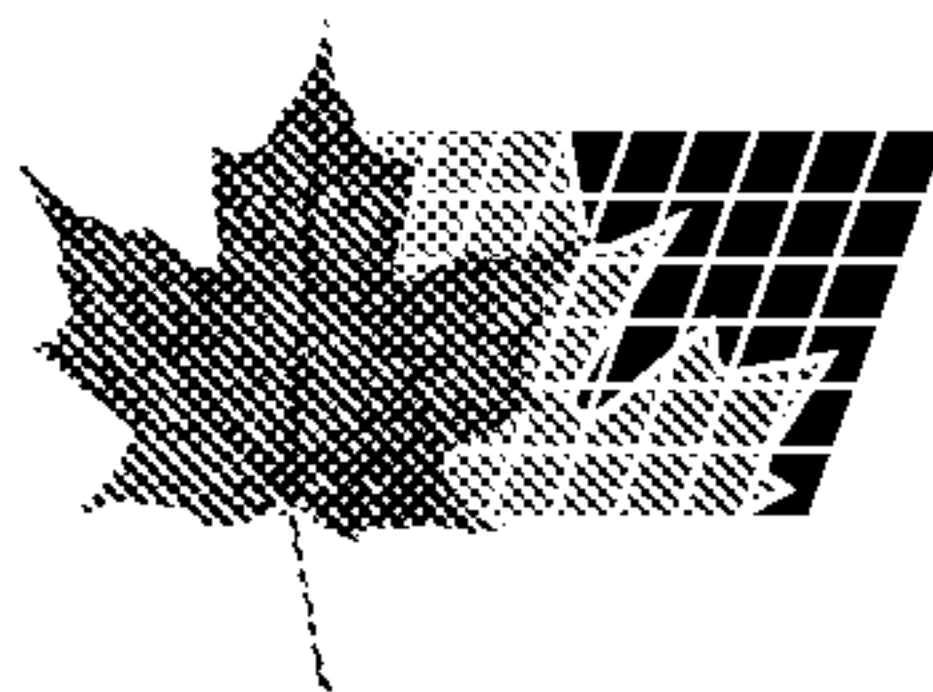




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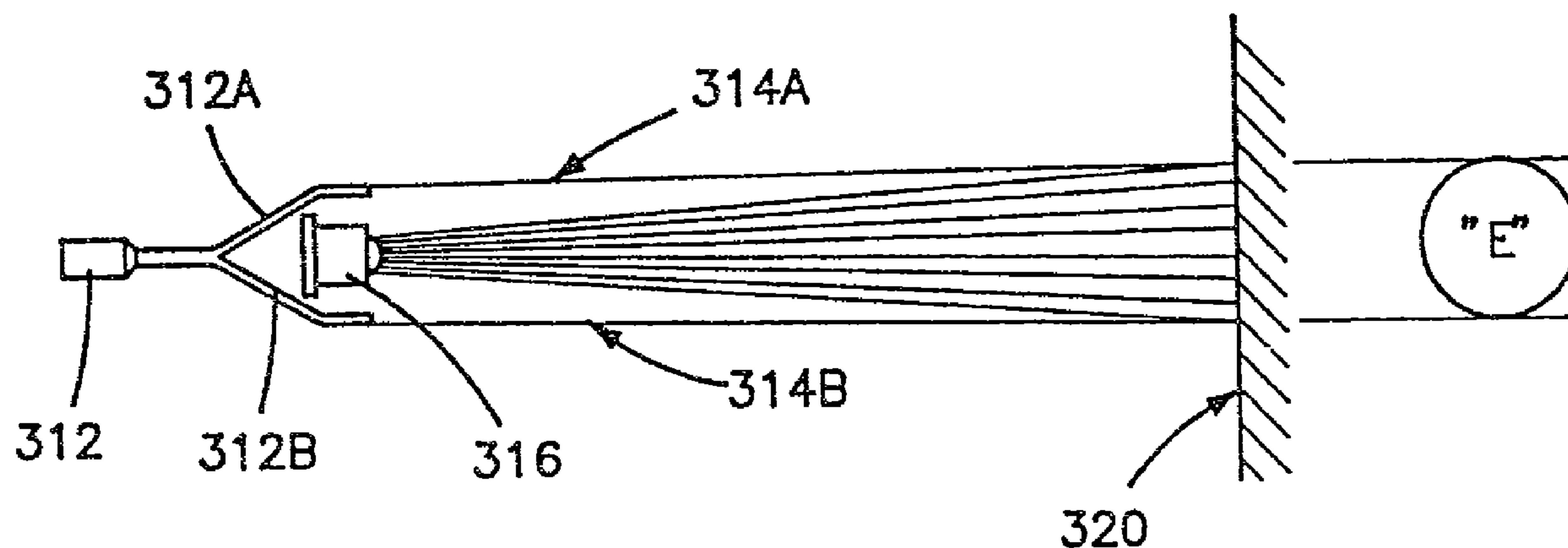
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(54) **METHODE ET APPAREIL SERVANT A MESURER LA
TEMPERATURE A L'AIDE DE TECHNIQUES INFRAROUGES**

(54) **METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR MEASURING
TEMPERATURE USING INFRARED TECHNIQUES**



(57) Method and apparatus are provided for visibly outlining the energy zone to be measured by a radiometer. The method comprises the steps of providing a laser sighting device on the radiometer adapted to emit at least one laser beam against a surface whose temperature is to be measured and positioning said laser beam about the energy zone to visibly outline said energy zone. The apparatus comprises a laser sighting device adapted to emit at least one laser beam against the surface and means to position said laser beam about the energy zone to visibly outline said energy zone.

ABSTRACT

Method and apparatus are provided for visibly outlining the energy zone to be measured by a radiometer. The method comprises the steps of providing a laser sighting device on the radiometer adapted to emit at least one laser beam against a surface whose temperature is to be measured and positioning said laser beam about the energy zone to visibly outline said energy zone. The apparatus comprises a laser sighting device adapted to emit at least one laser beam against the surface and means to position said laser beam about the energy zone to visibly outline said energy zone.

TITLE OF THE INVENTION

METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR MEASURING TEMPERATURE USING INFRARED TECHNIQUES

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

5 **1. Field of the Invention**

10 The present invention relates generally to a method and apparatus for more accurately measuring the temperature of a surface using infrared measurement techniques and, more particularly, to such a method and apparatus which utilizes a circumscribing laser sighting beam or beams for more clearly defining the periphery of the energy zone from which the temperature is measured. Generally speaking, this accomplished by rotating the laser beam about the periphery of the energy zone; by the use of two or more stationery laser beams which are focused on the periphery of the energy zone; or by the use of a controlled single laser beam directed towards two or more predetermined locations on the periphery of the energy zone.

15 **2. Description of the Prior Art**

Remote infrared temperature measuring devices (commonly referred to as infrared pyrometers or radiometers) have been used for many years to measure the temperature of a surface from a remote location. Their principle of operation is well known. All surfaces at a temperature above absolute zero emit heat in the form of

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radiated energy. This radiated energy is created by molecular motion which produces electromagnetic waves. Thus, some of the energy in the material is radiated in straight lines away from the surface of the material. Many infrared radiometers use optical reflection and/or refraction principles to capture the radiated energy from a given surface. The infrared radiation is focused upon a detector, analyzed and, using well known techniques, the surface energy is collected, processed and the temperature is calculated and displayed on an appropriate display.

Examples of such infrared radiometers are illustrated at pages J-1 through J-42 of the Omega Engineering Handbook, Volume 2B. See, also, U.S. Patent No. 4,417,822 which issued to Alexander Stein et al. on November 29, 1983 for a Laser Radiometer; U.S. Patent No. 4,527,896 which issued to Keikhosrow Irani et al. on July 9, 1985 for an Infrared Transducer-Transmitter for Non-Contact Temperature Measurement; and U.S. Patent No. 5,169,235 which issued to Hitoshi Tominaga et al. for Radiation Type Thermometer on December 8, 1992. Also see Baker, Ryder and Baker, Volume II, Temperature Measurement in Engineering, Omega Press, 1975, Chapters 4 and 5.

When using such radiometers to measure surface temperature, the instrument is aimed at a target or "spot" within the energy zone on the surface on which the measurement is to be taken. The radiometer receives the emitted radiation through the optical system and is focused upon an infrared sensitive detector which generates a signal which is internally processed and converted into a temperature reading which is displayed.

The precise location of the energy zone on the surface as well as its size

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are extremely important to insure accuracy and reliability of the resultant measurement. It will be readily appreciated that the field of view of the optical systems of such radiometers is such that the diameter of the energy zone increases directly with the distance to the target. The typical energy zone of such radiometers is defined as where 90% of the energy focused upon the detector is found. Heretofore, there have been no means of accurately determining the size of the actual energy zone unless it is approximated by the use of a "distance to target table" or by actual physical measurement.

Target size and distance are critical to the accuracy of most infrared thermometers. Every infrared instrument has a field of view (FOV), an angle of vision in which it will average all the temperatures which it sees. Field of view is described either by its angle or by a distance to size ratio (D:S). If the $D:S = 20:1$, and if the distance to the object divided by the diameter of the object is exactly 20, then the object exactly fills the instrument's field of view. A D:S ratio of 60:1 equals a field of view of 1 degree.

