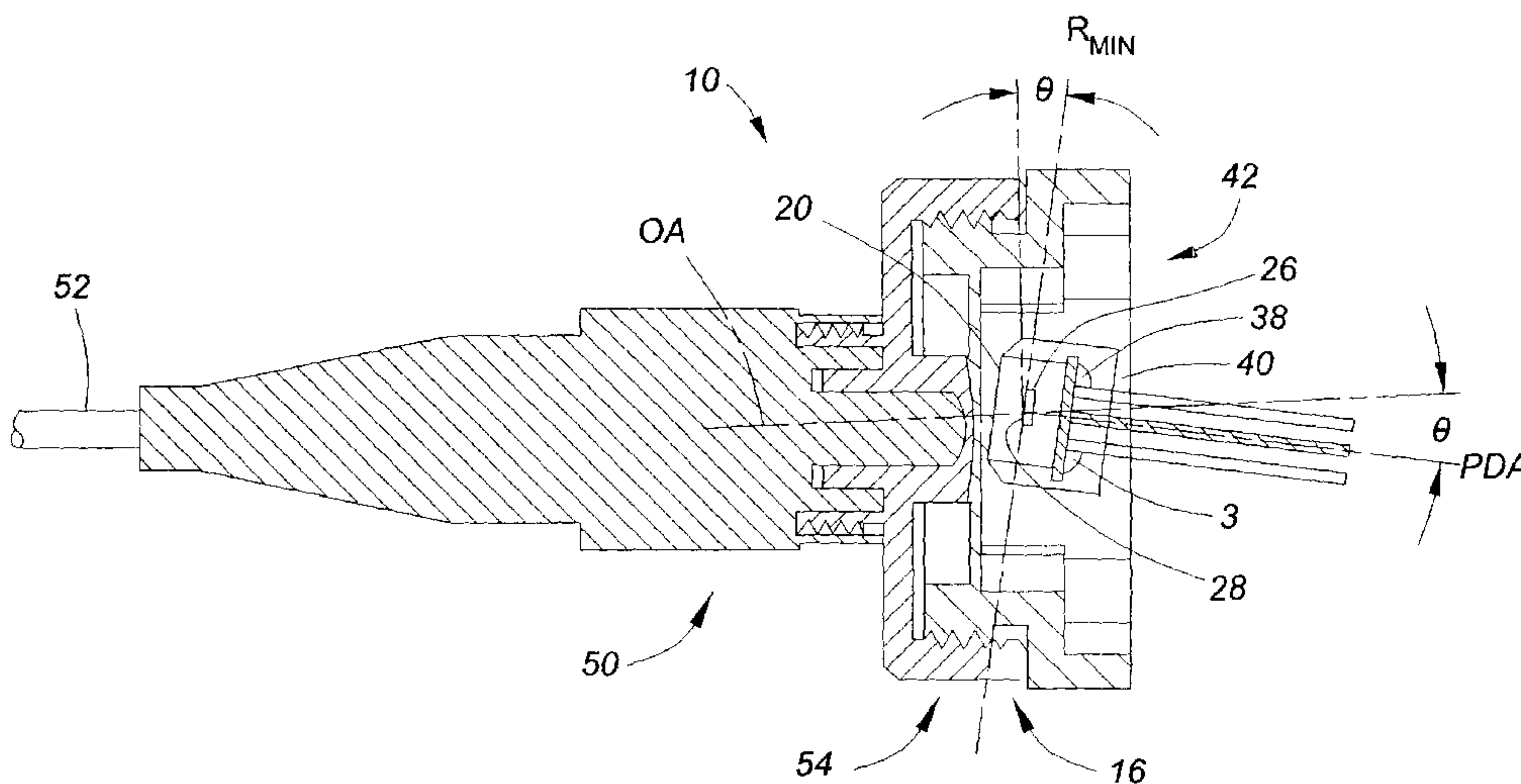




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 (71) Demandeur/Applicant:
 EXFO ELECTRO-OPTICAL ENGINEERING INC., CA
 (72) Inventeurs/Inventors:
 HE, GANG, CA;
 BABIN, FRANCOIS, CA;
 TREMBLAY, MARTIN, CA;
 BRETON, MARC, CA;
 POTVIN, STEEVE, CA;
 SCHINN, GREGORY WALTER, CA
 (74) Agent: ADAMS PATENT & TRADEMARK AGENCY

(54) Titre : DISPOSITIF PHOTODETECTEUR A POLARISATION INDEPENDANTE ET PROCEDE DE FABRICATION DU DISPOSITIF
 (54) Title: POLARIZATION INDEPENDENT PHOTODETECTOR DEVICE AND METHOD OF MAKING SAME



(57) **Abrégé/Abstract:**

A photodetector device comprising a photosensitive detector (12; 22) and one or more interfaces (20', 20'', 28, 98) between dissimilar media is configured so that a light beam (LB) for detection will pass through the interface(s) along a beam axis that is not normal to the interface(s). The deviation θ from the normal will be such that polarization dependent transmission introduced at the interface(s) will compensate for inherent polarization dependence of the detector (12; 96). The deviation may be achieved by inclining the interface(s) relative to a predetermined direction along which the light beam will be incident. Where the photosensitive detector is in a housing (84) with a window (20) through which the light beam enters the housing, the housing can be tilted. In such a case, there are three interfaces, one (28; 98) at the surface of the detector (12; 96), and one at each surface (20', 20'') of the window (20). Alternatively, the detector surface and/or the window could be tilted. Where a pigtail fiber (116) is permanently attached to the photodetector device to input the light beam through an interposed lens (106), the end of the pigtail fiber may be offset laterally from the lens optical axis (LOA) so that the beam axis deviates from the normal by such an angle that the resulting polarization dependent transmission (PDT) substantially corrects for polarization dependent response (PDR) of the photosensitive detector. An end facet of the pigtail fiber, the lens, and/or the window may be inclined so that they are not perpendicular to the propagation direction of the light beam so as to reduce interference and backreflection effects.

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Walter; 8 rue Garneau, Quebec City, Quebec G1R 3V1 (CA).

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(74) Agent: ADAMS, Thomas; P.O. Box 11100, Station H, Ottawa, Ontario K2H 7T8 (CA).

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(71) Applicant: EXFO ELECTRO-OPTICAL ENGINEERING INC. [CA/CA]; 465 Godin Avenue, Vanier, Quebec G1M 3G7 (CA).

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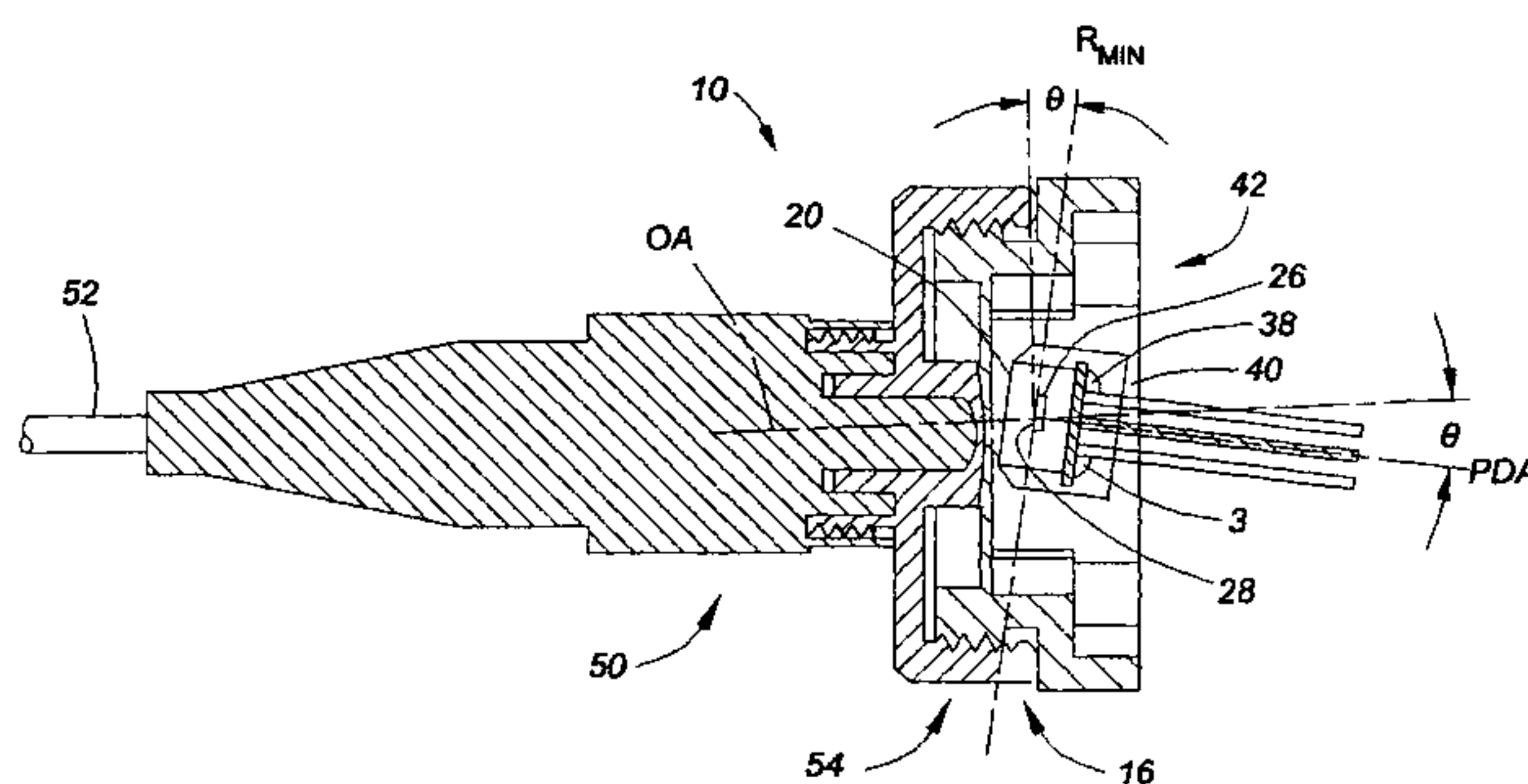
(72) Inventors: HE, Gang; 823 De La Louisiane, Saint-Foy, Quebec G1X 3L4 (CA). BABIN, François; 6806 Des Cannas Street, Charlesbourg, Quebec G1G 6H8 (CA). TREMBLAY, Martin; 400 Julien Road, Apt. 12, St-Marc-des-Carières, Quebec G0A 4B0 (CA). BRETON, Marc; 2305 rue du Calumet, Quebec, Quebec G2B 5G3 (CA). POTVIN, Steeve; 2615 rue du Rhin, Apt. 501, Quebec, Quebec G1P 2Z7 (CA). SCHINN, Gregory,

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(54) Title: POLARIZATION INDEPENDENT PHOTODETECTOR DEVICE AND METHOD OF MAKING SAME



(57) **Abstract:** A photodetector device comprising a photosensitive detector (12; 22) and one or more interfaces (20', 20'', 28, 98) between dissimilar media is configured so that a light beam (LB) for detection will pass through the interface(s) along a beam axis that is not normal to the interface(s). The deviation θ from the normal will be such that polarization dependent transmission introduced at the interface(s) will compensate for inherent polarization dependence of the detector (12; 96). The deviation may be achieved by inclining the interface(s) relative to a predetermined direction along which the light beam will be incident. Where the photosensitive detector is in a housing (84) with a window (20) through which the light beam enters the housing, the housing can be tilted. In such a case, there are three interfaces, one (28; 98) at the surface of the detector (12; 96), and one at each surface (20', 20'') of the window (20). Alternatively, the detector surface and/or the window could be tilted. Where a pigtail fiber (116) is permanently attached to the photodetector device to input the light beam through an interposed lens (106), the end of the pigtail fiber may be offset laterally from the lens optical axis (LOA) so that the beam axis deviates from the normal by such an angle that the resulting polarization dependent transmission (PDT) substantially corrects for polarization dependent response (PDR) of the photosensitive detector. An end facet of the pigtail fiber, the lens, and/or the window may be inclined so that they are not perpendicular to the propagation direction of the light beam so as to reduce interference and backreflection effects.

WO 01/65221 A1

POLARIZATION INDEPENDENT PHOTODETECTOR DEVICE AND
METHOD OF MAKING SAME

DESCRIPTION

5 TECHNICAL FIELD:

The invention relates to photodetector devices, especially semiconductor photodetector devices, and to a method of compensating for polarization dependent response of a photodetector of such a photodetector device. The invention is applicable to so-called "pigtailed" photodetector devices which have an integral optical waveguide,
10 for example an optical fiber, for directing light onto a detection surface of the detector, and to so-called "connectorized" photodetector devices which have means for attachment of a separate optical waveguide.

BACKGROUND ART:

15 Photodetector devices preferred for use in, for example, telecommunications systems, use semiconductor diodes, usually made of germanium or indium gallium arsenide (InGaAs). Where relatively long wavelengths are involved, such as in Dense Wavelength Division Multiplex (DWDM) systems, InGaAs detectors are preferred over germanium detectors because the former exhibit better temperature stability and more
20 uniform sensitivity, especially in the longer wavelength spectral ranges of typical DWDM telecommunications systems. They also have a lower dark current. Both of these kinds of photodetector devices exhibit a response that depends upon the state of polarization (SOP) of the incident light. Unfortunately, however, InGaAs photodetector devices have a relatively high polarization dependent response (PDR) as compared with
25 germanium photodetectors. For InGaAs photodetector devices, the PDR, i.e., the difference between maximum and minimum responses, typically is around 0.02 dB whereas, for germanium photodetectors, the typical PDR is about 0.005 dB. Consequently, when an InGaAs photodetector device is used to measure, for example, polarization dependent loss, the measurement accuracy is limited because of the relatively
30 high PDR of the photodetector device.

An object of the present invention is to at least ameliorate the afore-mentioned problem of polarization dependency of photodetector devices which have a maximum

response to incident light corresponding to a particular substantially linear SOP of that light.

DISCLOSURE OF INVENTION:

5 According to a first aspect of the present invention, there is provided a photodetector device comprising a photosensitive detector having a polarization dependent response having maximum (R_{MAX}) and minimum (R_{MIN}) values corresponding to substantially linear states of polarization of light incident thereupon that are orthogonal to each other, and at least one interface through which a light beam for detection passes
10 before being incident upon a detection surface of the detector, the arrangement being such that the light beam traverses said at least one interface with a propagation direction that deviates from the normal to the interface so as to introduce polarization dependent transmission to compensate at least partially for the polarization dependent response of the photosensitive detector.

15 In one embodiment of the first aspect of the invention, the device has a window whereby, in use, the light is directed onto the detection surface, the detection surface and opposite surfaces of the window providing three said interfaces, cumulatively providing the compensation for polarization dependent response.

 The photodetector device may have a connector part for releasably attaching to
20 the device a waveguide for directing the light to said window along an optical axis (OA) of the waveguide, each of said three interfaces being at an acute angle to said optical axis.

 The window may be fixed generally parallel to the detector surface and both tilted to the required degree, in which case three interfaces will provide the required
25 compensation. Alternatively, the detection surface may be substantially normal to the propagation direction of the light when incident thereupon and opposite surfaces of the window provide two said interfaces that cumulatively provide the compensation for polarization dependent response.

