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(19) **United States**(12) **Patent Application Publication**
Seidler(10) **Pub. No.: US 2004/0136614 A1**(43) **Pub. Date: Jul. 15, 2004**(54) **BAG TRANSFORMABLE INTO A
TABLECLOTH**(52) **U.S. Cl. 383/4; 383/110; 383/111;
383/10**(76) **Inventor: Laurence William Seidler, Murchas
(ES)**

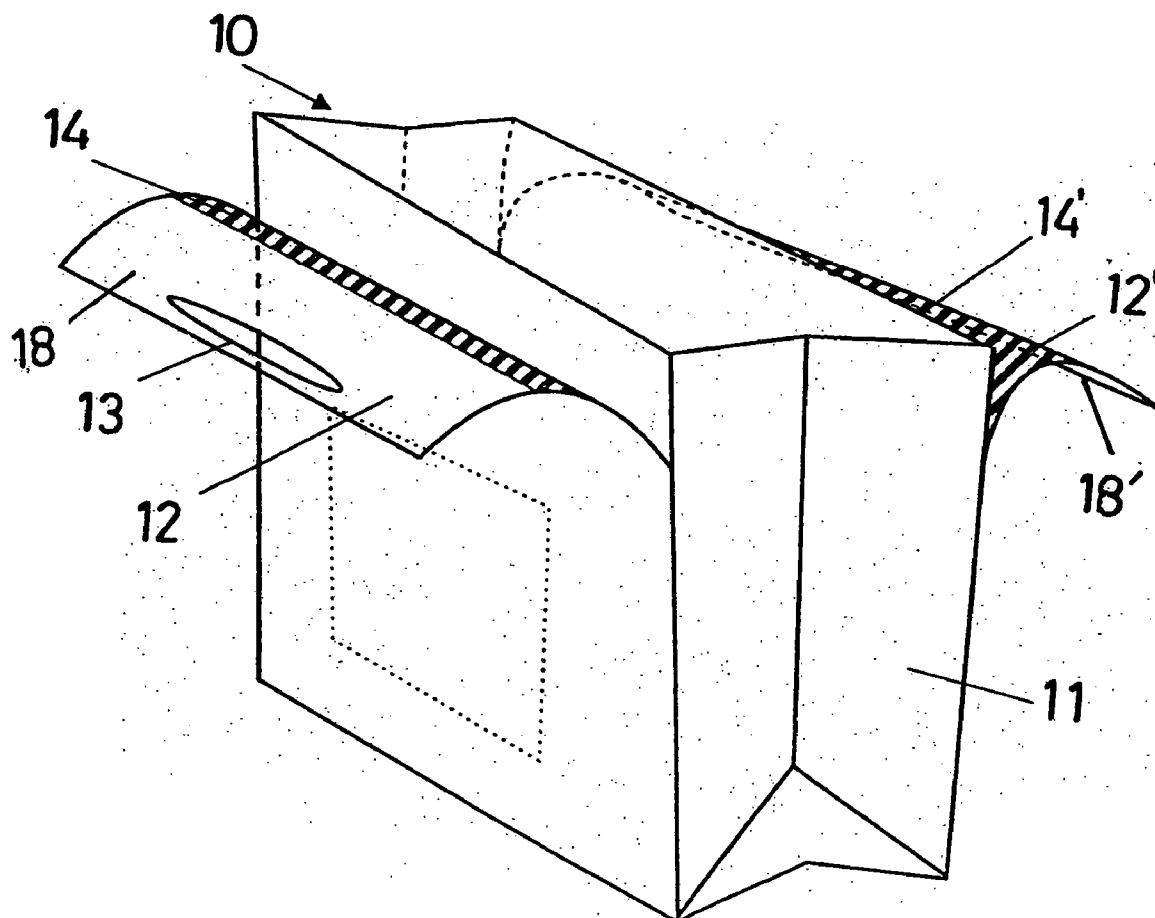
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NEW YORK, NY 100368403**(21) **Appl. No.: 10/746,569**(22) **Filed: Dec. 23, 2003**(30) **Foreign Application Priority Data**

Dec. 23, 2002 (ES) 200203069

Publication Classification(51) **Int. Cl.⁷ B65D 30/00**(57) **ABSTRACT**

A bag transformable into a tablecloth comprised of a bag manufactured from paper or a similar material having a quadrangular shape, the bag having tearing or controlled breaking means on which a thermal material lamina is incorporated. A plastic material or similar lamina is incorporated on one or each of the bag surfaces. The lamina is provided with reinforcement and with openings on the upper part constituting handles. The laminas are printed on one or both faces, able to be separated from the central body for forming tablecloths, having an identical width and longer length than the central body or a shorter length, as may be selected.



