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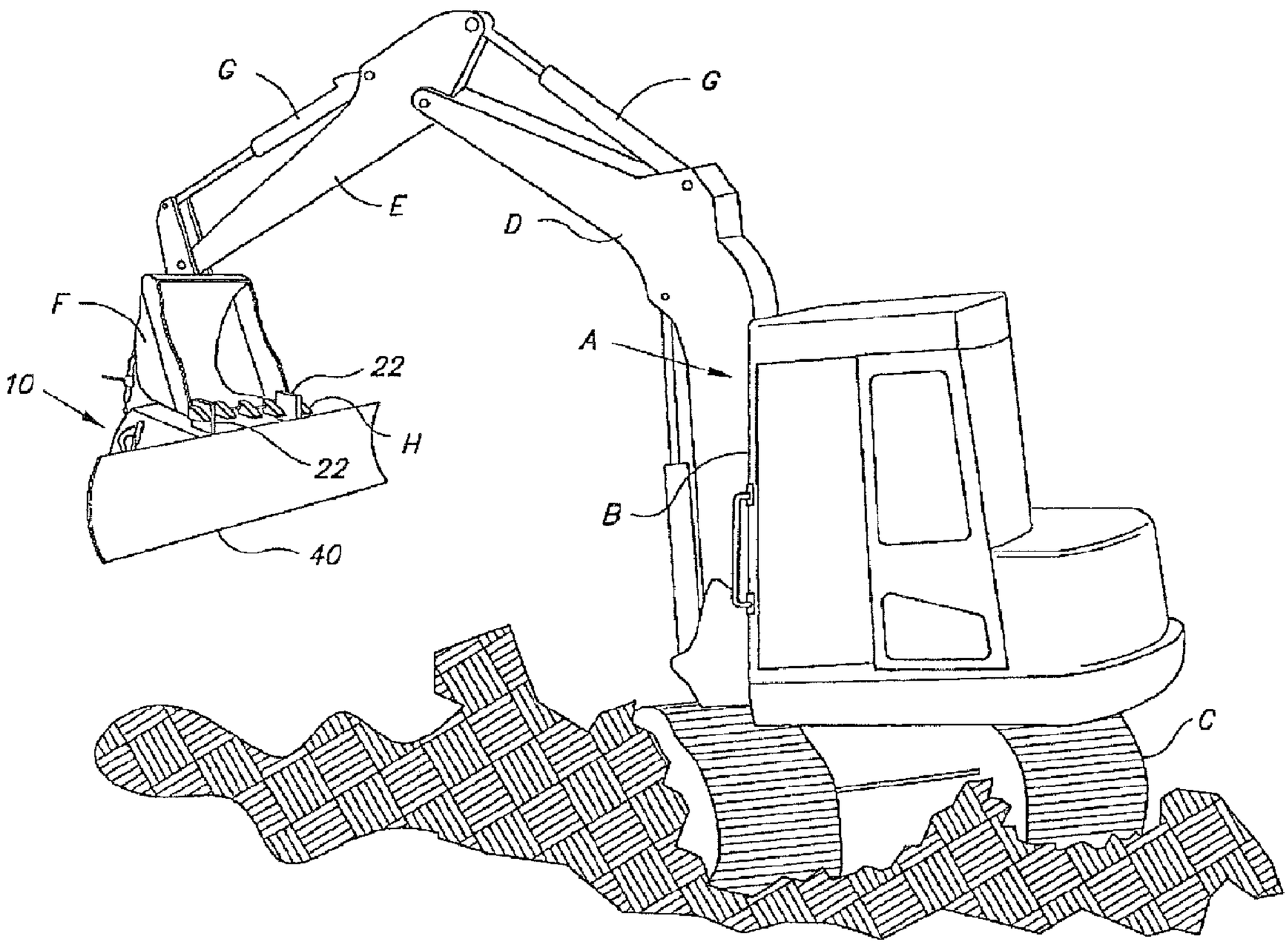
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(54) Titre : APPAREIL PERMETTANT DE RACCORDER UN ACCESSOIRE A UNE EXCAVATRICE
(54) Title: APPARATUS FOR CONNECTING AN ACCESSORY TO AN EXCAVATOR



(57) Abrégé/Abstract:
The apparatus for attaching an accessory to an excavator is a device for attaching a grader blade, brush blade, compactor, or other accessory to the bucket of an excavator. The apparatus has a body to which the accessory is attached which has a pair of hooks which slide between adjacent pairs of teeth on an edge of the excavator bucket and a pair of chains attached to the rear of the bucket and tightened by load binders to retain the apparatus on the excavator bucket. The apparatus provides for pivoting the accessory laterally, and may optionally provide for pivoting the accessory in a vertical plane.

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

The apparatus for attaching an accessory to an excavator is a device for attaching a grader blade, brush blade, compactor, or other accessory to the bucket of an excavator. The apparatus has a body to which the accessory is attached which has a pair of hooks which slide between adjacent pairs of teeth on an edge of the excavator bucket and a pair of chains attached to the rear of the bucket and tightened by load binders to retain the apparatus on the excavator bucket. The apparatus provides for pivoting the accessory laterally, and may optionally provide for tilting the accessory in a vertical plane.

APPARATUS FOR CONNECTING AN ACCESSORY TO AN EXCAVATOR

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to earthmoving machinery and equipment, and particularly to an apparatus for attaching a blade, compactor, or other accessory to the shovel of an excavator.

2. DESCRIPTION OF RELATED ART

Earthmoving machinery and equipment has greatly facilitated the construction of buildings, highways, bridges, and other structures. A variety of machines are available, from the general purpose bulldozer to more specialized equipment, including front end loaders, backhoes, graders, scrapers, etc. Although specialized equipment makes many tasks easier, a drawback to the variety of equipment available is that each machine is very expensive. Apparatus for attaching an accessory to an earthmoving machine so that it may perform the function of two machines is therefore desirable. Several patents describe apparatus for attaching blades to the bucket of front end loaders and backhoes.

U.S. Patent No. 3,440,744, issued April 29, 1969 to S.G. Smith, describes a blade attachment for a front end loader which includes a frame with a mounting edge member having a recess which receives the teeth on the lower edge of the front end loader bucket, the edge member having a length equal to the side to side width of the bucket. U.S. Patent No. 3,469,330, issued September 30, 1969 to Hood, et al., discloses a blade attachment for a backhoe, the blade having U-shaped pockets on its rear surface for

receiving the teeth on the backhoe bucket. U.S. Patent No. 3,942,271, issued March 9, 1976 to A.J. George, teaches a blade for attachment to a backhoe which includes a V-shaped housing for receiving the teeth of the backhoe bucket. U.S. Patent No. 4,009,529, issued March 1, 1977 to L.M. Johnson, shows a blade attached to a backhoe bucket by a series of clamp plates engaging the teeth of the backhoe bucket, the clamp plates being on both sides of the teeth and secured to the bucket by nuts and bolts.

U.S. Patent No. 4,189,854, issued February 26, 1980 to J.A. Haynes, describes a grader blade attachable to a front end loader of a backhoe by a bifurcated member having one leg extending into the bucket and secured by a plurality of jackscrews, the other leg extending below the bucket and having an L-shaped member to which the blade is pivotally attached. U.S. Patent No. 4,328,628, issued May 11, 1982 to B.N. Thomas, discloses a snow plough attachment for a front end loader including a blade with a frame pivotally attached to the rear of the blade, the frame being attached to the bucket by angles which engage the lower edge of the bucket, brackets inside the bucket which engage the frame, and a connector arm pinned to the top edge of the bucket. A semicircular beam is attached to the rear of the blade and slidable through sleeves attached to the frame, with hydraulic cylinders mounted between the frame and the circular beam to vary the angle of the blade.

U.S. Patent No. 4,255,884, issued March 17, 1981 to E.D. Williams, teaches a snow plough attachment for a front end loader in which the blade has a pair of brackets on its rear surface, the brackets supporting pins on their upper ends which are received by hooks attached to the top edge of the loader bucket, and having slots defined in their lower ends for receiving the bottom edge of the bucket. U.S. Patent No. 4,360,980, issued November 30, 1982 to J.D. Jarvis, shows a blade attached to a backhoe by an inclined

plate with bosses forming a pocket for receiving the bucket teeth, the plate being secured to the bucket by a turnbuckle.

U.S. Patent No. 4,463,507, issued August 7, 1984 to A.A. Gaub, describes a grader blade attachment for a front end loader or backhoe in which the blade attachment has a support arm which has an upright post at one end which fits between ears on the rear of the bucket and is secured to the ears by a pin. U.S. Patent No. 4,521,980, issued June 11, 1985 to N. Solaja, discloses a grader blade attached to a loader bucket, the blade being mounted on a cylinder having a slot defined therein for receiving the front edge of the bucket, the cylinder being secured to the bucket by chains.

U.S. Patent No. 5,165,191, issued November 24, 1992 to C.J. Davis, teaches a front end loader with a bucket convertible to a dozer blade, the dozer blade forming the back wall of the bucket. Japanese Patent No. 4-231523, published 08/1992, shows an earth removing device for an extra-small-size shovel car which shows a blade connected to a shovel or bucket by a spring.

