG. 8A

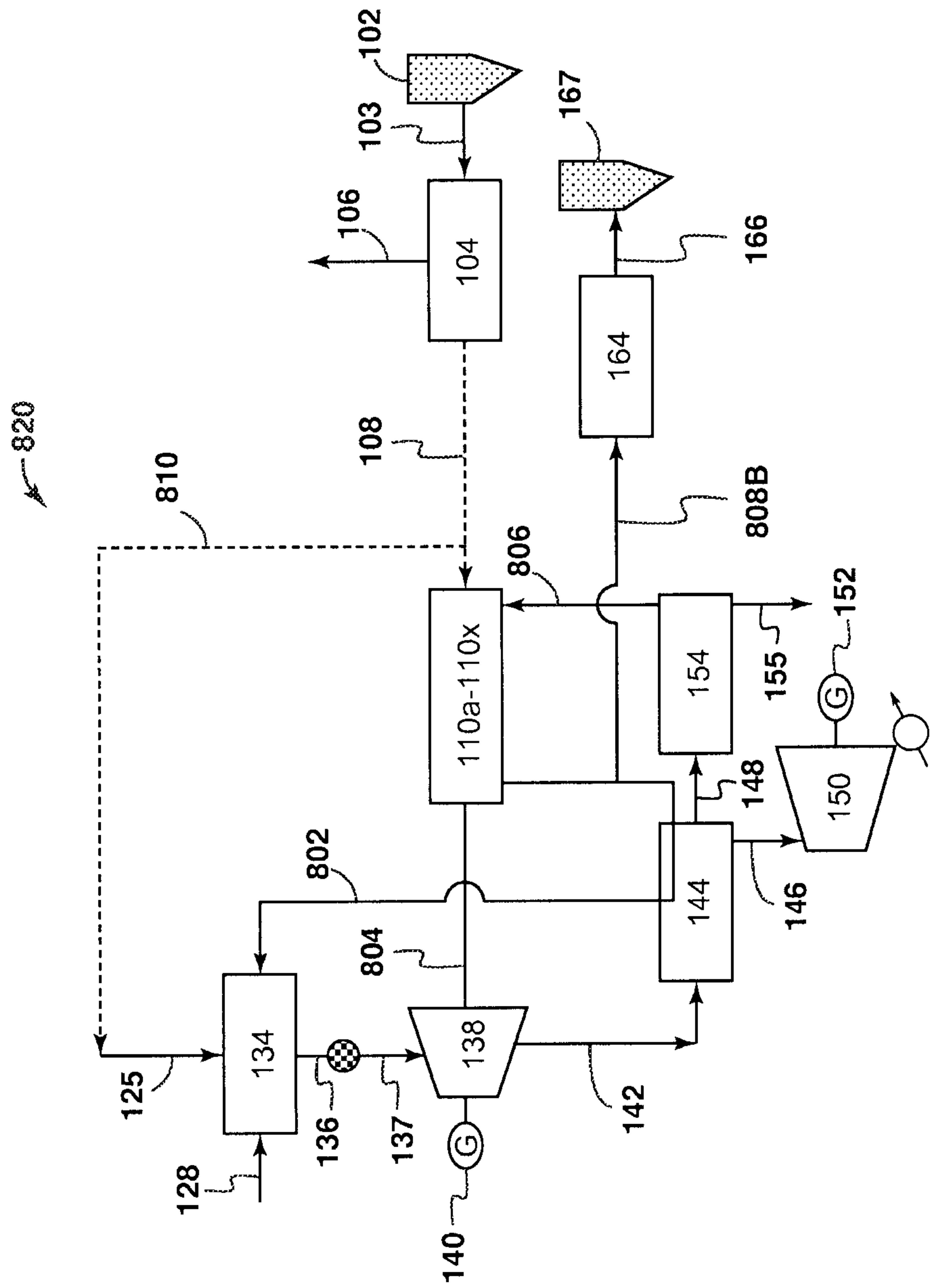


FIG. 8B