 The photodetector device may be mounted to a mount with its maximum response
30 axis having a predetermined orientation relative to a reference surface of the mount. The mount may then be installed on or in the connector part so as to allow tilting of the mount about the maximum response axis or an axis parallel thereto. The connector part may be part of, or fitted to, equipment in which the photodetector device is to be used.

This arrangement allows PDR compensation to be provided after the photodetector device has already been assembled.

Alternatively, the interface may comprise an angled end surface of a waveguide, typically an optical fiber, through which the light is directed onto the detector, either
5 directly or by way of another interface provided by a said window or an intervening lens. In the latter case, the required polarization dependent transmission effect would be provided cumulatively by the interfaces.

In a further embodiment of the first aspect of the invention, the photodetector device comprises a photodetector, a lens and an input optical fiber for directing a light
10 beam, in use, through the lens and onto the detection surface, the optical fiber having its end from which the light beam emerges secured relative to the lens with a lateral displacement relative to the lens optical axis so that the optical axis of the light beam when leaving the lens will be inclined relative to the lens optical axis by such an angle that polarization dependent transmission introduced thereby substantially corrects for
15 polarization dependent response of the photodetector *per se*.

According to a second aspect of the present invention, there is provided a photodetector device comprising a photosensitive detector and a fiber waveguide for directing a light beam for detection onto a detection surface of the detector, the waveguide being fixed relative to the detector and having an end face facing the detection
20 surface, the end face being inclined by such an angle that polarization dependent transmission effects introduced by the end face at least partially compensate for polarization dependent response of the detector.

According to a third aspect of the invention, there is provided a method of correcting for polarization dependent response of a photodetector device comprising a
25 photosensitive detector having a maximum response (R_{MAX}) corresponding to linear state of polarization of light incident thereupon via at least one interface between media having different refractive indices, the interface intersecting a propagation direction in which, in use, a light beam for detection will be incident upon a detection surface of the detector, the method comprising the steps of:

30 determining orientation of either or both of a maximum response axis and minimum response axis that correspond to states of polarization of incident light for which the response of the photodetector is a maximum or minimum, respectively; and

adjusting an angle between the propagation direction and the interface in a plane of the maximum response axis such that polarization dependent transmission introduced by the interface at least partially compensates for polarization dependent response of the detector.

5 The reference to a direction in which a light beam will, in use, be incident upon the detector is intended to take account of the fact that the light beam may be collimated or divergent. In each case, the light beam will be substantially symmetrical about its beam/cone axis which, preferably, extends substantially parallel to the optical axis and intersects the detector at or near its geometrical centre; otherwise the detector must be
10 considerably wider than the beam spot.

The determination of the maximum response axis of the photosensitive detector may comprise the steps of directing a substantially symmetrical, polarized light beam onto the detector and monitoring a corresponding output signal of the detector; varying the state of polarization between a substantial number of possible states; identifying
15 either or both of maximum and minimum values of the detector output signal; and, while maintaining that state of polarization which provided the maximum or minimum value, analyzing the light to determine the orientation of the maximum response axis of the detector.

Preferably, the light beam is collimated, though it could be converging or
20 diverging.

The accuracy of the determination will depend upon the number of polarization states selected. While it would be possible to use the subset comprising linear SOPs, the polarization controller permits the selection of substantially all of the points on a Poincaré sphere. Such variable polarization controllers are well known.

25 While it is preferable to use a highly-polarized light beam, it is possible to use any light beam having a significant non-zero degree of polarization.

Accordingly, an alternative embodiment of the third aspect of the invention is a method of determining the maximum-response-axis response of the photosensitive detector comprising the steps of directing linearly polarized light onto the detector along
30 the optical axis, repeatedly rotating the SOP of the linearly polarized light beam about the optical axis, tilting the at least one interface relative to the optical axis and about the maximum response axis, and determining said angle for which the difference between maximum and minimum responses of the photodetector is substantially minimal.

The subsequent determination of the required tilt angle may comprise the steps of directing linearly polarized light onto the detector along the optical axis, repeatedly rotating the SOP of the linearly polarized light beam about the optical axis, tilting the interface relative to the optical axis and about the maximum response axis, and
5 determining the tilt angle for which the difference between maximum and minimum responses of the photodetector is substantially minimal.

Alternatively, the required tilt angle may be determined by the steps of: directing a polarized light beam onto the detector and monitoring a corresponding output signal of the detector; varying the state of polarization between a substantial number of possible
10 states; and varying the angle of the interface to select an angle for which the difference between the maximum and minimum values of the output signal is substantially minimal, the selected angle being said tilt angle.

The photodetector device may be mounted rotatably in a mount while its maximum response axis is being determined and, once the maximum response axis is
15 known, secured to the mount with the maximum response axis having a known orientation relative to a reference surface of the mount. The mount then may be used to install the photodetector into a holder or other part of, or for assembly to, the equipment with which the photodetector is to be used. Once the mount is installed, the tilt angle can be determined by directing a linearly polarized light beam onto the detector
20 along said optical axis; repeatedly rotating the SOP of the linearly polarized light beam about the optical axis, tilting the mount relative to the holder and about the maximum response axis and measuring the output of the photodetector so as to determine the tilt angle at which the difference between maximum and minimum responses of the photodetector is minimal, whereupon the mount can be secured to the holder so as to
25 maintain that tilt angle.

The interface may be at the surface of the photosensitive detector or at a surface of a window through which the light to be detected is incident upon the photosensitive detector. Such a window may provide two such interfaces.

In one embodiment of the third aspect of the invention, the photosensitive detector
30 is housed in a housing having such a window; the step of tilting the interface involves tilting the window relative to the detector surface, and the securing step then involves fixing the window relative to the housing. This method is suitable for use during manufacture of the photodetector device.

In an alternative embodiment of the third aspect of the invention, the detector and window are fixed relative to each other in a housing of the photodetector device and the step of tilting the interface involves tilting of the housing, so that the window and the detector surface are tilted together. This method is suitable for use after the
5 photodetector device has been manufactured.

According to a fourth aspect of the invention, a method of assembling a photodetector device according to such further embodiment comprises the steps of directing a polarized light beam onto the detector and varying the state of polarization of the light beam between a large number of possible states; adjusting the displacement
10 of the optical fiber transversely relative to the optical axis of the lens while monitoring the difference between maximum and minimum values of the detector output signal; and fixing the optical fiber relative to the lens at a transverse displacement corresponding to the difference being a minimum.

Hence, in this case, it is not necessary to determine the maximum and minimum
15 polarization dependent response axes of the detector beforehand.

Preferably, the light beam emerging from the lens is substantially collimated, though it could be converging or diverging.

The accuracy of the adjustment will depend upon the number of polarization states selected. While it would be possible to use the subset comprising linear SOPs, the
20 polarization controller permits the selection of substantially all of the points on a Poincaré sphere. The variable polarization controller may comprise a polarization scrambler for randomly varying the SOP, or a controller which varies the SOP systematically. Such polarization controllers are well known.

While it is preferable to use a highly-polarized light beam, it is possible to use
25 any light beam having a significant non-zero degree of polarization.

In one embodiment of the fourth aspect of the invention, the detector is mounted in a housing of the photodetector device and the lens is attached to the housing so as to direct light onto the detector through an opening in the housing. The lens receives the light from a fiber waveguide which then is offset laterally with respect to the optical axis
30 of the lens to vary the angle at which the light impinges upon the detector surface.

According to a further aspect of the invention, there is provided a method of correcting for polarization dependent response of a photodetector device comprising a photosensitive detector (26;96) having a maximum response (R_{MAX}) corresponding to

linear state of polarization of light incident thereupon via at least one interface (20',20'',28,98) between media having different refractive indices, the interface intersecting a propagation direction in which, in use, a light beam for detection will be incident upon a detection surface (28;98) of the detector (26; 96), the photosensitive
5 detector having a photodetector axis (PDA) perpendicular to its detection surface, the method comprising the steps of:

with the photodetector device mounted rotatably in a connector part (16) with said photodetector axis (PDA) extending at an arbitrary acute angle (Θ) to an optical axis (OA) of said connector part, directing polarized light onto the detection surface (28;98);

10 while varying the state of polarization of the light successively between a substantial number of points on the Poincaré sphere, monitoring an electrical output signal from the photosensitive detector (26;96) and registering the difference between maximum and minimum values thereof;

rotating the photodetector device (12) step by step using the photodetector axis
15 (PDA) as a rotation axis, at each step, registering the difference between the maximum and minimum response and determining the rotation angle for which the difference is a minimum;

while maintaining said rotation angle constant, varying the state of polarization again through a substantial number of points on the Poincaré sphere, monitoring the
20 output of the photosensitive detector (26;96), adjusting the acute angle (Θ) with respect to the optical axis (OA), in a step by step manner, and determining the acute angle at which the difference between the maximum and minimum values is a minimum; and

securing the photodetector device to the connector part (16) to maintain said rotation angle and said acute angle at which the difference between the maximum and
25 minimum values is a minimum.

Typically, the acute angle is between 5 degrees and 8 degrees.

Embodiments of the various aspects of the present invention will now be described by way of example only and with reference to the accompanying drawings.

30 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS:

Figure 1 is an exploded perspective view of a photodetector assembly assembled by a method according to a first embodiment of the invention;

Figure 2 is an exploded plan view of the assembly of Figure 1;

Figure 3 is a cross-sectional plan view of the photodetector assembly with the parts assembled;

Figure 4 illustrates tilting of the surface of a photosensitive detector and a window through which light is incident upon the surface;

5 Figure 5 illustrates, schematically, equipment for determining maximum response axis;

Figure 6 is a simplified cross-sectional plan view of a photodetector device according to a second embodiment of the invention;

Figures 7 and 8 illustrate further modifications of the device;

10 Figure 9 is a schematic side elevation of an alternative photodetector assembly assembled by a method according to another aspect of the invention;

Figures 10(a) and 10(b) depict, from the side and one end, the orientations of the various optical axes of the components of the device of Figure 9;

Figure 11 illustrates equipment used in adjusting the device of Figure 9 during
15 manufacture;

Figure 12 illustrates a first modification of the device of Figure 11;

Figures 13 and 14 illustrates further modifications of the device of Figure 11; and

Figure 15 illustrates a photodetector device assembled by yet another method.

20 BEST MODE(S) FOR CARRYING OUT THE INVENTION:

Referring to Figures 1, 2 and 3, a photodetector assembly 10 comprises a photodetector device 12, a mount in the form of a bracket 14 and a holder 16, the latter for securing the photodetector device 12 to a panel (not shown) of, for example, a piece of equipment such as an optical power meter. The photodetector device 12 has a
25 generally cylindrical housing 18 having at one end a glass window 20 and, protruding from its other end, a pair of conductors 22 and 24. As shown in Figure 3, within the housing 18, a photosensitive detector 26, specifically an InGaAs photodiode, is positioned with its light-detecting surface 28 parallel to the glass window 20. The bracket 14 is L-shaped with a pair of perpendicular arms 30 and 32. A cylindrical hole
30 34 extends through the arm 30 and is large enough to receive the photodetector housing 18. When the photodetector device 12 is inserted fully, a lip 36 protruding radially around the rearmost edge of the housing 18 abuts the bracket arm 30. The other arm 32 has a pair of holes 38 whereby it can be attached to a sidewall 40 of a recess 42

(Figure 3) in one side of a flat portion 44 of the holder 16 by screws (not shown). A cylindrical boss 46 protrudes from the opposite side of the plate 44 and has an external screwthread. In use, the holder 16 will be attached to the outside of the instrument's panel and secured by screws (not shown) extending through holes 48 in the flat portion 5 44. A fiber connector 50, of known construction, is used to connect an optical fiber 52 to the holder 16 by way of an adapter 54. The fiber connector 50 has at one end a ferrule 56 to which the optical fiber 52 is connected, and a surrounding sleeve 58 which is screwthreaded internally. The adapter 54 has a key slot 55 to engage a corresponding key (not shown) of the connector 50. This allows use with industry standard connectors.

10 The adapter 54 is used because the diameter of the sleeve 58 is less than the diameter of the screwthreaded boss 46 of the holder 16. The adapter 54 comprises a first cylindrical portion 60 which has an internal screwthread matching that of the boss 46 and a second, smaller cylindrical portion 62 which has an external screwthread matching that of the sleeve 58. When the adapter 54 is screwed onto the boss 46 and 15 the fiber connector 50 attached to the adapter 54 by screwing the sleeve 58 onto the adapter 54, the cylindrical axis of the optical fiber 52 is aligned with the cylindrical axis of the holder 16.

As can be seen more clearly in Figure 3, the bracket 14 is mounted onto the sidewall 40 of recess 42 in the holder 16 so that the surface 28 of the photodiode 26 and 20 the surfaces 20'; 20" of the glass window 20 are not perpendicular to the optical axis OA extending through the holder 16 and the optical fiber 52. A light beam leaving the optical fiber 52 will be substantially symmetrical about the optical axis OA, and so will be incident upon the glass window 20 and the surface 28 of the photodiode 26 in a propagation direction which is not normal to them.

25 The window 20 and surface 28 both are tilted about an axis which is coincident with, or parallel to, a maximum response axis of the photosensitive detector 26. The angle θ through which the glass window 20 and the surface 28 are tilted from the normal to optical axis OA will depend upon the inherent polarization-dependent response of the photosensitive detector 26.

30 It is known that tilting an interface between two light-transmissive media relative to the direction of incidence of a light beam will introduce polarization dependency. As illustrated in Figure 4, light incident upon the photodiode 26 will traverse three such

interfaces, namely the air/glass and glass/air interfaces 20' and 20'', respectively, at opposite sides of the window 20 and the air/surface 28 interface of the photodiode 26 itself. Tilting of the bracket 14 causes all three interfaces to tilt relative to the optical axis of fiber 52, and hence to the direction in which the light will be incident upon the photodiode 26. Because the refractive index of the semiconductor medium is higher than most glasses, and in particular the glass plate 20, the effect of the polarization dependency induced by the interface at surface 28 is considerably less than the effect of the polarization dependency introduced by tilting of the air-glass/glass-air interfaces 20', 20''.

In order to determine the axis about which the interfaces 20' 20'', 28 are to be tilted, the PDR of the photodetector 12 is measured before assembly of the parts shown in Figures 1 to 3. Three procedures for doing so will be described, the first using equipment as illustrated schematically in Figure 5. The equipment comprises a light source 64, for example a laser, for supplying highly polarized light to a polarization controller 66 which varies, in time, the state of polarization of the light and supplies the polarized light via an optical fiber 68 to a collimating lens 70, for example a GRIN lens, which directs the collimated light onto the photodetector 12. A polarizer 72 can be inserted into the collimated beam and rotated, as will be described later. The conductors 22 and 24 of the photodetector 12 are coupled to a meter 74, for example an ammeter, which measures and displays the output signal of the photodetector 12. Where the photodetector 12 is part of an optical power meter, the meter 74 could comprise the electronics and display of the optical power meter. The photodetector 12 is mounted rotatably in the bracket 14, which is not shown in Figure 5 for clarity.