There are, however, problems associated with known devices for attaching grader blades and other accessories to the bucket of an earthmoving machine. Several of these devices are attached directly to or over the teeth of the bucket, leading to failure of the teeth from fatigue and wear. Several of the devices do not provide for adjustment of the angle of the blade about a vertical axis, nor for adjustment of the tilt of the blade vertically. Several of the devices require modification of the bucket, or are time consuming, cumbersome and inefficient to install and dismount from the bucket.

An apparatus for attachment of a grader blade, compactor, or other accessory to the bucket of an excavator to expand the functionality of the excavator would be advantageous, inasmuch as the excavator is a tracked vehicle with an extensible and powerful

boom which can operate in areas where a bulldozer would have difficulty competing, such as on wet or soft ground.

None of the above inventions and patents, taken either singly or in combination, is seen to describe the instant invention as claimed.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The invention is an apparatus for attaching an accessory to a bucket of an excavator. The apparatus includes a hollow C-shaped body having a top plate, a bottom plate, and a pair of opposing side plates connecting the top plate and the bottom plate. A rear plate is attached to the top plate and the bottom plate. The apparatus has an open front end. The top plate and the bottom plate each have a hole defined therein. The holes are in registry. The side plates are scalloped to define a C-shape. The side plates have a portion extending above the top plate. A pair of hooks is defined by the portion of the side plates extending above the top plate of the C-shaped body. The hooks are spaced apart a predetermined distance. Each of the hooks has a leg extending towards the rear of the C-shaped body parallel to and above the top plate of the C-shaped body in order to define a slot. The apparatus has a hollow, pie-shaped wedge having a substantially triangular top plate, a substantially triangular bottom plate, and a pair of side plates connecting the top plate and the bottom plate. The pie-shaped wedge has an open front end and has a hole defined through the top plate and the bottom plate adjacent the vertex opposite the front end. A pivot pin extends through the holes defined in the top and bottom plates of the C-shaped body and the pie-shaped wedge. The apparatus has a pair of chains. Each chain has a first end attached to the rear of the body and a second end attachable to a bucket of an excavator. Each chain includes

a load binder intermediate the first end and the second end for tightening the chain. A pair of hydraulic cylinders is included. Each cylinder has a first end pivotally attached to one of the side plates of the C-shaped body and an extensible piston at an opposite second end. The pistons are adapted for attachment to opposite ends of an accessory in order to pivot the accessory laterally. A leading edge of an excavator bucket is slidable into the slots defined by the hooks with each hook being slidably disposable between an adjacent pair of bucket teeth. The chains are wrapped about the bucket and attachable to a trailing edge of the bucket and tightenable to snugly secure the body to the bucket.

Another embodiment of the apparatus includes a body having a front, a rear, a pair of opposing side faces, and a top surface. A pair of hooks is attached to the front of the body and is spaced apart a predetermined distance. Each hook has a leg extending towards the rear of the body parallel to and above the top surface of the body in order to define a slot. The apparatus has a pair of chains, with each chain having a first end attached to the rear of the body and a second end attachable to a bucket of an excavator. Each chain includes a load binder intermediate the first end and the second end for tightening the chain. The apparatus has accessory attachment means for attaching an accessory to the body. A leading edge of an excavator bucket is slidable into the slots defined by the hooks. Each hook is slidably disposable between an adjacent pair of bucket teeth. The chains are wrapped about the bucket and attachable to a trailing edge of the bucket and tightenable to snugly secure the body to the bucket.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is an environmental, perspective view of an apparatus for attaching an accessory to an excavator according to the present invention.

Fig. 2 is an exploded view of an apparatus for attaching an accessory to an excavator according to the present invention.

Fig. 3 is a plan view of an apparatus for attaching an accessory to an excavator according to the present invention.

Fig. 4 is a rear view of an apparatus for attaching an accessory to an excavator according to the present invention.

Fig. 5 is an environmental perspective view of an alternative embodiment of an apparatus for attaching an accessory to an excavator according to the present invention.

Fig. 6 is a side view of the embodiment of the apparatus for attaching an accessory to an excavator of Fig. 5.

Fig. 7 is a section view along the line 7-7 of Fig. 6.

Fig. 8 is a section view along the line 8-8 of Fig. 6.

Fig. 9 is a rear perspective view of a third embodiment of an apparatus for attaching an accessory to an excavator according to the present invention.

Fig. 10 is an exploded view of the apparatus of Fig. 9.

Similar reference characters denote corresponding features consistently throughout the attached drawings.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

The apparatus for attaching an accessory to an excavator is a device for attaching a grader blade, brush blade, compactor, or other accessory to the bucket of an excavator. The apparatus

comprises a body having a front end and a rear end. A pair of hooks rise from the front end of the apparatus body and are inserted between the bucket teeth in order to engage the lower edge of the bucket. A pair of chains are attached to the rear end of the accessory body, the other end of the chains being attached to the rear of the bucket. Load binders are used to tighten the chains and firmly attach the body of the apparatus to the bottom of the bucket.

In a preferred embodiment, the body of the apparatus is a hollow C-shaped box. A hollow pie-shaped wedge has one sided welded to the accessory, viz., the rear face of a blade. The opposite V-shaped end fits in the open front end of the C-shaped box and is secured by a pivot pin so that the accessory pivots laterally. Hydraulic cylinders are attached between the sides of the C-shaped box and the accessory to control pivoting of the accessory.

In another embodiment, the body of the apparatus has a front face from which a support arm having a ball at its free end extends. The ball engages a socket mounted on the accessory so that the accessory is pivotally mounted on the support arm. In the case of a grader blade, hydraulic cylinders are attached to the apparatus body with their pistons attached to the blade to control the angle and tilt of the blade. In another embodiment, a post depends from, and is pivotally attached to, the bottom surface of the apparatus body. The accessory is pivotally mounted to the post. The angle and tilt of the blade or other accessory are adjusted manually.

Although the invention is illustrated for attaching a grader blade to an excavator, it will be understood that the apparatus may be used to attach a brush blade, a compactor, or other accessory to an excavator. It will also be understood that although the apparatus is particularly well suited for attaching an accessory

to an excavator, the principles of the present invention may be applied to an apparatus for attaching an accessory to a front end loader, backhoe, or other earthmoving machine having a bucket. A first embodiment of the apparatus, designated generally as **10** in the drawings, is shown in Figs. **1-4**.

As shown in Fig. **1**, a typical excavator **A** has cab **B** rotatably mounted on a crawler **C** having tracked wheels. A boom **D** is mounted adjacent the cab **B**. A stick or shovel arm **E** is articulated with the boom **D**, the shovel arm **E** having a shovel bucket **F** pivotally mounted to the end distal from the boom **D**. A plurality of hydraulic cylinders **G** controlled by an operator in the cab **B** are used to maneuver the boom **D** and shovel **F**. The bucket **F** is shown as a one-piece bucket for ease in illustration; however, it will be understood that the apparatus **10** is also adapted for use with a split bucket having two jaws which open and close under hydraulic control. The tracked wheels **C**, rotatable cab **B** and boom **D**, articulated and extensible shovel arm **E**, and hydraulically controlled bucket **F** make the excavator **A** a highly versatile, maneuverable power shovel superior to other earthmoving equipment for many applications. In Fig. **1** the apparatus **10** is used to attach a grader blade **40** to the bucket **F** to take advantage of the maneuverability of the excavator **A** and the power and extensible reach of the boom **D** to grade the earth, thereby also avoiding the cost and expense of a separate earth moving machine for the grading operation.

As shown more clearly in Figs. **2-4**, the apparatus **10** comprises a body **12** having a top surface **14**, a front face **16**, a rear face **18**, and opposing side faces **20**. A pair of hooks **22** arise from the

front end of the body **12**, each hook **22** having a vertical leg **24** and a horizontal leg **26**. The vertical leg **24** may be canted forward to extend beyond the leading edge of the bucket **F**. The horizontal leg **26** extends backwards and is generally parallel to and above the top surface **14** of the body **12**. A conventional excavator bucket **F** has five teeth **H** mounted on its leading edge. The hooks **22** are spaced apart so that each horizontal leg **26** is slidable between a pair of adjacent teeth **H**, the hooks **22** and the top surface **14** of the body **12** defining slots **27** for receiving the leading edge of the bucket **F**. The hooks **22** may be spaced to fit between teeth two-three and three-four in the middle of the edge of the bucket **F**, or between teeth one-two and four-five on opposite sides of the leading edge of the bucket **F**, as shown in Fig. 1. The hooks **22** may be made from 1 ½" thick steel plate.

