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(54) **COMPRESSED AIR ENGINE AND FLYING OBJECT EQUIPPED THEREWITH**

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(52) **U.S. Cl.** **244/11; 244/22; 244/72; 446/35**
(58) **Field of Search** **244/11, 22, 72; 446/35**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A compressed air engine and a flying object using the engine are disclosed. The flying object includes the following elements. That is, the compressed air engine includes: a top member **11** provided with an air inlet **16**; an upper cylinder **12**; a lower cylinder **13**; a bottom member **14**; an air pipe, for passing of a compressed air; a shuttle **20** for performing up/down movements within a cylinder formed by the upper and lower cylinders; and a pair of pistons **21a** and **21b** over and under the shuttle respectively. The pair of the wings are symmetrically and pivotally assembled to the shuttle and the lower cylinder through securing shafts so as to perform up/down movements in accordance with the up/down movements of the shuttle. A compressed air container **2** is assembled to the bottom of the bottom member, for storing the compressed air.

2 Claims, 14 Drawing Sheets

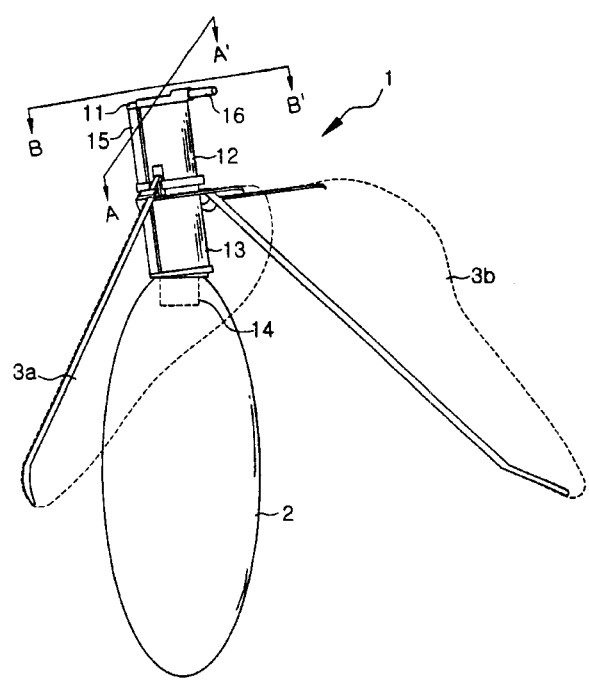


Fig. 1

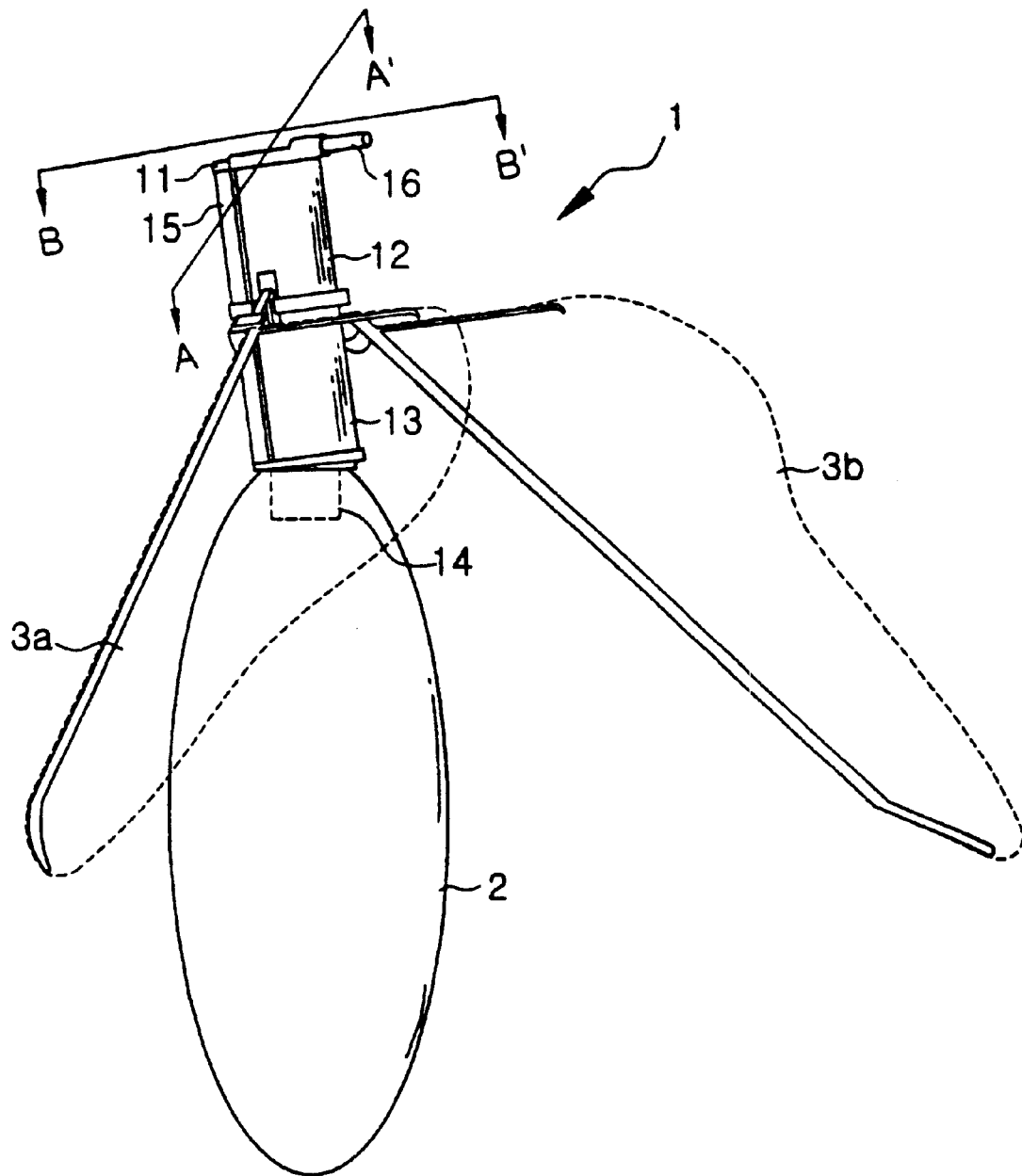


Fig. 2

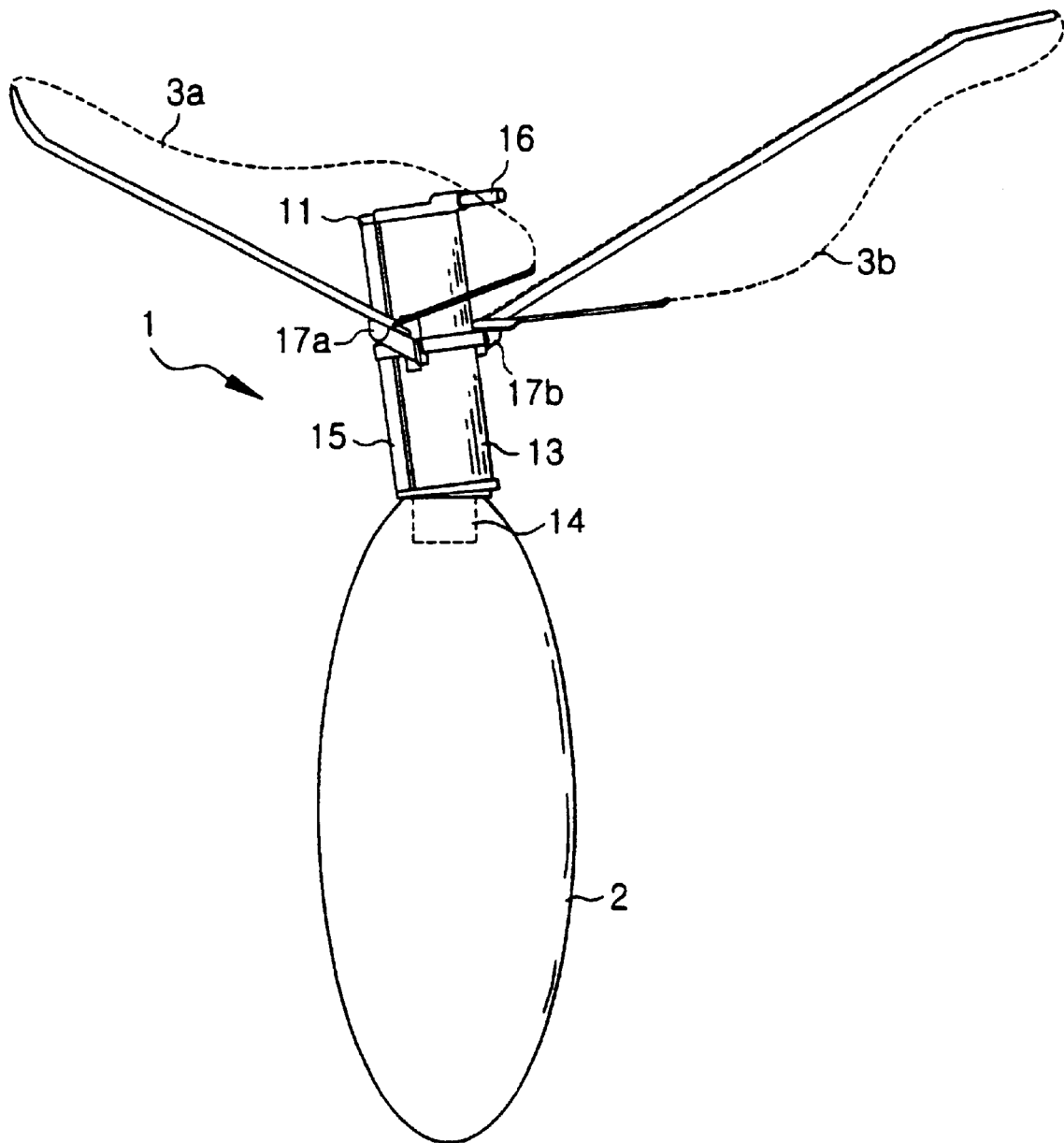


Fig. 3

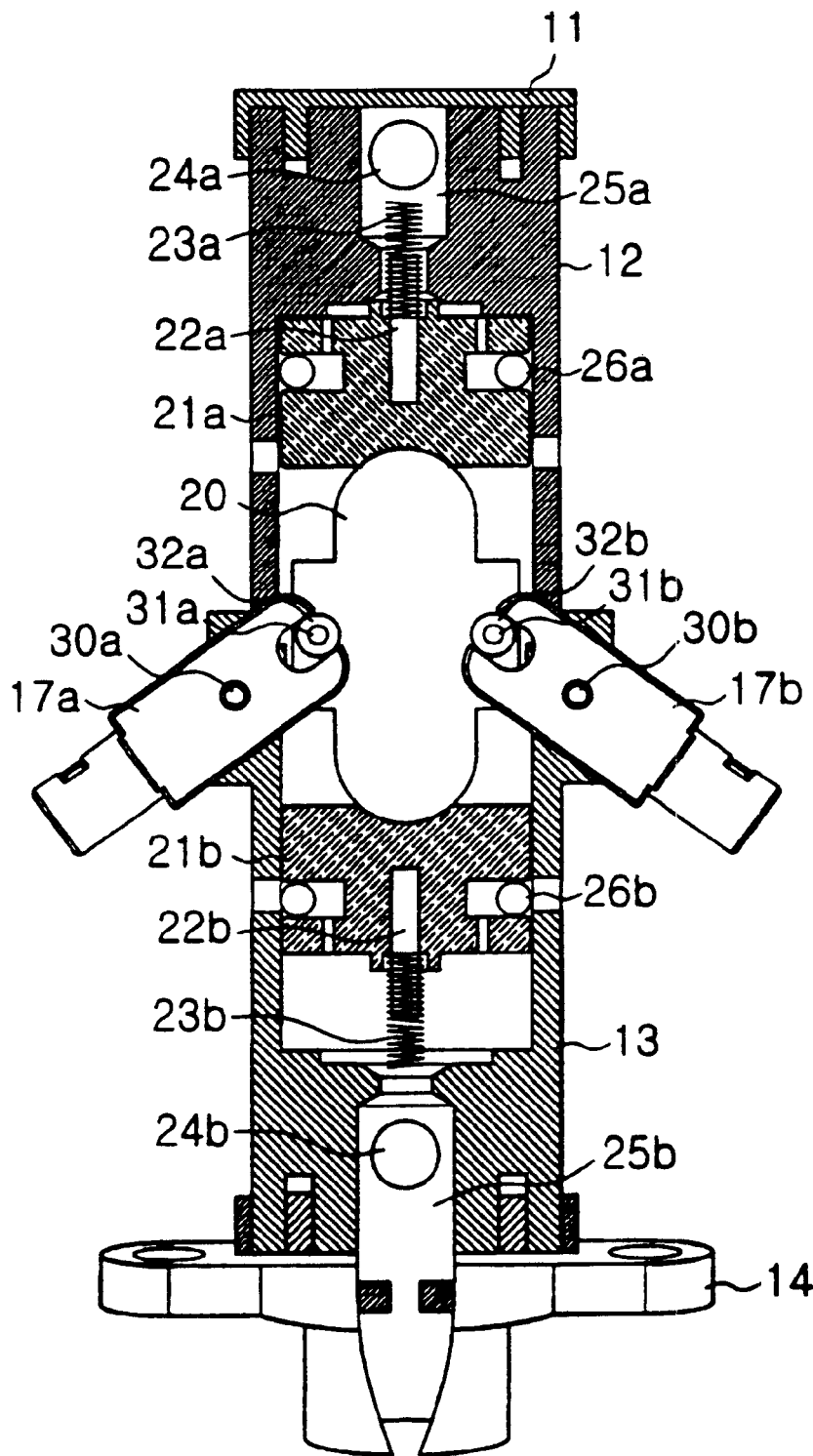


Fig. 4

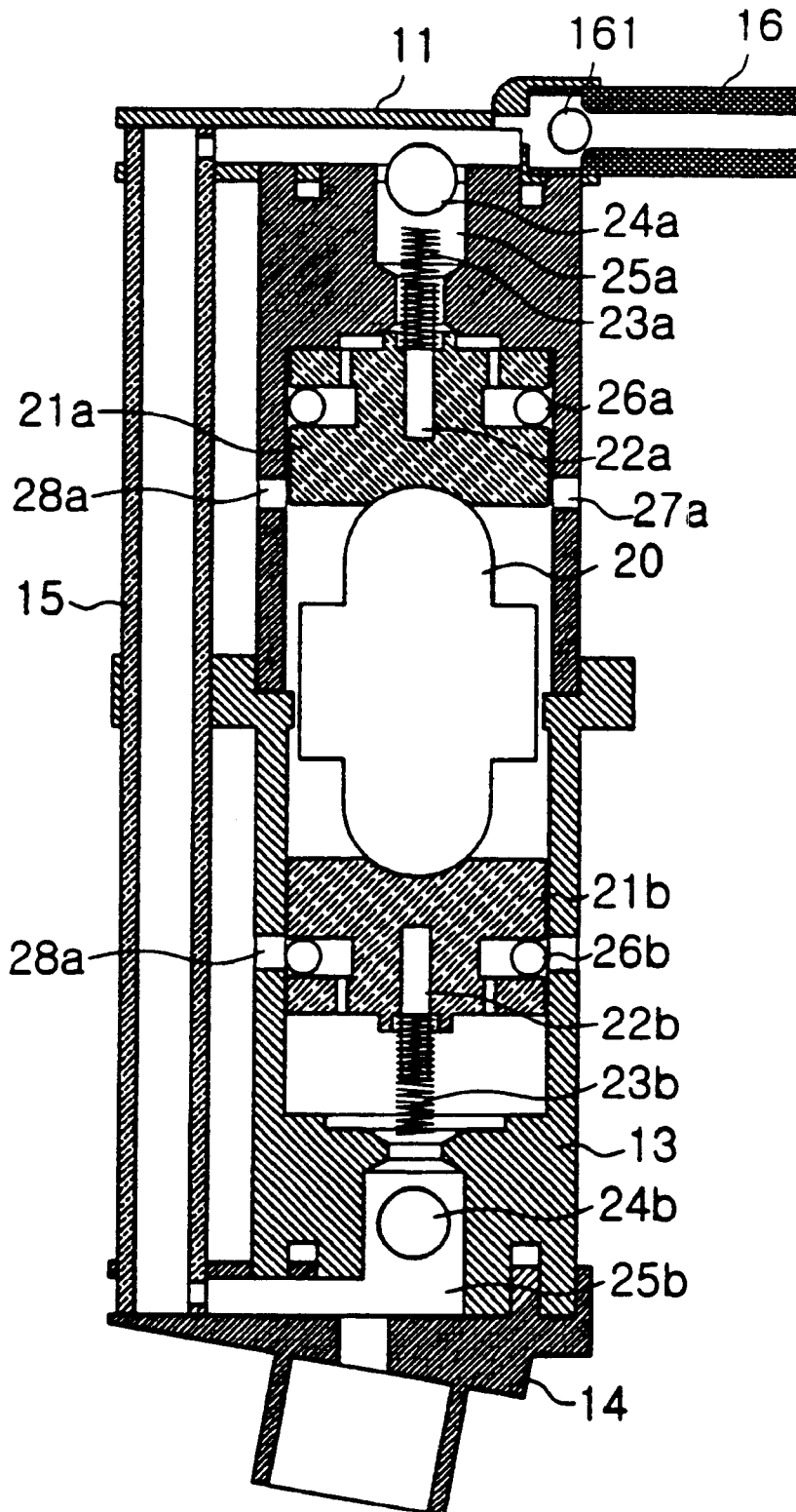


Fig. 5A

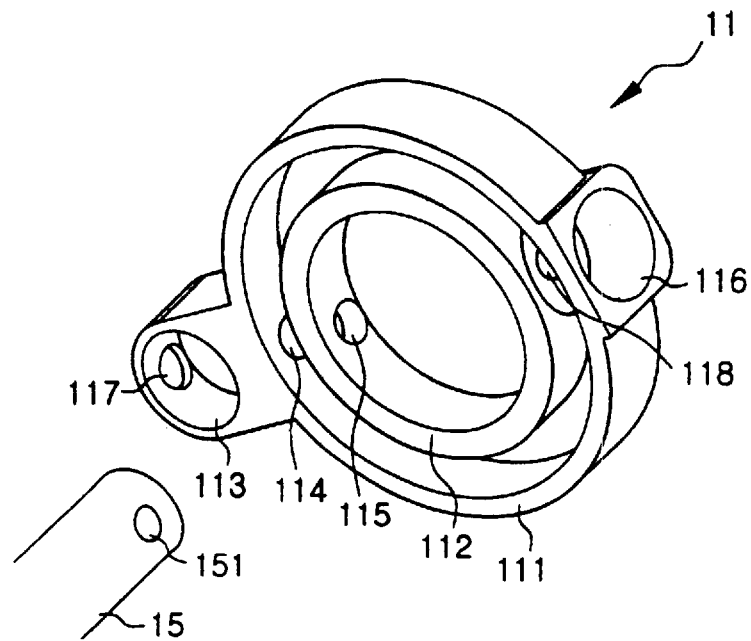


Fig. 5B

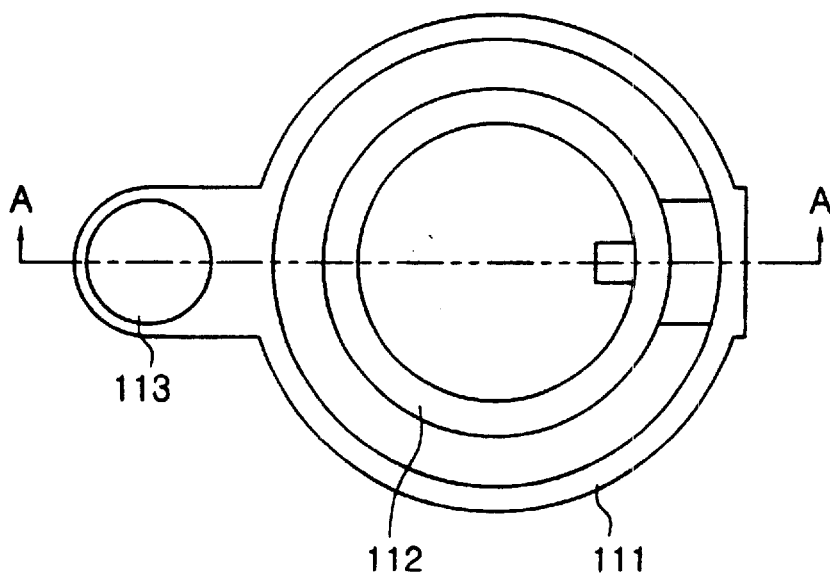


Fig. 5C

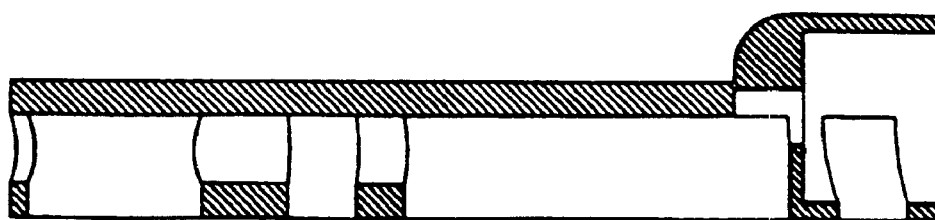


Fig. 5D

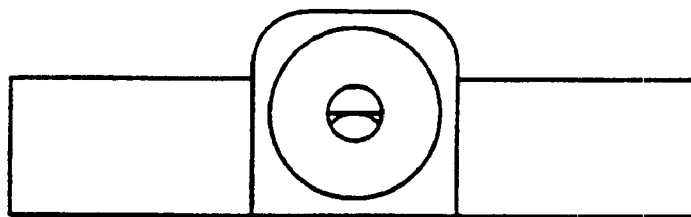


Fig. 6

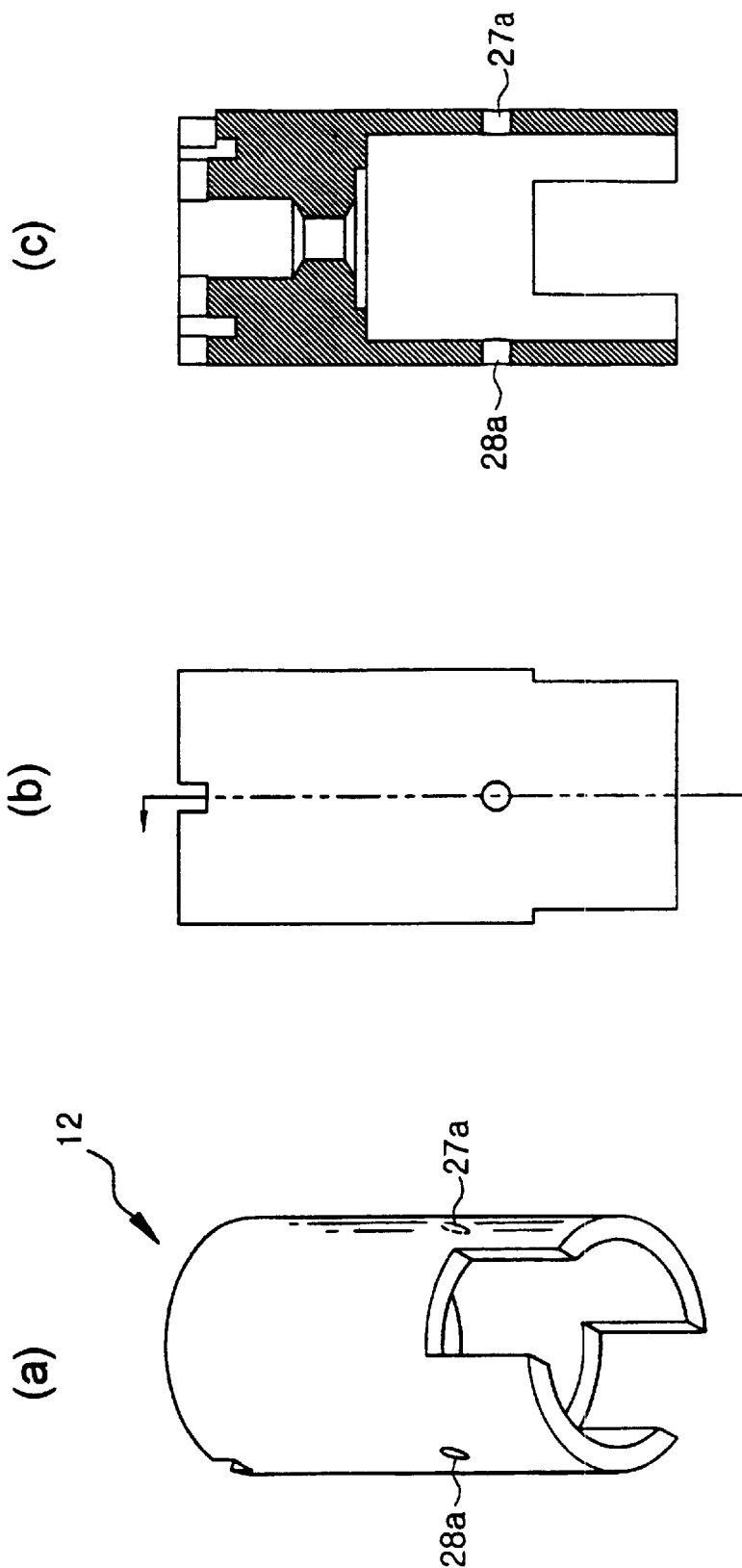


Fig. 7

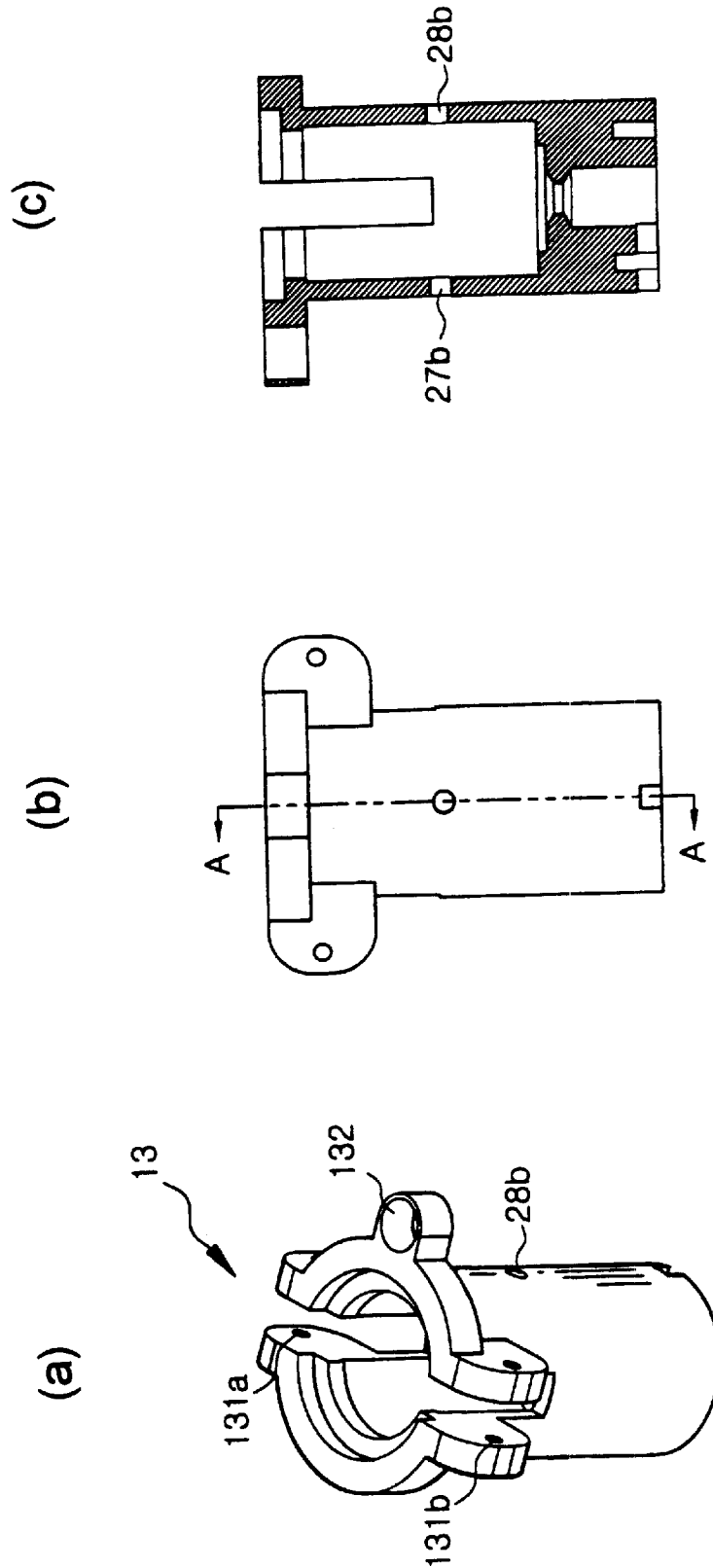