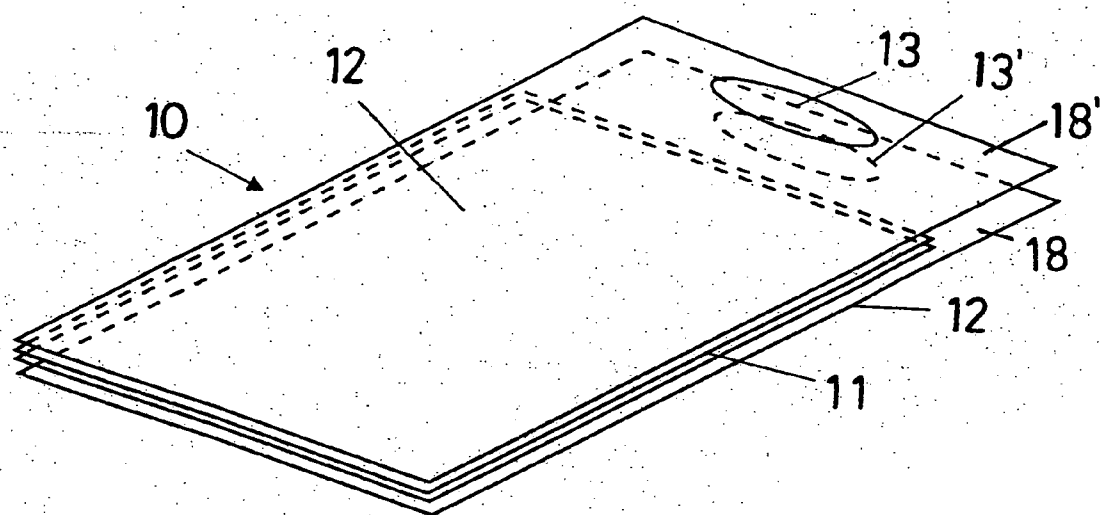


FIG. 1

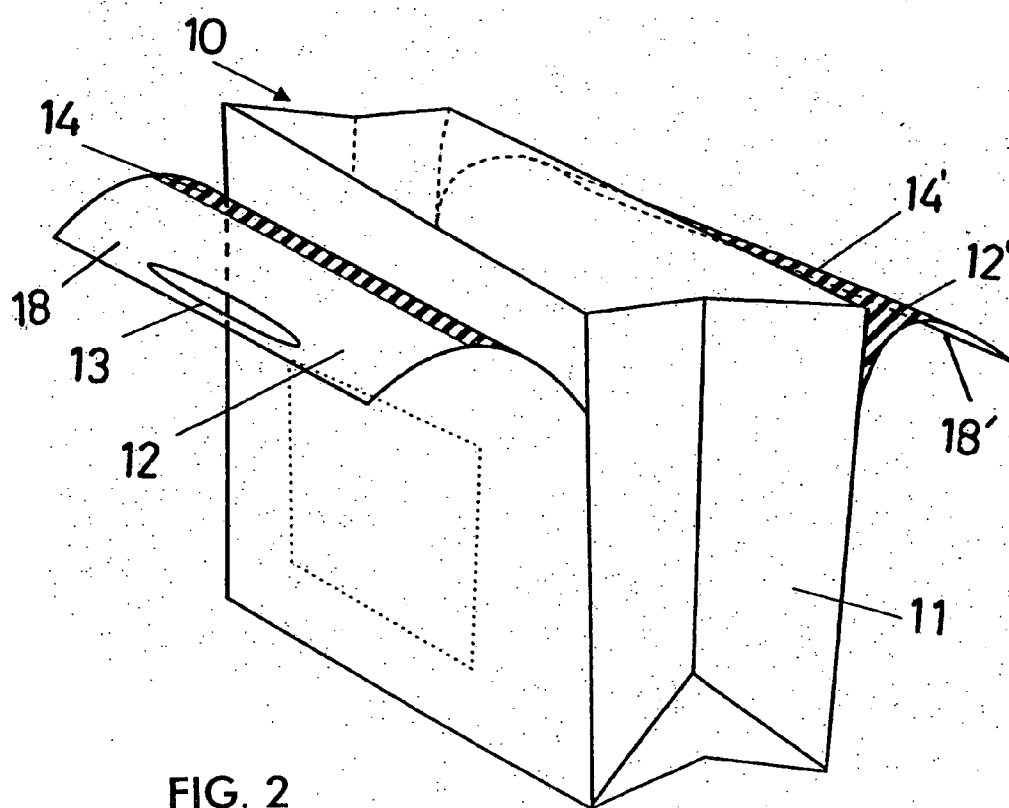