The apparatus **10** includes a pair of chains **28**, each chain **28** including a ratcheting load binder **30** for tightening the chain **28**, as known in the art. The body **12** has a pair of eyelets **32** extending from the rear surface **18** or other means for attaching one end of each chain **28** to the body **12**. The other end of the chains **28** is attached to the excavator **A** in any convenient manner. For example, the chains **28** may be wrapped around a cylindrical bar to which the bucket **F** is pivotally attached, or eyelets **34** may be welded to the bucket **F**, as shown in Fig. **4**, in order to receive a hook **31**, closable link, or other attachment means at the end of the chain **28**. The apparatus **10** is attached to the excavator **A** by maneuvering the bucket **F** over the top surface of the body **12** from rear to front in order to slide the leading edge of the bucket **F**

into the slots **27** with the hooks **22** lodged between adjacent teeth **H** and the leading edge abutting the vertical legs **24**. The chains **28** are then wrapped around the rear of the bucket **F** and attached, directly or indirectly, to a top portion of the rear of the bucket **F**, and the load binders **30** are used to tighten the chains **28** and draw the top surface **14** of the body snugly against the bucket **F**.

The apparatus **10** has a support arm **36** extending from the front surface **16** of the body **12**. The support arm **36** has a spherical ball **38** at its free end. The ball **38** is insertable in a socket **42** mounted on the blade **40**, compactor, or other accessory. A particularly useful form of socket **42** is a split collar type, in which the ball **38** is inserted into the collar which is subsequently tightened around the ball **38** with clamps. This form of socket **42** has been used for mounting blades on bulldozers and the like. The ball **38** and socket **42** joint permits angle adjustment of the blade **40** horizontally in the direction of the arrows **44** shown in Fig. **3** (rotation in the horizontal plane of the support arm **36**), or tilt adjustment of the blade **40** vertically in the direction of the arrows **46** shown in Fig. **4** (rotation in a vertical plane normal to the support arm **36**).

The apparatus **10** may include hydraulic means for adjusting the angle or tilt of a blade **40** or other accessory attached to the excavator **A**. In the embodiment shown in Figs. **1-4**, the apparatus includes a pair of double action hydraulic cylinders **48** for adjustment of the angle of the blade **40**, and at least one hydraulic cylinder **52** for adjustment of the tilt of the blade **40**. The angle adjustment cylinders **48** are mounted to clevises **56** on opposite

sides **20** of the body **12** by bolts, pins or the like. The pistons **50** are connected to clevises **58** attached to the rear surface of the blade **40** laterally on opposite sides of the socket **42**. The clevises **56** and **58** are mounted with their ears disposed in horizontal planes so that the pistons **50** extend in a substantially horizontal plane to adjust the angle of the blade **40**. The cylinders **48** are connected by hydraulic hoses **60** to quick connect fittings **62** mounted on the opposite sides **20** of the apparatus body **12**. The body **12** is connected to the hydraulic system of the excavator by hydraulic hoses **64**, which may be mounted on the rear surface **18** or other convenient location on the body **12**, so that adjustment of the angle and tilt of the blade **40** may be made by operation of hydraulic controls from the cab **B**. Hydraulic passages and/or a pressure accumulator may be mounted either internally or externally on the body **12**.

Figs. **2** and **3** show an embodiment in which tilt adjustment is accomplished with one hydraulic cylinder **52** mounted to the upper portion of the front face **16** of the body by a clevis **66** and pin arrangement. The piston **54** is connected to the rear face of the blade **40** by a second clevis **68** and pin mounted towards the bottom portion of the blade **40**. The clevises **66** and **68** are mounted with their ears oriented in a vertical plane, so that the piston **54** extends and retracts in a substantially vertical plane to accomplish tilt adjustment. The cylinder **52** includes hydraulic hoses **70** which connect to quick connect hydraulic fittings on the front face **16** of the body **12**, and are in fluid communication with the excavator's **A** hydraulic system by hoses **64**.

Fig. **4** shows an embodiment of the apparatus **10** in which two hydraulic cylinders **52** are provided for tilt adjustment. In this embodiment the apparatus includes a plate **72** welded to the top surface **14** of the body **12** so that the plate **72** overhangs the body **12** on opposite sides **20**. The cylinders **52** may then be mounted on clevises **74** depending from the plate **72**. In this embodiment, the clevises **68** may be mounted on the upper portion of the rear face of blade **40**. The cylinders **52** may be in fluid communication so that when the piston **54** of one cylinder **52** is extended, the piston **54** of the other cylinder **52** is retracted, thereby coacting to cause tilting of the blade **40**.

A second embodiment of the apparatus **110** which provides for manual adjustment of the angle and tilt of the blade **140** is shown in Figs. **5-8**. In this embodiment the body **112** of the apparatus **110** is a substantially flat plate. The hooks **122** are formed by 1 ½" thick plates joined to form a horizontal J-shape, the longer leg **123** of the J-shaped hooks **122** being welded or otherwise joined to the bottom face of the plate **112**, and the shorter leg **125** of the J-shaped hooks **122** extending parallel to the body **112** to define slots **127** for receiving the leading edge of the bucket **F**. As shown in Fig. **5**, the apparatus **110** is attached to the bucket **F** by inserting the leading edge of the shovel bucket **F** into the slot **127**, the hooks **122** being inserted between adjacent pairs of teeth **H**, the chains **128** being wrapped over the rear of the bucket **F** and attached to the upper portion of the rear of the bucket **F** as described above, and ratcheting the load binders **130** to tighten the chains **128**.

In this embodiment, a first pivot pin **131** is attached to and depends from the bottom face of the body **112**, extending through a first circular plate **133** which is fixedly attached to the hooks **122**. The opposite end of the pivot pin **131** is fixedly attached to a square, tubular post **135**, which is connected axially to the pivot pin **131**. A second circular plate **137** is fixedly attached to the top of the post **137**, the plate being supported by gussets **139**. Thus, the post **135** and second circular plate **137** are free to rotate with respect to the body **112** and first circular plate **133**. The first circular plate **133** has a pair of cogs **134** hingedly attached to its circumference on opposite sides of the post **135**. As shown in Fig. **7**, the second circular plate **137** has a plurality of notches **136** defined about its circumference, the notches being sized and dimensioned for receiving the cogs **134** in order to lock the first circular plate **133** to the second circular plate **137** and thereby prevent further rotation of the post **135**.

The blade **140** is attached to the apparatus **110** by a second pivot pin **141** which extends through the blade **140** and the post **135**. A first tilt adjustment plate **143** is fixedly attached to the rear face of the blade **140** and supported by braces **145**, while a second tilt adjustment plate **147** is fixedly attached to the post **135** in parallel relation to the first adjustment plate **143**. Thus, the first tilt adjustment plate **143** is free to rotate with respect to the second tilt adjustment plate **147**. The apparatus includes a lock pin **149** which may be inserted through a hole in the second tilt adjustment plate **147** and one of a plurality of holes **151**, shown in Fig. **8**, defined radially in the first tilt adjustment

plate **143** in order to prevent further rotation of the first tilt adjustment plate **143** with respect to the second tilt adjustment plate **147**, thus preventing further rotation of the blade **140** with respect to the post **135** about second pivot pin **141**.

In operation, the apparatus **110** is mounted to the excavator **A** as described above. The angle of the blade **140** is adjusted manually by unlatching the cogs **134**, rotating the blade **140** about first pivot pin **131**, and securing the angle by aligning the cogs **134** with the nearest notches **136** and latching the cogs **134** in the notches **136**. The tilt of the blade **140** is adjusted manually by removing lock pin **149**, rotating the blade **140** about the second pivot pin **141**, and reinserting lock pin **149** through second tilt adjustment plate **147** and the nearest hole **151** in first adjustment plate **143**.

Figs. **9** and **10** show a third, and preferred, embodiment of the apparatus, designated generally as **210**. In this embodiment, the apparatus **210** has a hollow, C-shaped body **212** having a top plate **214**, a bottom plate **216**, two opposing side plates **218**, a rear face **220**, and an open front end. The side plates **218** are scalloped to define the C-shape, and extend above the top plate **214** to define a pair of hooks **222** having a vertical leg **222a** and a horizontal leg **222b** extending rearward above and parallel to the top plate **214**, each hook **222** defining an elongated slot **224**. The top plate **214** has a first hole defined **226** therein, and the bottom plate **216** has a second hole **228** defined therein in registry with the first hole **226**. The side plates **218** each have an ear **230** extending therefrom, and a pair of quick connect hydraulic fittings **232** disposed

thereon. A pair of chains **234** of the same type as chains **28**, described above, are attached to the side plates **218**.

The apparatus **210** also includes a hollow, pie shaped wedge **236** having a top plate **238**, a bottom plate **240**, two side plates **242** and an open front end. The top plate **238** has a hole **244** defined therein at the vertex opposite the open front end, and the bottom plate **240** has a similar hole symmetrically disposed opposite the hole **244** in the top plate **238**. The front edges **246** of the side plates **242** are slightly arcuate to match the contour of the rear face of the blade **248**, or other accessory, to which the pie shaped wedge **236** is welded. A pivot pin **250**, such as an elongated bolt or rod, extends through the hole **226** in the top plate **214** of the C-shaped body **212**, the holes **244** in the top plate **238** and bottom plate **240** of the wedge **236** and the bottom plate **216** of the C-shaped body **212**, where it is secured by a nut **252** or other means. The height of the pie shaped wedge is slightly smaller than the scalloped openings in the side plates **218** of the C-shaped body **212** so that the pie shaped wedge is free to rotate through the C-shaped opening.