Since most IR thermometers have fixed-focus optics, the minimum measurement spot occurs at the specified focal distance. Typically, if an instrument has fixed-focus optics with a 120:1 D:S ratio and a focal length of 60" the minimum spot (resolution) the instrument can achieve is 60 divided by 120, or .5" at a distance of 60" from the instrument. This is significant when the size of the object is close to the minimum spot the instrument can measure.

Most general-purpose IR thermometers use a focal distance of between 20" and 60" (50 and 150cm); special close-focus instruments use a .5" to 12" focal

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distance. See page Z54 and Z55, Volume 28, The Omega Engineering Handbook, Vol. 28.

In order to render such devices more accurate, laser beam sighting devices have been used to target the precise center of the energy zone. See, for example, Pages C1-10 through C1-12 of The Omega Temperature Handbook, Vol. 27. Various sighting devices such as scopes with cross hairs have also been used to more accurately identify the center of the energy zone to be measured. See, for example, Pages C1-10 through C1-21 of The Omega Temperature Handbook, Vol. 27.

The use of a laser to pinpoint the center of the energy zone does not, however, provide the user with an accurate definition of the actual energy zone from which the measurement is being taken. This inability frequently results in inaccurate readings. For example, in cases where the area from which radiation limits is smaller than the target diameter limitation (too far from or too small a target), inaccurate readings will occur.

One method used to determine the distance to the target is to employ an infrared distance detector or a Doppler effect distance detector or a split image detector similar to that used in photography. However, the exact size of the energy zone must still be known if one is to have any degree of certainty as to the actual area of the surface being measured. This is particularly true if the energy zone is too small or the surface on which the energy zone encompasses is irregular in shape. In the case where the surface does not fill the entire energy zone area, the readings will be low and, thus, in error.

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Similarly, if the surface is irregularly shaped, the readings will also be in error since part of the object would be missing from the actual energy zone being measured. Thus, the use of a single laser beam to the apparent center of the energy zone does not insure complete accuracy since the user of the radiometer does not know specifically the boundaries of the energy zone being measured.

As will be appreciated, none of the prior art recognizes this inherent problem let alone offers a solution to the problems created thereby.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Against the foregoing background, it is a primary object of the present invention to provide a method and apparatus for measuring the temperature of a surface using infrared techniques.

It is another object of the present invention to provide such a method and apparatus which provides more accurate measurement of the surface temperature than by the use of techniques heretofore employed.

It is yet another object of the present invention to provide such a method and apparatus which permits the user to visually identify the energy zone on the surface to be measured.

It is still yet another object of the present invention to provide such method and apparatus which employs a laser beam or beams for clearly outlining the periphery of the energy zone on the surface.

To the accomplishments of the foregoing objects and advantages, the

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present invention, in brief summary, comprises method and apparatus for visibly outlining the energy zone to be measured by a radiometer. The method comprises the steps of providing a laser sighting device on the radiometer adapted to emit at least one laser beam against a surface whose temperature is to be measured and
5 controlling said laser beam about the energy zone to visibly outline said energy zone. The beam would be controlled in such a fashion where it is directed to predetermined points of the target zone. This can be done mechanically or electrically.

Another embodiment of this invention employs a plurality of laser beams to describe the outline of the energy zone either by splitting the laser beam into a
10 number of points through the use of optical fibers or beam splitters or the use of a plurality of laser. One embodiment of the apparatus comprises a laser sighting device adapted to emit at least one laser beam against the surface and means to rotate said laser beam about the energy zone to visibly outline said energy zone. This rotation can be by steps or continue motion.

15 Another embodiment consists of two or more stationary beams directed to define the energy zone. The two or more laser beams could be derived from a dedicated laser to each beam or by means of beam splitters. This can be accomplished by mirrors, optics and fiber optics.

20 Another embodiment consists of a laser beam splitting device that emits one laser beam which is split into a plurality of beams that outline the energy.

Another embodiment consists of a method for visibly outlining an energy zone to be measured by a radiometer, in which method comprises the steps of providing the radiometer with a sighting device adapted to project a plurality of

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stationary light beams against a surface whose temperature is to be measured and adapted to outline said energy zone.

The embodiment is characterized in that the sighting device is a laser sighting device including a primary laser beam generator and a laser beam splitting device, and in that method includes:

- (a) generating a primary laser beam to strike the splitting device;
- (b) dividing the primary laser beam, by means of the splitting device, into more than two secondary laser beams; and
- (c) projecting the more than two secondary laser beams from the splitting device, the more than two secondary beams being directed to strike the surface at separate positions about the periphery of the zone so as to project a corresponding number of visible light spots upon the surface at the periphery of the zone, positioned so as to encompass and configure, and so visibly outline, the zone.

Another embodiment consists of apparatus for use in conjunction with a radiometer for visibly outlining an energy zone to be measured by the radiometer. The apparatus comprises a sighting device adapted to emit a plurality of stationary light beams against a surface whose temperature is to be measured and means to position the light beams about the energy zone to outline the energy zone visibly. The sighting device comprises:

- (a) a laser generator operable to generate a primary laser beam; and
- (b) means comprising a laser beam splitting device operable to divide

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the primary laser beam into more than two secondary beams, and
to project the more than two secondary beams to strike the surface
at separate positions about the periphery of the zone, so as to
position a corresponding number of visible light spots upon the
surface at the periphery of the zone, to encompass and configure,
and so visibly outline, the zone.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The foregoing and still other objects and advantages of the present
invention will be more apparent from the detailed explanation of the preferred
embodiments of the invention in connection with the accompanying drawings,
wherein:

FIG. 1 is a schematic illustration of the prior art type of radiometers using
laser sighting devices;

FIG. 2 is a schematic illustration of a preferred embodiment of the present
invention in which the laser beam is circumscribing the target zone using a mirror;

FIGS. 2A and 2B illustrate the manner in which the laser beam is
relocated in stepped fashion to identify the energy zone;

FIG. 3 is a schematic illustration of an alternative embodiment of the
present invention in which the laser is pivoted about a pivot point by the use of
mechanical motive means;

FIG. 4 is a schematic illustration of another alternative embodiment of the

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present invention in which the laser is directed through a magnetic field to identify the target zone;

FIG. 5 is a schematic illustration of another alternative embodiment of the present invention in which a number of individual laser beams are projected so as to define the energy zone being measured;

FIG. 6 is a schematic illustration of another alternative embodiment of the present invention in which the laser is mechanically pivoted;

FIG. 7 schematically illustrates the positioning of fiber optics to create a pattern of the target zone with the laser beam;

FIG. 8 is a detailed sectional view of another alternative embodiment of the present invention in which the laser is mechanically pivoted about the detector;

FIGS. 9A-9C illustrate alternative configurations of the targets which can be projected using the apparatus of the present invention; and

FIG. 10 is a schematic illustration of another embodiment of the invention wherein the laser is divided into a plurality of laser beams defining the energy zone by the use of optical fibers.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Traditional, prior art radiometers have long employed laser sighting devices to assist in the proper aim and alignment of the instrument. FIG. 1 illustrates the operation of traditional, prior art, hand held radiometers. Such a radiometer, referred to generally by reference numeral 10, include a laser site scope 12 which

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emits a laser beam 14 to a spot or target 18 on the surface 20 whose temperature is to be measured. This spot 18 is located in the center of the energy zone "E" which is to be measured by the radiometer 10. This spot 18 includes a detector 16 which is connected to conventional internal circuitry and display means (not shown) for conversion, calculation and display of the temperature of the surface 20 calculated indirectly from the energy radiated from the surface within the energy zone E. Such energy is radiated in straight lines in all directions away from the surface 20 and captured with the detector 16 on the radiometer 10. Using infrared radiation principles, the radiometer is thus able to capture and measure the infrared energy in the energy zone E and determine the surface temperature thereof. The actual size and shape of the energy zone E is determined by the optics of the radiometer and the distance between the radiometer and the target. Each radiometer has a defined angle of vision or "field of view" which is typically identified in the instrument's specification sheet. The size of the energy zone E is predetermined when the field of view is known in conjunction with the distance to the target. Obviously, the further the radiometer is held to the target (i.e., the greater the distance), the larger the energy zone E.

This can be expressed in a "distance to spot size ratio". For example, with a "distance to spot size ratio of 40:1 the periphery of the energy zone would have a 1" diameter at a distance of 40" or, at a distance of 20" the diameter of the energy zone would be ½". The manufacturer of the pyrometer usually provides field of view diagrams for determining the energy zone at specific distances.

As can readily be appreciated, however, such laser aiming devices are merely able to identify the center of the energy zone being measured and not the

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outer periphery of the actual energy zone from which the measurement is being taken. The farther away from the surface the radiometer 10 is positioned, the larger the energy zone E. Thus, depending upon the size and configuration of the surface 20, the actual energy zone E may, conceivably, include irregular shaped portions of the surface 20 or even extend beyond the edges of the surface. Of course, in such instances, the resultant measured temperature would be inaccurate. Without knowing the outer perimeter of such energy zone E, the user of the radiometer 10 would have no knowledge of such fact or that the resultant readings could be inaccurate.