To determine the maximum response axis, the polarization controller 66 is adjusted, without the polarizer 72 in the collimated beam, to vary the polarization state of the input light beam so as to select randomly substantially all possible states of polarization i.e., points on the Poincaré sphere. While this is happening, the meter 74 is monitored and the maximum and minimum levels of the output signal are noted. It has been found that, generally, the maximum and minimum values will correspond to two orthogonal states of polarization. Consequently, once one has been found, the other can be inferred. The output of the polarization controller 66 then is held steady at the state of polarization for which the maximum (or minimum) was detected and the polarizer 72 is inserted into the collimated beam and used as an analyzer to determine

the orientation of linear SOP of the light from the controller 66. This, the polarizer 72 is rotated until it is aligned with the SOP of the light from the controller 66 corresponding to a maximum reading, or perpendicular to the SOP, corresponding to a minimum, substantially zero, reading. The orientation of the state of polarization of the
5 polarizer 72 then is transferred to the photodetector 12 as the maximum response axis R_{MAX} , or the minimum response axis R_{MIN} as the case may be. With the minimum response axis R_{MIN} parallel to the outermost surface of arm 32 of the bracket 14 (see Figure 3), and the maximum response axis R_{MAX} orthogonal thereto, the photodetector
10 12 is glued to the bracket 14. The surface of the arm 32 then can be used as the reference when mounting the photodetector 12 to the holder 16 and tilting the bracket 14.

An advantage of this procedure is that it can be used to confirm that the detector does indeed have a maximum response axis corresponding to a substantially linear SOP. Thus, if rotating the polarizer through 90 degrees from the maximum response axis does
15 not cause substantial extinction, the PDR of the detector is not characterized by substantially linear SOP response axes.

While the above-described method is preferred because the polarization controller 66 allows substantially all polarization states to be selected, it is possible to determine the maximum response axis in other ways, for example, only linear SOPs could be used,
20 as described below:

- (i) The photodetector 12 is inserted into the hole 34 in the L-shaped bracket 14 until its lip 36 abuts the bracket and the bracket 14 then is supported in a jig (not shown). At this stage, the photodetector 12 can be rotated in the hole 34.
- 25 (ii) A linearly-polarized light beam is directed onto the surface 28 of the photodiode 26 along an axis that is substantially normal to the surface 28.
- (iii) Relative rotation of the state of polarization of the light beam relative to the photodiode 26 is effected by rotating either the SOP of the light beam or the detector about the normal axis and the photodetector response is
30 measured at different angles of rotation.
- (iv) The orientations of the maximum response axis R_{MAX} and minimum response axis R_{MIN} are determined. (Because they are orthogonal, determination of one also gives the other.)

- (v) The photodetector 12 is secured to the bracket 14, conveniently using adhesive, with the minimum response axis R_{MIN} parallel to a reference surface of the bracket 14, specifically the outermost surface of arm 32.

As shown in Figure 3, the axis of minimum response R_{MIN} now extends in or
5 parallel to the plane of surface 28 and substantially parallel to the outermost surface of
arm 32 of bracket 14. The axis of maximum response R_{MAX} (not shown in Figure 3) also
lies in the plane of surface 28 but orthogonal to minimum response axis R_{MIN} . In Figure
3, therefore, the maximum response axis R_{MAX} extends out of the paper. Once the
maximum response axis has been determined, It is necessary to determine the angle at
10 which the photodetector 12 (and hence the interfaces) must be tilted to compensate for
the inherent polarization dependency of the photodiode 26. For this, the assembly of
parts shown in Figures 1 and 2 is used, but with the fiber 52 connected to the
polarization controller 66 and light source 64 of Figure 5.

Using a suitable jig (not shown), the bracket 14 is positioned upon the sidewall
15 40 of recess 42 in the holder 16 so that the surface 28 of the photodiode 26 is generally
aligned with the optical axis extending through the centre of the holder 16. At this stage,
the bracket 14 is not fixed.

The fiber connector 50 is attached to the holder 16 by means of the adapter 54
and polarized light is directed from the fiber 50 onto the surface 28. The polarized light
20 may be supplied by the source 64 and polarization controller 66 used to determine the
maximum response axis, as described with reference to Figure 5. The polarization
controller 66 is adjusted to vary the SOP of the polarized light to generate, in time,
substantially all of the possible states of polarization of the light beam, i.e., for a
representative number of points on the Poincaré sphere. Preferably, this adjustment of
25 the polarization controller 66 is under automatic control.

While the SOP is varying, the bracket 14 is tilted step-by-step and the output of
meter 74 is monitored. It will be observed that the difference between the maximum and
minimum values of the output signal will vary according to the angle of the detector 12,
specifically of the interfaces at the surfaces of the glass window and the semiconductor
30 device, respectively. For one tilt angle, the difference will be a minimum. The bracket
14 will be secured to the holder 16 at this tilt angle.

Just as there were other ways of determining the orientation of the maximum response axis, there are other ways of determining the required tilt angle. One using only linear SOPs will now be described.

As before, with the photodetector 12 glued in place, the bracket 14 is positioned on the holder 16 and linearly-polarized light from the polarization controller 66 directed onto the photosensitive detector 26.

The SOP of the linearly-polarized light beam is rotated about the optical axis and the bracket 14 tilted relative to the holder 16 about the maximum response axis R_{MAX} (or an axis parallel thereto), and the response of the photodetector 12 measured so as to determine a tilt angle θ at which the difference between maximum and minimum responses of the photodetector is a minimum. The bracket 14 then is fixed, preferably adhered, to the sidewall 40 of the holder 14 so as to maintain that tilt angle θ .

As illustrated in Figure 4, both the glass window 20 and the surface 28 of the detector diode 26 then are inclined relative to the direction along which light from the optical fiber 52 will be incident upon the diode 26.

It should be noted that, in Figures 2 and 3, the size of tilt angle θ is exaggerated for purposes of illustration. A typical tilt angle θ might be about 5 - 7 degrees. The direction of tilt will be such that the effective response of the photodetector 12 along the respective axes R_{MAX} and R_{MIN} will be equalized, i.e., the overall PDR of the photodetector device 12 will be substantially uniform.

An alternative method for aligning the photodetector device, slightly different from the above-described method, does not involve insertion of a linear polarized analyzer to determine the maximum (or minimum) response axis, but may use all of the other components of Figures 1, 2 and 3, with the exception of the "L bracket" 14. Referring to Figure 15, the photodetector 12 is inserted loosely into a hole 120 in the connector part 16 and supported by a suitable jig 121 which can be used to rotate it around the photodetector axis PDA and tilt it to vary angle θ . Initially, the angle θ is set to an arbitrary angle θ with respect to the optical beam propagation axis (OA) in Figures 3 and 4). A typical value of this arbitrary tilt angle would be 5 to 6 degrees. The conductors 22 and 24 of the photodetector device 12 are coupled to the electronics of an optical power meter 74 or to an ammeter. Using a polarization controller, the SOP of the light from a light source 64 is varied in such a way as to cover, in time, substantially all of the points on the Poincaré sphere. While the SOP is varying, the

signal from the photodetector device 12 is monitored with the meter 74 and the difference between the maximum and minimum values during successive intervals of about 30 seconds is registered. Using the jig, the photodetector device is rotated, step by step, with the photodetector device axis (PDA) as the axis of rotation, i.e. perpendicular to the photodetector surface 28. At each step, the difference between the maximum and minimum response is registered, and the azimuthal orientation for which the difference is a minimum is the orientation for which the maximum response axis, R_{MAX} , is perpendicular to the plane containing the axes OA and PDA. The photodetector device 12 is held at this rotation angle and, using the jig, the photodetector device 12 is tilted with respect to the optical axis, OA, in a step by step manner, to vary the angle θ , while monitoring the output of the photodetector 12 again. When a minimum is reached in the registered difference between the maximum and minimum values, the PDR of the photodetector device should then be minimum. The photodetector device 12 is then glued to the holder, i.e., connector part, 16 by injecting adhesive 122 between the sides of the housing 18 and the hole 120. In effect, the first "roll" measurement determines the orientation of the maximum-response axis and the subsequent "pitch" adjustment is used to minimize the PDR of the photodetector device 12.

The invention is predicated upon the fact that the maximum and minimum responses correspond to orthogonal, substantially linear SOPs, and that the geometric orientation of these axes with respect to the material of the detector is constant with respect to time. The invention is further predicated upon the fact that the transmission of light through an optical interface between two media having different refractive indices (e.g. air-glass) is polarization dependent if the light is not incident upon the interface along the normal to the interface. This arises because the reflection of the light beam at the interface is polarization dependent, so, by conservation of energy, the transmitted portion of the light beam also is polarization dependent. An incident light beam having a linear SOP lying in the plane of reflection ("p" polarization) will be preferentially transmitted past the interface as compared with a light beam having a linear SOP perpendicular to the plane of reflection ("s" polarization). For the case of a light beam passing through a glass plate, this polarization dependency is effectively doubled because of the presence of two air-glass interfaces. Likewise, the fraction of the light absorbed (i.e., transmitted past the interface at the surface of the semiconductor material) by a tilted semiconductor detector (e.g. InGaAs) is polarization dependent, with the

portion having "p" polarization being absorbed preferentially as compared with the portion having "s" polarization. However, on account of the higher refractive index of the semiconductor medium compared with most glasses, this polarization dependence is less marked than with transmission through an air-glass interface at the same tilt angle.

5 It is possible, therefore, to select a tilt angle θ such that the polarization dependency introduced by the interface(s) compensates for the inherent polarization dependency of the photosensitive detector. Consequently, the above-described embodiment of the invention may be applied after the detector and the window have been assembled into the usual housing 18 and the window 20 has been fixed substantially
10 parallel to the surface 28 of the photodiode 26.

Figure 6 illustrates a photodetector 12' which has been corrected for polarization dependent response during manufacture. The maximum response axis R_{MAX} and the tilt angle θ could be determined using the procedures described above, but during manufacture, of course, the response of the detector may be measured with or without
15 the window in place. In the photodetector 12' shown in Figure 6, the photodetector surface 28 is normal to the direction in which light will be incident upon it and the window 20 is tilted by the required tilt angle θ relative to the detector surface 28 as well as the optical axis. The photodetector 12' will be polarization independent and so may be used without further tilting of the window 20 or housing 18. Hence since there would
20 be no need to tilt the photodetector 12' when installing it into the usual holder 14, the bracket 14 could be omitted and the photodetector device 12' inserted directly into a suitable hole in the holder 16.

It should also be appreciated that, during manufacture of the photodetector device 12', both the window 20 and the photodiode 26, or only the photodiode 26, could be
25 installed with the required inclination to the maximum response axis of the photosensitive detector 26. Whether or not both the window 20 and the detector surface 28 were tilted would depend upon the level of the inherent polarization dependent response. It should be appreciated, however, that tilting the window would give a greater amount of correction than tilting the detector surface because the window provides two interfaces,
30 namely air/glass and glass/air. It should also be noted that, preferably, the opposite faces of the window are not parallel but rather converge very slightly, i.e. to form a wedge-shaped window, so as to avoid interference effects.

It should be appreciated that the interface need not be within the housing of the photodetector device, but could be provided by a separate part, e.g. a glass plate or the like, disposed upstream in the optical path.

Thus, the invention embraces a photodetector having either or both of its detector
5 surface and a window tilted relative to an optical axis of the device so that it is substantially independent of polarization state; a photodetector secured to a bracket or other mount with some indication as to the orientation of the maximum response axis of the detector, enabling the mount to be installed into equipment and the photodetector tilted to effect the required compensation; and an assemblage of a photodetector and a
10 holder for attaching it to equipment for use.

It should also be appreciated that some combinations of fiber connector 50 and panel holder 16 may screw together directly, in which case an adapter 54 will not be needed.

It is further envisaged that, as illustrated in Figure 7, where the photodetector
15 device has a pigtail fiber 116 permanently attached, typically by means of a capillary 112, the required PDT for compensating for the PDR of the detector 26 could be introduced by angling the end facet of the fiber 116 relative to the optical axis. The angle of the fiber end surface would be predetermined according to the PDR value of the detector 26, conveniently measured using the method described herein. The correct
20 compensation then would be achieved by rotating one or other of the fiber 112 and the detector 26 relative to the other around the optical axis OA to align the orientation of the angle relative to the maximum response direction R_{MAX} or minimum response direction R_{MIN} . The window 20 also would provide some correction.

As shown in Figure 8, however, the window 20 could be omitted and the
25 capillary 112 secured within the opening in place of the window 20. The required correction then would be provided solely by the single interface at the angled end of the fiber 112.

It should also be appreciated that, where the photodetector device has a pigtail fiber permanently attached during manufacture, the required polarization dependent
30 transmission could be introduced by a suitable lateral displacement of the waveguide relative to the optical axis of a lens through which the light beam will pass to the detector. Embodiments of such a photodetector device, and its method of manufacture/adjustment, will now be described with reference to Figures 9 to 14.

Referring to Figures 9, 10(a) and 10(b), a photodetector device 80 comprises a base 82 and a cup-shaped housing 84 attached by its rim to one surface 86 of the base 82 so as to form an enclosure 88. An opening 90 is provided in the middle of a wall 92 of the housing 84 that extends generally parallel to the base 82. The opening 90 is
5 covered by a glass window 94 that is adhered to the interior surface of the wall 92. A photodetector 96, for example an InGaAs photodiode, is mounted in the middle of the enclosure 88 with its detection surface 98 extending generally parallel to, and directed towards, the glass window 94. The photodetector 96 is supported from the base 82 by a mount 100 and is connected to a pair of conductors 102 and 104 which protrude from
10 the furthest surface of the base 82 for connection to other equipment (not shown).

A graded-index (GRIN) lens 106 has a first end surface adhered by suitable optical adhesive 107, for example as marketed under the name UV NOA61 by Norland Inc., to the middle of the exterior surface 108' of the window 94 so that the optical axis LOA of the GRIN lens 106 is substantially aligned with the centre of the detector surface
15 98. The opposite end surface 110 of the GRIN lens 106 extends obliquely to the optical axis LOA at an angle of, say, 6 degrees. A short length of fiber capillary 112 has an end surface 114 inclined at a similar oblique angle and adhered by optical adhesive 113 to the oblique surface 110 of the GRIN lens 106. An optical (pigtail) fiber 116 extends coaxially through the fiber capillary 112 and its end abuts the oblique surface 110 of the
20 GRIN lens 116. The end of the fiber 116 also is inclined at the same angle as the surface 114 of the capillary 112. This fiber 116 may either be single-mode or multimode at the operating wavelength of interest. As shown in Figure 10(a), the optical axis FOA of the fiber 116 extends generally parallel to the optical axis LOA of the GRIN lens 106.

The window 94 is wedge-shaped, in order to significantly reduce interference
25 effects.

Light entering the photodetector device 80 via the fiber 116 will pass through the GRIN lens 106 and the window 94 and impinge upon the detector surface 98. As shown in Figure 9, the capillary 112 and the GRIN lens 106 are offset laterally relative to each other, in the direction of the minimum response axis R_{MIN} , with the result that the beam
30 optical axis BOA of the light beam LB will be inclined relative to the lens optical axis LOA by an angle Θ . The size of the offset "d" will determine the size of angle Θ . Consequently, when the light beam LB is incident upon the detector surface 98 and the window surface 108", it is not perpendicular to either. As will be described hereinafter,

during manufacture, the offset "d" is adjusted until polarization dependent transmission effects caused by the light beam LB leaving the lens 106 with its optical axis BOA inclined relative to the lens optical axis LOA substantially counteract the inherent PDR of the detector 96 so as to minimize the overall or effective PDR of the photodetector 5 device 80.

