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(54) **Indoor canopy**

(57) The invention relates to the provision of a canopy for use primarily indoors which is provided to be positioned with an item of furniture, such as a bed. The canopy, which is particularly attractive to children, gives the appearance that the item of furniture is enclosed by

the canopy. The canopy includes a frame having a cover section and support members depending downwardly therefrom. The support members of the canopy can be adjusted with respect to the cover section to allow the same to be adjustable to accommodate different sizes of items of furniture within a range of dimensions.

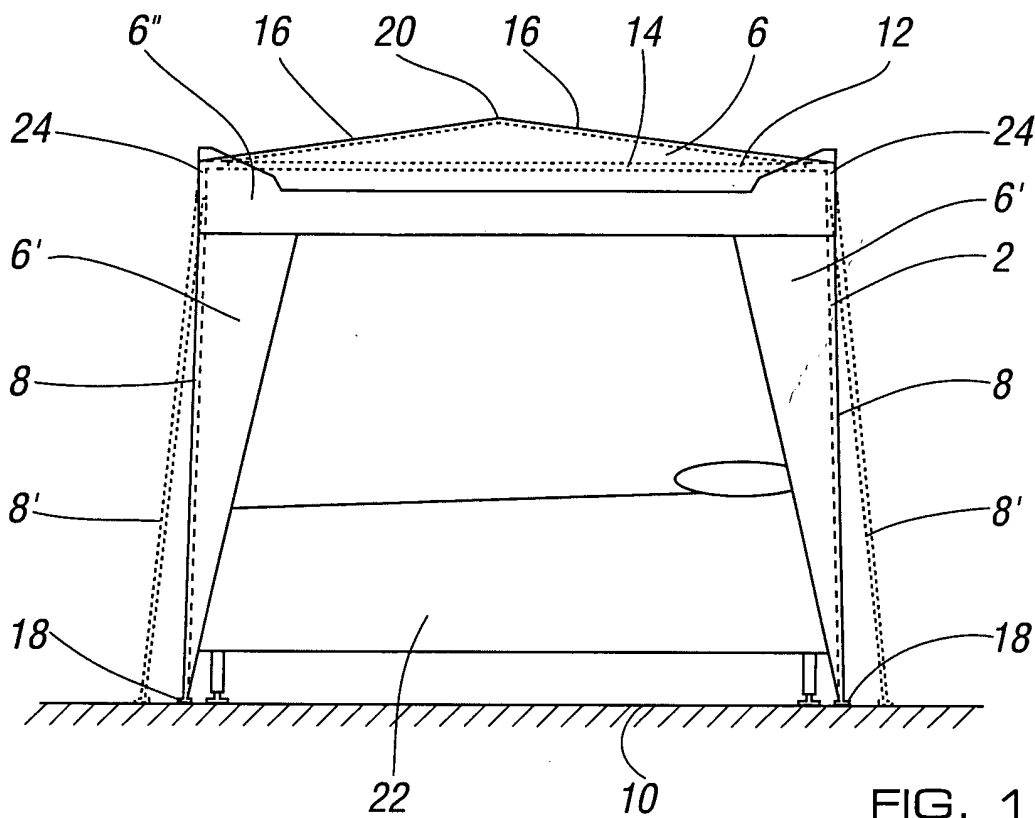


FIG. 1

Description

[0001] The invention to which this application relates is to a canopy apparatus and the use of the same in an innovative way.

[0002] The provision of canopies is known in outdoor environments to provide shelter from the sun, rain, wind or the like. The outdoor canopy typically comprises a number of substantially vertical support members provided as part of a frame, with the frame including a roof section. Sheet material is provided to be attached to and stretched between the members of the roof section to provide the required cover from the environmental conditions. In many instances wall sections can also be provided between some or all of the vertical members as required to provide a partially or fully enclosed area within the canopy.

[0003] While it is known to provide the canopies with sheet material of colour or pattern which can have some decorative effect there has been no attempt to allow the conventional canopy to appear to be or act as anything other than a shelter for persons in an outside environment.