The present invention provides a means for visibly defining the energy zone E so that the user of the radiometer 10 can observe the actual energy zone being measured to determine where it falls relative to the surface being measured. In the various embodiments of this invention, a fine laser line or lines is projected against the surface being measured and such line or lines is positioned so as to encompass the periphery of the energy zone E. If a rotating laser beam is employed, positioning can be effected, alternatively, by moving either the laser itself or the laser beam emitted from the laser. If the perimeter of the energy zone E could be identified on the object by the movement of the laser beam in a path about the circumference of the energy zone E, the user would be able to quickly and accurately determine if the energy zone from which the measurement was being taken was fully on the surface to be measured and whether its surface was of a type which would provide an otherwise accurate measurement.

The periphery of the energy zone E is identified as a function of the stated "field of view" of the particular radiometer as identified in its specifications and the

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distance between the radiometer and the target. Identification of the size and shape of the energy zone is easily done using conventional mathematical formulas. Once identified, the laser beam is then projected about the periphery of the energy zone E in accordance with the methods and apparatus hereinafter described. One simple "aiming" approach is to project the laser beam at the same angle as the field of view of the radiometer emulating from the same axis or, alternatively, by mechanically adjusting the laser beam angle in accordance with the "distance to spot size ratio" calculations. In either event, the periphery of the energy zone E would be identified by the laser beam.

Fig. 2 illustrates a first embodiment of the present invention in which the laser aiming device 12 emits a laser beam 14 which is aimed at a mirrored surface 30 which is positioned in front of the laser beam 14. The mirror 30 is rotated using motive means 32 so as to rotate the beam in a circular fashion to define the energy zone E on the surface being measured. Alternatively, the mirror 30 can be rotated by vibratory means or by the application of a magnetic field (not shown). Rotation of the mirror 30 should be at a refraction angle which corresponds to the 90% energy zone E thereby permitting the laser beam 14 to rotate about the periphery of the energy zone E thereby making it visible to the user of the radiometer 10.

Alternatively, a prism can be used in place of the mirror 30 with predetermined angles to cause the prism to function as the reflecting mirror surface and, thereby, direct the laser beam about the perimeter of the energy zone.

Figs. 2A and 2B illustrate the manner in which the laser beams can be used to outline the energy zone E on the surface to be measured. It is important that

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rotation of the beam 14 be carefully controlled so that rotation is at such a speed which can be visually followed. This will permit full beam intensity. As illustrated in Figs. 2A and 2B, the laser beam is rotated about the energy zone E through a series of steps with the laser beam being permitted to remain in each step for at least one hundredth of a second before moving to its next position. This is accomplished by creating a plurality of steps E-1, E-2 etc., around the energy zone E. The laser beam 114 would stop at each step for the predetermined period of time to permit the beam to be visually observed before moving to the next step.

Fig. 3 illustrates another embodiment of the present invention in which the laser 112 itself is rotated or displaced so as to scribe a circle which defines the energy zone E by mechanically pivoting the laser 112 about pivot point 120 using motive means 132. Alternatively, the laser 112 can be rotated by vibratory means (not shown) or by the application of a magnetic field (not shown). Rotation of the laser 112 should, however, be at a refraction angle which corresponds to the 90% energy zone E thereby permitting the laser beam 114 to rotate about the periphery of the energy zone E to make it visible to the user of the radiometer 10.

In Fig. 4, the laser 212 is rotated about a pivot point 220 by the application of a magnetic field 225 so as to cause the emission of the laser beam 214 around the periphery of the 90% energy zone E to make the beam visible to the user of the radiometer 10. In such embodiment, means (not shown) are provided for modifying the magnetic field 225 to correspond to the 90% energy zone so as to permit the laser to be rotated accordingly.

In Fig. 5, the laser 312 has at least two components 312A and 312B

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which produce at least two individual laser beams 314A and about the detector 316. These at least two individual beams 314A and 314B are directed to the surface 320 being measured at the perimeter of the energy zone E rather than at its center, as in the prior art as shown, for example in Figure 1. Through the use of a number of such
5 laser beams, the energy zone E becomes clearly identified rather than merely the center of the energy zone E. If desired, individual lasers can be used or laser splitting devices such as a beam splitter can be used to split a single laser beam.

Fig. 6 illustrates yet another embodiment of the present invention in which the laser 412 is mechanically pivoted in a circular fashion around the detector 416 so
10 as to emit a laser beam 414 in a circular path on the surface (not shown) thereby defining the energy zone E. Laser 412 is pivotally mounted on pivot bearing 420 provided on connecting arm 421. Arm 421 is mounted on pivot bearing 424 which is rotated by motor 422. In such a manner, the laser beam 414 emitted from the laser 412 rotates about and outlines the energy zone E on the surface from which the
15 temperature is being measured.

The rotation of the laser beam may also be effected using fiber optics techniques as shown in Fig. 7 in which the laser beam is projected through fiber optics means 501. In such manner, the beam fans out from the laser source and encircles and thereby defines the energy zone E. By the use of a sufficient number of fiber
20 optics, one can outline the circumference of the target area E with a light ring.

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Fig. 8 illustrates still another means of effecting rotation of the laser beam 614 emitted from laser 612. In this manner, the laser beam 614 is directed against a rotating flat surface mirror 630 where it is reflected against a plated plastic cone mirror 631. The reflected beam is then projected to the surface and defines the perimeter of the energy zone E. The flat mirror 630 is driven by motor 622. In such manner, the laser beam 614 rotates about the circumference of the energy zone E on the surface being measured. The mirrors are positioned at such an angle that the laser projection is at the same angle as the infrared detector pickup angle.

It will, of course, be appreciated that the energy zones E may assume configurations other than the circular configuration shown in Figs. 1-8. Figs. 9A-C illustrate alternative square (Fig. 9A), rectangular (Fig. 9B) and triangular (Fig. 9C) configurations for the light patterns which may be accomplished using the means of the present inventions. Fig. 10 illustrates a method for defining the energy zone wherein a circular configuration can be accomplished without rotation of the laser beam wherein a plurality of fixed optical fibers positioned to project a number of spots is employed. In this figure, a fixed laser 712 projects a beam 713 which is split into a plurality of beams 714 by a bundle of optical fibers 715 in order to project a pattern 716 onto the surface defining the energy zone E. Additional configurations may also be used, if desired.

Having thus described the invention with particular reference to the preferred forms thereof, it will be obvious that various changes and modifications can be made therein without departing from the spirit and scope of the present invention as defined by the appended claims.

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WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. The combination of a temperature measurement device and an apparatus for outlining an energy zone on a surface whose temperature is to be measured by using said temperature measurement device, said apparatus comprising a laser sight co-operating with said temperature measurement device for emitting at least one primary laser beam toward said surface, and for producing a plurality of more than two beams from said primary laser beam to strike said surface simultaneously at spaced apart locations serving to outline said energy zone.
2. The combination of Claim 1, wherein said laser sight includes a beam splitter disposed between said temperature measurement device and said surface.
3. The combination of Claim 1, wherein said temperature measurement device is positioned between said plurality of laser beams.
4. The combination of Claim 2, wherein said temperature measurement device is positioned on the central longitudinal axis of said plurality of laser beams downstream of said beam splitter.
5. The combination of a temperature measurement device having an axis and a laser sight for identifying the extent of an energy zone whose temperature is to be measured using said measurement device, said laser sight co-operating with said

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measurement device, and said laser sight emitting more than two laser beams simultaneously in a circular pattern along the axis of the measurement device to form an illuminated ring at said energy zone defining the extent of the zone to be measured.

6. The combination of a temperature measurement device and a sighting device for visibly outlining an energy zone on a surface whose temperature is to be measured using said measurement device, said sighting device including:

- means for generating a laser beam;

- means for splitting said laser beam into more than two split laser lines;

- means for directing said laser lines simultaneously toward said surface; and

- means for positioning said laser lines to outline visibly the periphery of said energy zone.

7. A hand held temperature measuring unit comprising a temperature measurement device, said device including:

- an infrared sensor located within said device, comprising a detector, for infrared radiation emitted from an energy zone disposed along an axis of said device passing onto said detector; and

- a laser light beam splitter assembly, including a beam splitter for splitting an incident laser light beam into more than two beams directed simultaneously toward said zone to define said zone by peripherally outlining said zone.

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8. The combination according to Claim 7, in which more than two spots are formed on said zone by said beams, and wherein at least two of said spots outline an edge of said energy zone.

9. The combination of a laser light source aiming device and a hand held temperature measuring unit for measuring an energy zone on a target, said unit comprising an aiming device:

a laser light beam generator providing a laser light beam;

a beam splitter receiving said beam; and

a device simultaneously aiming more than two laser light beams emitted by said splitter to define an energy zone by projecting a laser light intensity distribution pattern as separate spots on said zone on said target.