The inclined window surface 108" serves primarily to minimize interference effects and its angle of inclination, typically 2 degrees, is chosen to be significantly different from the afore-mentioned angle of incidence Θ , so as to ensure low backreflection.

10 As a practical example, for an InGaAs detector 96 with a PDR of 0.02 dB and a window 94 having a refractive index of 1.5, it was found that the angle Θ should be about 7.5 degrees, which was obtained using a GRIN lens 106 having a focal length of 1.9 mm displaced relative to the fiber 116 by about 0.25 mm.

Adjustment of the photodetector 80 during production will now be described.
15 Referring to Figure 11, with the GRIN lens 106 glued to the glass window 96, the housing 84 is supported by a first holder 120 and the conductors 102 and 104 connected to an ammeter 122. The fiber capillary 112, with the fiber 116 installed inside it, is supported in a second holder 124 and the pigtail fiber 116 coupled by a connector or splice 126 to a polarization scrambler 128 which varies, in time, the SOP of light
20 received from a source 130 of highly polarized light.

The polarization controller 128 is adjusted to vary the SOP of the light beam over a wide range of possible SOPs. Ideally, the SOP is varied through substantially all of the possible states of polarization of the light beam, but in practice, the number of different SOPs will be a representative number of points on the Poincaré sphere.

25 While the SOP is varying, either one of the GRIN lens 106 and the capillary 112 is adjusted laterally in the plane x-y shown in Figure 10(b) and the output of the meter 122 is monitored. The lateral movement is made in various directions to determine that which reduces the difference between the maximum and minimum values measured by the meter 122. The actual difference will vary according to the lateral displacement "d"
30 between the fiber optical axis FOA and the lens optical axis LOA, since this will control the angle at which the light beam LB is incident upon the surface 108" and the detector surface 98. For a particular displacement "d", in a particular direction which defines the minimum response axis R_{MIN} , the *difference* between the maximum and minimum

values will itself be a minimum. The fiber 116 and capillary 112 then are glued to the GRIN lens 106, using optical adhesive, to fix them at this displacement position. As shown in Figure 10(b), the minimum response axis R_{MIN} then will intersect the fiber optical axis FOA and the lens optical axis LOA, the latter spaced apart by the distance 5 "d". The maximum response axis R_{MAX} and minimum response axis R_{MIN} are orthogonal so the maximum response axis R_{MAX} will extend perpendicular to both the minimum response axis R_{MIN} and the lens optical axis LOA.

Using the above-described procedures and configurations, therefore, it is possible to substantially minimize the overall PDR of the photodetector device 80 because the 10 polarization dependency introduced by the light beam traversing the surface 108" at an angle that is not perpendicular counteracts the inherent polarization dependency of the detector 96.

Very high return loss achieved by such a photodetector assembly 80 is attributable to the fact that little, or substantially no, residual reflection is coupled back to the fiber 15 116 from the surfaces 110 and 114, because they are inclined relative to the optical axes LOA and FOA. The same applies at the interior surface 108" of the window 94, and the adjacent end surface of the GRIN lens 106, because the light beam is not normal to the surfaces when it traverses them. It should be appreciated, however, that these surfaces need not be inclined if only PDR reduction is required.

20 It has also been found that undesirable interference effects are negligible, which is attributed to the use of index matching adhesive between the fiber 116 and the GRIN lens 106 and between the distal end of the GRIN lens 106 and the exterior surface 108' of the window 94, and to the inclination of the surfaces 110, 114 and 108" of the fiber 116, lens 106 and window 94, respectively.

25 It has been found that this arrangement makes it possible to produce a virtually ideal detector 80 with minimum PDR, backscatter and Fabry-Perot-type interference effects.

Although it is preferred to use a GRIN lens 106 for reasons of compactness, ruggedness and ease of fabrication, it will be appreciated that the concept taught by the 30 present invention, i.e. using polarization dependent transmission (PDT) of an interface to compensate for PDR of the detector chip 96, can be implemented with other configurations. For example, as illustrated in Figure 12, the GRIN lens 106 may be replaced by a bulk-optic lens (e.g. "singlet" convex lens) 106A, the capillary 112 and

fiber waveguide 116 then fixed with the end of the fiber 116 in the focal plane of the convex lens 106A so that the light beam LB leaves the lens 106A collimated. The required PDT then is provided by both the lens 106A and the window 94. If desired, the end of the fiber waveguide 116 need not be located at the focal plane, in which case
5 the light beam LB would diverge or converge.

Of course, the GRIN lens 106 or the convex lens 106A could be fixed at a suitable spacing from the window 94, providing the required degree of displacement "d" is provided and any interference effects can be tolerated.

It is also envisaged that, as illustrated in Figures 13 and 14, which show
10 modifications of the devices of Figures 9 and 12, respectively, the window 94 could be omitted and the lens 106 or 106A installed into the opening 90 to serve also as a window. Depending upon the precise type of lens, either or both of the surfaces of the lens 106/106A would introduce the required PDT to compensate for the PDR of the detector chip 96.

15 It is also envisaged that the glass window or the lens could be attached or formed directly upon the surface of the detector (26; 96).

It should be appreciated, therefore, that the invention is predicated upon the fact that the transmission (T) of a light beam through an interface between two dielectric media having different refractive indexes becomes polarization dependent if the light
20 beam does not traverse the interface in a direction that is normal to the interface. The SOPs related to maximum transmission T_{MAX} and minimum transmission T_{MIN} are orthogonal and linear, with P-polarization having a higher transmission than S-polarization.

25 INDUSTRIAL APPLICABILITY

An advantage of embodiments of the invention is that the compensation for polarization dependent response can be effected during or after manufacture simply by appropriate tilting of at least one interface, i.e., at the surface of the photosensitive detector and/or an adjacent window and/or a fiber waveguide end facet, relative to an
30 axis along which light for detection will be incident upon the detection surface of the photodetector or, in the case of pigtail photodetectors embodying the present invention, offsetting the pigtail fiber relative to the input lens.

CLAIMS:

1. A photodetector device characterized by a photosensitive detector (26;96) having a polarization dependent response having maximum (R_{MAX}) and minimum (R_{MIN}) values
5 corresponding to substantially linear states of polarization of light incident thereupon that are orthogonal to each other, and at least one interface (20; 28; 94) through which a light beam for detection passes before being incident upon a detection surface (28) of the detector (12), the arrangement being such that the light beam traverses said at least one
10 interface with a propagation direction that deviates from the normal to the interface so as to introduce polarization dependent transmission to compensate at least partially for the polarization dependent response of the photosensitive detector (26).
2. A photodetector device according to claim 1, further characterized by a window (20;94) whereby, in use, the light is directed onto the detection surface (28), the
15 detection surface and opposite surfaces (20',20";108',108") of the window (20;94) providing three said interfaces, cumulatively providing the compensation for polarization dependent response.
3. A photodetector device according to claim 2, further characterized by connector
20 means (16) for releasably attaching to the device a waveguide (52) for directing the light to said window (20) along an optical axis (OA) of the waveguide (52), each of said three interfaces being at an acute angle to said optical axis (OA).
4. A photodetector device according to claim 3, characterized in that the
25 photosensitive detector (26) is mounted in a housing (18) of the photodetector device (12), and the window (20) is mounted in a wall of the housing (18) such that the detection surface (28) and the window are generally parallel to each other, and the housing (18) is secured relative to said connector means (16) such that the three
30 interfaces have the required tilt relative to the optical axis (OA).
5. A photodetector device according to claim 1, further characterized by a window (20;94) whereby, in use, the light is directed onto the detection surface (28), the
detection surface (28;98) being substantially normal to the propagation direction of the

light when incident thereupon opposite surfaces (20', 20"; 108', 108") of the window providing two said interfaces that cumulatively provide the compensation for polarization dependent response.

- 5 6. A photodetector device according to claim 5, further characterized by connector means (16) means for releasably attaching to the device a waveguide for directing the light to said window (20;94) such that on leaving the window, the light is incident upon the detection surface (28) substantially normal thereto.
- 10 7. A photodetector device according to claim 6, characterized in that the photosensitive detector (26) is mounted in a housing (18), and the window (20) is mounted in a wall of the housing such that opposite surfaces (20', 20") of the window are inclined relative to the detection surface (28).
- 15 8. A photodetector device according to any one of claims 2 to 7, characterized in that the window (20;94) is wedge-shaped, having a wedge angle significantly less than the angle between the propagation direction of the light and the normal to either surface of the window.
- 20 9. A photodetector device according to claim any preceding claim, characterized in that the device is secured to a mount (14) with said maximum response axis having a predetermined orientation relative to a reference surface of the mount, the mount (14) being secured to said connection means (16) by releasable fastening means which, when released, allows tilting of the mount (14) about the maximum response axis or an axis
25 parallel thereto.
10. A photodetector device according to claim 1, 2 or 5, further characterized by connector means (16) for releasable attachment of an optical fiber connector (50) thereto such that light from an optical fiber (52) coupled by the connector (18) is directed
30 through said at least one interface onto the detection surface (28) with the required propagation direction.

11. A photodetector device according to claim 1, further characterized by lens means (106,106A) and an input optical waveguide means (116) for directing a light beam, in use, through the lens means (106) and onto the detection surface (28), the optical waveguide means (116) having its end face from which the light beam emerges secured
5 relative to the lens means (106,106A) and displaced transversely relative to an optical axis (LOA) of the lens means so that the propagation direction of the light beam when leaving the lens means (106) will be inclined relative to the lens means optical axis (LOA) by such an angle that polarization dependent transmission introduced thereby at least partially corrects for polarization dependent response of the photosensitive detector
10 (26).

12. A photodetector device according to claim 11, characterized in that the photosensitive detector (26) is mounted in a housing (84) of the photodetector device and the lens means (106) is attached to the housing (84) so as to direct light onto the detector
15 (12) through an opening (90) in the housing, the lens means receiving the light from a fiber waveguide (116, 112) which is offset in a direction transverse to the optical axis (LOA) of the lens means (106) such that the light beam leaves the lens means (106) along a beam axis that is not parallel to the lens means optical axis (LOA).

20 13. A photodetector device according to claim 11 or 12, characterized in that the lens means comprises a GRIN lens.

14. A photodetector device according to claim 11, 12 or 13, further characterized by a window (20;94) the light beam being directed, in use, through the lens means (106)
25 and said window (20;94) onto the detection surface (28), at least that surface (108") of the window facing the detector constituting a said interface.

15. A photodetector device according to claim 14, characterized in that the lens means (106) comprises a GRIN lens having one end attached to the window (94) and its
30 opposite end attached to the optical fiber waveguide (116, 112).

16. A photodetector device according to any one of claims 11 to 15, characterized in that the optical waveguide means (116) is supported by a capillary (112), the capillary (112) being bonded to the lens means (106).
- 5 17. A photodetector device characterized by a photosensitive detector (26) and a fiber waveguide (116) for directing a light beam for detection onto a detection surface (28) of the detector (26), the waveguide (116) being fixed relative to the detector (26) and having an end face facing the detection surface (28), the end face being inclined by such an angle that polarization dependent transmission effects introduced by the end face at
10 least partially compensate for polarization dependent response of the detector (98).
18. A photodetector device according to claim 17, further characterized by a window (20) interposed between the fiber waveguide end face and the detector (26).
- 15 19. A photodetector device according to any preceding claim, characterized in that the photosensitive detector (26; 96) comprises a semiconductor diode.
20. A photodetector device according to claim 19, characterized in that the semiconductor diode comprises an indium gallium arsenide (InGaAs) semiconductor
20 diode.
21. A method of correcting for polarization dependent response of a photodetector device comprising a photosensitive detector (26; 96) having a maximum response (R_{MAX}) corresponding to linear state of polarization of light incident thereupon via at least one
25 interface (20', 20'', 28, 98) between media having different refractive indices, the interface intersecting a propagation direction in which, in use, a light beam for detection will be incident upon a detection surface (28; 98) of the detector (26; 96), the method characterized by the steps of:
- 30 determining orientation of either or both of a maximum response axis and minimum response axis that correspond to states of polarization of incident light for which the response of the photodetector is a maximum or a minimum, respectively; and

adjusting an angle between the propagation direction and the interface in a plane of the maximum response axis such that polarization dependent transmission introduced by the at least one interface at least partially compensates for polarization dependent response of the detector (12).

5

22. A method according to claim 21, characterized in that determination of the maximum response axis comprises the steps of:

directing a substantially symmetrical, polarized light beam onto the detector and monitoring a corresponding output signal of the detector;

10 varying the state of polarization between a substantial number of possible states; identifying either or both of maximum and minimum values of the detector output signal; and

while maintaining that state of polarization which provided the maximum or minimum value, analyzing the light to determine the orientation of the maximum
15 response axis of the detector.

23. A method according to claim 22, characterized in that determination of the maximum response axis comprises the steps of:

directing a substantially symmetrical, polarized light beam onto the detector and
20 monitoring a corresponding output signal of the detector;

varying the state of polarization between a substantial number of possible states; identifying either or both of maximum and minimum values of the detector output signal; and

while maintaining that state of polarization which provided the maximum or
25 minimum value, analyzing the light to determine the orientation of the maximum response axis of the detector.

24. A method according to claim 22, characterized in that determination of the maximum response axis comprises the steps of:

30 directing a substantially symmetrical, polarized light beam onto the detector and monitoring a corresponding output signal of the detector;

varying the state of polarization between a substantial number of possible states;

identifying either or both of maximum and minimum values of the detector output signal; and

while maintaining that state of polarization which provided the maximum or minimum value, analyzing the light to determine the orientation of the minimum
5 response axis of the detector, the maximum response axis being orthogonal thereto.

25. A method according to claim 22, 23 or 24, characterized in that the analyzing step comprises the steps of:

disposing a polarizer in the collimated light beam, rotating the polarizer and
10 monitoring the detector output signal to establish that orientation of the polarizer corresponding to maximum or minimum response, and transferring that orientation to the detector as an indication of the maximum response axis or minimum response axis, respectively, of the detector.

15 26. A method according to claim 21, characterized in that the orientation of the maximum response axis is determined by the steps of directing linearly-polarized light onto the detector along said optical axis, monitoring an output signal from the detector, and determining the orientation of the maximum response axis as the direction of the SOP for which said output signal is a maximum.

20

27. A method according to claim 21, further characterized by the step of determining said angle by directing linearly polarized light onto the detector along the optical axis, repeatedly rotating the SOP of the linearly polarized light beam about the optical axis, tilting the at least one interface relative to the optical axis and about the maximum
25 response axis, and determining said angle for which the difference between maximum and minimum responses of the photodetector is substantially minimal.

28. A method according to any one of claims 21 to 27, characterized in that, the photosensitive detector being housed in a housing having a window through which light
30 for detection will pass to the photosensitive detector, the window providing at least two said interfaces, the step of adjusting the angle comprises the step of tilting the window relative to both the surface of the photosensitive detector and the optical axis, and the securing step comprises the step of securing the window to the housing.

29. A method according to claim 21, characterized in that, the detector and a window are fixed relative to each other in a housing of the photodetector device such that light for detection will pass through the window to the detector, the step of tilting the interface comprises the step of tilting the housing.

5

30. A method according to claim 21, further characterized by the steps of:

mounting the photodetector device in a mount;

directing a polarized light beam normally onto a detection surface of the detector,

10 varying the state of polarization of the light beam and measuring the photodetector response for different states of polarization;

determining said axis corresponding to maximum response of the photodetector; and

securing the photodetector to the mount with the maximum response axis

15 having a known orientation relative to a reference surface of the mount.