FIG. 2

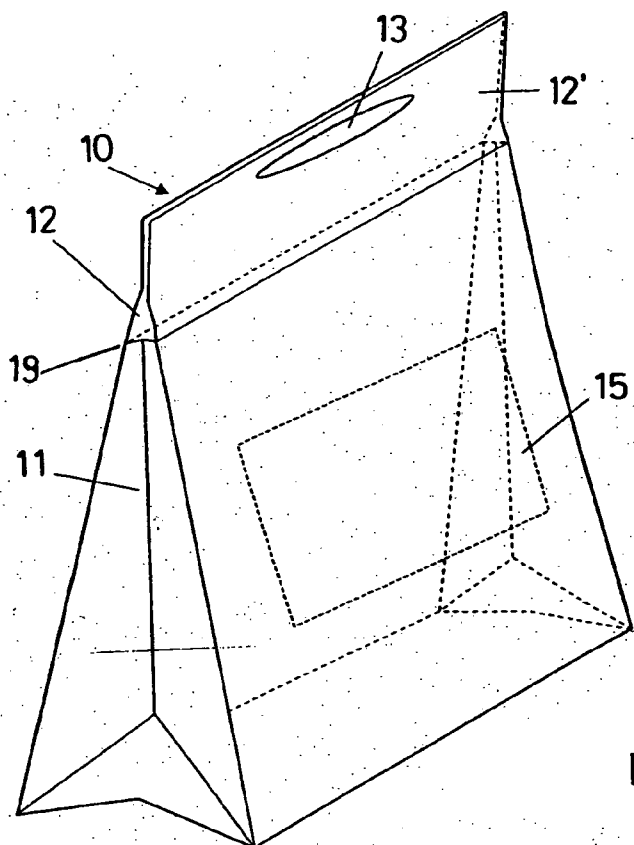
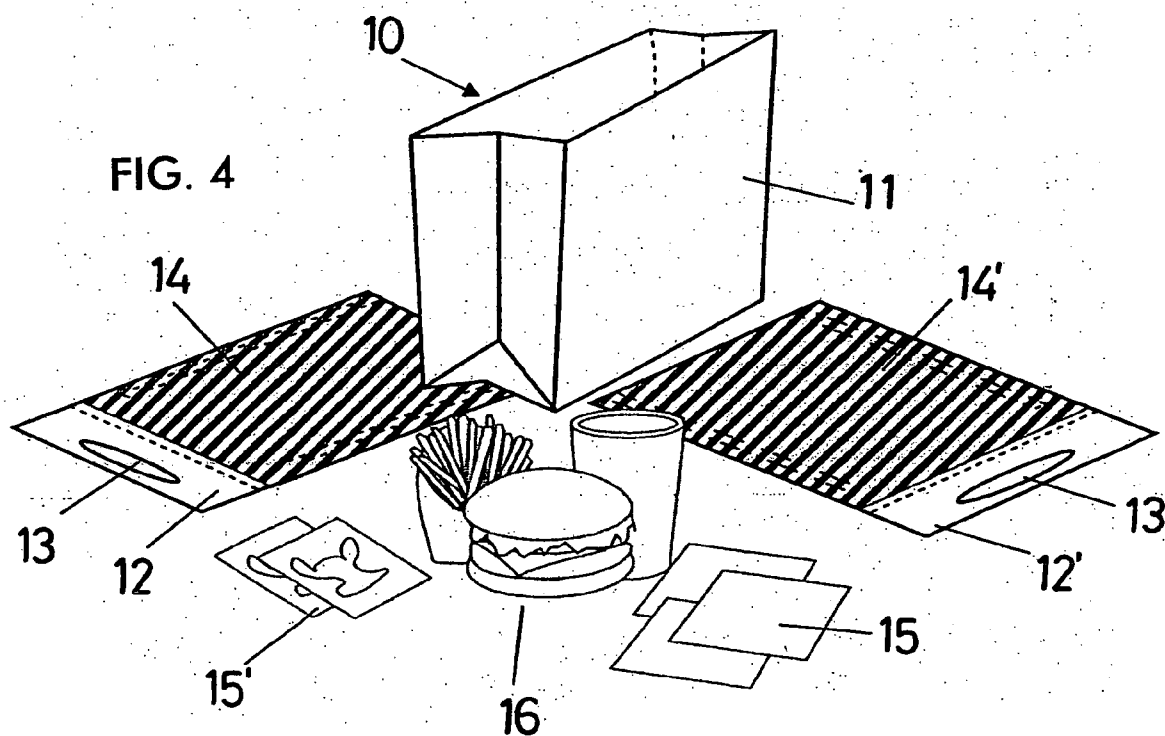