10. The combination, as claimed in Claim 9, wherein said beam splitter is a fibre optic means.

11. The combination according to Claim 9, in which the spots form a periphery of a marking light distribution pattern.

12. The combination of a hand held temperature measuring unit and an aiming device, said unit comprising:

an infrared light sensor and including a detector to receive infrared radiation, emitted from an area of a target, passing onto said detector; and said device

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comprising:

a laser light beam splitter assembly including a beam splitter for splitting an incident beam of laser light into more than two beams simultaneously directed toward said area to define said area by peripherally outlining said area.

13. The combination of a hand held temperature measurement device and a sighting device which emits laser light toward a surface on which temperature is to be measured by said measuring device, said sighting device comprising:

a sight integral with said measurement device;

means to position said visible light on said surface; and

means on said sighting device for projecting a visible circular laser light pattern onto said surface to encircle and outline a temperature measurement zone.

14. A hand held apparatus for aiming a radiometer for measuring surface temperature, said apparatus comprising:

a detector capturing infrared radiation emanating from an energy zone on a surface where temperature is to be measured;

a sight identifying the location, and periphery of the energy zone on the surface by visible laser light; and

wherein said sight directs more than two laser beams against said surface at separate positions about the periphery of said zone to identify said energy zone.

15. The apparatus of Claim 14, in which said sight comprises a beam splitter for

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splitting a single laser beam into said more than two laser beams.

16. The apparatus of Claim 15, in which said beam splitter comprises a fibre optic means.

17. The apparatus of Claim 14, in which said more than two laser beams are arranged to form a circular light pattern to outline the energy zone.

18. The apparatus of Claim 17, in which said circular light pattern is defined by a plurality of circumferentially distributed laser light spots on said surface.

19. A hand held apparatus for measuring surface temperatures, said apparatus comprising:

a detector for capturing infrared radiation emanating from an energy zone on the surface whose temperature is to be measured;

a sight means for identifying the size of the energy zone on the surface by means of visible laser light; and

wherein said sight means directs more than two simultaneous laser beams against said surface to generate a laser light spot pattern having a configuration defining a pattern of at least two non-parallel straight lines of separate spots, said lines being separated from each other, so as to identify said energy zone.

20. The apparatus of Claim 19, the improvement in which said sight means

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comprises a beam splitter for splitting a single laser beam into more than two laser beams.

21. Apparatus for use in conjunction with a radiometer for visibly outlining an energy zone to be measured by said radiometer, said apparatus comprising a sighting device adapted to emit a plurality of stationary light beams against a surface whose temperature is to be measured and means to position said light beams about the energy zone to outline said energy zone visibly, characterized in that said sighting device comprises:

- (a) a laser generator operable to generate a primary laser beam; and
- (b) means comprising a laser beam splitting device operable to divide said primary laser beam into more than two secondary beams, and to project said more than two secondary beams to strike said surface at separate positions about the periphery of said zone, so as to position a corresponding number of visible light spots upon said surface at the periphery of said zone, to encompass and configure, and so visibly outline, said zone.

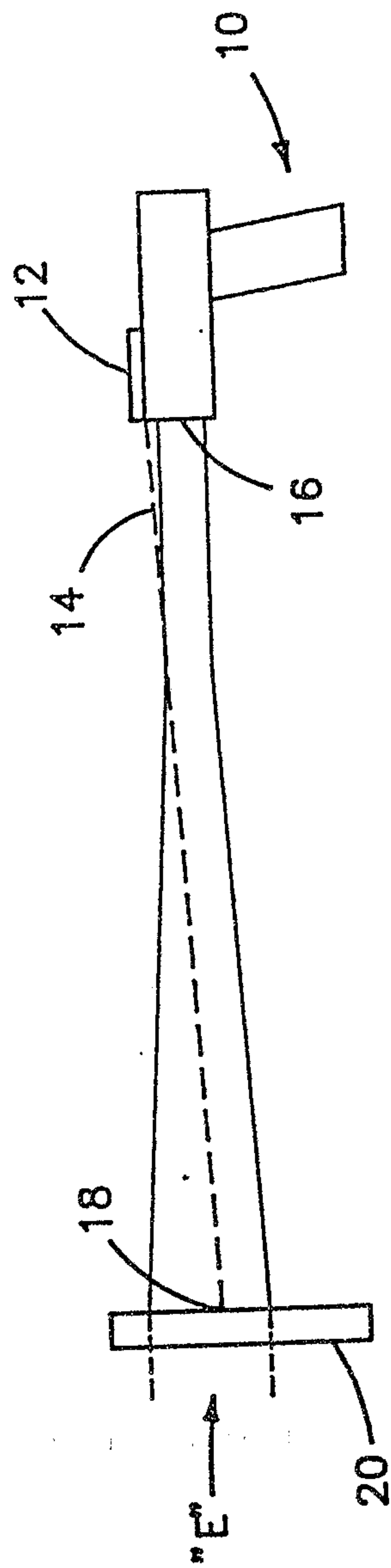


FIG-1

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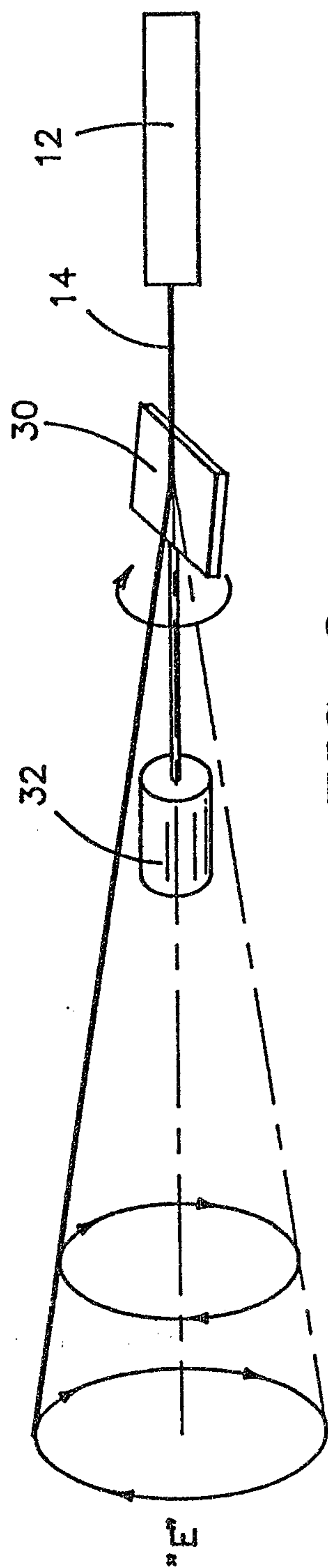


FIG-2

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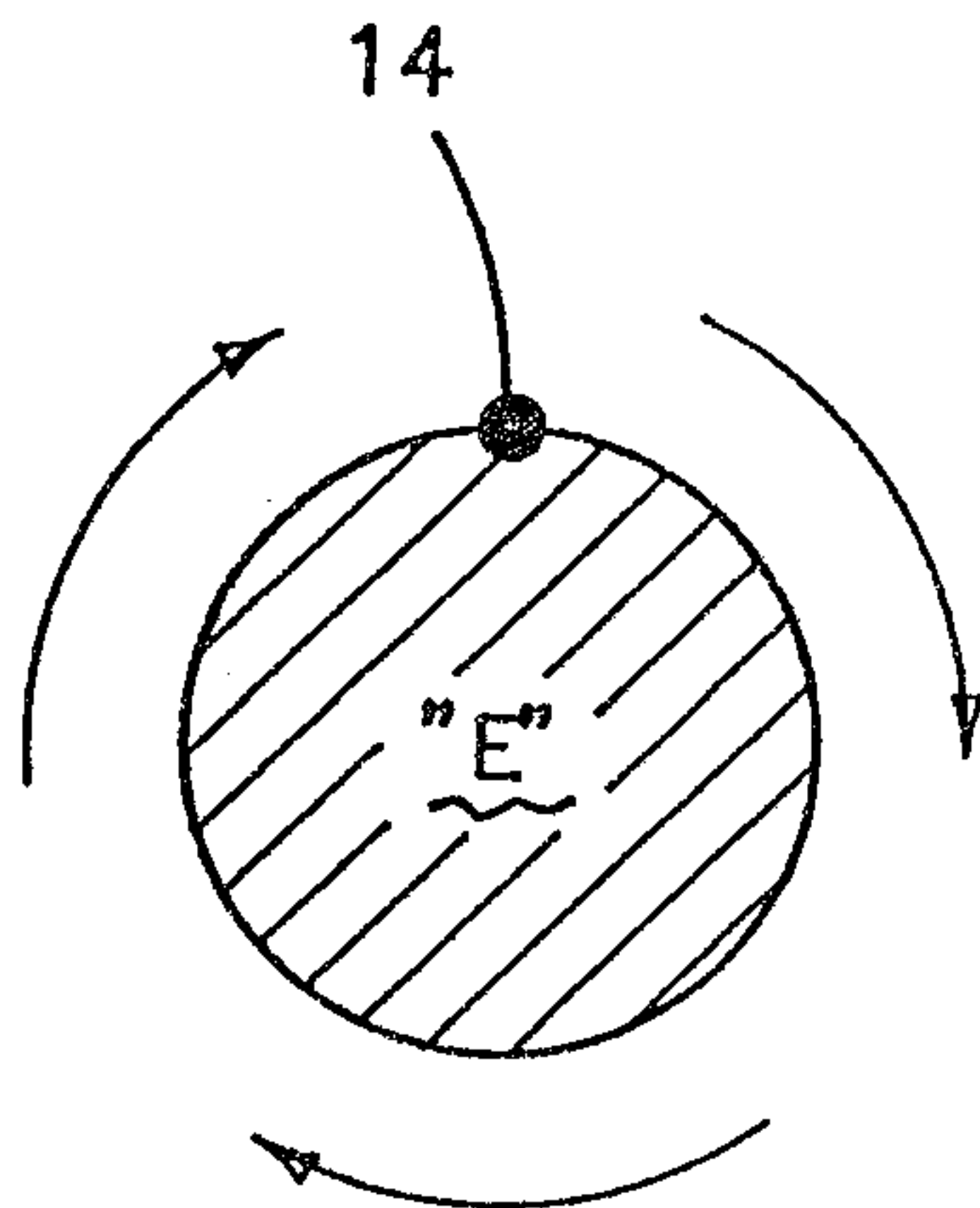