[0004] Furthermore, while it is possible, if space permits, to place tables, chairs and the like inside said canopies, it has always been a matter of choice and convenience and the furniture is placed independently of the canopy. It is also known from US5718254 to provide apparatus for the location of curtains over a bed to give the appearance of a four poster. However this apparatus tends to be provided to be permanently positioned with the bed frame and, while adjustable, requires either or both of the height of the vertical members and/or horizontal frame members to be adjustable by the provision of overlapping joints and L shaped members which makes the product relatively complex and expensive to manufacture.

[0005] The aim of the present invention is to provide a canopy for use in an environment where such use is not known and to provide the canopy in use with at least one other article to provide entertainment and enjoyment, to children in particular.

[0006] In a first aspect of the invention there is provided a canopy for placement with at least one item of furniture, said canopy including a frame, said frame having a cover section, and a series of support members depending downwardly therefrom, the cover section providing a roof to the canopy and the support members are positioned with respect to the at least one item of furniture to allow the said item to be substantially accommodated within the canopy area as defined by the support members, and wherein said support members are selectively angled in a range from a substantially vertical position to an outwardly angled position as they depend down from the cover section to lie outside of but adjacent to the sides of the item of furniture.

[0007] By providing for the outward angling of the support legs so the appearance of the canopy can be im-

proved and the specific angling of the legs can be selected to allow the canopy to be fitted around items of furniture of differing dimensions.

[0008] Thus there is provided canopy apparatus which in one embodiment includes a frame having a plurality of spaced upstanding support members and a cover section, and sheet material, said sheet material spread over and retained on at least the cover section of the frame to provide a roof to the canopy and wherein the support members are positioned with respect to at least one identifiable item of furniture to allow the said item to be substantially accommodated within the area of the canopy.

[0009] In an alternative embodiment the cover section is formed as a moulded item located on the support members.

[0010] In one embodiment the canopy is for indoor use and so need not be resistant to external conditions such as rain, sun or the like.

[0011] Typically the support members are connected to the cover section of the frame with sufficient resilience to allow the canopy to be range taking with respect to variations in the dimensions of the items of furniture to be located therein. For example, in one preferred embodiment, the canopy is of a size and dimensions to be placed around and over an item of furniture in the form of a child's single bed. While single beds can be provided of dimensions within a certain range, there are variations within that range. Typically the canopy of the invention is range taking in that the support members can be adjusted within a range, typically by adjusting the angle or splay of the support members inwardly or outwardly such that the same lie adjacent to the edges of the item of furniture.

[0012] Preferably the frame members are formed by interlocking sections, thereby ensuring that the frame can be moved between a relatively small storage condition and a larger erected condition, by assembling the member sections.

[0013] Typically, in addition to the provision of sheet material to form the roof of the canopy, sheet material is provided to depend from the cover section at least partially downwardly along the support members to mask the same, at least when viewed from externally of the canopy.

[0014] Yet further, additional sheet material can be provided, and may be rendered more rigid by the provision of further members which act as stiffening means and are provided as part of the cover section of the frame. The provision of the additional sheet material enhances the appearance of the canopy and furthermore alters the shape and appearance of the same.

[0015] Typically the cover section of the frame comprises a series of members which define the outer shape of the section and one, two or more intersecting members which traverse and join opposing points of the cover section. For example, in one embodiment, the intersecting members pass diagonally from opposing cor-

ners of the cover section.

[0016] The cover section can also be provided to be three dimensional in that rather than a two dimensional flat roof being provided the cover section can include raised and/or sloping sections.

[0017] In one embodiment the canopy is free standing in as much as it stands clear of the item of furniture with which the support members are located adjacent thereto when the item is placed within the canopy. Alternatively, the canopy and/or item of furniture is provided with attachment means which, in one embodiment, allow the canopy to be retained in location with the item of furniture. In a further embodiment the canopy is attached to the furniture by the attachment means and the item act to support the canopy via the item of furniture.