FIG. 3



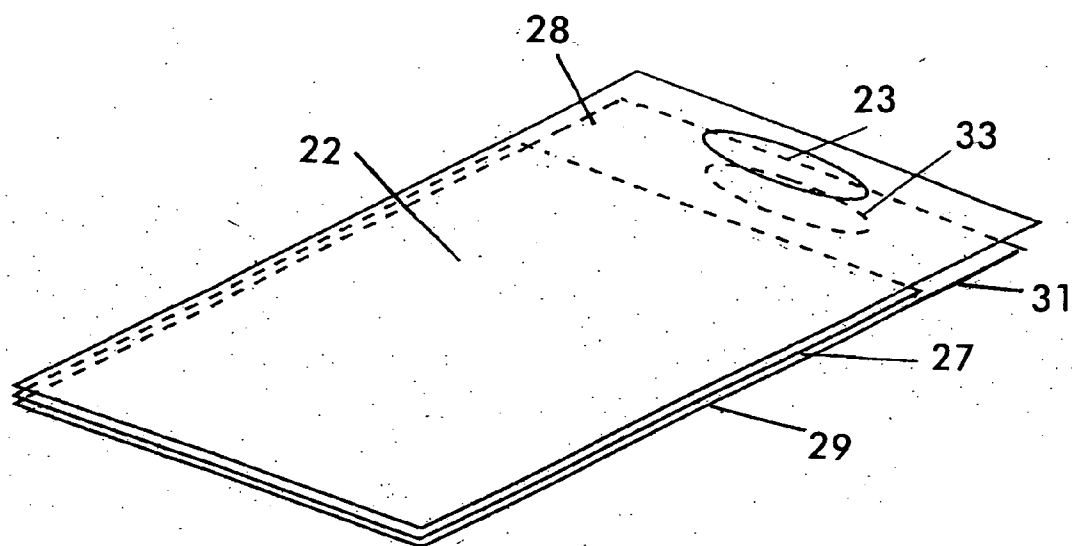


FIG. 5

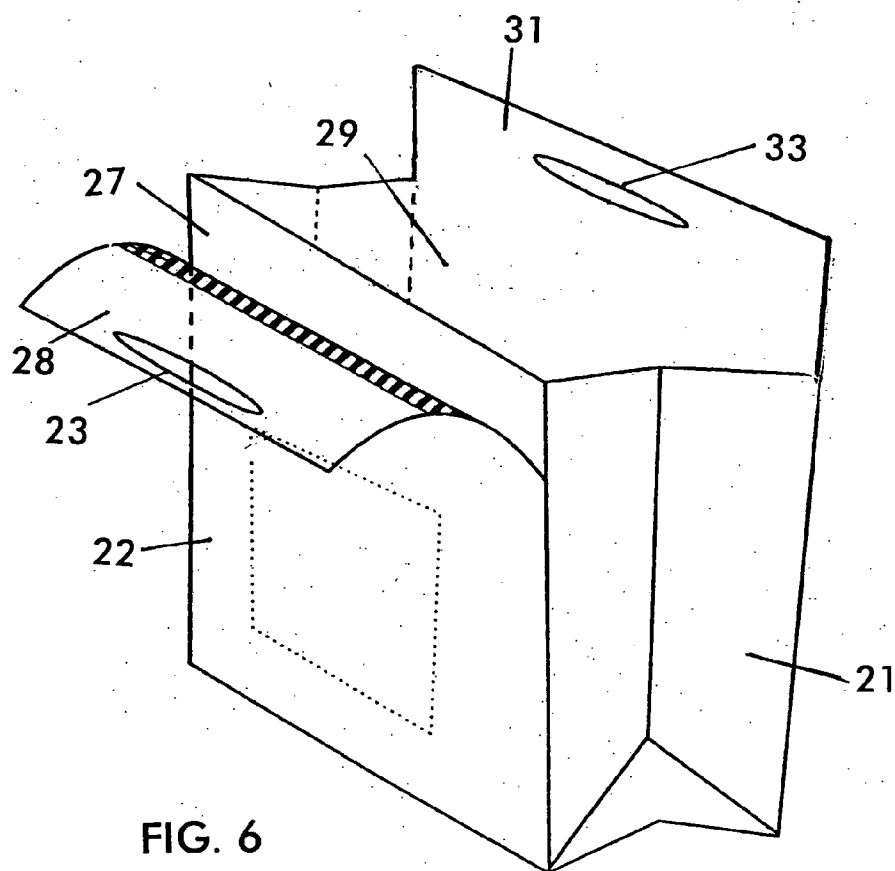


FIG. 6

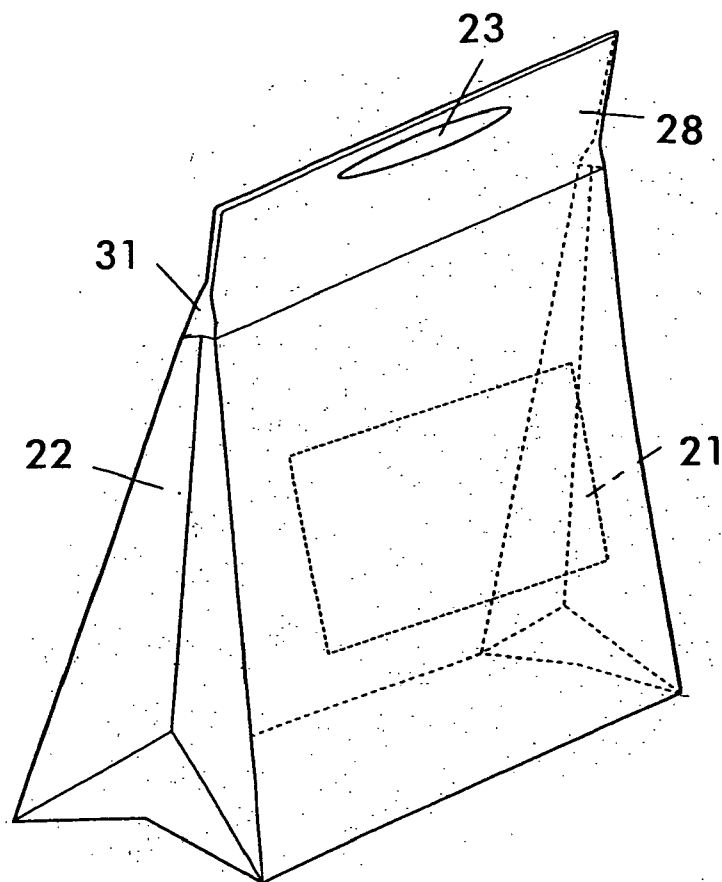


FIG. 7

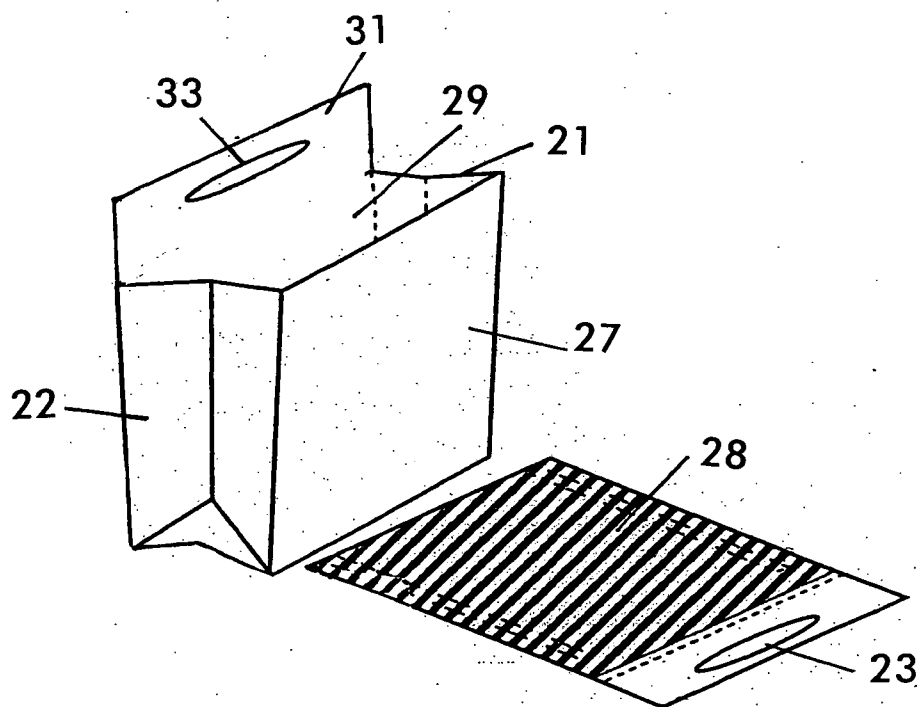


FIG. 8

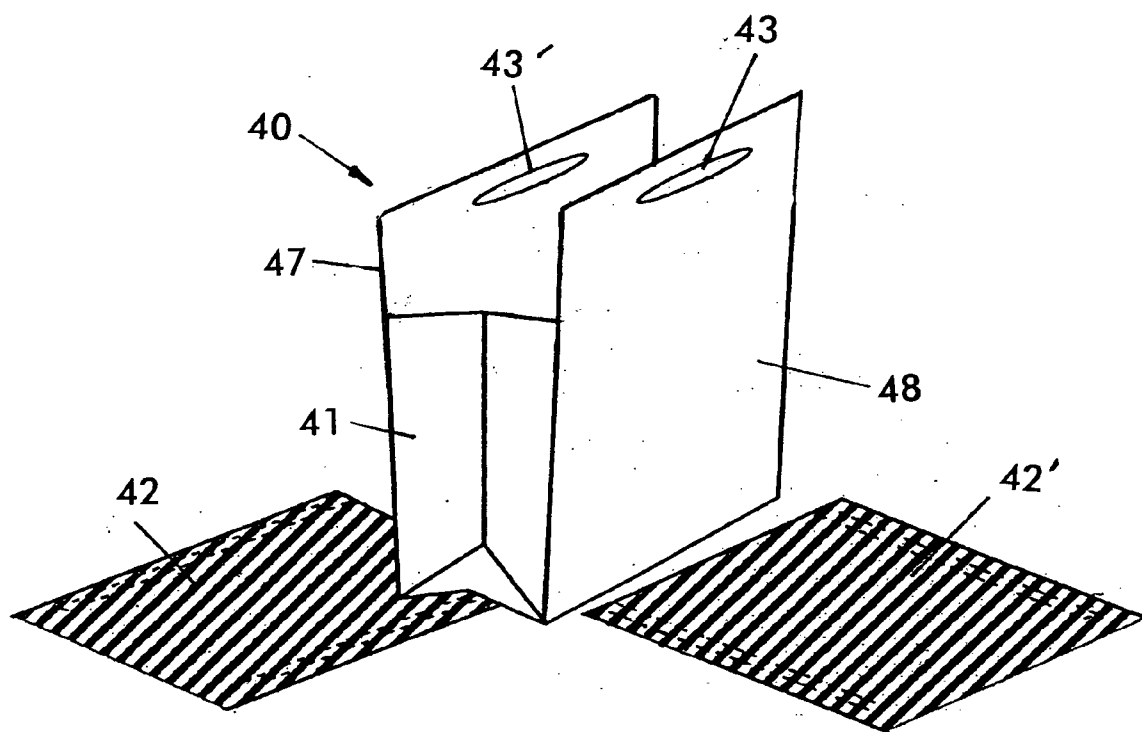


FIG. 10

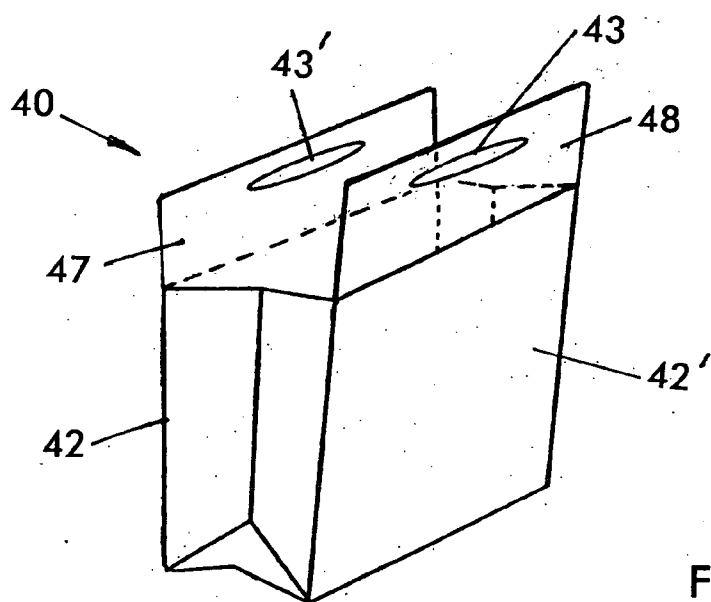


FIG. 9

BAG TRANSFORMABLE INTO A TABLECLOTH**BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION****[0001] 1. Field of The Invention**

[0002] The invention relates to bags which are preferably applicable for carrying and distributing prepared food and particularly relates to a bag with one or more lamina on the bag which are removable from the bag to define a tablecloth.

[0003] 2. Description of the Prior Art

[0004] There are a large number of bags manufactured from paper and/or plastic material, and there are containers manufactured from cardboard and paperboard which, subsequent to their assembly, are formed as "picnic" containers very frequently used for carrying prepared food during organized trips and excursions.

[0005] French patent FR 2715669 discloses and claims a textile material lamina which can have multiple uses and is capable of being folded and transformed into a bag. Solutions of this type are applied on a plurality of products formed as beach or pool towels which, by means of different arrangements and systems, are capable of being folded and transformed into bags. See ES-U-152,496, ES-U-152,497, ES-U-152,983, ES-U-152,984, ES-U-153,777, ES-U-153,778, WO-9616567, WO-9960884, EP-303771 and U.S. Pat. No. 6,276,828.