FIG-2A

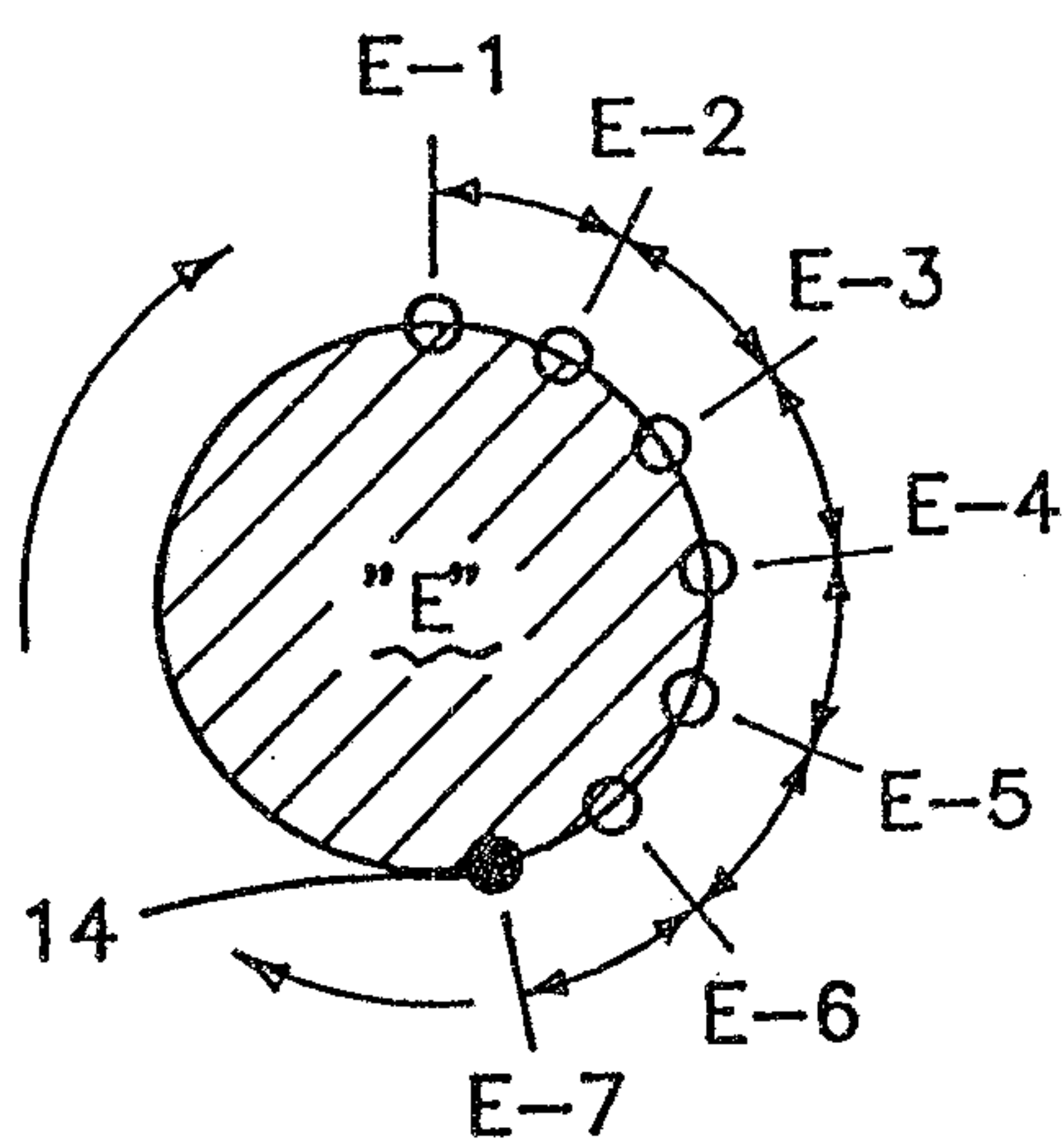
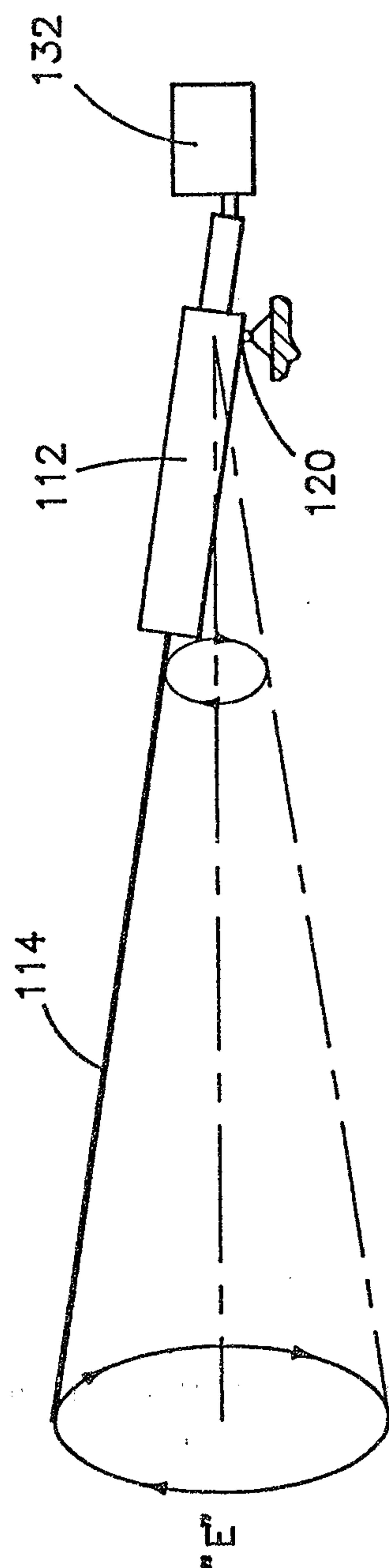


FIG-2B

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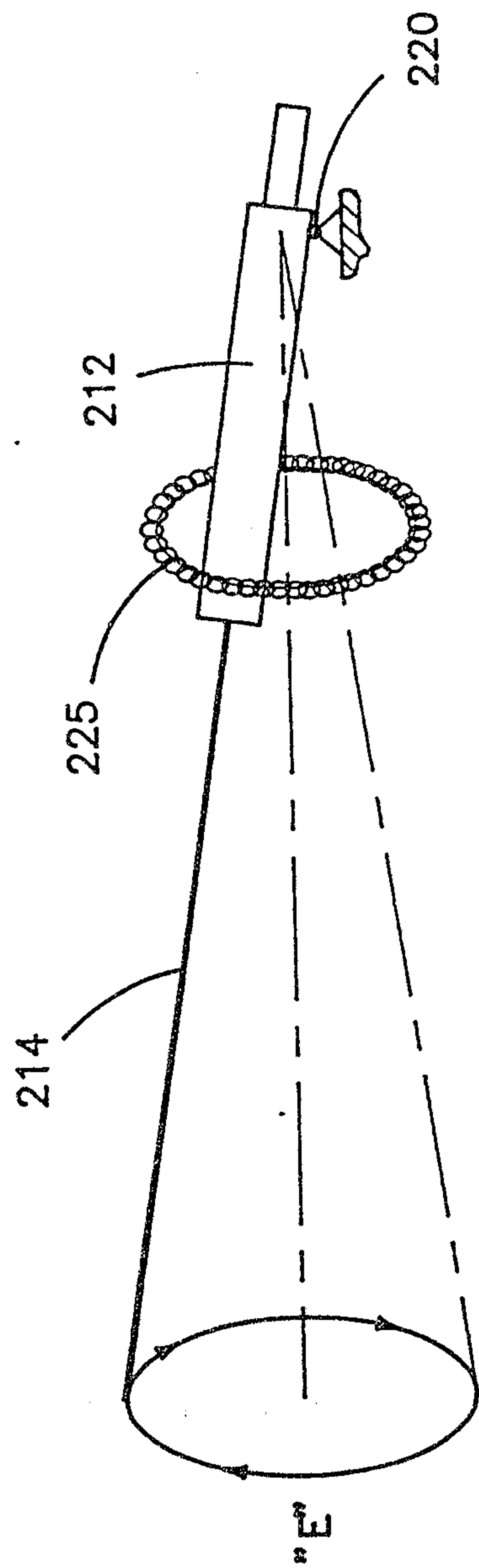