Fig. 8A

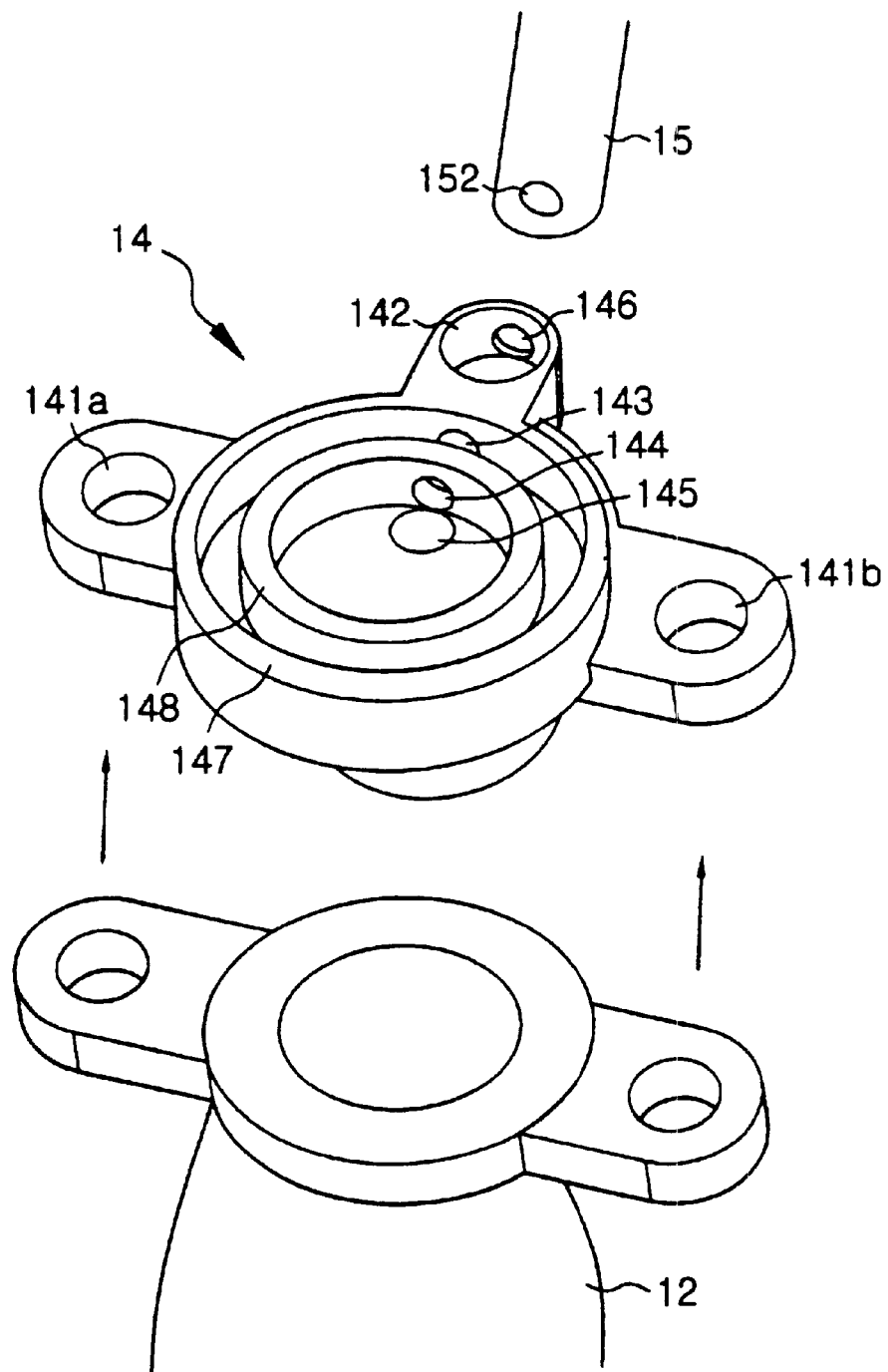


Fig. 8B

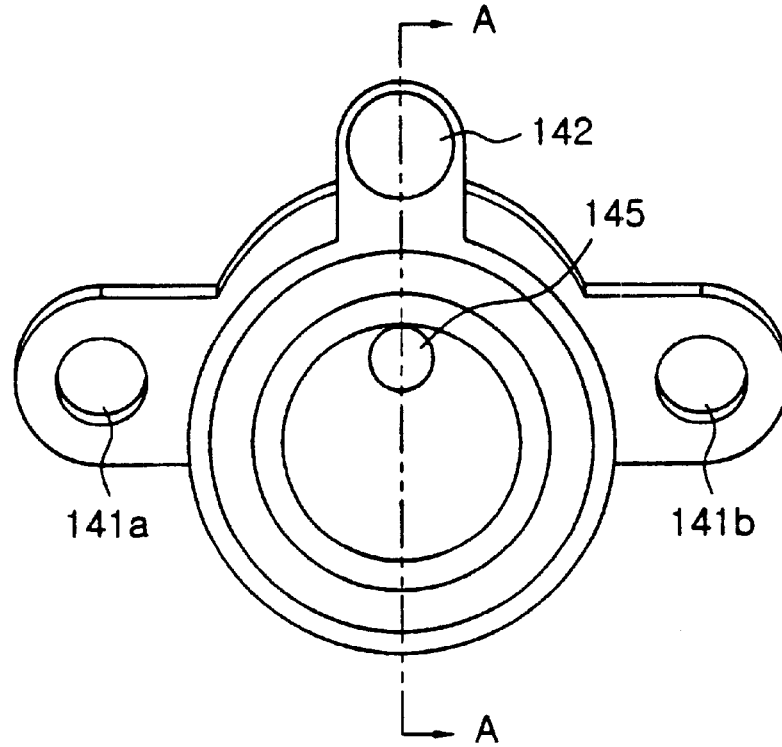


Fig. 8C

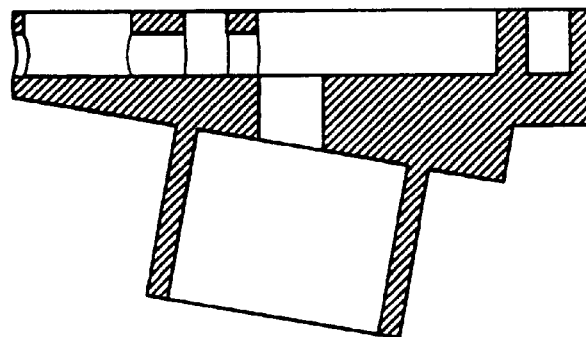


Fig. 9

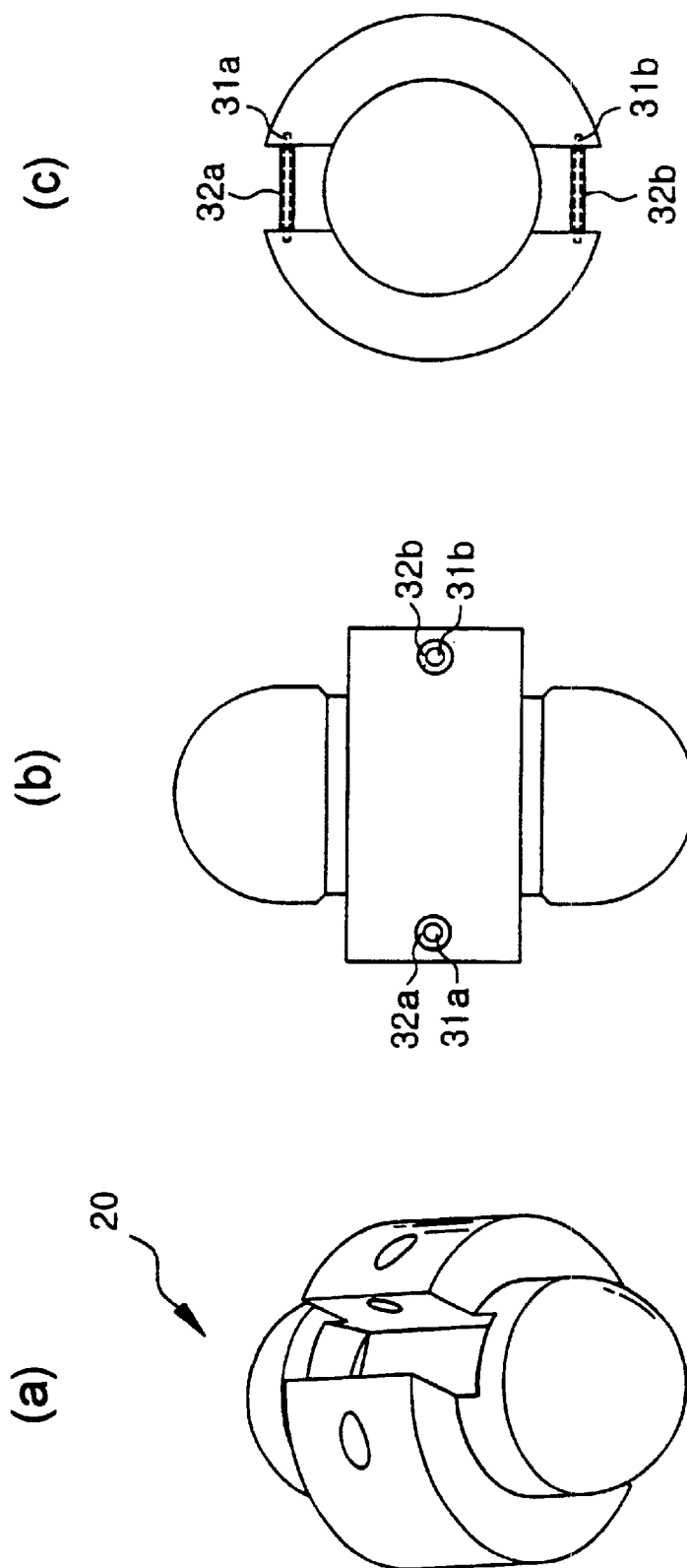


Fig. 10

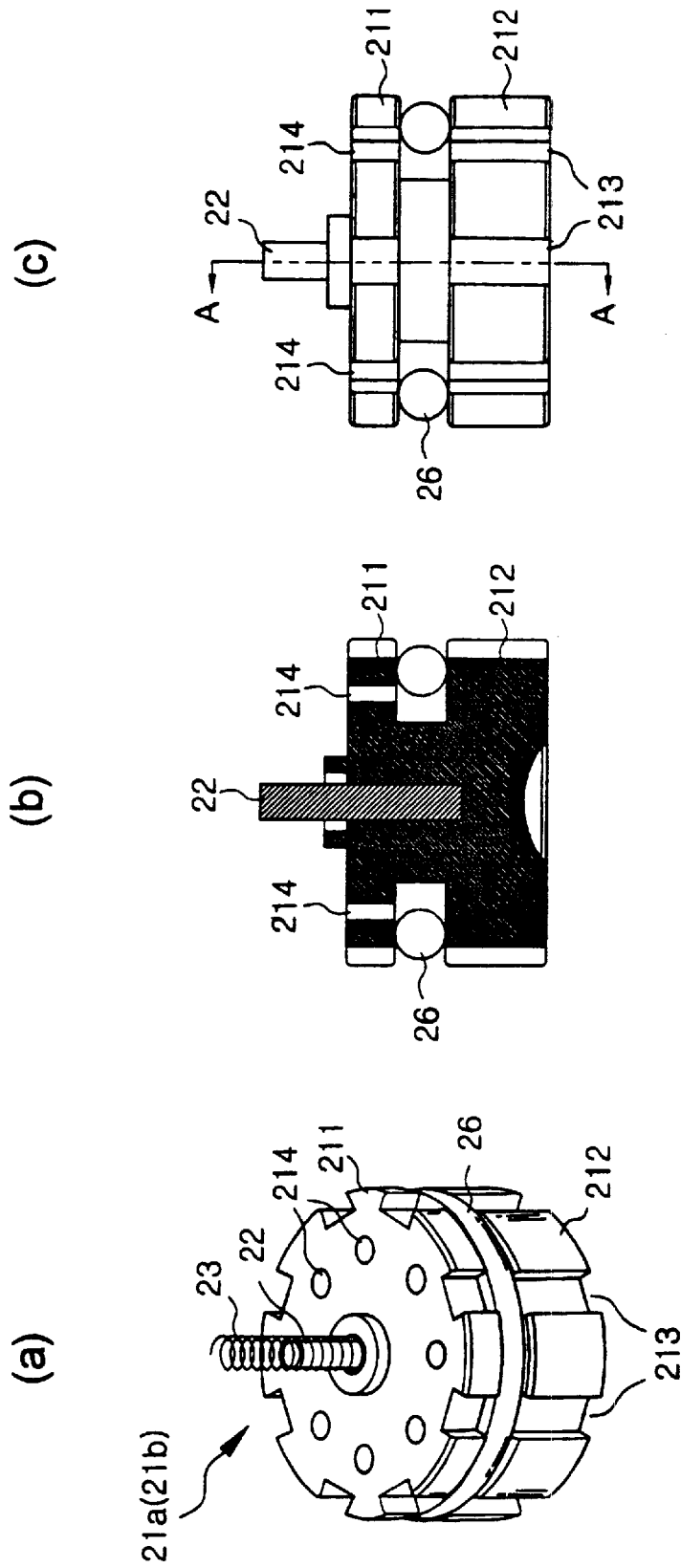


Fig. 11

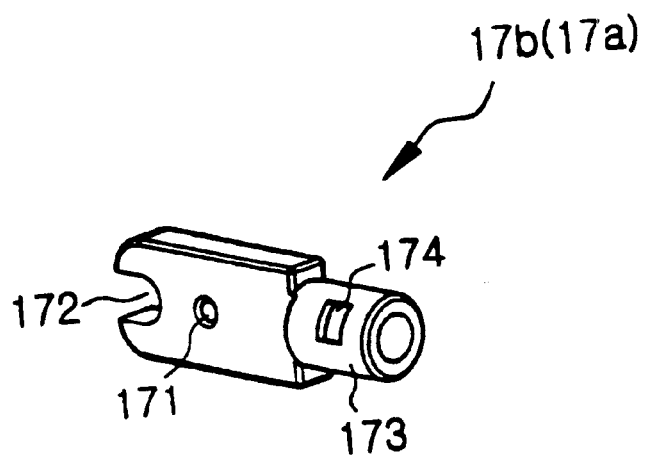


Fig. 12

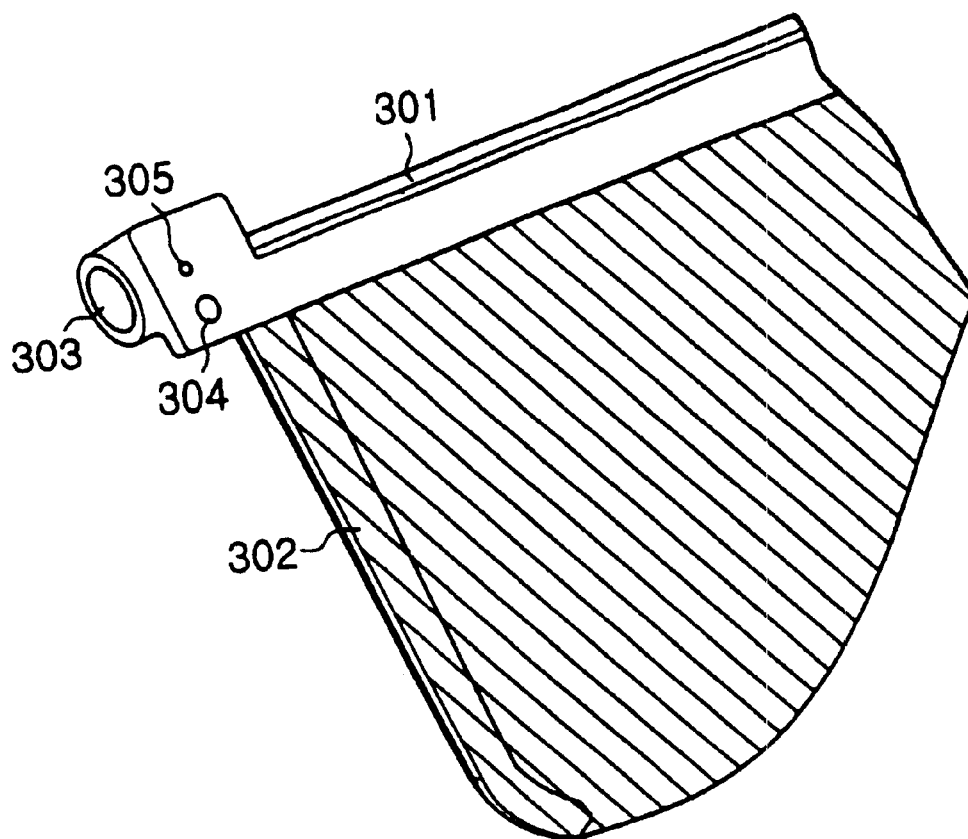
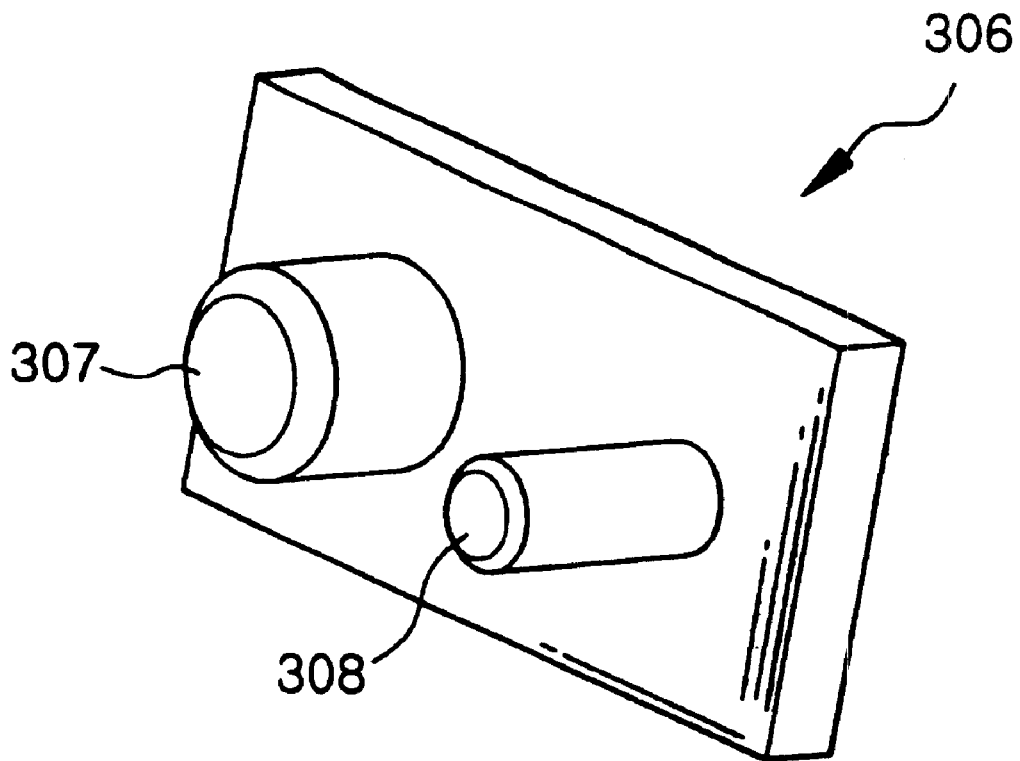


Fig. 13



COMPRESSED AIR ENGINE AND FLYING OBJECT EQUIPPED THEREWITH

This application is a continuation of 10/167,728 filed Jun. 11, 2002, now U.S. Pat. No. 6,530,541 B1 issued Mar. 11, 2003 which claims priority of Application No. 2001-69263 filed Nov. 7, 2001 in Korea, the entirety of which is incorporated herein by reference.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a compressed air engine and a flying object equipped with the air engine, in which a compressed air is injected