What is clamed is:

1. An apparatus for cleaning an article, the apparatus comprising:

a first drive belt defining a first article engaging surface extending substantially parallel to a second article engaging surface of the apparatus and positioned to receive the article between the first and second article engaging surfaces, the first drive belt being powered to move in a first direction such that the first article engaging surface imparts a forward motive force on an outer surface of the article; and

a first wiper belt defining a first article wiping surface positioned to contact the article, the first wiper belt being powered to move in a second direction opposite the first direction such that the first article wiping surface imparts a rearward wiping force on the article.

2. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the first article wiping surface is substantially coplanar with the first article engaging surface.

3. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the first drive belt is further powered to impart a forward rotational force on the outer surface of the article and against the rearward wiping force of the first article wiping surface.

4. The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a second drive belt defining the second article engaging surface.

5. The apparatus of claim 4, wherein the second drive belt is powered to move in a third direction such that the second article engaging surface imparts a forward motive force on the side wall of the article.

6. The apparatus of claim 5, wherein the second drive belt is powered to move at a slower rate than the first drive belt, such that the first and second drive belts impart a forward rotational force on the side wall of the article.

7. The apparatus of claim 4, wherein the second drive belt is powered to move in a third direction, such that the second article engaging surface imparts a rearward motive force on the side wall of the article, with the forward motive force being greater than the rearward motive force for forward movement and forward rotation of the article.

8. The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a second wiper belt defining a second article wiping surface substantially coplanar with the first article wiping surface and spaced apart from the first article wiping surface by the first article engaging surface, and positioned to contact the article, the second wiper belt being powered to move in the second direction such that the second article wiping surface imparts a rearward wiping force on the side wall of the article.

9. The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a second wiper belt defining a second article wiping surface transverse to the first article wiping surface and positioned to contact an end wall of the article, the second wiper belt being powered to move in a third direction such that the second article wiping surface imparts a rearward wiping force on the end wall of the article.

10. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the first wiper belt includes a plurality of flexible projections sized and positioned to impart the rearward wiping force on the side wall of the article.

11. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein the plurality of flexible projections comprise laterally extending ribs.

12. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein the plurality of flexible projections are formed with the first wiper belt as an integral elastomeric component.

13. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein each of the plurality of flexible projections extends from the first wiper belt a distance at least three times a nominal thickness of the first wiper belt.

14. The apparatus of claim 10, wherein each of the plurality of flexible projections includes a root thickness that is greater than a nominal thickness of the first wiper belt.

15. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the first wiper belt comprises a continuous belt further defining a return surface spaced apart from the first article wiping surface and out of

contact with the article, the apparatus further comprising a wiper cleaning assembly operable to remove contaminants from the return surface.

16. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the wiper cleaning assembly comprises at least one of a vacuum assembly, a cleaning fluid dispenser, and a belt agitating mechanism.

17. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the wiper cleaning assembly includes an air knife disposed within a vacuum plenum, the vacuum plenum being secured over a portion of the first wiper belt.

18. The apparatus of claim 17, wherein the first wiper belt includes a plurality of flexible projections sized and positioned to impart the rearward wiping force on the side wall of the article, the air knife being positioned to contact the plurality of flexible projections when the wiper belt is powered to move in the second direction.

19. An apparatus for cleaning an article, the apparatus comprising:

a drive member configured to impart a forward motive force on the article; and

a first wiper belt defining a first article wiping surface, the first wiper belt including a plurality of flexible projections formed with the first wiper belt as an integral elastomeric component, the plurality of flexible projections being sized and positioned to impart a wiping force on the article when the first wiper belt is moved with respect to the article.

20. The apparatus of claim 19, wherein the drive member is configured to impart a forward rotational force on the article.

21. The apparatus of claim 19, wherein the first wiper belt is powered to move the first article wiping surface to impart a rearward wiping force on the article.

22. The apparatus of claim 19, wherein the plurality of flexible projections comprises laterally extending fins.

23. The apparatus of claim 19, wherein each of the plurality of flexible projections extends from the first wiper belt a distance at least three times a nominal thickness of the first wiper belt.

24. The apparatus of claim 19, wherein each of the plurality of flexible projections includes a root thickness that is greater than a nominal thickness of the first wiper belt.

25. A method for cleaning an article, the method comprising:

receiving the article between first and second opposed article engaging surfaces;

moving at least the first article engaging surface to impart a forward motive force on a side wall of the article;

contacting the article with a first article wiping surface, the first article wiping surface being disposed on a first wiper belt; and

moving the first wiper belt such that the first article wiping surface imparts a rearward wiping force on the article.