The apparatus **210** further includes a pair of hydraulic cylinders **254** which are attached between the side plates **218** of the C-shaped body **212** and the lateral edges of the blade **248** or other accessory. The base of the cylinder has a clevis **256** which is attached to the ear **230** by a bolt **258** or other pivot pin, and the piston **260** has a clevis **262** which may be pivotally attached to an ear welded to the rear face of the blade **248**. Hydraulic hoses **264** extend between the cylinders **254** and the quick connect fittings **232**

on the side plates **218** of the C-shaped body **212**. Other hydraulic lines (not shown) connect the quick connect fittings **232** to the hydraulic system of the excavator **A** and are not shown for clarity.

In use, the apparatus **210** is attached to the bucket of the excavator **A** by sliding the edge of the bucket **F** into the slots **224**, the hooks **222** lodging between two pairs of teeth **H** on the bucket **F**, and the chains **234** are wrapped around the rear of the bucket **F** and tightened by ratcheting the load binders, as described with the embodiments described above. The angle of the blade **248** or other accessory may be adjusted laterally by actuating the hydraulic cylinders **254**. Adjustment of the tilt of the blade is accomplished through manipulation of the boom **D** and shovel arm **E**.

The preferred embodiments of the invention provide an apparatus for attaching a grader blade, compactor, or other accessory to the bucket of an excavator. The apparatus is quick and convenient to use. The apparatus includes means for adjusting the angle and, optionally, the tilt of the blade.

It is to be understood that the present invention is not limited to the sole embodiments described above, but encompasses any and all embodiments within the scope of the following claims.

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An apparatus for attaching an accessory to a bucket of an excavator, the apparatus comprising:

(a) a hollow C-shaped body having a top plate, a bottom plate, a pair of opposing side plates connecting the top plate and the bottom plate, a rear plate attached to said top plate and said bottom plate, and an open front end, the top plate and the bottom plate each having a hole defined therein, the holes being in registry, the side plates being scalloped to define a C-shape, the side plates having a portion extending above the top plate;

(b) a pair of hooks defined by the portion of the side plates extending above the top plate of said C-shaped body, the hooks being spaced apart a predetermined distance, each of said hooks having a leg extending towards the rear of said C-shaped body parallel to and above the top plate of said C-shaped body in order to define a slot;

(c) a hollow, pie-shaped wedge having a substantially triangular top plate, a substantially triangular bottom plate, and a pair of side plates connecting the top plate and the bottom plate, the pie-shaped wedge having an open front end and having a hole defined through the top plate and the bottom plate adjacent the vertex opposite the front end;

(d) a pivot pin extending through the holes defined in the top and bottom plates of said C-shaped body and said pie-shaped wedge;

(e) a pair of chains, each chain having a first end attached to the rear of said body and a second end attachable to a bucket of an excavator, each chain including a load binder intermediate the first end and the second end for tightening the chain; and

(f) a pair of hydraulic cylinders, each cylinder having a first end pivotally attached to one of the side plates of said C-shaped body and having an

extensible piston at an opposite second end, the pistons being adapted for attachment to opposite ends of an accessory in order to pivot the accessory laterally;

(g) wherein a leading edge of an excavator bucket is slidable into the slots defined by said hooks with each hook being slidably disposable between an adjacent pair of bucket teeth, said chains being wrapped about the bucket and attachable to a trailing edge of the bucket and tightenable to snugly secure said body to the bucket.

2. The apparatus for attaching an accessory to a bucket of an excavator according to claim 1, further comprising an accessory attached to the front end of said pie-shaped wedge.

3. The apparatus for attaching an accessory to a bucket of an excavator according to claim 1, further comprising a grader blade attached to the front end of said pie-shaped wedge, said pistons being pivotally attached to opposite ends of said grader blade.