[0006] Publications also disclose rigid devices which can be unfolded to be used as tablecloths. U.S. Pat. No. 6,159,179 discloses a device that is similar to a folded cardboard box used for containing glass bottles.

[0007] U.S. Pat. No. 2,831,624, U.S. Pat. No. **3,097,782** and U.S. Pat. No. 4,499,999 disclose panels having a certain rigidity which are fixed together such that when folded, they form a receptacle in the form of a box or basket, and when unfolded, they may be used as a "picnic" blanket.

[0008] German Utility Model D-9,114,046 discloses devices for attaching plates and silverware to a "picnic" blanket, such that the blanket is folded without leaving interior space.

[0009] EP-578247 discloses a bag formed of a circular base and a wall which is closed by a perimetral cord, such that when it is unfolded, it defines a broader circular surface which can especially be used for changing babies' diapers.

[0010] U.S. Pat. No. 4,337,812 discloses a configuration similar to the aforementioned one, but it is provided in its center with a housing for plates and silverware. When the bag is unfolded, it is used as a tablecloth and can be re-used as a bag, after pulling on the cord again.

[0011] Spanish Utility Model ES-U-294,193 also discloses a configuration similar to the one mentioned above.

[0012] DE-4,335,279 discloses a sheet or lamina which is folded and closed so as to form a pocket-like bag in which silverware can be housed. Once the sheet is opened, it may be used as a napkin.

[0013] EP-688,515 discloses arrangements of bags which can be unfolded so as to be used as mats or blankets for children's games. The bags are provided with zippers facilitating their closure.

[0014] However, the inventor hereof does not know of the current existence of a structure provided with the relevant features disclosed in this specification.

OBJECT OF THE INVENTION

[0015] The present specification refers to a bag transformable into a tablecloth. The bag is provided with an inner area manufactured from paper with perforated edges, which can incorporate a lamina of material having thermal features, and a plastic lining, being provided with perforations on its sides for the purpose of allowing its opening or tearing for use. It may be subsequently used as a tablecloth on which the foods constituting the contents of the bag used for carrying prepared food are incorporated.

[0016] The invention can also be formed as a bag made of a flexible material, having features suitable for allowing carrying and maintaining the food disposed inside the bag. The body of the bag is provided on its outward facing side faces with laminas which are capable of being removed from the central structure or bag once the bag is used. Alternatively, there is a single lamina. These removed laminas are subsequently used as a tablecloth and for that they may incorporate decorative designs on their inner surfaces. The central body of the bag may be the receptacle for wastes, for their subsequent dumping into a conventional garbage container after the intake of the carried products.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0017] The embodiments of a bag transformable into a tablecloth according to the invention allows use of the bag for comfortably carrying prepared food in optimal conditions, and allow for subsequent use of the bag to provide a tablecloth as when carried food is to be eaten.

[0018] In preferred embodiments, the invention may be manufactured from a flexible material formed into a central body. A respective lamina is applied to and carried on the outer surface of at least one side or of the two opposite sides of the central body. After a user removes the content of the central bag, the lamina or both laminas constituting the outer area or outer areas of the bag, and each possibly provided with its corresponding handle or grip, can be removed from the central body and may define a tablecloth possibly having decorations on one of its faces, and specifically on the inner face that had been placed against the central body.

[0019] In a first preferred embodiment, the bag transformable into a tablecloth may be formed of three components. The first component defines a central area comprised of a laminar body adopting the shape of a bag for holding prepared foods inside the bag. To provide resistance to tearing, the bag is provided with physical features for supporting the elements incorporated inside the bag. The bag may also be provided with volumetric features and may satisfy health standards suitable for the contents.

[0020] The two other components of the bag are formed as laminas which collaborate in the thermal maintenance of the contents inside the central body. The laminas are temporarily fixed on the outer surfaces of the broad opposite sides of the central body. The laminas may have a width similar to the width of the central body, and may also have a slightly longer length than the central body, for the purpose of providing projecting ends of the laminas. Those ends may

have grip or handle defining elements, such as die-cut openings, and applicable for use as handles.

[0021] The presence of two laminas on opposite side of the central body may be obtained by two separate laminas, each adapted to define a separate cloth, or by a single sheet-like lamina which is folded and shaped so as to wrap around the bottom of the central body and extend up over both opposite sides thereof.

[0022] The outer sides of the laminas allow for printed advertising or identifying graphics on their outer surface so that the bag accordingly may serve as an advertising means, whereas on their inner sides, the laminas may also have impressions thereon forming a tablecloth decoration.

[0023] When food contained inside the central body is to be eaten, the laminas placed against the outer surfaces of the body are removed, and one or two laminas may be extended on a surface where they may form tablecloths on which the food can be consumed.

[0024] In the area of its opening, e.g., at its top end, the central body can be provided with closure means for closing the opening.

[0025] Additional useful elements can also be disposed between the outer laminas and the central body, including elements such as napkins, silverware, advertising brochures, etc. This would be enabled by the outer laminas being attached to the central body along their opposite lateral sides and their lower side. Because the upper sides of the lamina are not also attached to the central body, pockets are thereby formed between the laminas and the central body. The pockets are applicable for carrying, e.g. napkins, silverware and informative brochures, which are kept in optimal conditions until removal of the laminas constituting the tablecloths.

[0026] In a second embodiment, one lamina is disposed at one side of the central body. It may have characteristics of one of the two above discussed laminas. The one lamina can be removed from the central body to define a tablecloth. The one lamina may be of the same width as the central body but may be longer than the central body, so that one end thereof extends beyond the top of the central body. A handle may be formed in the lamina, e.g., by a grippable element, such as a cutout formed therein. The central body may alternatively be shaped so that at least one side thereof, particularly the side opposite the side on which the lamina is disposed, is of a length as to cooperate with and may be so shaped as to cooperate with the handle of the one lamina, so that the central body and the one lamina define grippable elements or handles for holding the bag.