26. The method of claim 25, further comprising moving the first article engaging surface forward with respect to the second article engaging surface to impart a forward rotational force on the side wall of the article.

27. The method of claim 26, wherein moving the first article engaging surface forward with respect to the second article engaging surface comprises moving the first article engaging surface in a forward direction and moving the second article engaging surface in a rearward direction.

28. The method of claim 26, wherein moving the first article engaging surface forward with respect to the second article engaging surface comprises moving the first article engaging surface in a forward direction at a first velocity and moving the second article engaging surface in the forward direction at a second velocity, the first velocity being greater than the second velocity.

29. The method of claim 25, further comprising moving the second article engaging surface to impart a rearward motive force on the side wall of the article, with the forward motive force being greater than the rearward motive force for forward movement and forward rotation of the article.

What is claimed is:

1. An apparatus for cleaning an article, the apparatus comprising:

a drive member configured to impart a forward motive force on the article; and

a first wiper belt defining a first article wiping surface, the first wiper belt including a plurality of flexible projections formed with the first wiper belt as an integral elastomeric component, the plurality of flexible projections being sized and positioned to impart a wiping force on the article when the first wiper belt is moved with respect to the article;

wherein the first wiper belt is powered to move the first article wiping surface to impart a rearward wiping force on the article.

2. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the drive member is configured to impart a forward rotational force on the article.

3. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the plurality of flexible projections comprises laterally extending fins.

4. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of flexible projections extends from the first wiper belt a distance at least three times a nominal thickness of the first wiper belt.

5. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of flexible projections includes a root thickness that is greater than a nominal thickness of the first wiper belt.

6. A method for cleaning an article, the method comprising:

receiving the article between first and second opposed article engaging surfaces;

moving at least the first article engaging surface to impart a forward motive force on a side wall of the article;

contacting the article with a first article wiping surface, the first article wiping surface being disposed on a first wiper belt; and

moving the first wiper belt such that the first article wiping surface imparts a rearward wiping force on the article.

7. The method of claim 6, further comprising moving the first article engaging surface forward with respect to the second article engaging surface to impart a forward rotational force on the side wall of the article.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein moving the first article engaging surface forward with respect to the second article engaging surface comprises moving the first article engaging surface in a forward direction and moving the second article engaging surface in a rearward direction.

9. The method of claim 7, wherein moving the first article engaging surface forward with respect to the second article engaging surface comprises moving the first article engaging surface in a forward direction at a first velocity and moving the second article engaging surface in the forward direction at a second velocity, the first velocity being greater than the second velocity.

10. The method of claim 6, further comprising moving the second article engaging surface to impart a rearward motive force on the side wall of the article, with the forward motive force being greater than the rearward motive force for forward movement and forward rotation of the article.

11. An apparatus for cleaning an article, the apparatus comprising:

a first drive belt defining a first article engaging surface extending substantially parallel to a second article engaging surface of the apparatus and positioned to receive the article between the first and second article engaging surfaces, the first drive belt being powered to move in a first direction such that the first article engaging surface imparts a forward motive force on an outer surface of the article; and

a first wiper belt defining a first article wiping surface positioned to contact the article, the first wiper belt being powered to move in a second direction opposite the first direction such that the first article wiping surface imparts a rearward wiping force on the article.

12. The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the first wiper belt includes a plurality of flexible projections sized and positioned to impart the rearward wiping force on the side wall of the article, wherein the plurality of flexible projections are formed with the first wiper belt as an integral elastomeric component.

13. The apparatus of claim 11, further comprising a second wiper belt defining a second article wiping surface substantially coplanar with the first article wiping surface and spaced apart from the first article wiping surface by the first article engaging surface, and positioned to contact the article, the second wiper belt being powered to move in the second direction such that the second article wiping surface imparts a rearward wiping force on the side wall of the article.

14. The apparatus of claim 11, further comprising a second wiper belt defining a second article wiping surface transverse to the first article wiping surface and positioned to contact an end wall of the article, the second wiper belt being powered to move in a third direction such that the second article wiping surface imparts a rearward wiping force on the end wall of the article.

15. The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the first wiper belt comprises a continuous belt further defining a return surface spaced apart from the first article wiping surface and out of contact with the article, the apparatus further comprising a wiper cleaning assembly operable to remove contaminants from the return surface, wherein the wiper cleaning assembly comprises at least one of a vacuum assembly, a cleaning fluid dispenser, and a belt agitating mechanism.