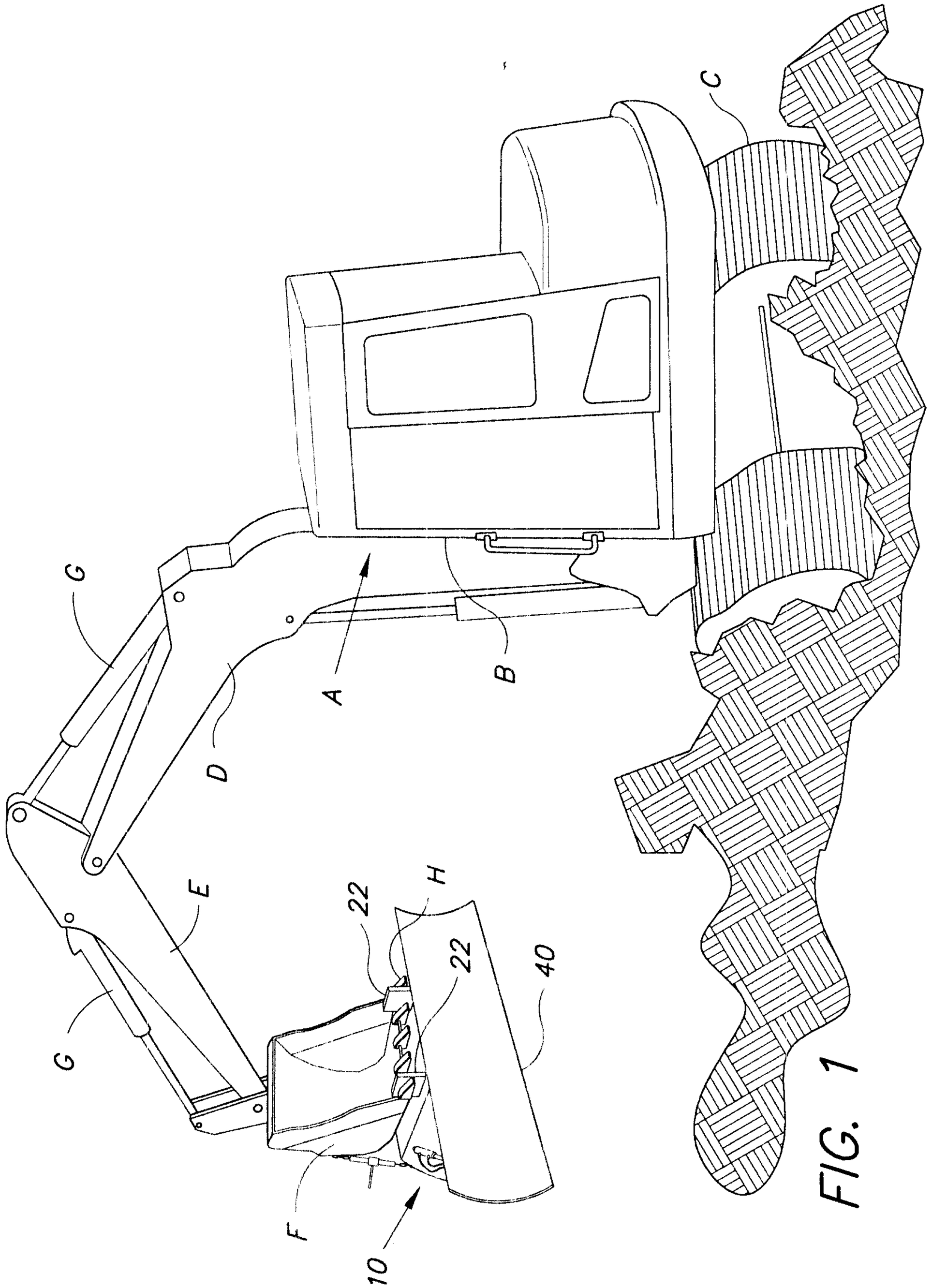


FIG. 1

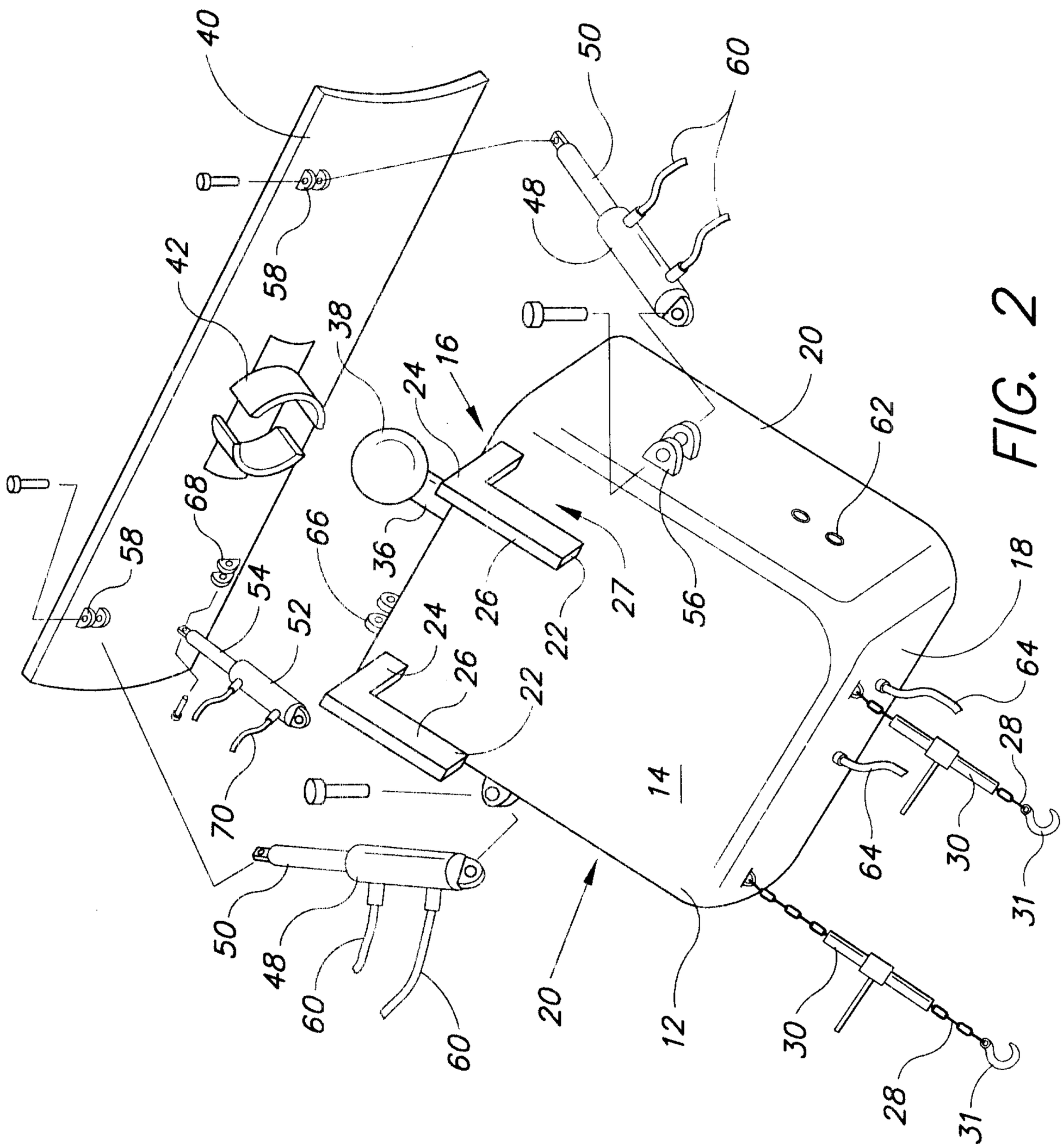

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FIG. 2

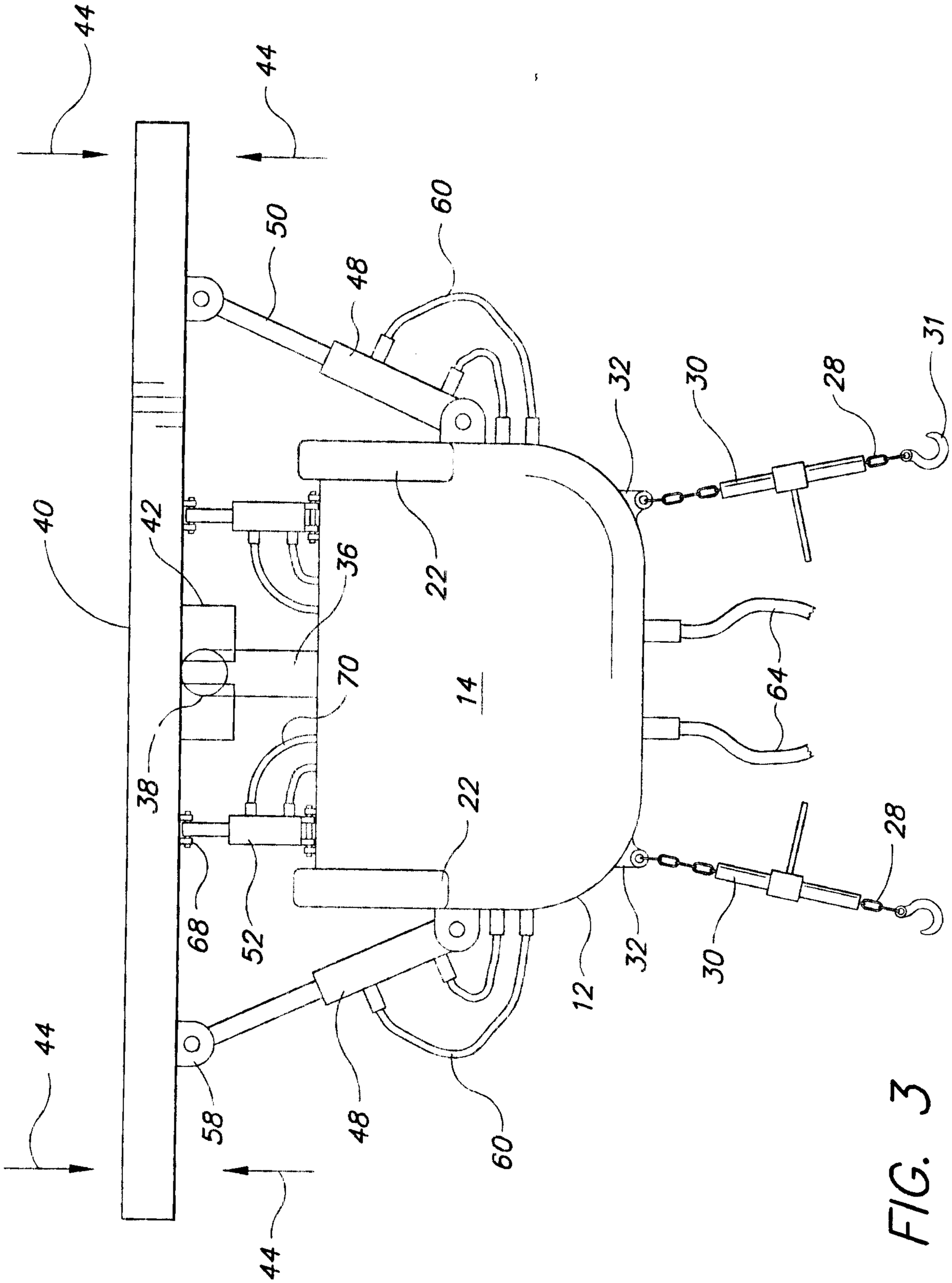