into a compressed air container, and the compressed air is discharged to operate the engine by the force of the compressed air. More specifically, the present invention relates to a compressed air engine and a flying object equipped with the air engine, in which a compressed air is injected into a compressed air container, and the compressed air is discharged at a certain discharge rate, so that the discharging air would drive the compressed air engine. A pair of wings which are assembled to the compressed air engine are made flapped, and thus, lifting and propulsion forces are generated.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Model planes are a kind of most popular sports articles for adults as well as for children. So far, many kinds of model planes have been manufactured for being used as toys, as sports articles and as recreation articles.

The model planes that have been manufactured so far can be classified into: those having no power-driving means; and those having a power-driving means. The model planes that are provided with the power-driving means include: propeller planes, jet planes, and helicopters with helical wings. They are usually controlled with a radio controller.

The present inventors have been making efforts to get rid of the conception of the conventional model planes to develop a flying object resorting to the flapping motions of wings like birds and insects.

The present inventor utilized the principle that insects and birds fly by the flapping motions of their wings. Thus, a compressed air was injected into a compressed air container to a certain level of pressure, and then, the compressed air was discharged out of the compressed air container, so that a compressed air engine can be operated by the discharge force of the compressed air. Thus two pairs of wings which were assembled to the compressed air engine were made perform the flapping motions, thereby generating lifting and propulsion forces. This was filed for a patent application under Korean Patent Application No. 2000-43618 (filed on Jul. 28, 2000), and based on this, a PCT application was filed under PCT Application No. PCT/KR01/00932 (filed on Jun. 1, 2001).

The present inventor improved the above PCT application to develop a compressed air engine and a flying object equipped with the engine, in which only one pair of wings are provided.

OBJECT OF THE INVENTION

It is an object of the present invention to provide a compressed air engine in which a compressed air is injected into a compressed air container, and the compressed air is discharged at a certain discharge rate to generate a propulsion force, thereby making it possible to fly.