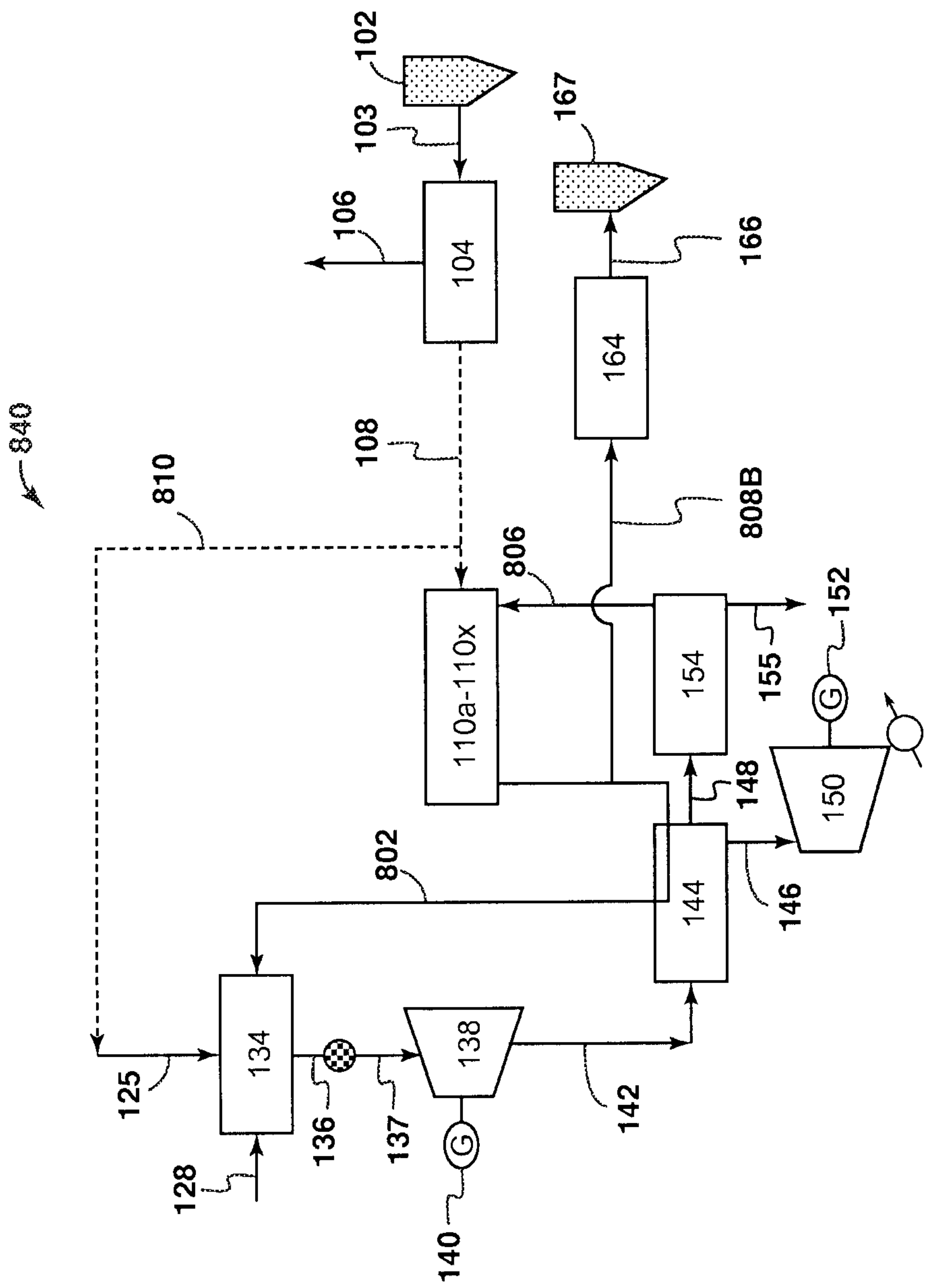


FIG. 8C