FIG. 3

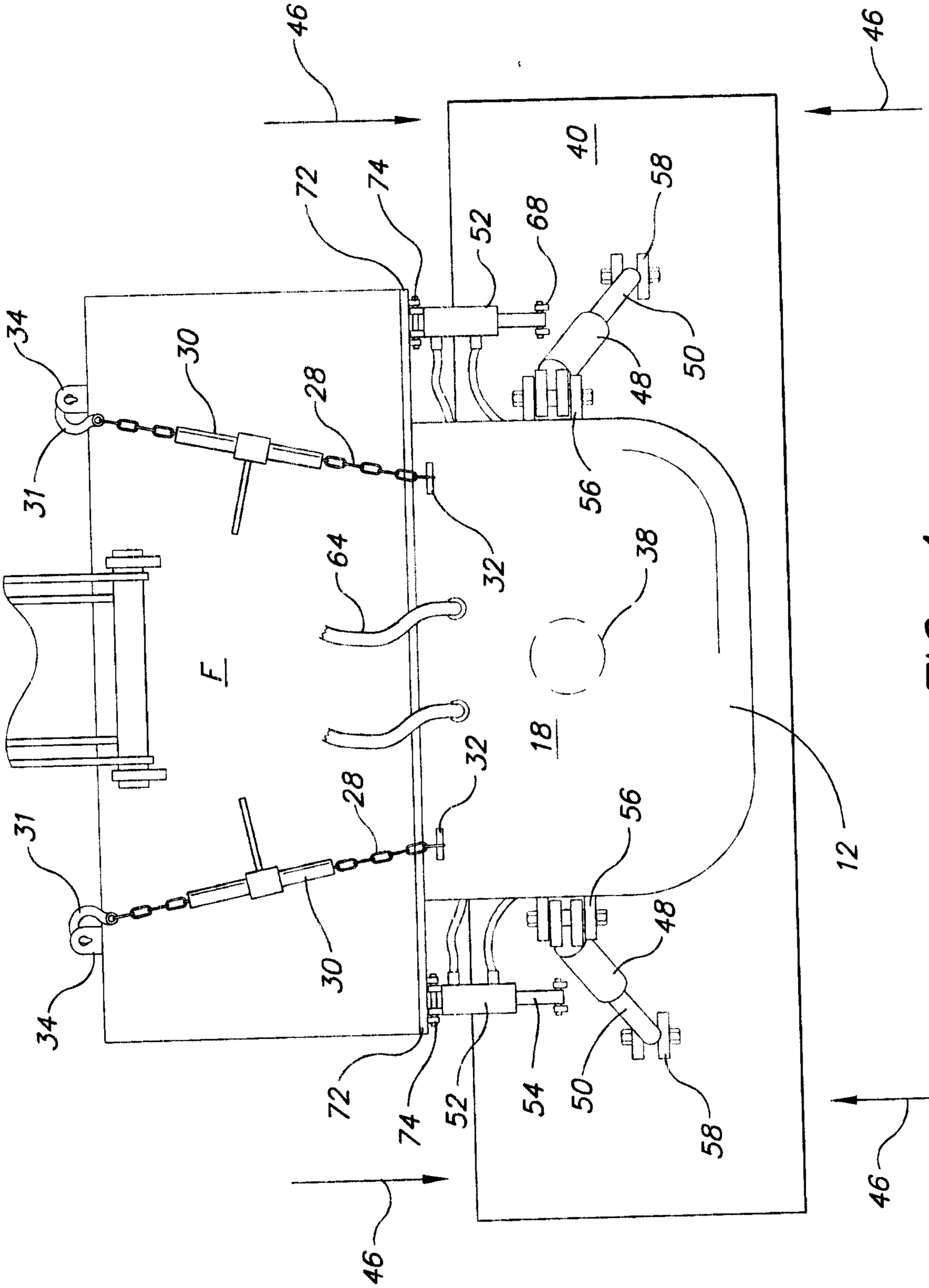


FIG. 4

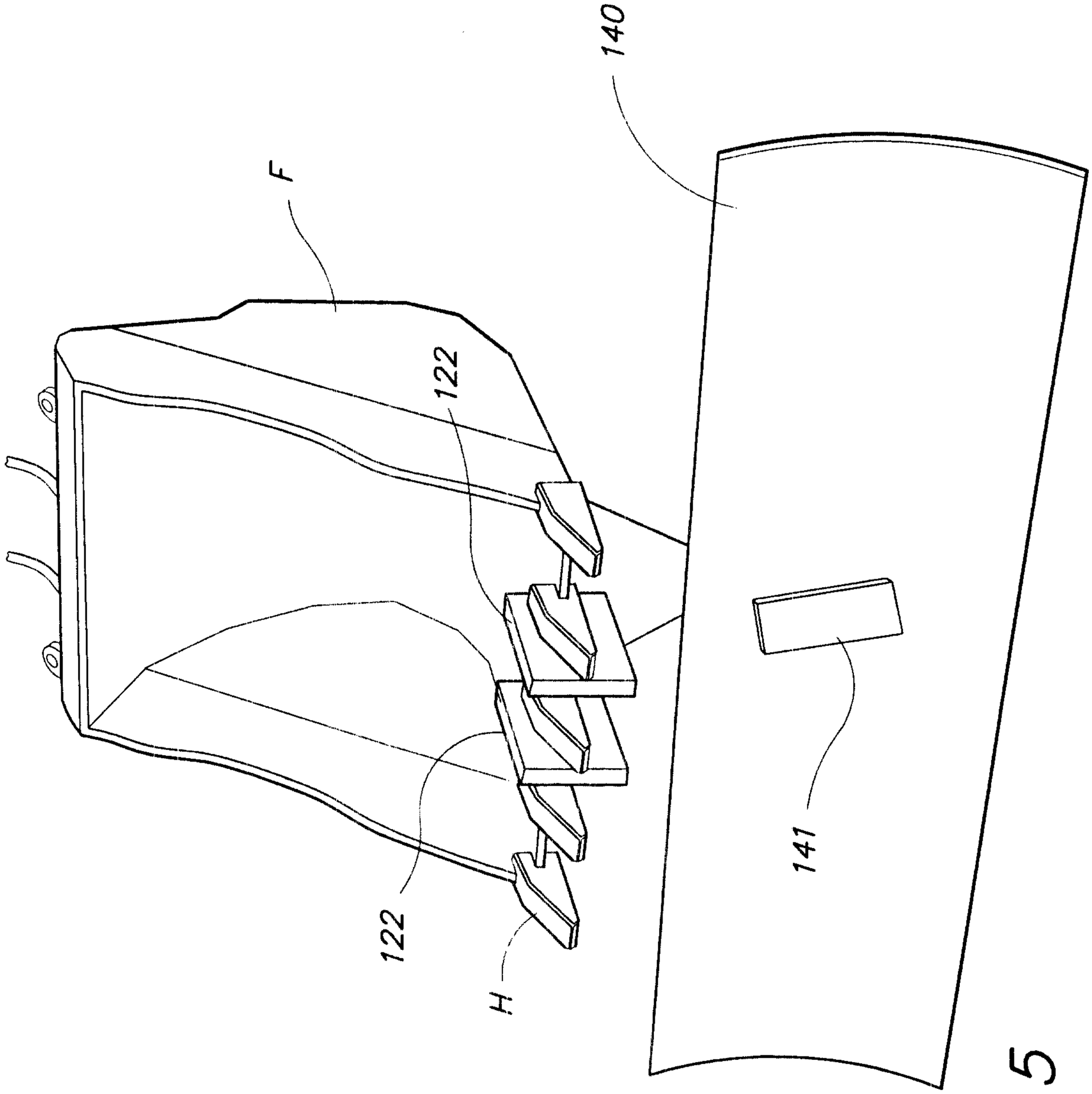


FIG. 5

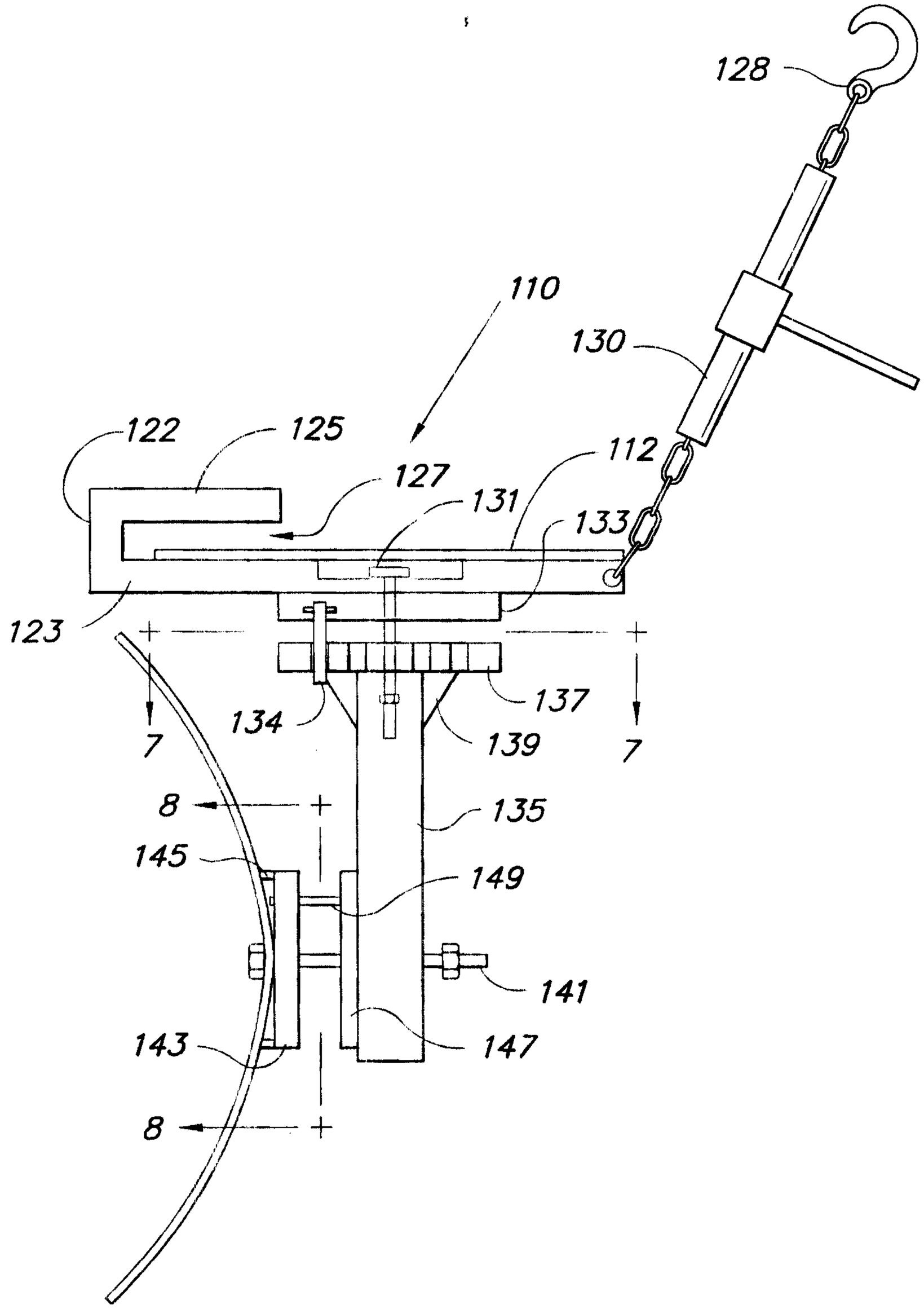

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FIG. 