FIG-4

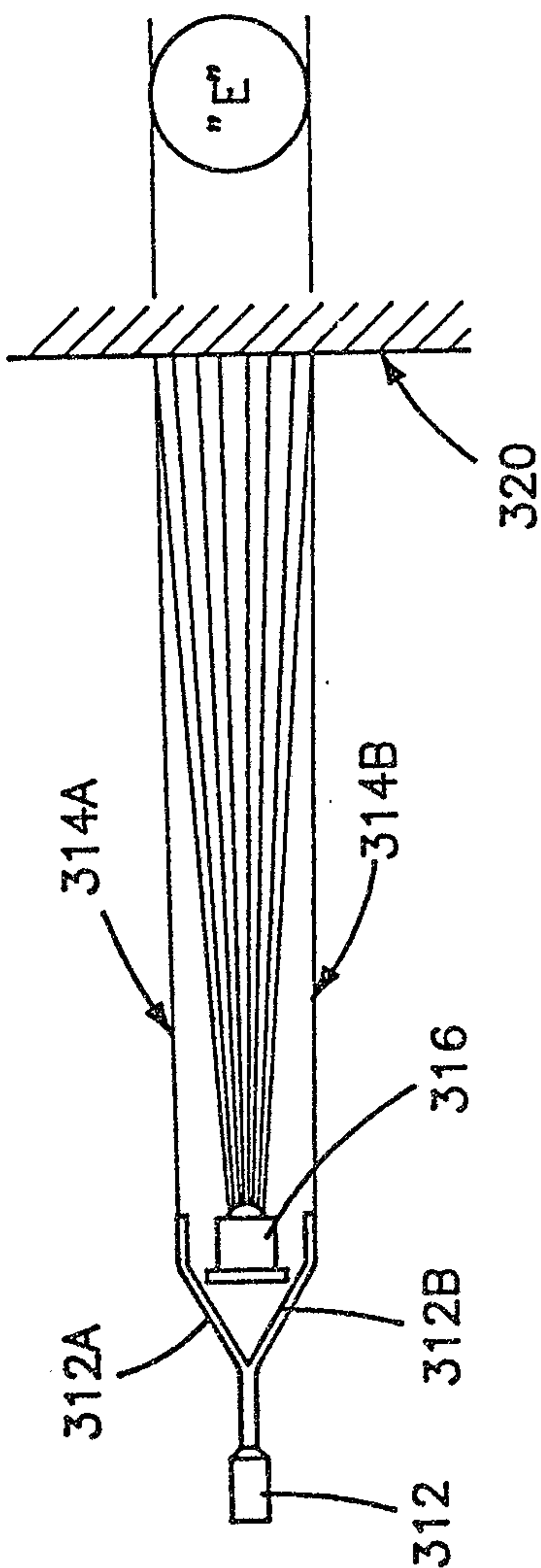


FIG-5

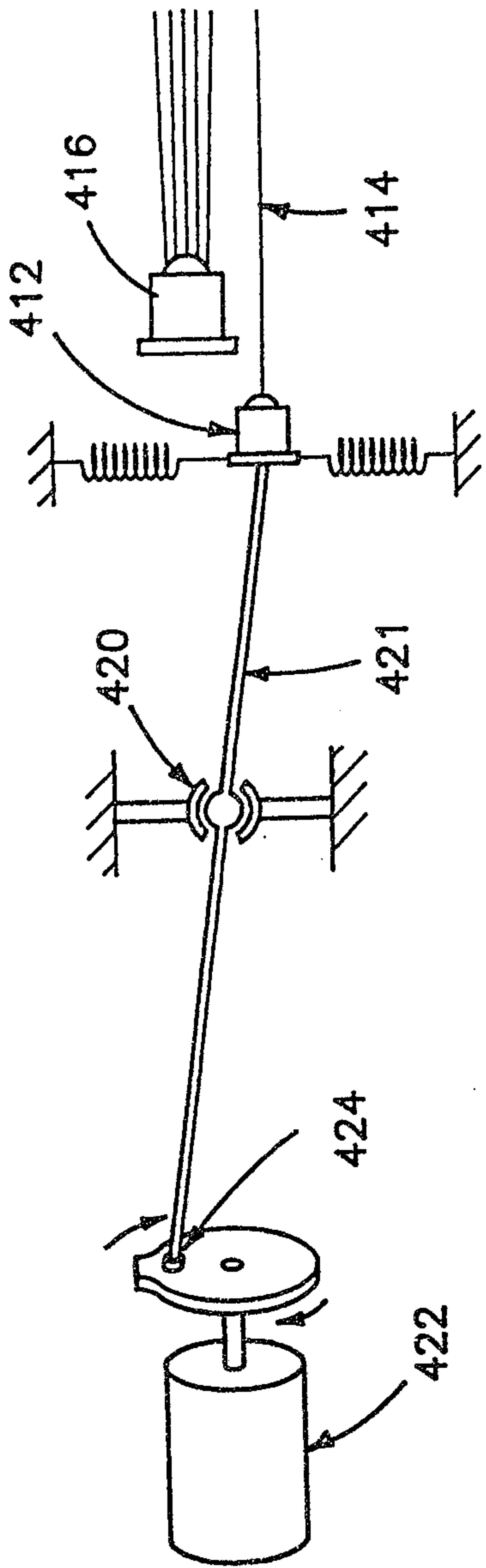


FIG-6

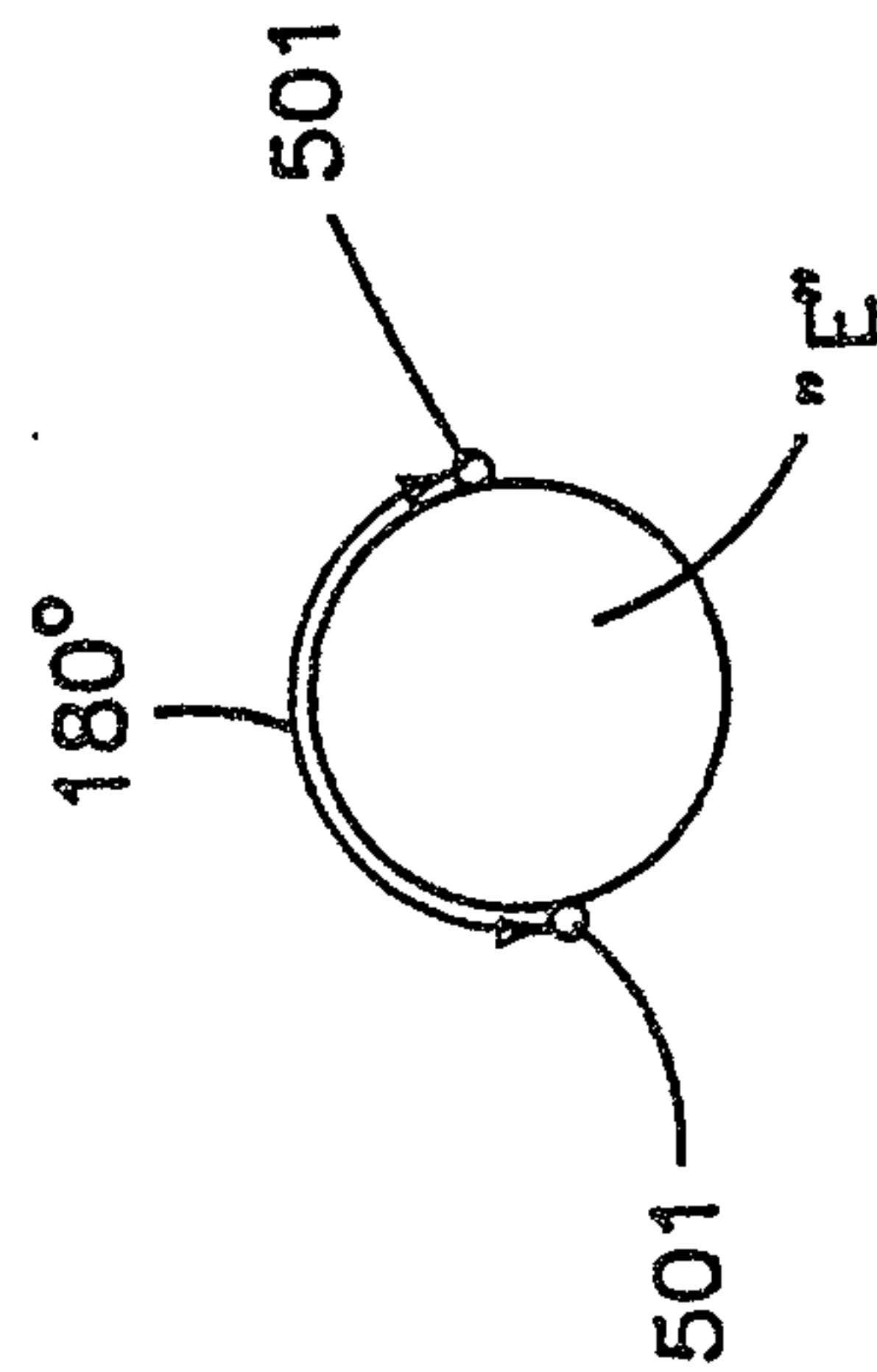