31. A method according to claim 30, further characterized by the steps of:

attaching the mount to a holder;

directing a polarized light beam onto the detector along said optical axis;

20 repeatedly varying the SOP of the polarized light beam between a substantial number of possible states, tilting the mount relative to the

holder and about the maximum response axis and measuring the response of the photodetector so as to determine a tilt angle at which the difference

25 between maximum and minimum responses of the photodetector is minimal, and

securing the mount to the holder so as to maintain said tilt angle.

32. A method of assembling a photodetector device comprising a photosensitive detector (12;96) having a polarization dependent response having maximum (R_{MAX}) and
30 minimum (R_{MIN}) values corresponding to mutually orthogonal substantially linear states of polarization of light incident thereupon, lens means (106) and an input optical waveguide means (116) for directing a light beam, in use, through the lens means (106) and onto a detection surface (28;98) of the photodetector (12;96) so that the propagation

direction of the light beam when leaving the lens means (106) will be inclined relative to the lens means optical axis (LOA) by such an angle that polarization dependent transmission introduced thereby substantially corrects for polarization dependent response of the photosensitive detector, the method characterized by the steps of directing a
5 polarized light beam onto the detector (12;96) via said lens means (106) and varying the state of polarization of the light beam between a large number of possible states; adjusting the displacement of the optical waveguide means (116) transversely relative to the optical axis of the lens means (106) while monitoring the difference between maximum and minimum values of the detector output signal; and fixing the optical
10 waveguide means (116) relative to the lens means (106) at a transverse displacement corresponding to the difference being a minimum.

33. A method of correcting for polarization dependent response of a photodetector device comprising a photosensitive detector (26;96) having a maximum response (R_{MAX})
15 corresponding to linear state of polarization of light incident thereupon via at least one interface (20',20'',28,98) between media having different refractive indices, the interface intersecting a propagation direction in which, in use, a light beam for detection will be incident upon a detection surface (28;98) of the detector (26; 96), the photosensitive detector having a photodetector axis (PDA) perpendicular to its detection surface, the
20 method characterized by the steps of:

with the photodetector device mounted rotatably in a connector part (16) with said photodetector axis (PDA) extending at an arbitrary acute angle (Θ) to an optical axis (OA) of said connector part, directing polarized light onto the detection surface (28;98);

while varying the state of polarization of the light successively between a
25 substantial number of points on the Poincaré sphere, monitoring an electrical output signal from the photosensitive detector (26;96) and registering the difference between maximum and minimum values thereof;

rotating the photodetector device (12) step by step using the photodetector axis (PDA) as a rotation axis, at each step, registering the difference between the maximum
30 and minimum response and determining the rotation angle for which the difference is a minimum;

while maintaining said rotation angle constant, varying the state of polarization again through a substantial number of points on the Poincaré sphere, monitoring the

output of the photosensitive detector (26;96), adjusting the acute angle (Θ) with respect to the optical axis (OA), in a step by step manner, and determining the acute angle at which the difference between the maximum and minimum values is a minimum; and

5 securing the photodetector device to the connector part (16) to maintain said rotation angle and said acute angle at which the difference between the maximum and minimum values is a minimum.