It is another object of the present invention to provide a flying object in which a compressed air is injected into a

compressed air container, and the compressed air is discharged at a certain discharge rate to make a pair of wings perform flapping motions, thereby making it possible to fly.

It is still another object of the present invention to provide a flying object in which a compressed air container and a pair of wings are assembled to the compressed air engine in a simple manner, and if needed, a head part is assembled also in a simple manner, thereby making it possible to use it in a simple manner.

It is still another object of the present invention to provide a flying object in which a portable pump is used to inject the compressed air, thereby making it possible to fly in a simple manner.

It is still another object of the present invention to provide a flying object in which the pair of the wings assembled to the compressed air engine are made flap up and down to generate a propulsion force, thereby making it possible to fly.

It is still another object of the present invention to provide a flying object in which the pair of the wings assembled to the compressed air engine are made flap up and down and perform twisting motions within an angular range of about 15°.

The above objects and other objects are achieved by the present invention which is described in detail below.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In achieving the above objects, the flying object according to the present invention includes: a compressed air engine, the compressed air engine including: a top member **11** provided with an air inlet **16**; an upper cylinder **12** assembled to the top member; a lower cylinder **13** assembled to the upper cylinder; a bottom member **14** assembled to the lower cylinder; an air pipe **15** connected between the top member and the bottom member, for passing of a compressed air; a shuttle **20** for performing up/down movements within a cylinder (consisting of the upper and lower cylinders) so as to make a pair of wings perform flapping motions; and a pair of pistons **21a** and **21b** for performing reciprocating movements over and under the shuttle respectively;

the pair of the wings being symmetrically and pivotally assembled to the shuttle through securing shafts so as to perform up/down movements in accordance with the up/down movements of the shuttle; and

a compressed air container **2** assembled to the bottom of the bottom member, for storing the compressed air.

In the flying object of the present invention, a compressed air is injected into the compressed air container to a certain level of pressure by using a pump, and the compressed air is discharged out of the compressed air container at a certain discharge rate, so that the upper and lower pistons **21a** and **21b** can drive the shuttle **20** up and down so as to make the pair of the wings of the shuttle **20** flap up and down, thereby generating propulsion forces.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The above objects and other advantages of the present invention will become more apparent by describing in detail the preferred embodiment of the present invention with reference to the attached drawings in which:

FIG. **1** is a perspective view of the flying object of the present invention, in which a compressed air container is assembled to the bottom of the compressed air engine, and a pair of wings are assembled to the middle of it, the pair of the wings being at a lowered position here;

FIG. 2 is a schematic perspective view of the flying object in which the pair of the wings are at the lifted position;

FIG. 3 is a sectional view of the compressed air engine, taken along the line A-A' of FIG. 1;

FIG. 4 is a sectional view of the compressed air engine, taken along the line B-B' of FIG. 1;

FIG. 5A is a schematic perspective view of the top member 11, FIG. 5B is its bottom view, FIG. 5C is its sectional view, and FIG. 5D is its right side view;

FIG. 6A is a schematic perspective view of the upper cylinder 12, FIG. 6B is its frontal view, and FIG. 6C is its sectional view;

FIG. 7A is a schematic perspective view of the lower cylinder 13, FIG. 7B is its frontal view, and FIG. 7C is its sectional view;

FIG. 8A is a schematic perspective view of the bottom member 14, FIG. 8B is its plan view, and FIG. 8C is its sectional view;

FIG. 9A is a schematic perspective view of the shuttle 20, FIG. 9B is its frontal view, and FIG. 9C is its plan view;

FIG. 10A is a schematic perspective view of the piston 21, FIG. 10B is its sectional view, and FIG. 10C is its frontal view;

FIG. 11 is a schematic perspective view of one of the arms 17 for connecting the left and right wings respectively;

FIG. 12 is a schematic perspective view of a part of the wings 3 to be assembled to the arm 17; and

FIG. 13 is a schematic perspective view of the cock 306 as a means for assembling each of the wings 3 to each of the arms 17.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

The flying object according to the present invention includes: a compressed air engine 1; a compressed air container 2 assembled to the bottom of the engine body, for storing the compressed air; and a pair of wings 3a and 3b assembled to sides of the engine body, for performing the flapping motions.

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the flying object of the present invention, in which a compressed air container is assembled to the bottom of the compressed air engine, and a pair of wings are assembled to the middle of it, the pair of the wings being at a lowered position here. FIG. 2 is a schematic perspective view of the flying object in which the pair of the wings are at the lifted position.

The compressed air engine 1 includes: a top member 11 provided with an air inlet 16; an upper cylinder 12 assembled to the top member; a lower cylinder 13 assembled to the upper cylinder; a bottom member 14 assembled to the lower cylinder; and an air pipe 15 connected between the top member and the bottom member, for passing of a compressed air.

Within the interior of the engine body, there are accommodated a shuttle and two pistons. When these internal elements perform up/down movements, the pair of the wings perform the flapping motions. These motions are generated when the compressed air is discharged. That is, when the compressed air which has been stored within the compressed air container is discharged at a certain discharge rate, the shuttle and the pistons perform the up/down movements, and accordingly, the pair of the wings 3a and 3b perform the flapping motions.

The compressed air is injected through the air inlet 16 into the compressed air container 2 by using a pump or the like.

That is, the compressed air which is injected by the pump (not illustrated) passes through the top member 11, the air pipe 15 and the bottom member 14 before being stored in the compressed air container 2. After being stored within the compressed air container 2, the compressed air is discharged out to drive the shuttle and the pistons.

The head part of FIGS. 1 and 2 consists of a cap having the form of a dragonfly, an airplane, a doll or the like, thereby completing a product. Here, however, they are neither illustrated nor described, but only the structure and principle of the compressed air engine will be described. The cap of the head part can take various forms, but this can be easily carried out by those ordinarily skilled in the art.

In the compressed air engine of the present invention, the shuttle 20 and the pair of the pistons 21a and 21b are driven within the interior of the engine body, so that the pair of the wings 3a and 3b can perform the flapping motions. This is illustrated in FIG. 3. FIG. 3 is a sectional view of the compressed air engine, taken along the line A-A' of FIG. 1.

As shown in FIG. 3, the compressed air engine 10 includes: a top member 11; an upper cylinder 12; a lower cylinder 13; and a bottom member 14. A shuttle 20 is accommodated at the middle of the cylinder, and the upper and lower pistons 21a and 21b are accommodated over and under the shuttle 20, in such a manner that the pistons should be able to perform the up/down movements. The upper piston 21a, shuttle 20 and lower piston 21b may be formed in one body, if the one body reciprocates well in the upper and lower cylinders 12 and 13. A pin 22a or 22b and a spring 23a or 23b are secured to each of the pistons 21a and 21b, and at the outer end of each of the springs 23a and 23b, there is installed a bead 24a or 24b, for passing/blocking the compressed air. Further, there are provided hollows 25a and 25b for guiding the beads 24a and 24b respectively.

Arms 17a and 17b are pivotally secured to the lower cylinder by means of securing shafts 30a and 30b respectively. Ends of the arms 17a and 17b are assembled to the shuttle 20, and other ends of the arms 17a and 17b are assembled to the pair of the wings respectively, so that the pair of the wings can perform the flapping motions in accordance with the up/down movements of the shuttle 20.

The compressed air passes through the air inlet 16 to enter into the compressed air container 2. The compressed air thus stored in the compressed air container 2 is discharged to drive the shuttle 20 and the pistons 21a and 21b. This actuation principle is illustrated in FIG. 4. FIG. 4 is a sectional view of the compressed air engine, taken along the line B-B' of FIG. 1.

Thus, the compressed air which has been injected through the air inlet 16 by the air pump (not illustrated) passes through the top member 11, the air pipe 15 and the bottom member 14 to be ultimately stored in the compressed air container 2. At the end of the air inlet 16, there is disposed a bead 161. When the compressed air is injected by the pump, the compressed air is injected while pushing the bead 161. When the pump is not activated, the bead 161 closes the air inlet owing to the internal pressure, so that the compressed air would not be discharged to the outside.

In order that the air inlet can be perfectly closed, the bead 161 should be preferably made of a soft rubber, and this can be easily carried out by those ordinarily skilled in the art.

In a state with the compressed air filled into the compressed air container 2, if the wings are hit once with hand, then the pistons 21a and 21b are activated. That is, if the wings 3a and 3b are hit downward once, then the shuttle 20 moves upward to push the piston 21a upward. Under this

condition, the bead **24a** which has been closing the air passage is pushed by the spring **23a**, so that the compressed air passes through the air pipe **15** and the top member **11** to be introduced into the hollow **25a**.

