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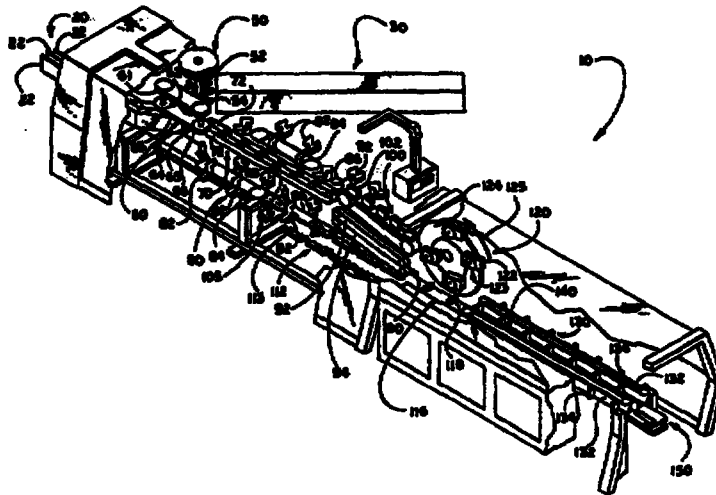
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(54) Title: APPARATUS FOR DRAWING TOGETHER THE BOTTOM-PANELS OF A CARRIER IN A CARRIER LOADING MACHINE



(57) Abstract

An apparatus (10) for loading containers into basket-style bottom-loading carriers (3) has a container infeed mechanism; a carrier infeed supplier (30); a carrier feeder mechanism (50) for removing carriers from the carrier infeed supplier; a carrier timer-transport assembly (60 or 260) for receiving carriers (3) from the carrier infeed supplier and initiating transport of the carriers in synchronous parallel motion above the containers; a gripper (82) assembly for opening the carriers (3); a declination belt assembly (90) forming a pathway for receiving transversely extending bottom panels of said carriers and transporting said carriers downwardly over the groupings of containers; a seating assembly (120) for engaging tops of handles of carriers such that as the seating members rotate the bottommost seating member engages the respective tops of the handles of the carriers; and bottom-panel closure mechanisms (130, 140, 182) for placing the bottom panels together in locking relationship with respect to one another.