[0018] The canopy is found to be of particular advantage and attraction to children when used in conjunction with their bed as the canopy can be designed to provide an illusion of, for example, a castle, princess' room or the like. However it should be appreciated that the canopy and use of the same in conjunction with any type of furniture item is of advantage.

[0019] In a further aspect of the invention there is provided a canopy, said canopy moveable between storage and erected conditions and, when erected, including a frame having a cover section and support members depending downwardly therefrom, and sheet material provided to enclose at least the roof section and wherein the canopy is provided for use within a premises for decorative effect.

[0020] An embodiment of the invention is now described with reference to the accompanying drawings wherein;

Figure 1 illustrates an elevation of the canopy in the erected condition in conjunction with an item of furniture;

Figure 2 illustrates an end elevation of the canopy of Figure 1;

Figure 3 illustrates a plan view from the base of the canopy without the item of furniture in position;

Figure 4 illustrates a further embodiment of the invention; and

Figure 5 illustrates one form of connection socket in accordance with the invention.

[0021] Referring now to the Figures 1-3, there is illustrated a canopy 2 in accordance with one embodiment of the invention. The canopy comprises a frame 4 and, in this embodiment sheet material 6, supported by the frame. The sheet material is attached to the frame by suitable fastening means such as ties, hook and loop fastening means, to retain the sheet material in position when the frame is erected as shown. In one embodiment

the sheet material can be used to form the roof by spreading the same over the cover section 12 and/or partly along the support members. Alternatively, as shown in Figure 4, the cover section 12 can be formed as a preformed moulded component which is supported in position by the support members 8 and therefore need not include sheet material for the cover section. In this embodiment the cover section design may be provided in any of a series of predetermined dimensions with the particular size selected by the customer to suit the size of the item of furniture with which the canopy is to be used. In one embodiment the moulding tool used to provide the moulded cover section may itself be adjustable to allow different profiles and dimension mouldings to be manufactured to the same design but of a series of dimensions from the same mould.

[0022] The frame 4 is shown in broken lines in Figure 1 and partly in Figure 3. The frame comprises a series of upstanding support members 8, in this case located at each of the corners of the cover section 12. The support members depend downwardly to contact the support surface 10 and support the canopy in position. The support members are connected to the cover section 12 via connection means which include a series of location sockets angled or adjustably positionable to receive an end of one of the frame members and hold the same at the required angular position with respect to the other support members connected to the connection means and thereby allow the frame to be constructed. In the embodiment of Figure 4 the connection means 29 can be provided as integral parts of the moulding as shown.

[0023] In the embodiment illustrated in Figure 1-3, the cover section is shaped by a frame of members 14 and includes a peaked section formed by members 16 depending inwardly and upwardly from the corners of the cover section to a central peak 20 where the same are joined together.

[0024] The support members 8 are provided with feet 18 to add to the stability of the canopy and portions of the sheet material 6' pass downwardly to enclose and mask the support members 8. Further sheet material 6" can be provided as shown to further add to the decorative effect.

[0025] Typically, to allow the canopy to be easily stored when not in use, the members 8, 16 are disconnectable from engagement means, not shown, which can be formed as required and which allow the respective members to be joined together at the required angles. Yet further, each of the members themselves can be formed of disengagable sections thereby allowing the members to be moved to a smaller storage condition as required.

[0026] As shown in Figures 1 and 2, the canopy is most effective when used in accordance with the invention in conjunction with an item of furniture 22, in this case a single bed and in Figure 4 a sofa chair 23.

[0027] It can be seen how the bed 22 and sofa 23 is wholly enclosed within the envelope area of the canopy

and so a child, when lying in the bed or sitting on the sofa is given the impression of being in an enclosed environment even though they are still within their own bedroom.

[0028] In order to allow the canopy to be range taking within a predetermined range, and thereby allow the same to be used, for example, with different sizes of bed, the splay or angle of the support members 8 is adjustable. For example, if the canopy is to be used with respect to a single bed which had the same width but which was longer then the splay of the support members 8 would be increased as indicated by the broken lines 8' in Figure 1. In another example, if another bed was wider but of the same length then the splay of the support members would be adjusted as indicated by the broken lines 8" in Figure 2.