The compressed air which has been introduced into the hollow **25a** pushes the piston **21** a downward, and as a result, the shuttle **20** and the piston **21b** move downward together. When the piston **21b** moves downward, the spring **23b** pushes the bead **24b**, so that the compressed air moves along the bottom member **14** to be introduced into the hollow **25b**. The bottom member can be appropriately adjusted considering the direction of the flying object. This actuation is repeated, and thus, the shuttle **20** and the pistons **21a** and **21b** perform up/down movements until the compressed air within the compressed air container **2** is exhausted.

Now the structure and the operating principle of the compressed air engine will be described in more detail below.

FIG. **5A** is a schematic perspective view of the top member **11**, FIG. **5B** is its bottom view, FIG. **5C** is its sectional view, and FIG. **5D** is its right side view.

As shown in FIG. **5A**, the air inlet **16** is assembled into a hole **116** of the top member **11**, while the air pipe **15** is assembled into the hole **113** of the top member **11**. The upper cylinder **12** is assembled between an outer frame **111** and an inner frame **112**, and there are provided holes **114**, **115** and **118** so that the air can pass through. The air pipe **15** is provided with a hole **151** so as to make the air pass through, and the hole **151** has to be aligned with the hole **114** on a straight line. There is a hole **117** through which the air does not pass, but which is unavoidably formed during the preparation of the die.

FIG. **6A** is a schematic perspective view of the upper cylinder **12**, FIG. **6B** is its frontal view, and FIG. **6C** is its sectional view. As shown in FIGS. **4** and **6**, there are formed two air outlets **27a** and **28a** on the sidewall of the upper cylinder **12**. Around the middle of the piston **21a**, there is inserted an O-ring **26a**. If the piston **21a** comes down to the air outlets **27a** and **28a**, then the compressed air which has been pushing down the piston **21a** is discharged through the air outlets **27a** and **28a** to the outside.

FIG. **7A** is a schematic perspective view of the lower cylinder **13**, FIG. **7B** is its frontal view, and FIG. **7C** is its sectional view.

As shown in FIGS. **4** and **7**, there are formed two air outlets **27b** and **28b** on the sidewall of the lower cylinder **13**. Around the middle of the piston **21b**, there is fitted an O-ring **26b**. If the piston **21b** comes up to the air outlets **27b** and **28b**, then the compressed air which has been pushing up the piston **21b** is discharged through the air outlets **27b** and **28b** to the outside.

At the opposite positions of the lower cylinder **13**, there are formed holes **131a** and **131b** through which securing shafts **30a** and **30b** pass to secure a pair of arms **17a** and **17b** respectively. Meanwhile, apart by 90 angular degrees from the holes **131a** and **131b**, there is formed a hole **132** through which the air pipe **15** passes.

FIG. **8A** is a schematic perspective view of the bottom member **14**, FIG. **8B** is its plan view, and FIG. **8C** is its sectional view.

As shown in FIG. **8A**, the air pipe **15** is assembled to a hole **142** of the bottom member **14**. The lower cylinder **13** is assembled between an outer frame **147** and an inner frame **148**, and there are formed holes **143**, **144** and **145** through which the air passes. Further, the air pipe **15** is provided with

a hole **152** so as to make the air pass through it, and this hole **152** has to be aligned to the hole **143** on a straight line.

There is a hole **146** through which the air does pass, but which is unavoidably formed during the preparation of the die. The compressed air container **2** is assembled to the bottom of the bottom member **14** through its holes **141a** and **141b**. This can be easily carried out by those ordinarily skilled in the art FIG. **9A** is a schematic perspective view of the shuttle **20**, FIG. **9B** is its frontal view, and FIG. **9C** is its plan view.

As shown in FIGS. **3** and **9**, at the middle of the shuttle **20**, there are secured pins **31a** and **31b**, while idlers **31a** and **32b** surround the pins **31a** and **31b** respectively.

A slot **172** of each of the arms **17** is fitted to each of the idlers, so that the arms **17a** and **17b** can be pivoted around securing shafts **30a** and **30b** respectively.

FIG. **10A** is a schematic perspective view of the piston **21**, FIG. **10B** is its sectional view, and FIG. **10C** is its frontal view.

As shown in FIG. **10**, the piston **21** consists of an upper piston portion **211** and a lower piston portion **212**, and between the two piston portions, there is installed an O-ring **26**. On the top of the piston, there are formed a plurality of holes **214**, while on the circumferential surface of the piston, there are formed a plurality of vertical channels **213**.

First, when the piston **21a** comes down owing to the action of the compressed air, the compressed air exerts a pressure through the plurality of the holes **214** to make the O-ring **26a** expanded toward the outside, while the piston **21a** comes down. If the piston comes down so as for the O-ring **26a** to arrive at the positions of the air outlets **27a** and **28a**, then the compressed air is discharged through the air outlets **27a** and **28a**, with the result that the descending of the piston **21a** is stopped. At this moment, the piston **21b** starts its actuation.

This operation is repeated so that the upper and lower pistons **21a** and **21b** would perform the up/down movements alternately. As a result, the shuttle **20** performs the up/down movements repeatedly.

FIG. **11** is a schematic perspective view of one of the arms **17** for connecting the left and right wings respectively.

As shown in FIGS. **3** and **11**, a securing shaft **30** is inserted into a hole **171** of the arm **17**, and thus, the arm **17** is pivotally secured to a side of the lower cylinder **13**. On an end of the arm **17**, there is formed a slot **172** to be assembled around the idler **32**. On the other end of the arm **17**, there is integrally formed a connecting member **173** for connecting the wing **3** to it, and the connecting member **173** is provided with a rectangular slot **174**. The connecting member may be appropriately angled to the arm considering the direction of flying of the flying object. The angle may be preferably in the range of about -50° to about $+50^\circ$ to the arm.

FIG. **12** is a schematic perspective view of a part of the wings **3** to be assembled to the arms **17** respectively.

Wing frames **301** and **302** are integrally formed, and the connecting member **173** of the arm **17** is inserted into a hole **303** of the wing **3**. If the connecting member **173** is inserted into the hole **303**, the connecting member **173** is secured by using a cock **306** of FIG. **13**.

The cock **306** has a fixed pin **307** and a twisting pin **308**, the fixed pin **307** of the cock **306** is tightly coupled to a hole **304** of the wing **3**, while the twisting pin **308** passes through a hole **305** to be coupled to the rectangular slot **174**. The

rectangular slot 174 has a larger cross sectional area than that of the twisting pin 308, and therefore, when the wing 3 performs the flapping motions, it also performs twisting motions within an angular range of about 40°.

Referring to FIGS. 3 and 4, the beads 24a and 24b serves the role of closing/opening the air passages, and therefore, they should be preferably made of a soft rubber. This can be easily carried out by those ordinary skilled in the art.

The pair of the wings which are attached to the compressed air engine are designed such that they should be able to perform the flapping motions within an angular range of about 70°. Further, together with the flapping motions, the wings perform the twisting motions within an angular range of about 40°.

According to the present invention as described above, a compressed air engine is provided in which a compressed air is injected into a compressed air container, and the compressed air is discharged at a certain discharge rate, so that a pair of wings can perform the flapping motions. Further, there is provided a flying object utilizing the compressed air engine, in which the pair of the wings are assembled to the compressed air engine in a simple manner, a head part of a desired shape is assembled also in a simple manner, and an air pump can be used to inject the air into the compressed air engine.

In the above, the present invention was described based on the specific preferred embodiments and the attached drawings, but it should be apparent to those ordinarily skilled in the art that various changes and modifications can be added without departing from the spirit and scope of the present invention, which will be defined in the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A compressed air engine for actuating a first and a second wing in a flapping motion, comprising:
 - a container for holding compressed air;
 - a first and a second piston positioned within an internal volume of the compressed air engine and being in fluid communication with the container on an alternating basis so that the first and second pistons move reciprocally within the internal volume in response to the compressed air; and
 - a shuttle positioned in the internal volume between the first and second pistons so that the shuttle reciprocates with the first and second pistons and the shuttle transmits the reciprocating movement of the first and second pistons to the first and second wings thereby actuating the first and second wings.
2. A flying object comprising a first and a second wing, a container for holding compressed air, and a compressed air engine, the compressed air engine comprising:
 - a first and a second piston positioned within an internal volume of the compressed air engine and being in fluid communication with the container on an alternating basis so that the first and second pistons move reciprocally within the internal volume in response to the compressed air; and
 - a shuttle mechanically coupled to the first and second wings and positioned in the internal volume between the first and second pistons so that the shuttle reciprocates with the first and second pistons and thereby actuates the first and second wings.

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