34. A method according to claim 33, wherein the photodetector device is tilted by between 5 degrees and 8 degrees.

1/8

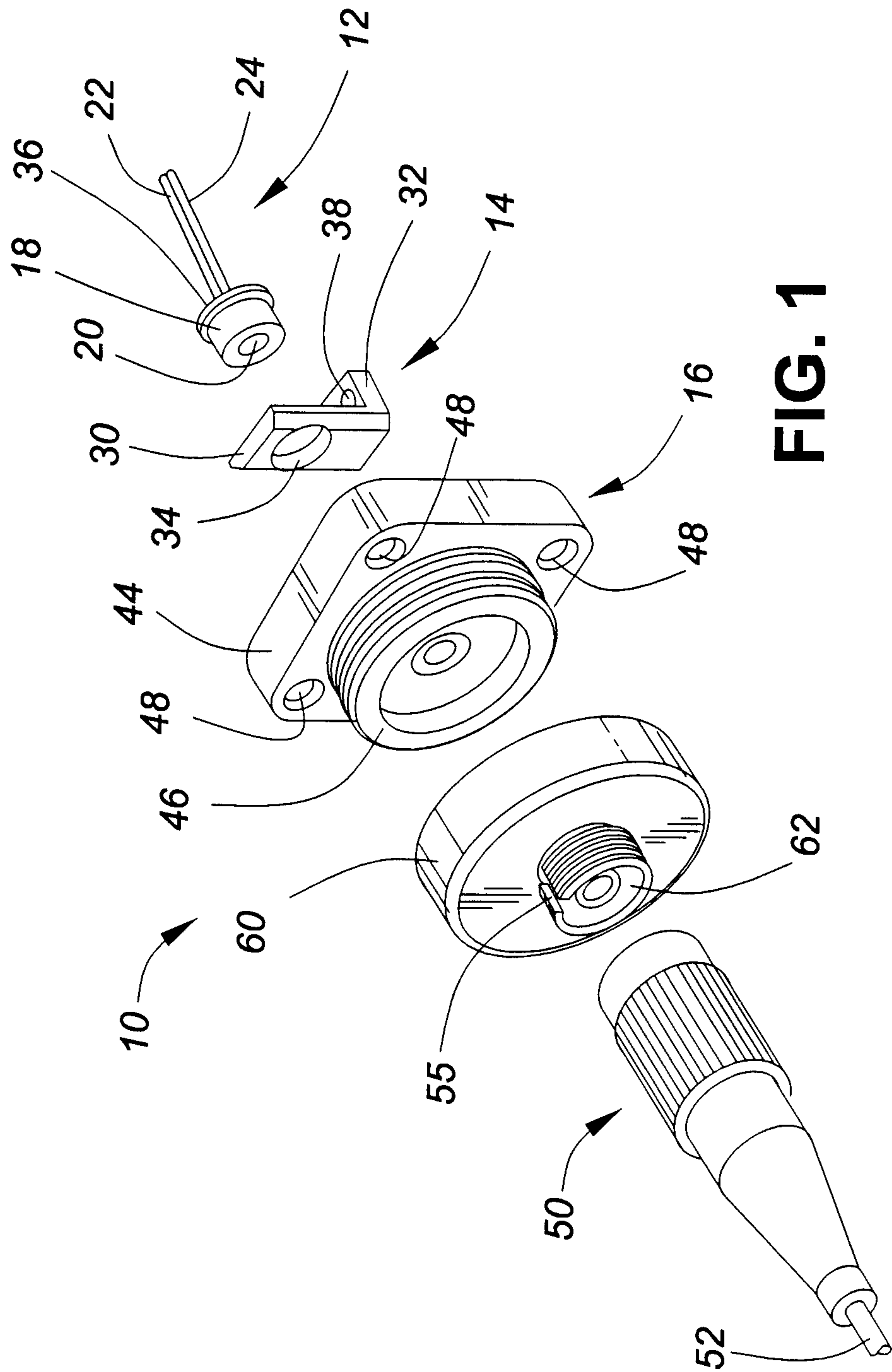


FIG. 1

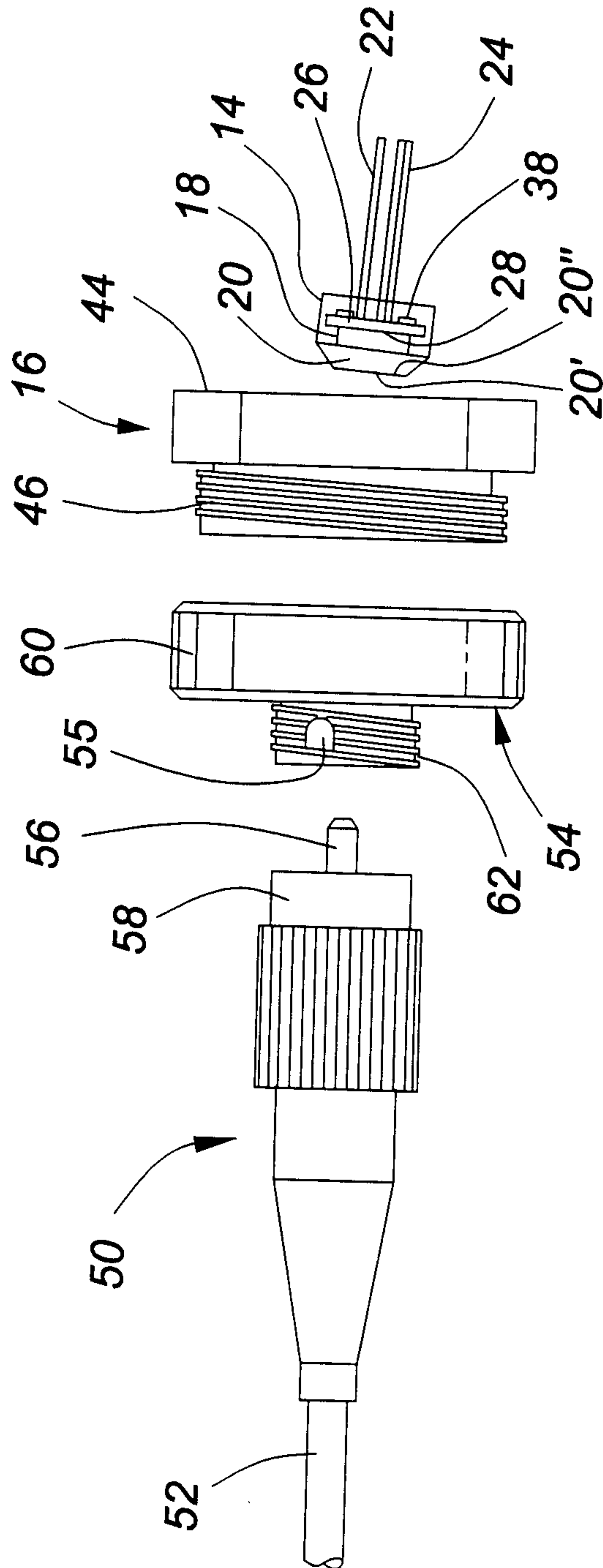


FIG. 2

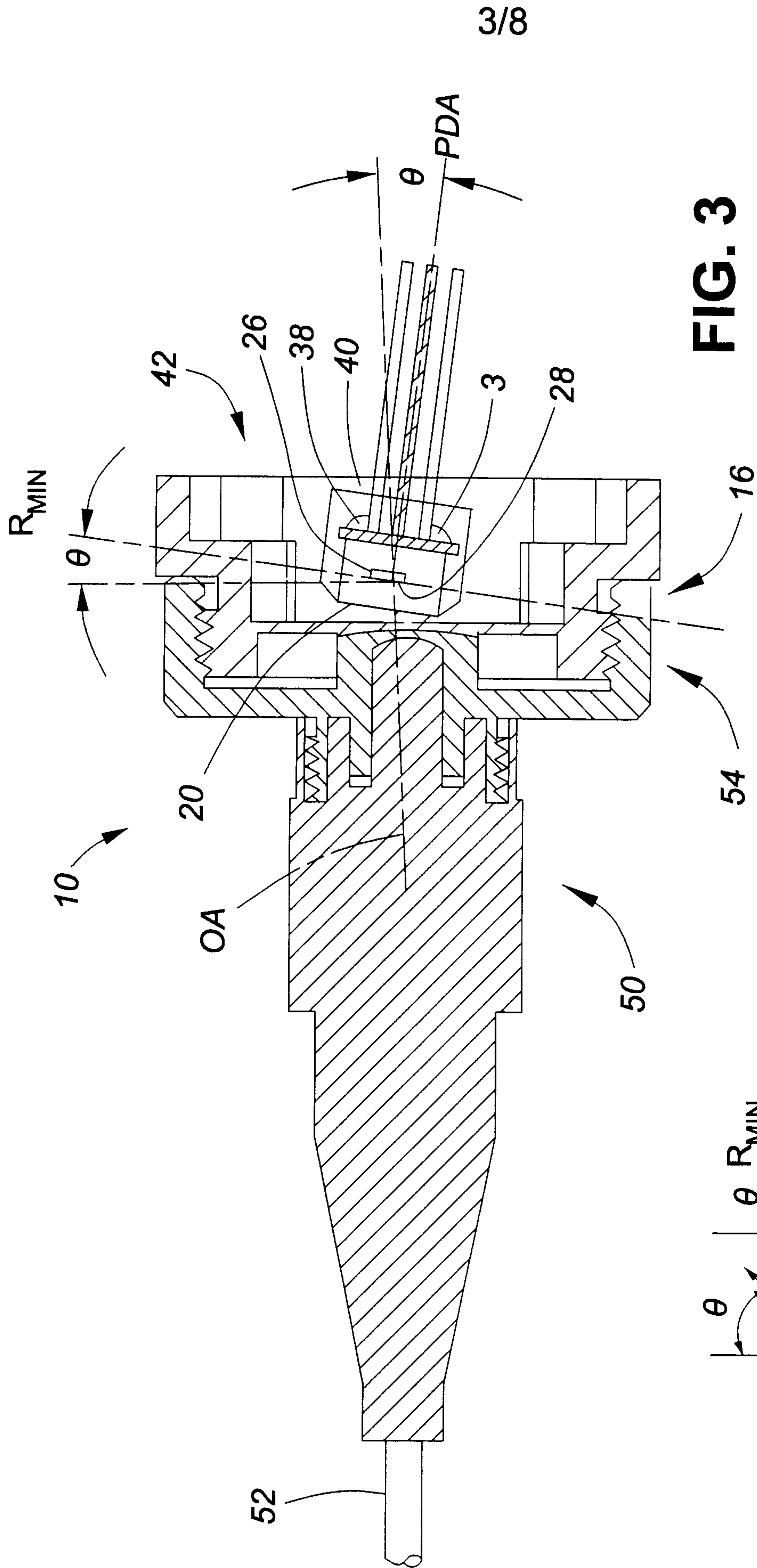


FIG. 3