FIG-7

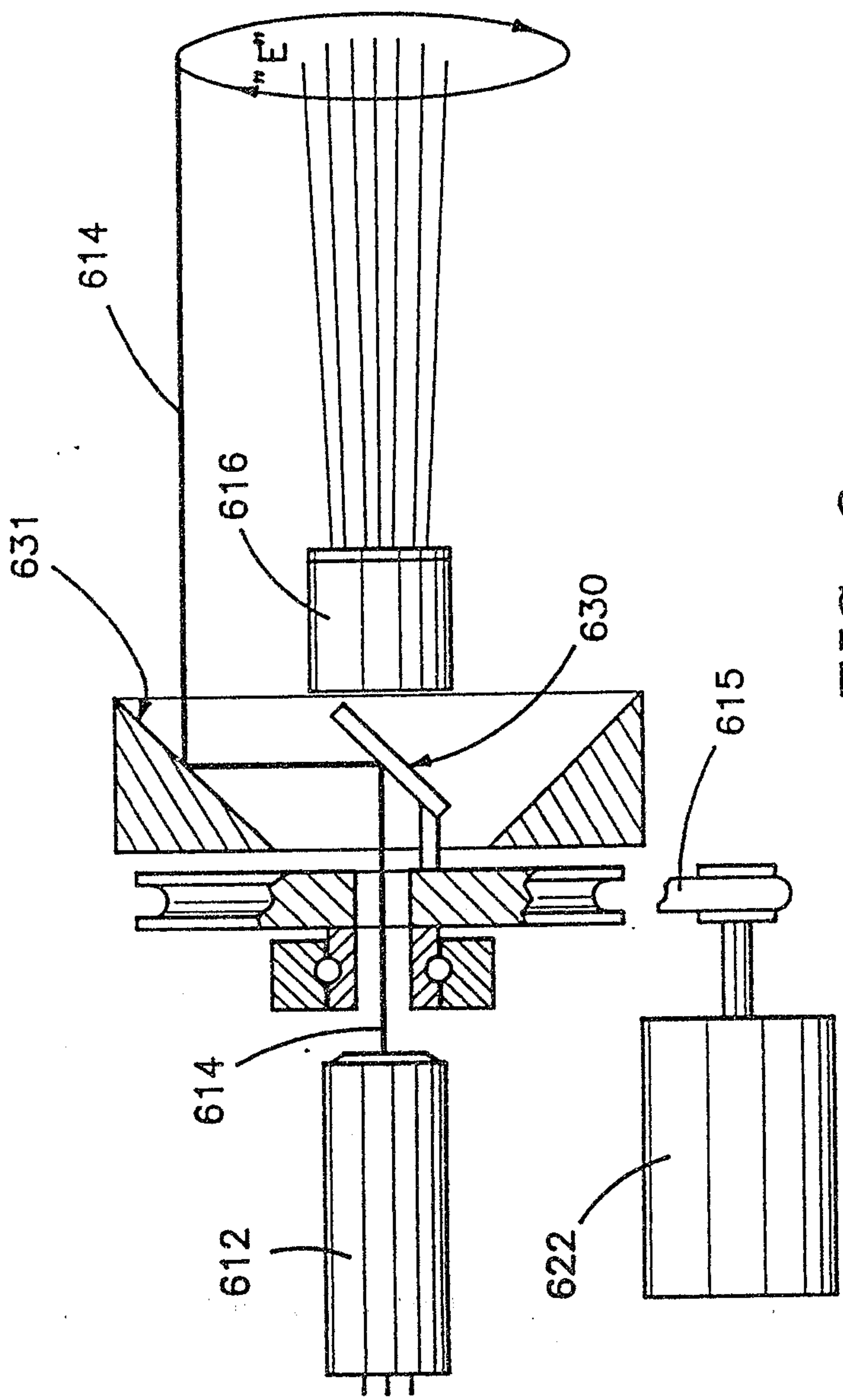


FIG-8

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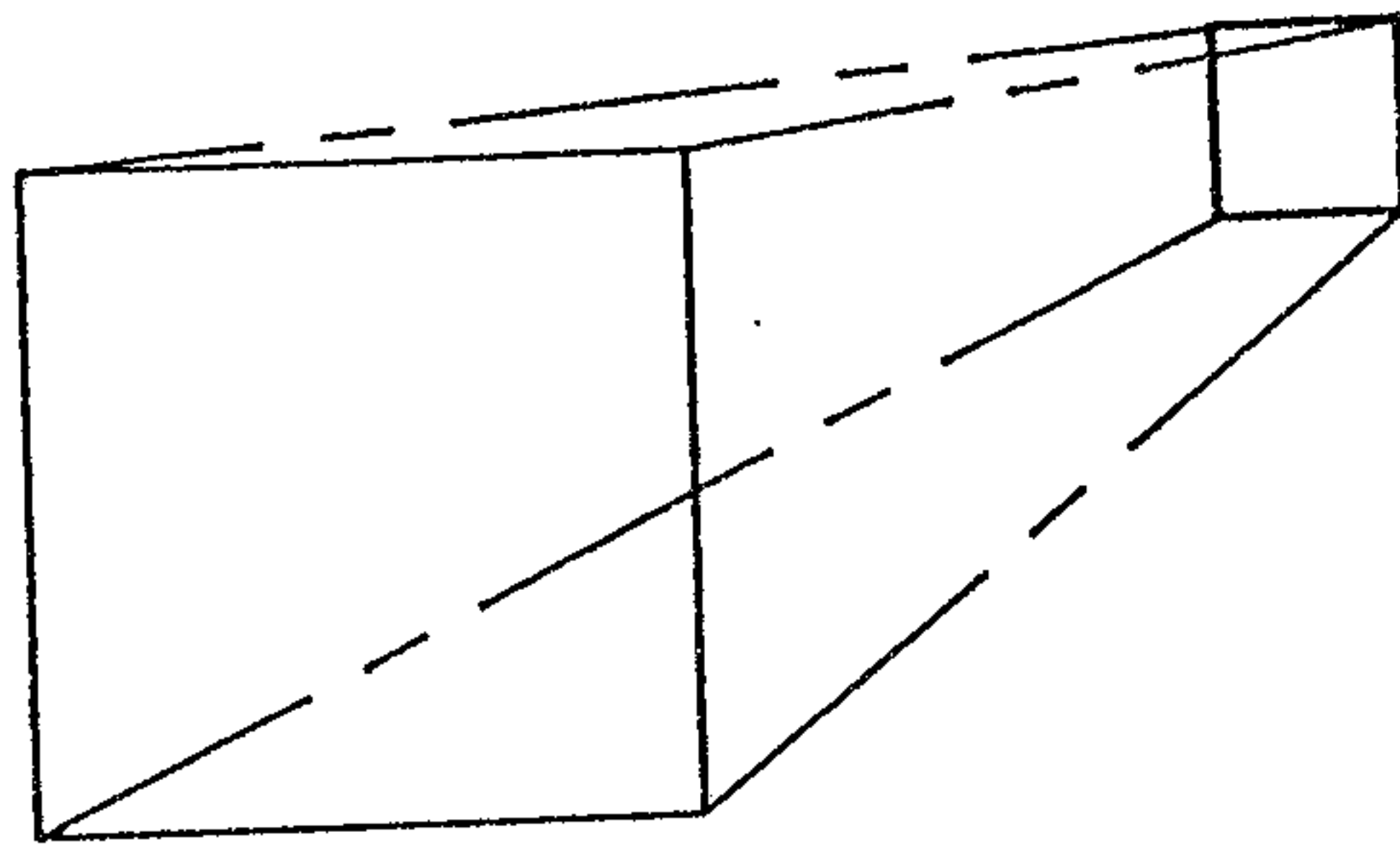