[0027] In a third embodiment, rather than the laminas being longer or taller than the central body, the central body may be longer in height than the laminas and may project above the laminas. As an alternative, one such lamina may be provided at one side of the central body. In these embodiments, at least one or both of the sides of the central body that project above the lamina may have a grippable element thereon or particularly may have a cutout or perforation establishing a handgrip for the bag.

[0028] In all of the embodiments, the upper end of the central body of the bag is open. An appropriate closure may be defined at the upper end of the bag to enable closing it,

to hold the contents in the bag, for example. Depending upon the particular embodiment and configuration, the closure may join the upper ends of the two flat sides of the central body, or the upper ends of the laminas, or the upper end of a side of the central body and one lamina.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0029] To complement the description which is being made and for the purpose of aiding a better understanding of the features of the invention, the drawings attached with an illustrative and non-limiting character, shows the following:

[0030] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a first embodiment of the bag of the invention in a folded condition.

[0031] FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the bag shown in FIG. 1 in an opened position e.g. for introducing food.

[0032] FIG. 3 is a perspective view of the bag shown in FIGS. 1 and 2, in a closed position e.g. with contents to be carried inside.

[0033] FIG. 4 is a perspective view of the bag in FIGS. 1, 2 and 3, completely separated and in use.

[0034] FIG. 5 is a perspective view of a second embodiment of the bag in the folded condition.

[0035] FIG. 6 is a perspective view of the second embodiment of the bag in the open condition.

[0036] FIG. 7 is a perspective view of the second embodiment in the closed condition.

[0037] FIG. 8 is a perspective view of the second embodiment of the bag completely separated and in use.

[0038] FIG. 9 is a perspective view of the third embodiment completely separated and in use.

[0039] FIG. 10 is a perspective view of the third embodiment in the open condition.

PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS OF THE INVENTION

[0040] FIGS. 1 and 4 show a first embodiment of the invention which is formed from a central body in the form of a bag 10. Inside of the bag, prepared food 16 may be carried. The bag 10 is formed using a bag body 11 having suitable size and material features for its purpose, here carrying food. The bag is manufactured from paper or a suitable flexible material. It is provided with large outer rectangular or quadrangular, flat, opposite, outer side faces.

[0041] On each side face of the central body, a respective one of two laminas 12 and 12' is fixed by conventional means, preferably by adhesive. The laminas are fixed to the body 11 by or at seams located along the sides of the laminas, particularly the opposite lateral sides and the bottom side, but not along the top side of the laminas. The seams are formed as adhesive lines, even on the lower inner side. As the laminas are unattached at their top ends, they form respective pockets 18 in coincidence with respective outer surfaces of the body 11. In the pockets, for example, pieces constituting napkins, eating utensils 15 or brochures 15', or advertising in general, can be disposed. Each lamina may have a thermal nature for maintaining the temperature of the contents of the bag. The laminas may be manufactured from a paper or plastic material or another suitable material.

The laminas may be provided on their upper parts with reinforcement areas **18, 18'**, wherein openings **13, 13'** may be provided to act as a handle. Other hand grippable elements may be provided alternatively. The laminas **12** and **12'** have the possibility of being printed on one or both of their faces, possibly incorporating advertising graphics in general on their outer faces and ornamental designs **14** and **14'** on their inner faces since the inner faces are exposed when the laminas are used as tablecloths.

[0042] Each of the two laminas **12** and **12'** has a slightly longer length or height than the height or length of the central body **11**, but may maintain generally the same width. Die-cuts **13** and **13'** constituting the grip handles are formed in the projecting ends of both laminas **12** and **12'**. The assembly of the bag **10** can be provided with conventional closure means at **19**, like snaps, clips, adhesive, or tongue in groove, as in sealable plastic bags. The closure may be disposed on the upper area of the opening of the body **11** and/or at the top ends of the laminas.

[0043] FIG. 4 shows the central bag between the tablecloths, possible contents of the central bag, and brochures or napkins which may be carried in the pockets formed by attaching the outer laminas to the central body on three of the four sides of the laminas.

[0044] The second embodiment of bag **20** shown in drawing FIGS. 5-8 differs from the first embodiment primarily in that only a single lamina **22** is disposed at the outside surface of only one side **27** of the bag **20**, rather than outside both sides of the bag. The central body **21** of the bag **10** may otherwise have the same foldable construction of FIG. 5 like the body **11** of the first embodiment, may or be otherwise shaped, as discussed below. As shown in FIG. 8, the single lamina **22** on the side **27** of the body **21** may be removed from the body to serve as a tablecloth.

[0045] As in the first embodiment, the lamina **22** may be generally the same width as the side **27** of the body **21** and be fastened to the side **27** at the two lateral sides and at the bottom side of the lamina by the same type of seaming, e.g., by adhesive. The upper side of the lamina **22** is not adhered to the side **27**, thereby defining an object receiving pocket between them.

[0046] The side of the lamina **22** may be taller than the respective side **27** of the body **21** defining thereby a possibly reinforced extension flap **28** in which a cutout **23** or other grippable element, such as a handle, might be provided. The bag can be carried by the cutout or gripping element **23**.