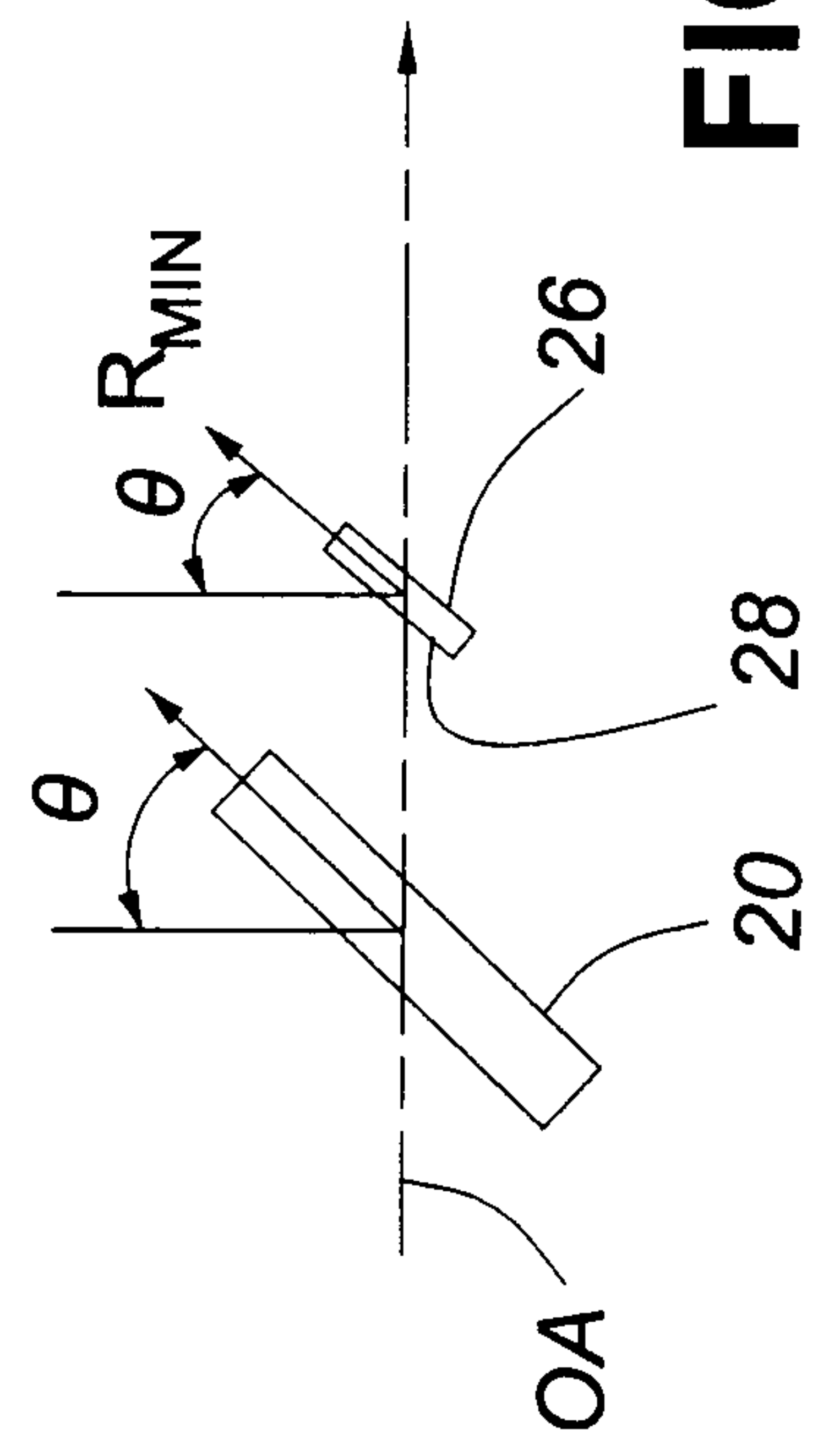


FIG. 4

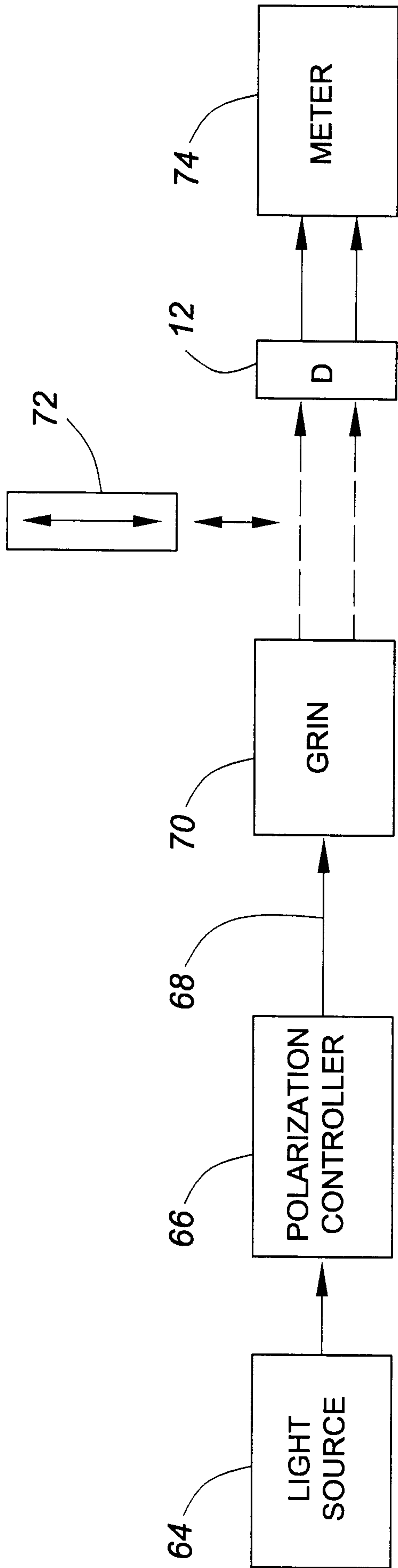


FIG. 5

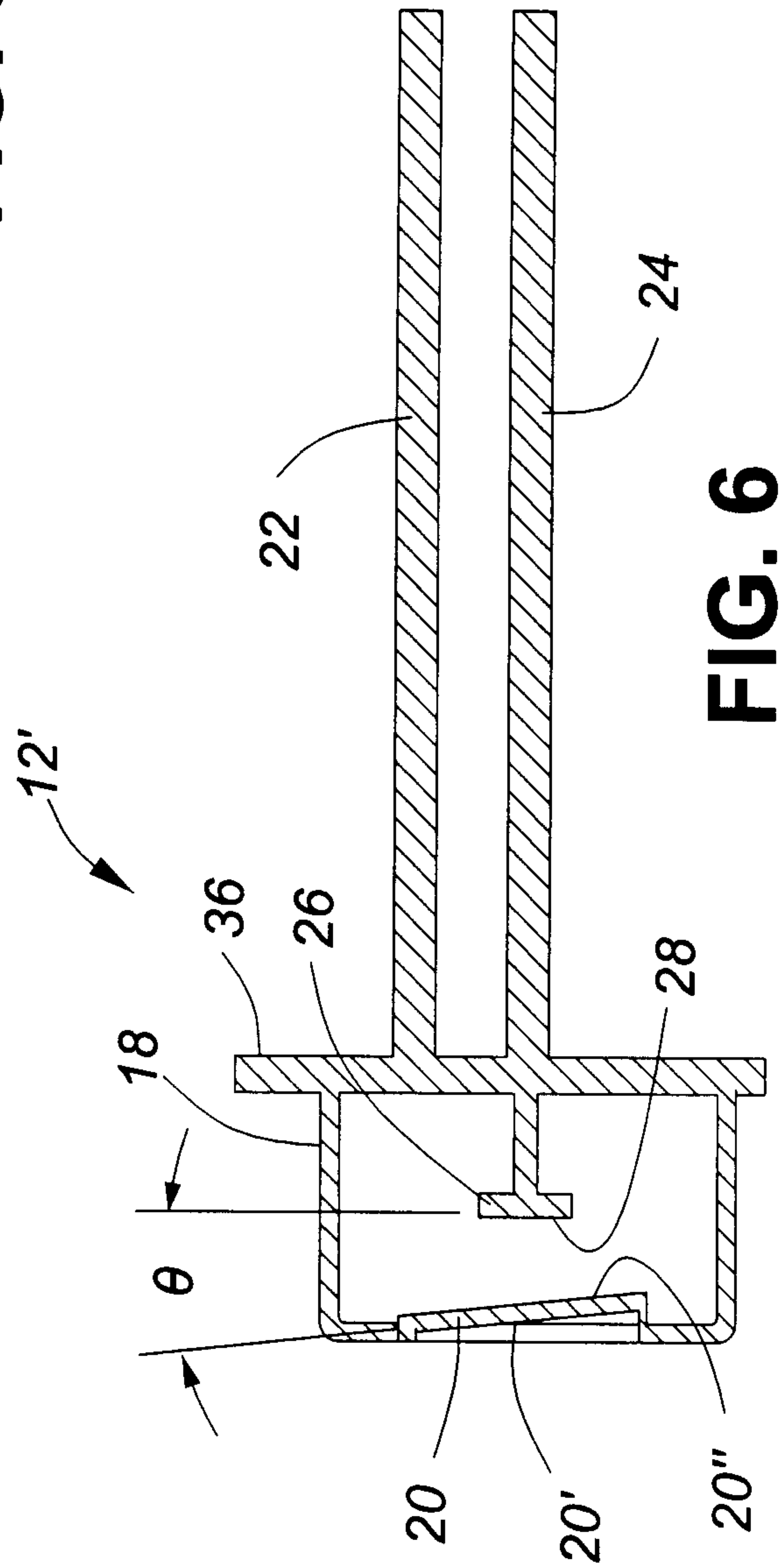
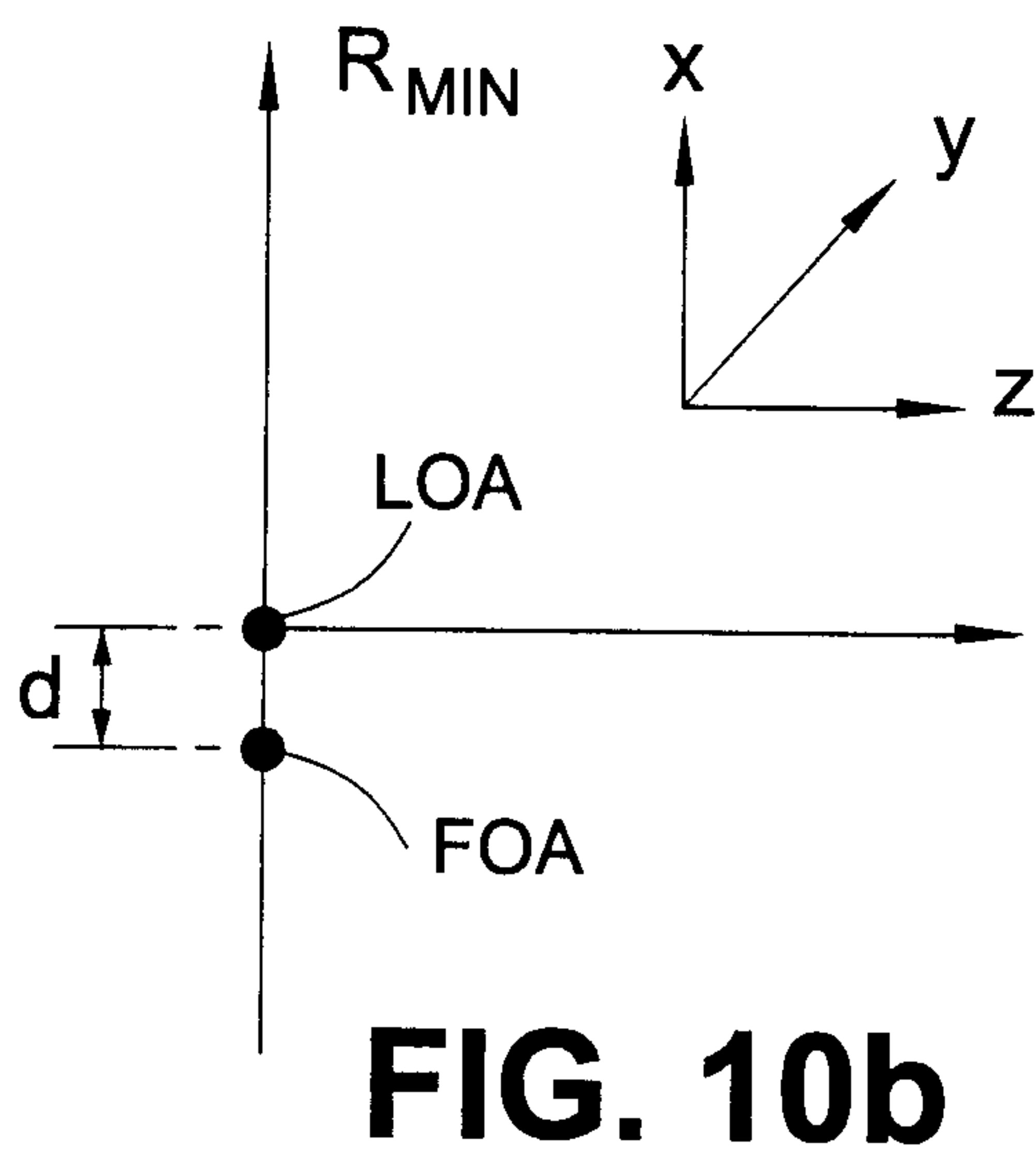
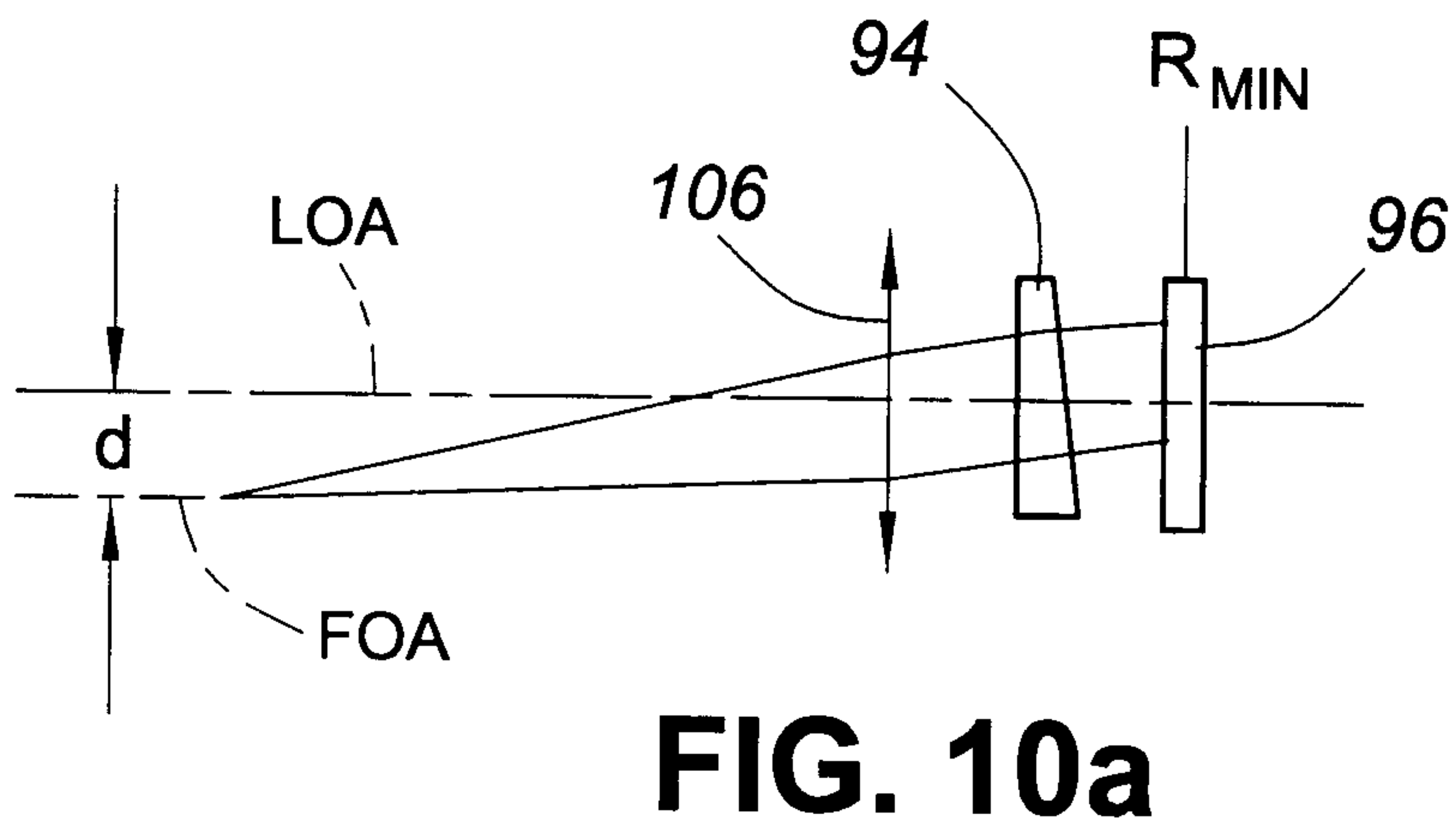
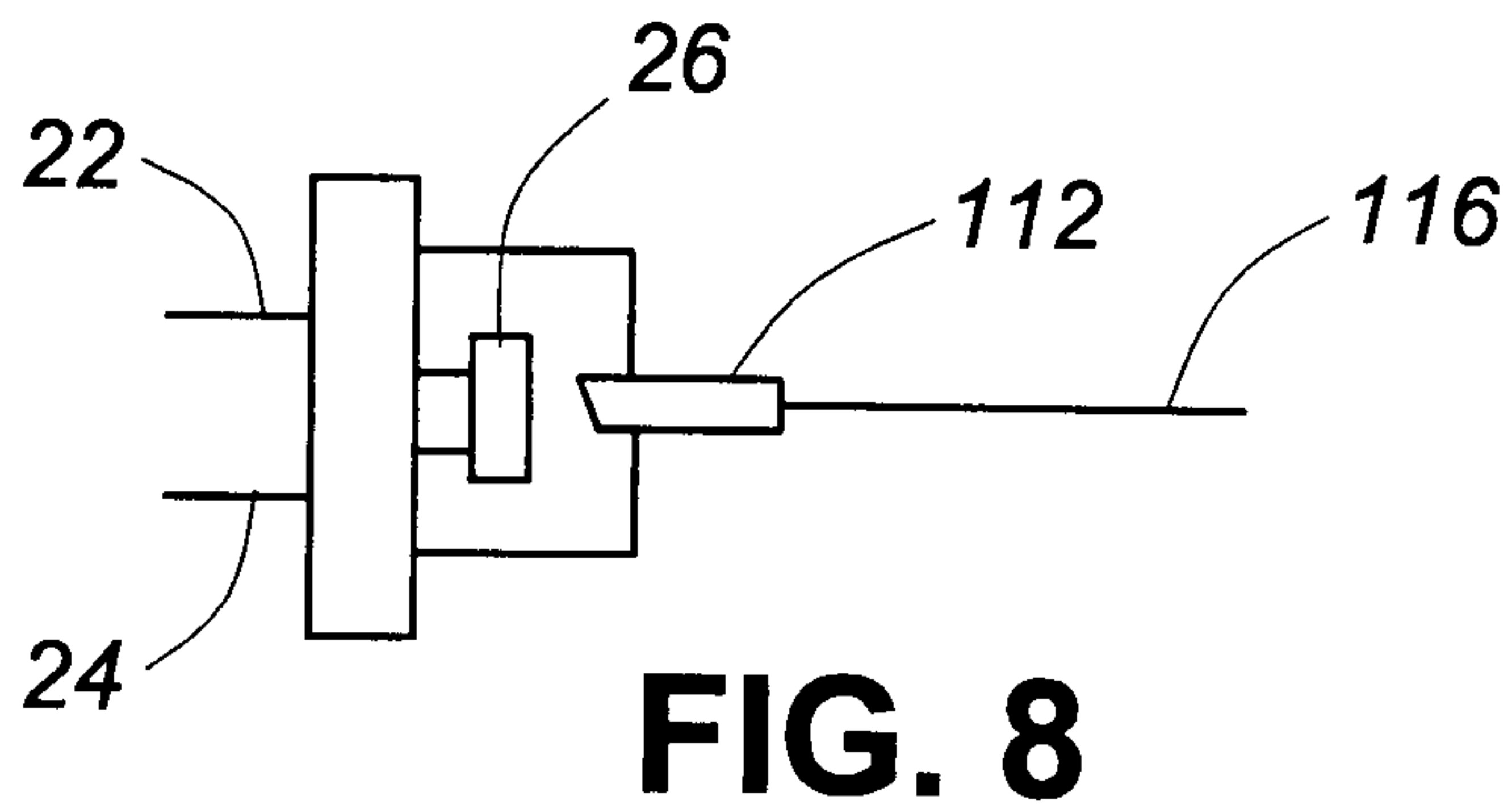
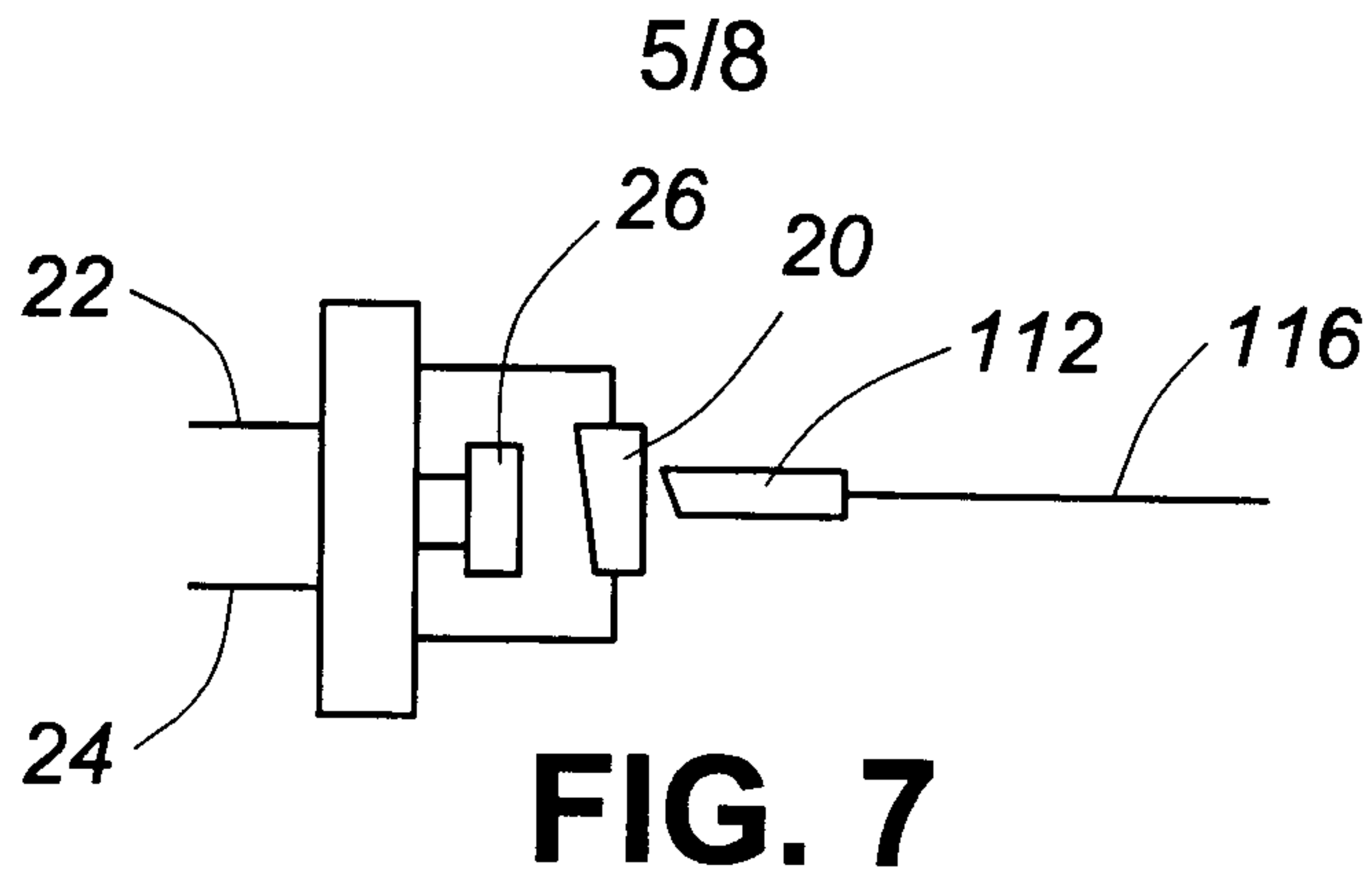