FIG-9A

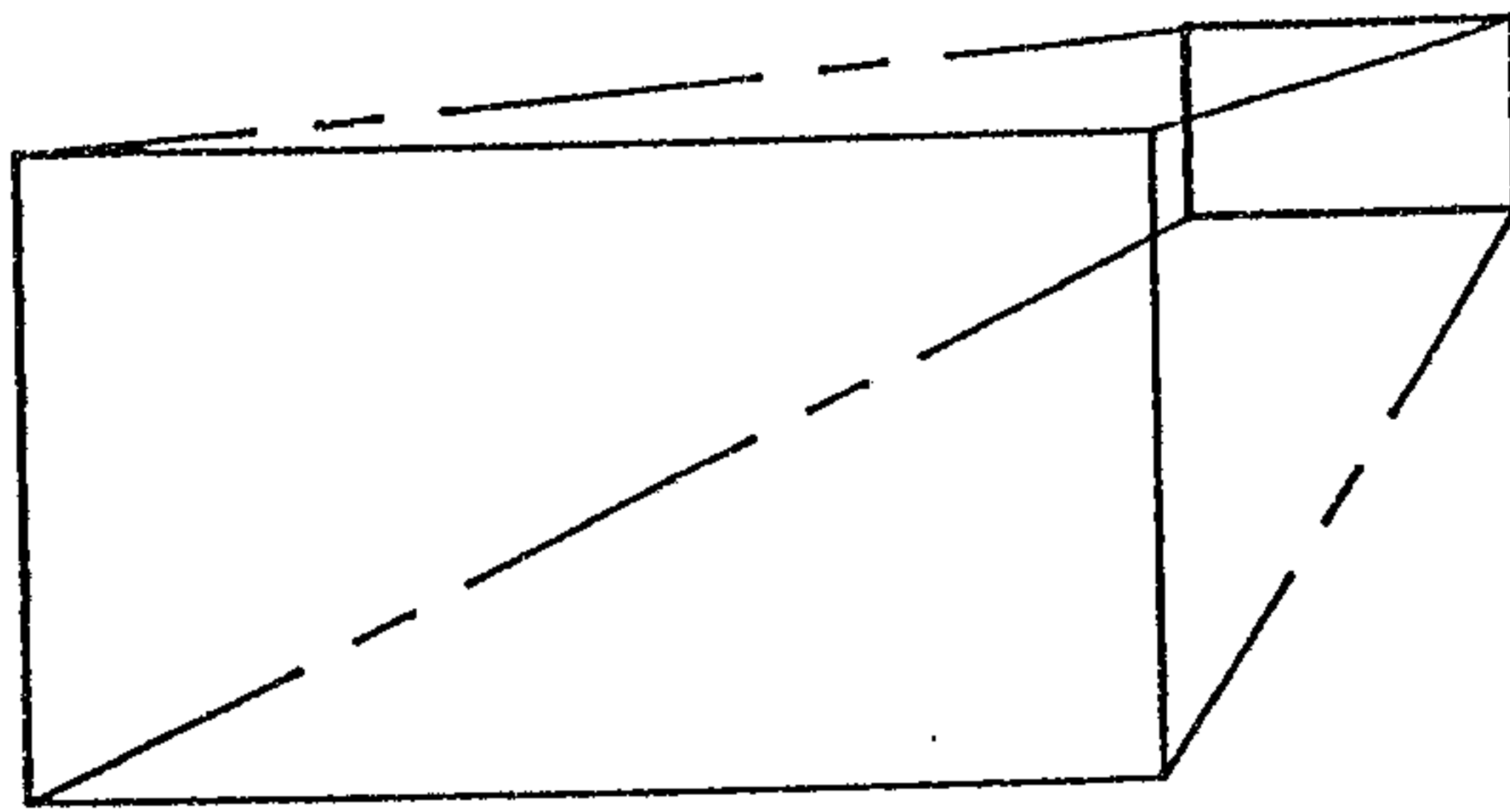


FIG-9B

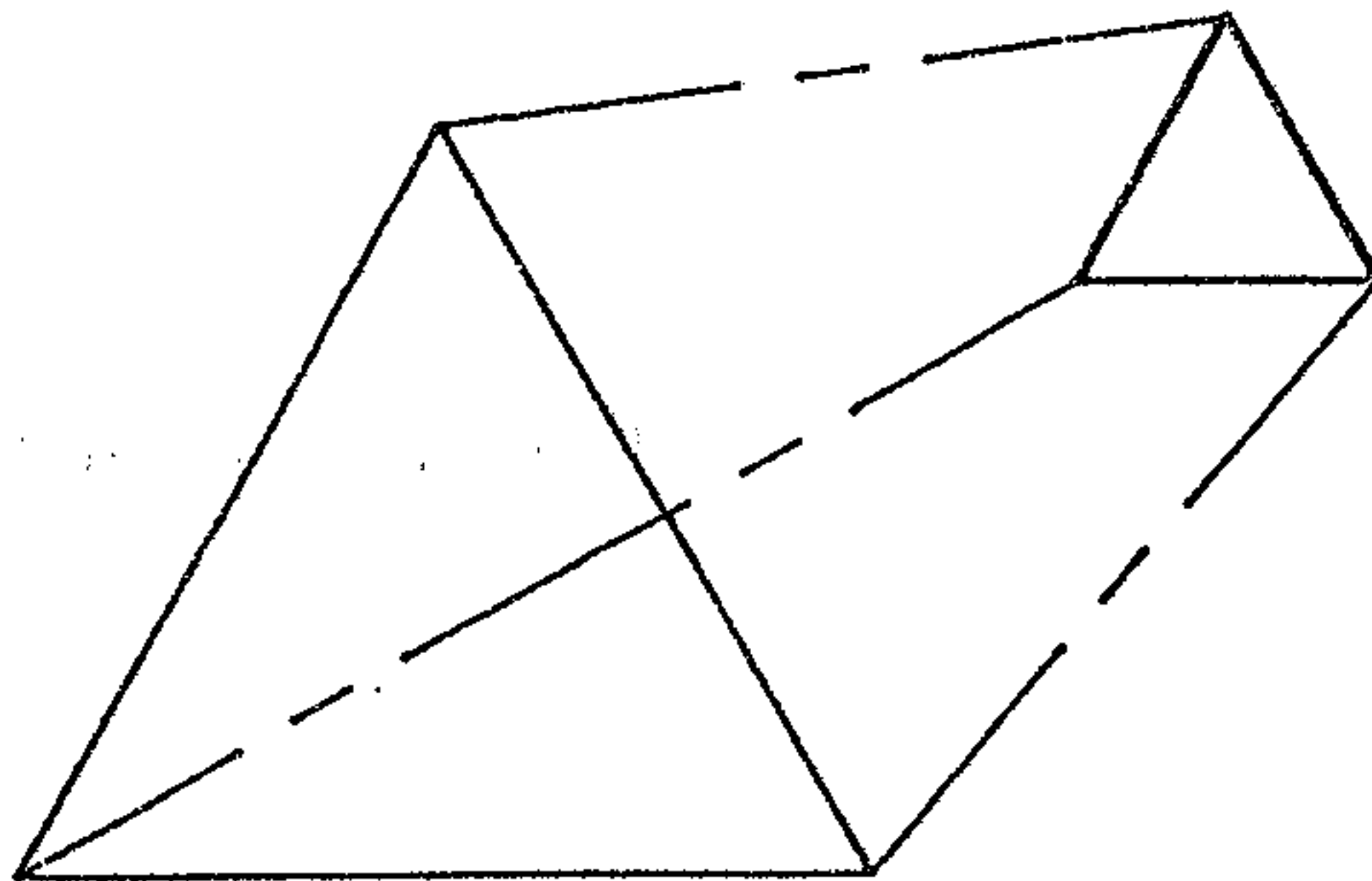


FIG-9C

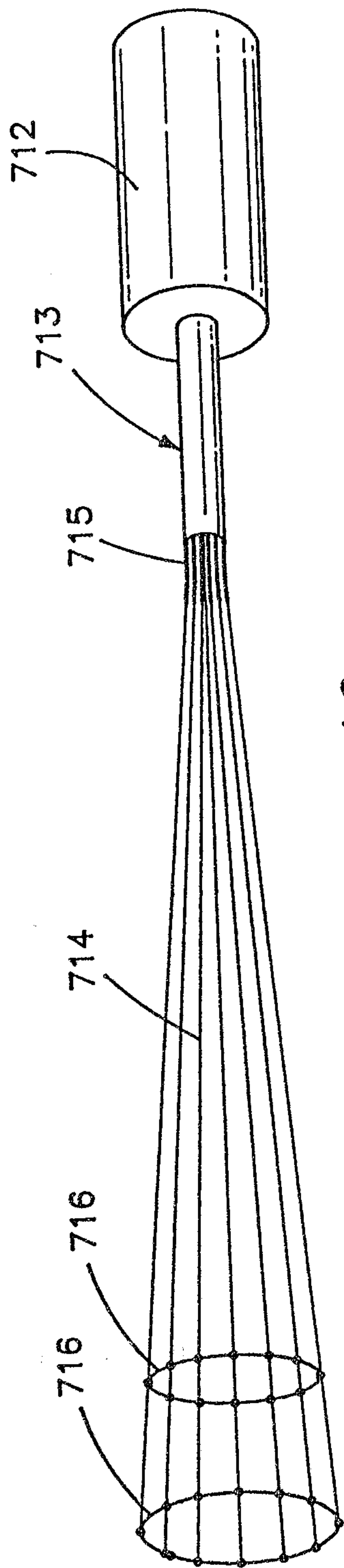


FIG-10

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