[0047] In this embodiment, since there is no lamina on the other side **29** of the body **21**, the side **29** may be taller than the side **27** and taller than the lateral sides of the body **21**, so that the side **29** of the body defines its own flap **31** with a corresponding cutout **33** or other grippable element. When the bag is closed, the cutouts **23** and **33** overly each other providing a convenient carrying handle for the bag. The top end of the body **21**, like the top end of the body **11**, may be fastened closed at a fastener, which may be an appropriate tongue and groove fastening used for pouches or by other sealing or adhesive fastening.

[0048] A third embodiment **40** of FIGS. 9 and 10 differs from the first and second embodiments in a significant way. In the first embodiment, the two laminas are taller than the respective sides of the bag, and in the second embodiment,

the one lamina is taller than the respective side. In the third embodiment **40**, the two sides **47** and **48** of the body **41** are respectively taller than the height of the two laminas **42** and **42'** which are adhered to the opposite outer sides **47, 48** in the same manner as in the first embodiment. The width of the laminas **42, 42'** remains generally the same as the width of the respective sides **47, 48**. In this embodiment, the upwardly projecting sides **47, 48** of the bag or body **41** have the cutouts **43, 43'** or other grippable elements, and the two cutout or elements **43, 43'** enable the bag to be carried. As in the first embodiment, the laminas **42** and **42'** can be separated from the respective sides **47, 48** of the body **41** to define tablecloths. As in the second embodiment, instead of two laminas being provided in the third embodiment, only one lamina **42** may be provided at one side **47**, and as that one lamina is shorter than the height of the two sides of the body, the sides could remain the same size as illustrated in FIG. 10 and would have the respective cutouts or grippable elements **43, 43'**.

[0049] Although the present invention has been described in relation to particular embodiments thereof, many other variations and modifications and other uses will become apparent to those skilled in the art. It is preferred, therefore, that the present invention be limited not by the specific disclosure herein, but only by the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A bag transformable into a tablecloth, the bag comprising:

a central body;

two laminas each adaptable for use as a tablecloth, the laminas being releasably fixed to the central body at separate locations on the body and fixed so that the laminas can be removed from the central body and used as tablecloths.

2. A bag according to claim 1, wherein the central body and the laminas are comprised of paper.

3. A bag according to claim 2, wherein the paper has thermal features.

4. A bag according to claim 1, wherein the central body is comprised of a flexible material.

5. A bag according to claim 1, wherein the central body has two opposite sides separable to define a bag for holding objects, and the sides have outer surfaces, a respective one of the lamina is disposed on each outer surface.

6. A bag according to claim 5, wherein each lamina is substantially rectangular in shape.

7. A bag according to claim 6, wherein the bag has a width and each lamina has a respective width similar to the width of the bag.

8. A bag according to claim 7, wherein the central body has a length and each lamina has a respective length slightly longer than the length of the central body.

9. A bag according to claim 5, wherein the bag has a width and each lamina has a respective width similar to the width of the bag.

10. A bag according to claim 5, wherein the central body has a length and each lamina has a respective length slightly longer than the length of the central body.

11. A bag according to claim 5, further comprising seams fixing the laminas to the central body.

12. A bag according to claim 11, wherein each lamina has lateral sides and a lower area, and the seams are located on the sides and the lower area of each lamina.

13. A bag according to claim 5, further comprising adhesive fixing the laminas to the central body.

14. A bag according to claim 5, wherein each lamina has an upper part which extends beyond the central body, and coinciding cuts in the upper parts of the two laminas, whereby the cuts may constitute handles or handgrips of the bag.

15. A bag according to claim 5, wherein each lamina has an upper part which extends beyond the central body and the upper parts have grippable elements.

16. A bag according to claim 5, wherein the central body has a length and each lamina has a respective length that is slightly shorter than the length of the central body, whereby the central body has upper parts above the lamina.

17. The bag of claim 16, wherein the upper parts of the body have grippable elements thereon by which the bag may be gripped.

18. A bag according to claim 5, wherein each lamina has an upper side, a lower side and lateral sides, each lamina is fixed to the central body by its lateral sides and lower side, whereby each lamina and the central body form a pocket which is accessible from the upper side.

19. A bag according to claim 1, wherein each lamina has an outer surface and an inner surface, the lamina surfaces allowing printing thereon.

20. A bag transformable into a tablecloth, the bag comprising:

a central body;

a lamina adaptable for use as a tablecloth, the lamina being releasably fixed to the central body so that the lamina can be removed from the central body and used as a tablecloth.

21. A bag according to claim 20, wherein the central body and the lamina are comprised of paper.

22. A bag according to claim 20, wherein the central body is comprised of a flexible material.

23. A bag according to claim 20, wherein the central body has two opposite separated sides to define a bag for holding objects, and the sides have outward surfaces; the lamina is disposed on one of the outward surfaces of the bag.

24. A bag according to claim 23, wherein the lamina is substantially rectangular in shape.

25. A bag according to claim 23, wherein the bag has a width and the lamina has a respective width similar to the width of the bag; and

wherein the side of the central body to which the lamina is disposed has a length and the lamina has a respective length slightly longer than the length of the central body.

26. A bag according to claim 23, wherein the bag has a width and the lamina has a respective width similar to the width of the bag; and

wherein the side of the central body to which the lamina is disposed has a length and the lamina has a respective length slightly shorter than the length of the central body.

27. A bag according to claim 23, wherein the lamina has lateral sides and a lower area, and seams located at the lateral sides and the lower area of the lamina fixing the lamina to the central body whereby the lamina and the central body form a pocket which is accessible from the upper part.

28. A bag according to claim 23, wherein the lamina has an upper part which extends beyond the central body; a cut in the upper part of the lamina, which may constitute a grippable element.

29. A bag according to claim 23, wherein the lamina has an upper part which extends beyond the central body and the upper part has a grippable element.

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