FIG. 6



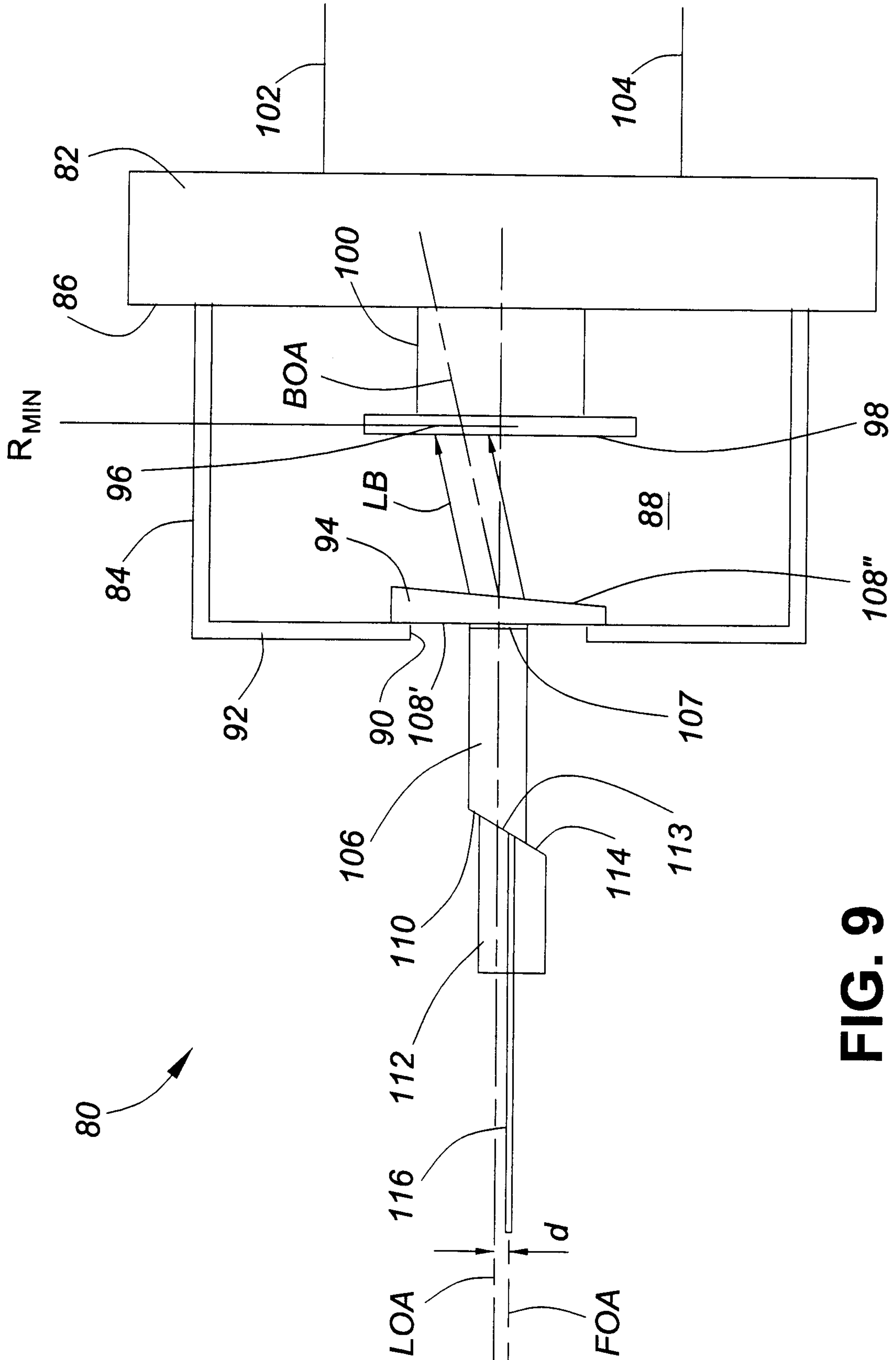
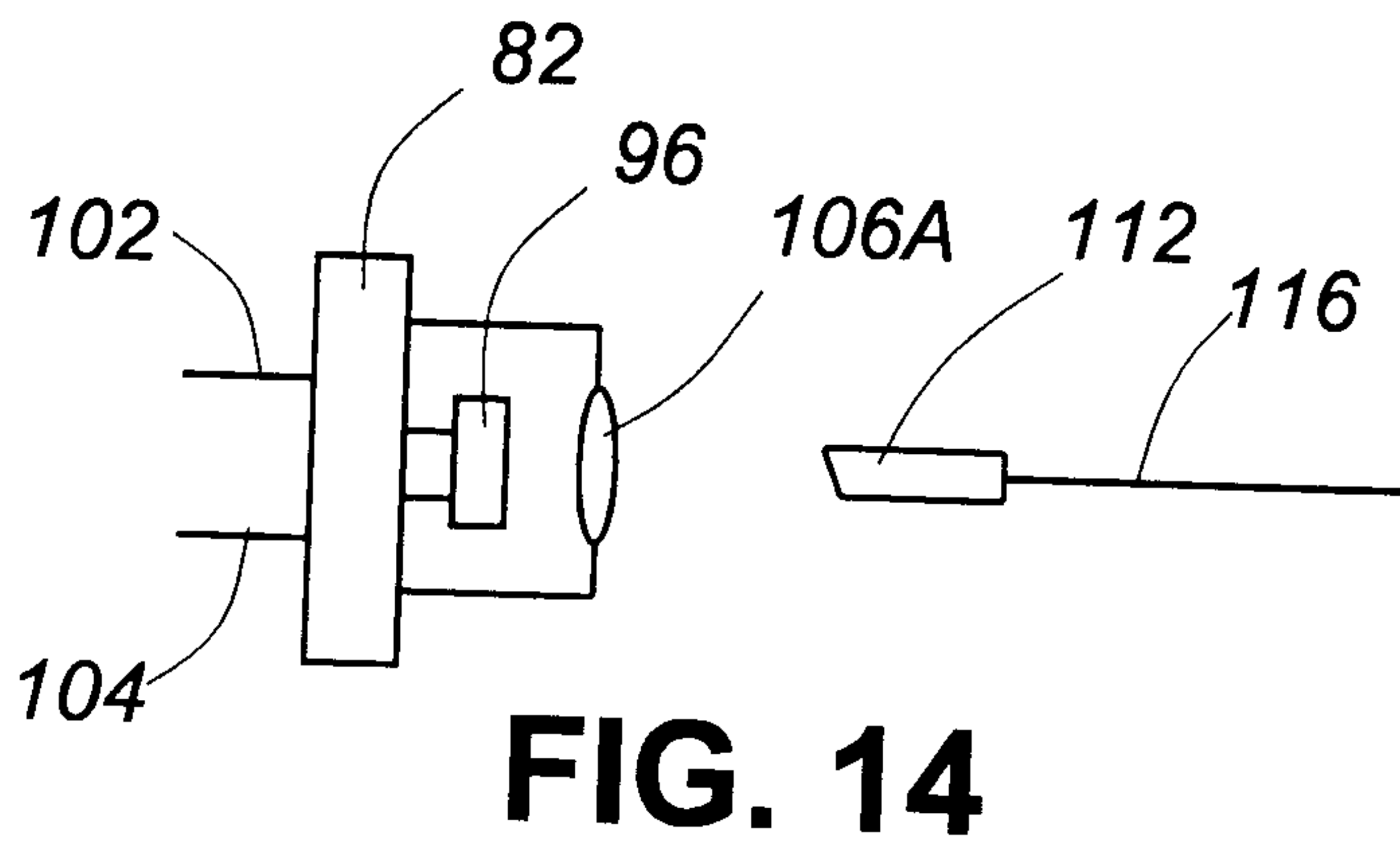
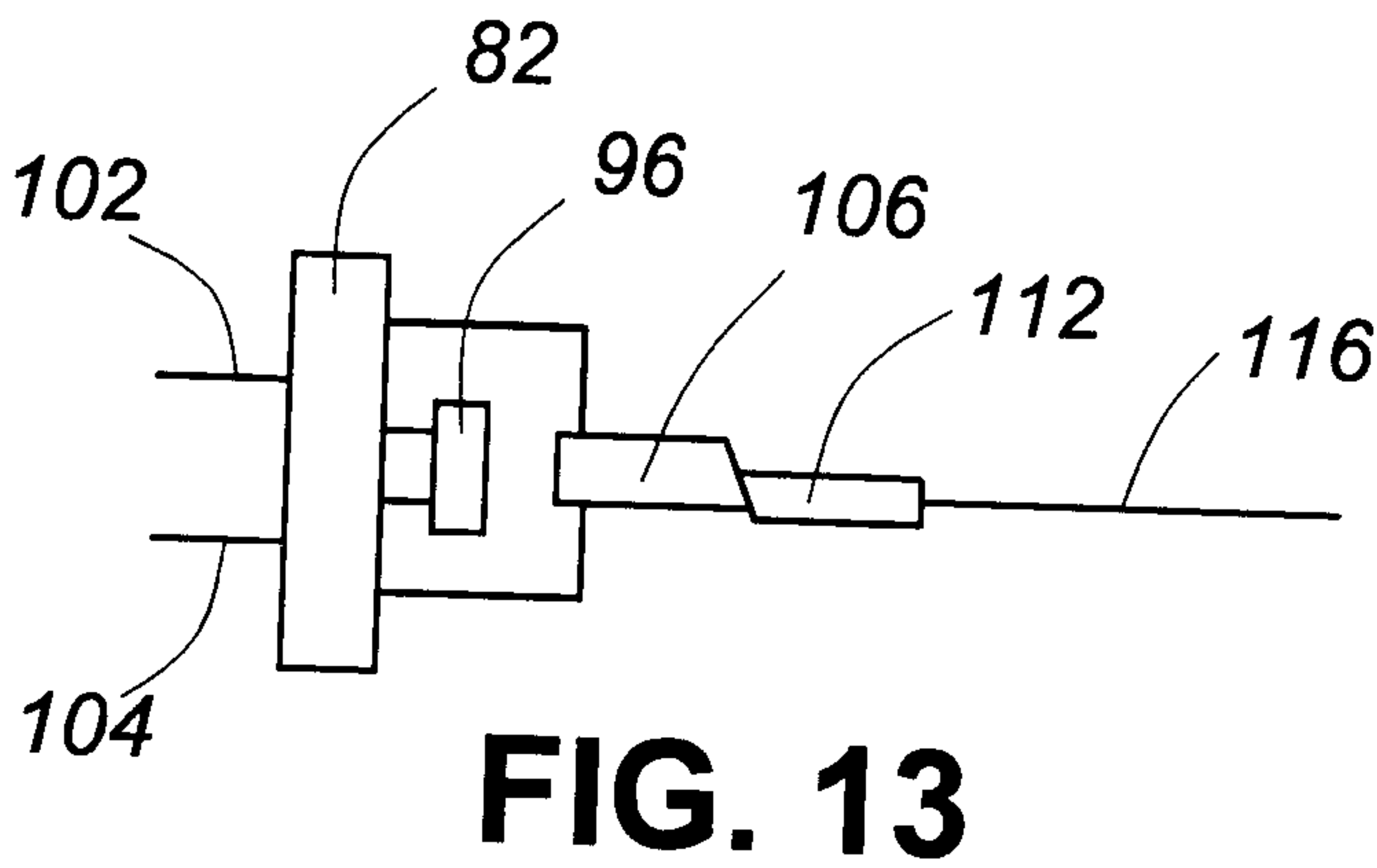
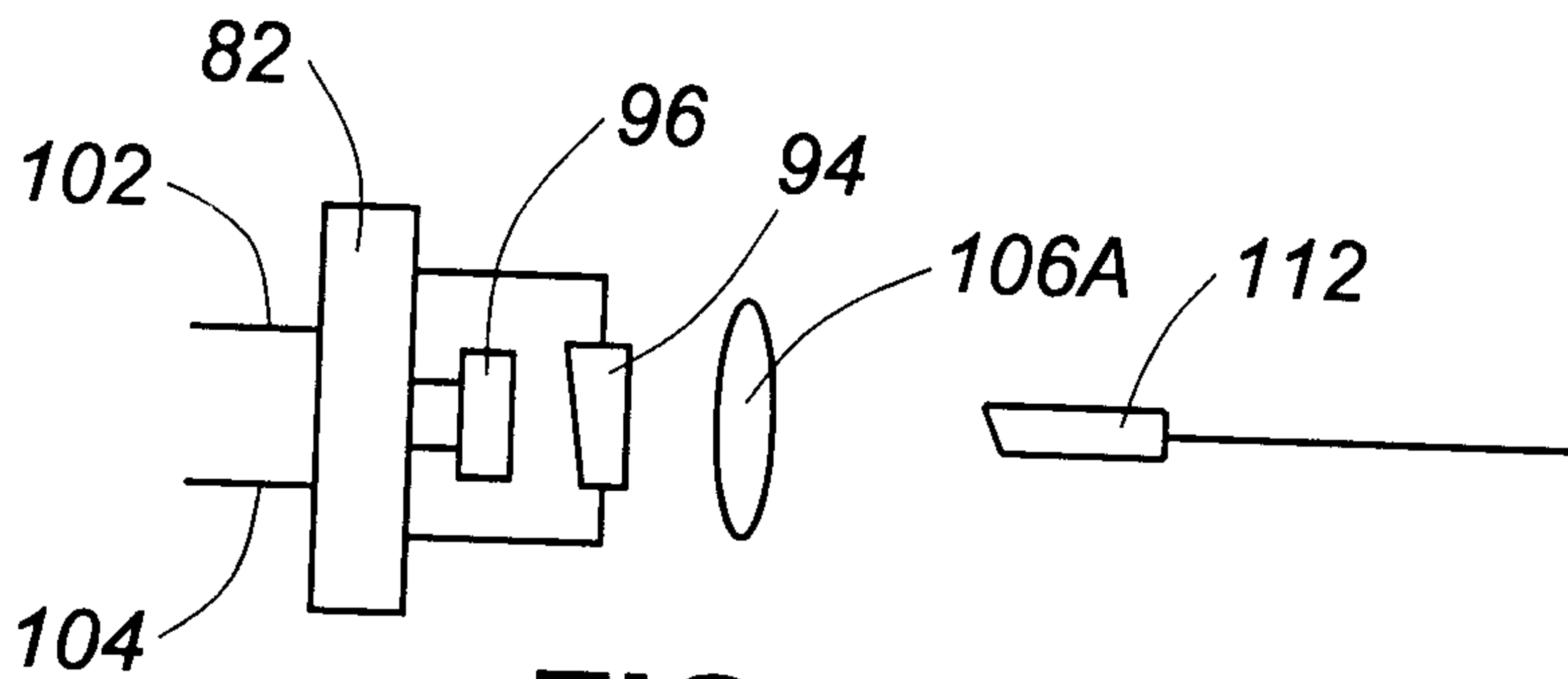
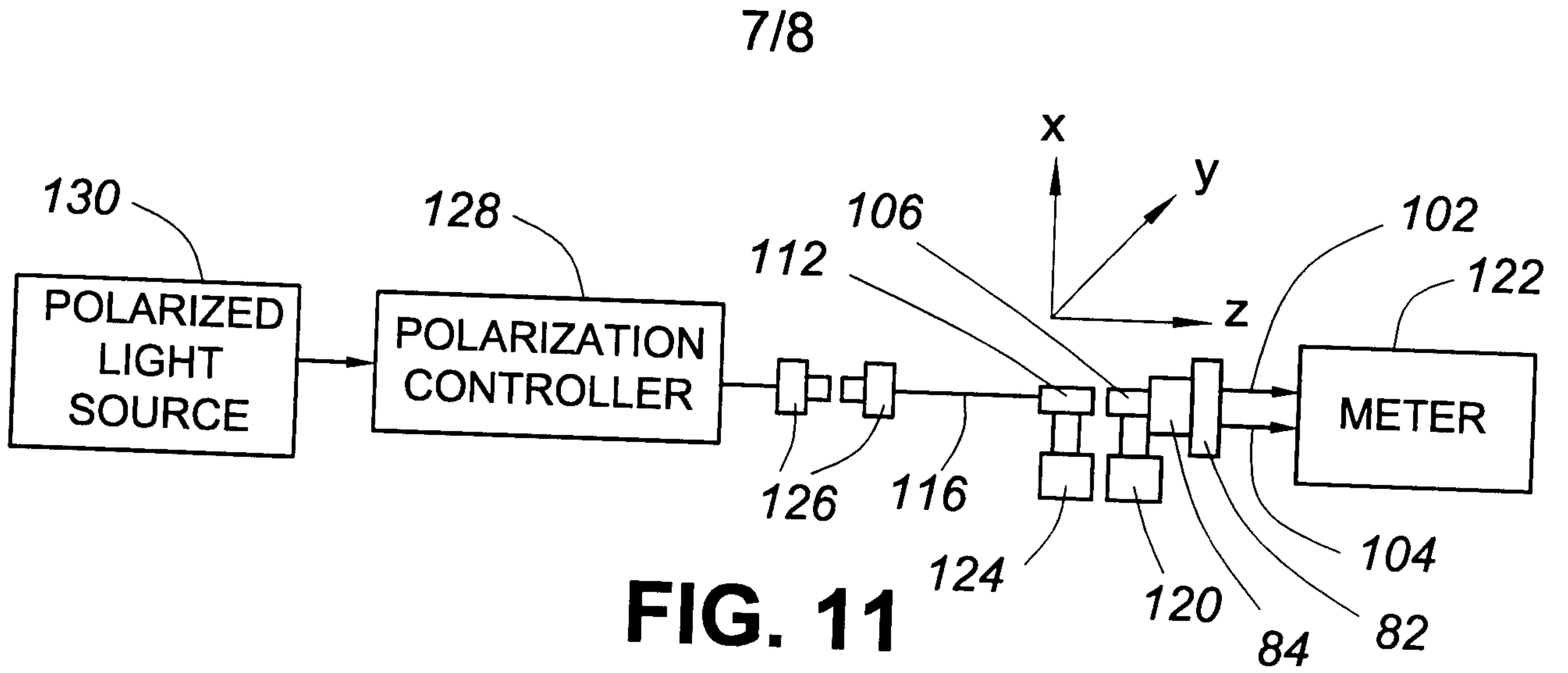


FIG. 9



8/8

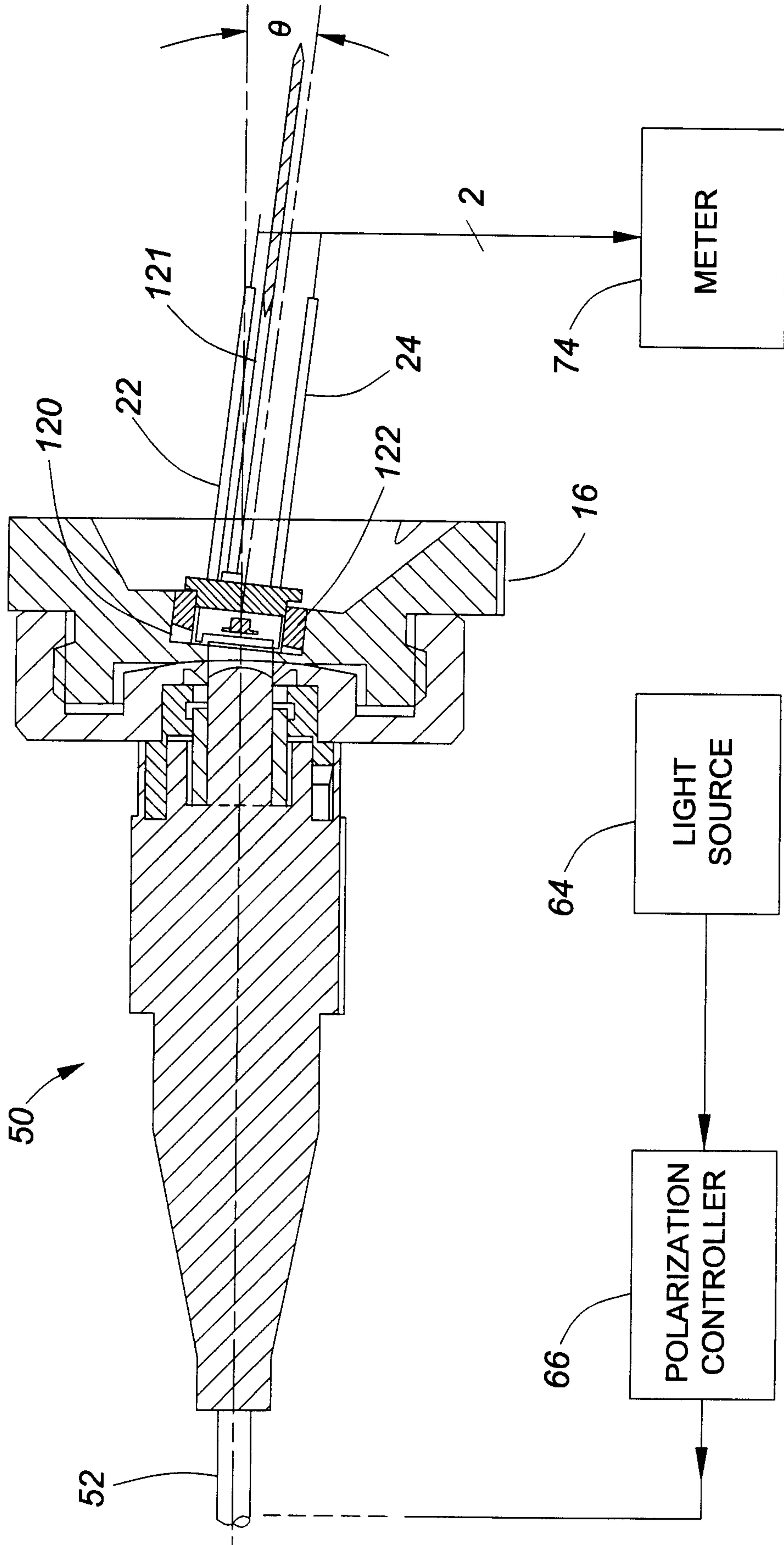


FIG. 15