6

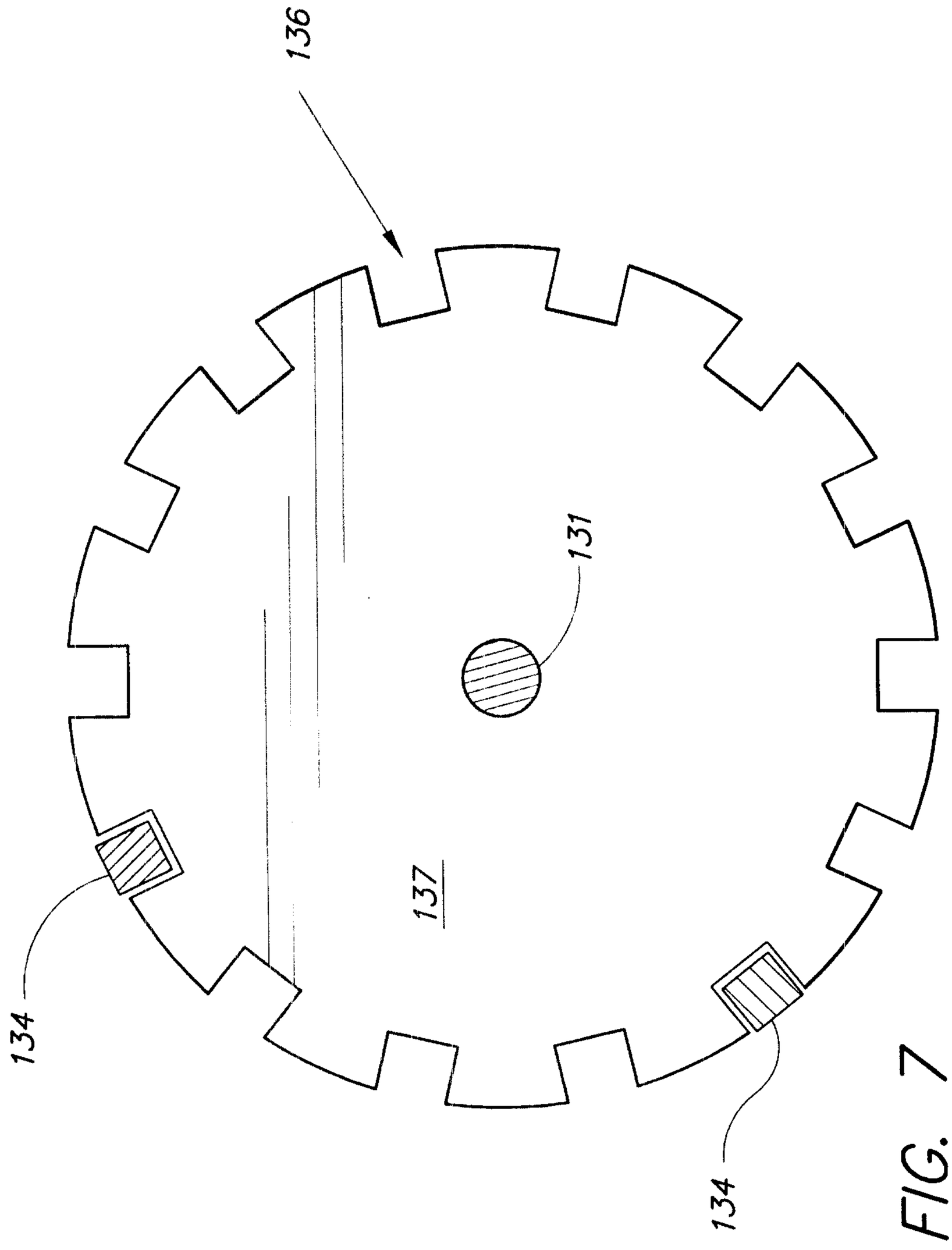


FIG. 7

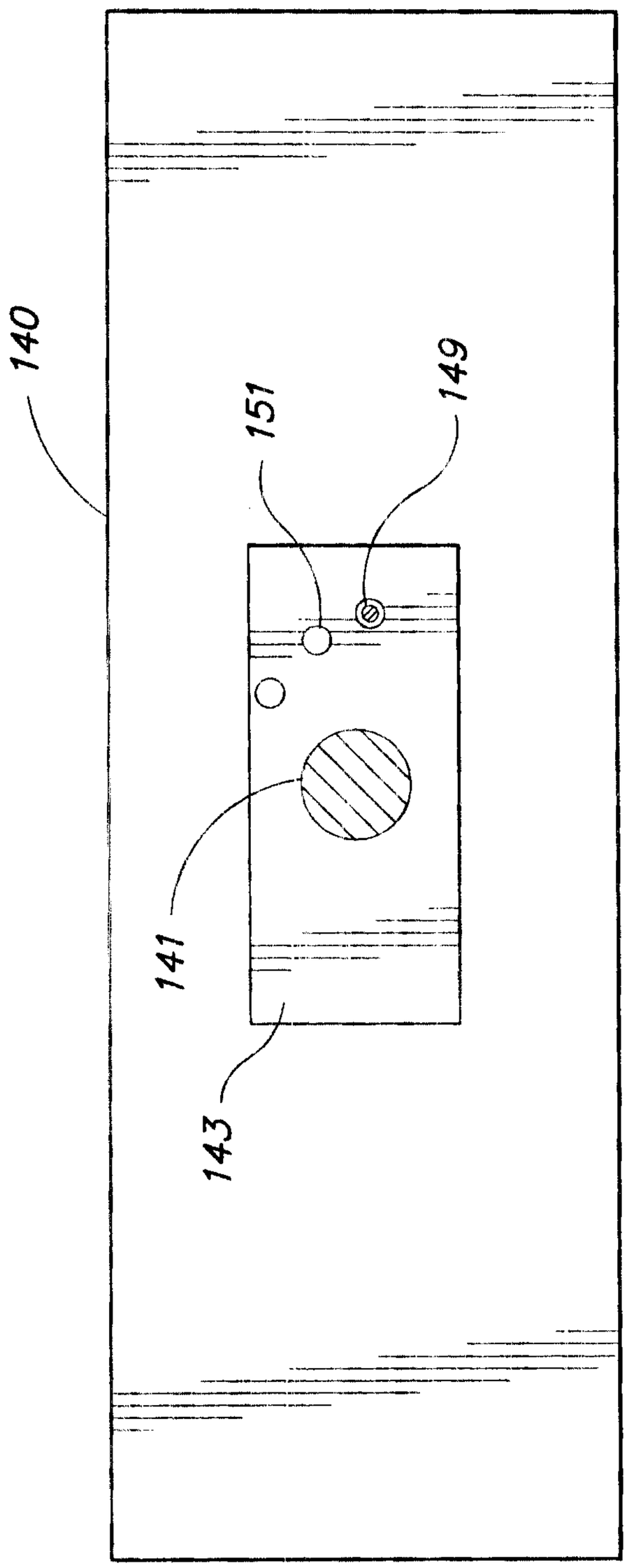


FIG. 8

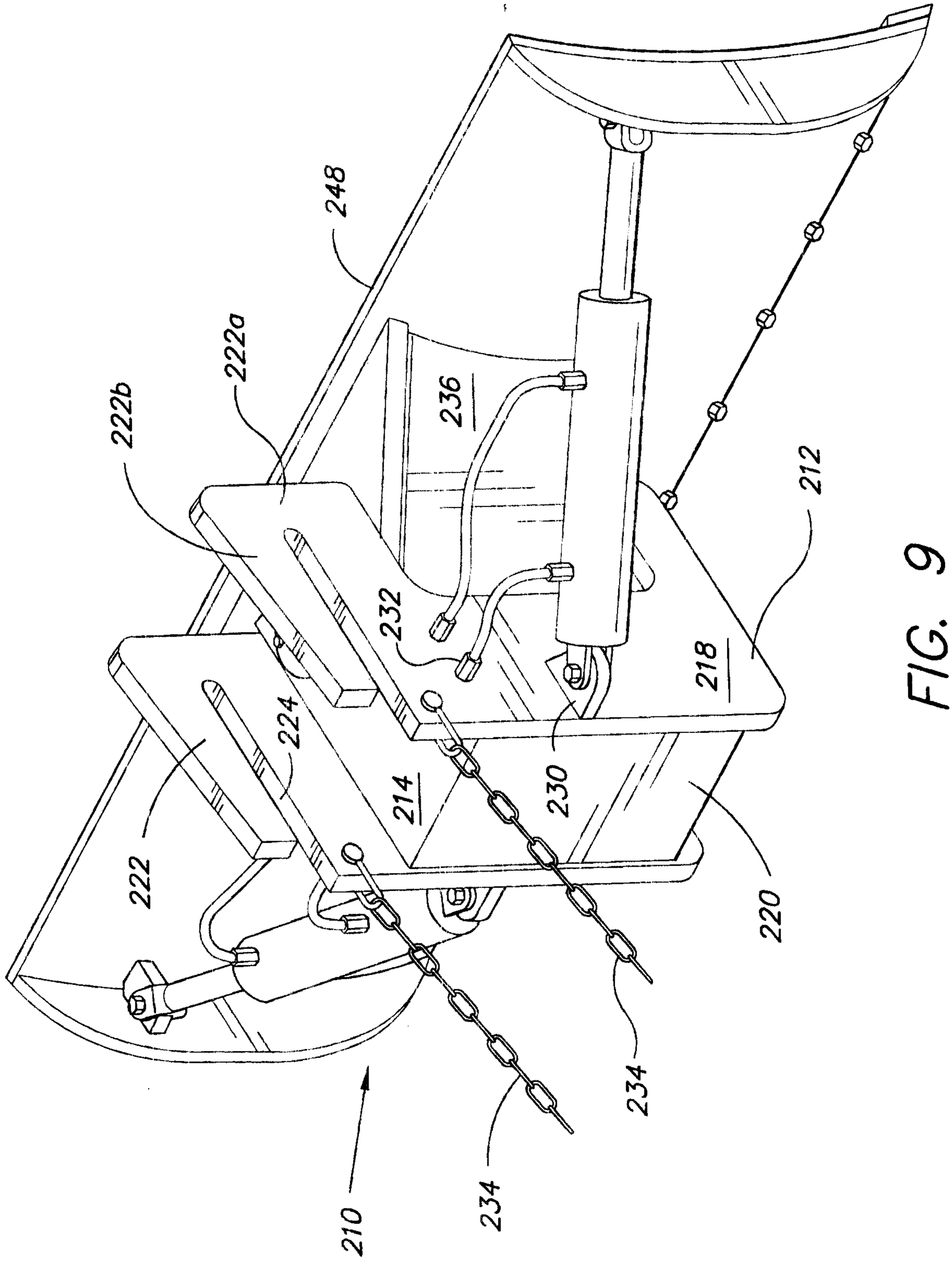


FIG. 9

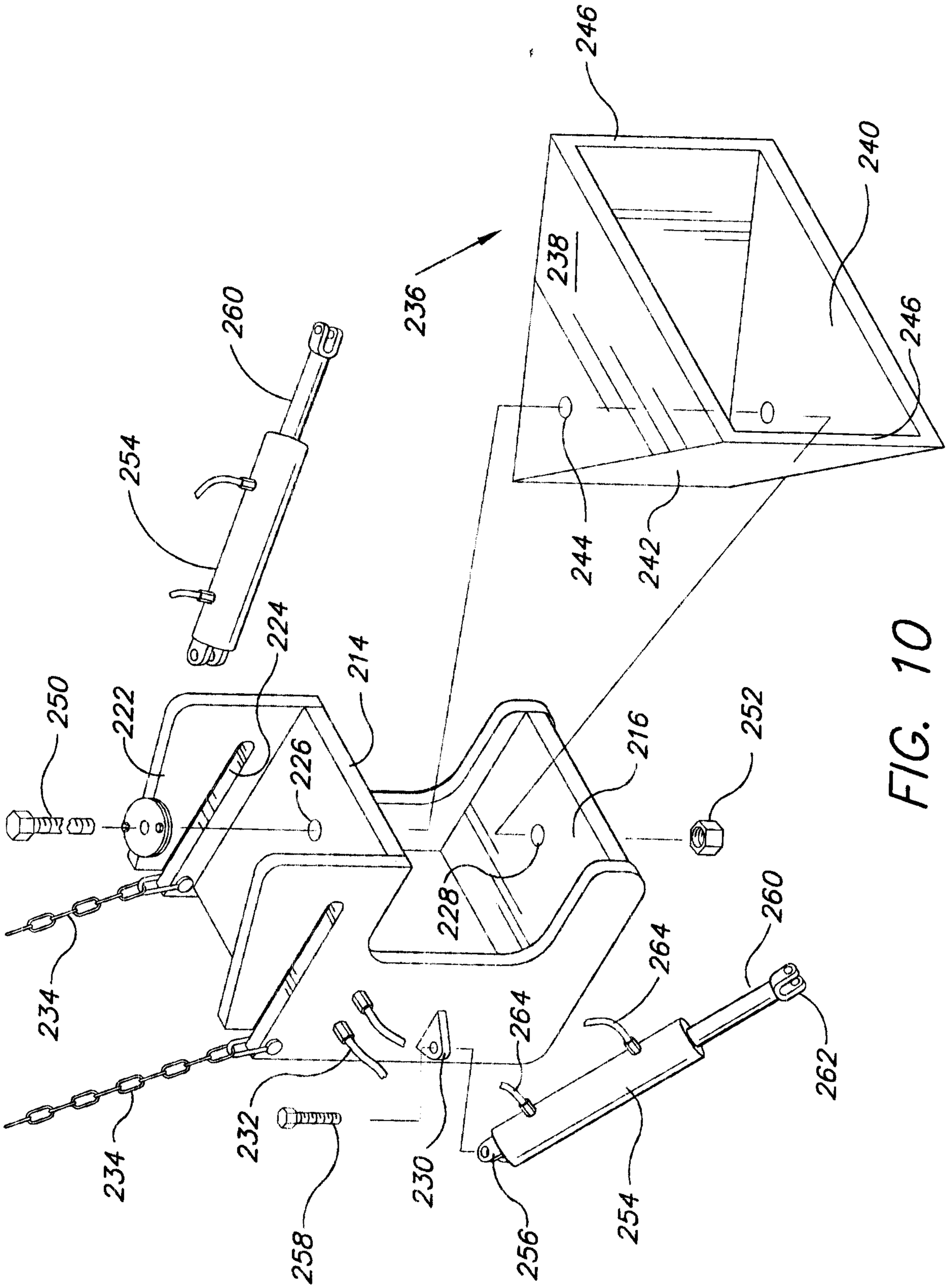
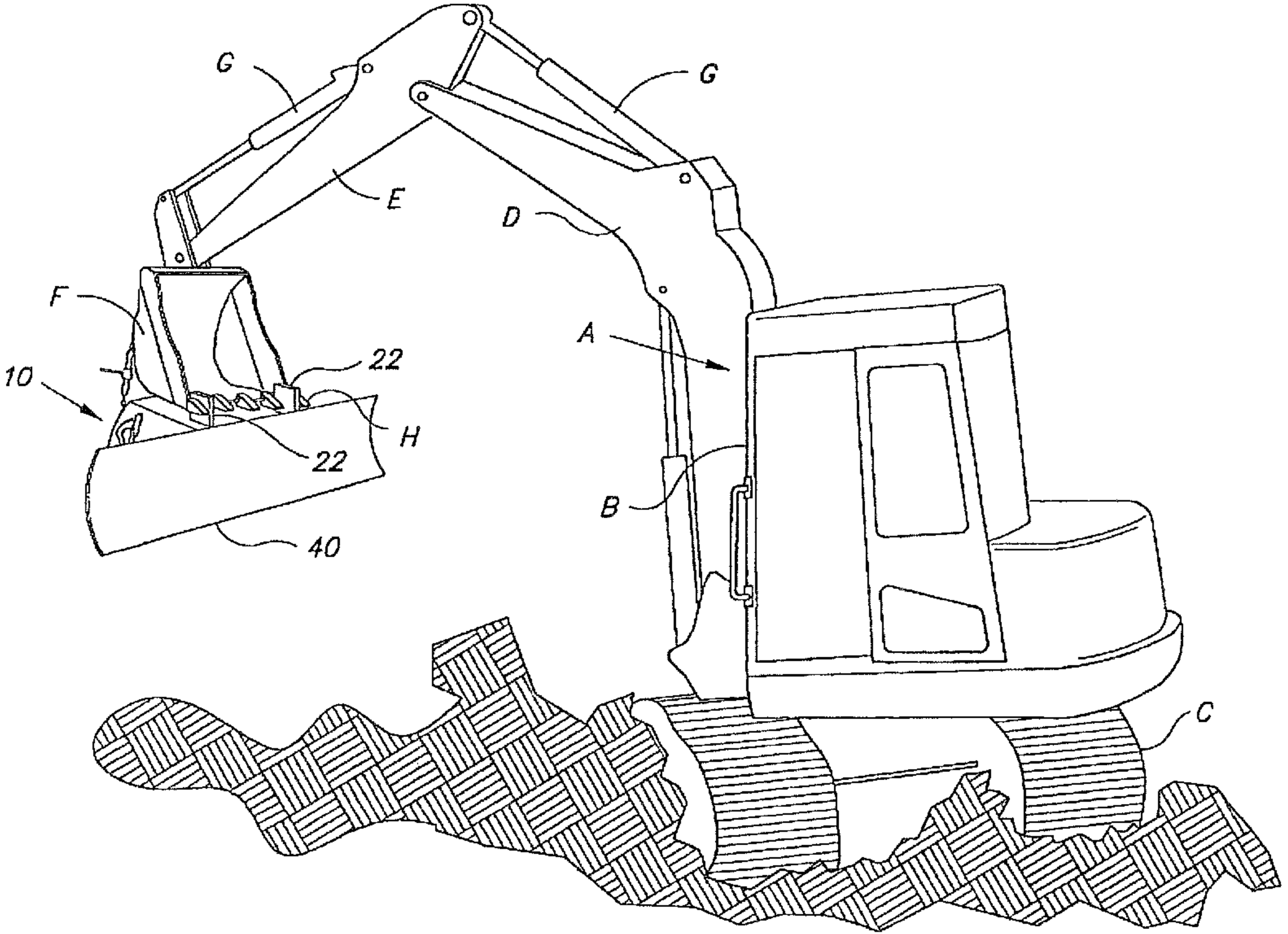

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FIG. 10


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