[0029] The adjustment of the splay can be achieved in one of two ways. In a first way the support members can be angularly adjusted with respect to the connection means 24 in Figures 1 and 2 and 29 in Figure 4 at the cover section within a given tolerance due to the manufacture dimensions of the support members and location sockets and the resilience of the materials being used for the support members and the connection means. A second way as shown in Figure 5 is to provide the location sockets 31 for the end of the support members 8 at the connection means to be angularly adjustable with respect to their respective connection means 24,29. The angular adjustment can be for example by the provision of a ball and socket joint between the location socket and the remainder of the connection means.

[0030] If required, the canopy can be provided with attachment means such as ties or plates which can be attached to the item of furniture to allow the canopy to be located with the item of furniture and/or supported by the item of furniture.

[0031] Thus it will be appreciated by the reader that the provision of the canopy in the design illustrated and indeed in other designs to suit particular items of furniture, allows the canopy to be used to great visual and entertaining effect in an indoor environment. This effect is further enhanced by the use of particular styles of fabric, patterns and colours to allow the canopy to provide a particular appearance and effect to the onlooker and to depict a particular environment.

[0032] Thus the canopy is put to a surprisingly beneficial use which is completely different to the conventional purpose of shelter from environmental conditions when used externally.

Claims

1. A canopy for placement with at least one item of furniture, said canopy including a frame, said frame having a cover section, and a series of support members depending downwardly therefrom, the

cover section providing a roof to the canopy and the support members are positioned with respect to the at least one item of furniture to allow the said item to be substantially accommodated within the canopy area as defined by the support members, and wherein said support members are selectively angled in a range from a substantially vertical position to an outwardly angled position as they depend down from the cover section to lie outside of but adjacent to the sides of the item of furniture.

2. A canopy according to claim 1 wherein the canopy is provided for use indoors.

3. A canopy according to claim 1 wherein the support members are connected to the cover section of the frame with the support members capable of being adjustable to alter the size of the canopy area to accommodate the dimensions of the at least one item of furniture to be located therewith.

4. A canopy according to claim 3 wherein the support members are angularly adjustable with respect to the cover section to allow the splay of the support members to be adjustable.

5. A canopy according to claim 4 wherein the splay adjustment is achieved by angularly adjusting the support members and location sockets with respect to connection means which act to connect the support members to the cover section.

6. A canopy according to claim 1 wherein the cover section is formed by a plurality of elongate members engaged with each other.

7. A canopy according to claim 1 wherein the members are formed by interlocking sections which can be released to allow the frame to be moved to a storage condition.

8. A canopy according to claim 1 wherein the cover section includes sheet material spread over and retained on the cover section frame members.

9. A canopy according to claim 8 wherein the sheet material depends downwardly from the cover section to at least partially mask the support members when viewed externally of the canopy.

9. A canopy according to claim 1 wherein the canopy includes stiffening means which depend upwardly from the cover section.

10. A canopy according to claim 1 wherein the cover section of the frame comprises a series of members which define the outer shape of the cover section and one or a number of intersecting members which

traverse and are respectively attached to opposing sides of the cover section.

11. A canopy according to claim 1 wherein the canopy is free standing and stands clear of the item of furniture placed within the canopy area. 5

12. A canopy according to claim 1 wherein the canopy is provided with attachment means to allow the canopy to be attached to the item of furniture. 10

13. A canopy according to claim 12 wherein the canopy is supported by the item of furniture.

14. A canopy according to claim 1 wherein the cover section is formed as a moulded item located on the support members. 15

15. A canopy, said canopy moveable between storage and erected conditions and, when erected, including a frame having a cover section and support members depending downwardly therefrom, and sheet material provided to enclose at least the roof section and wherein the canopy is provided for use within a premises for decorative effect. 20
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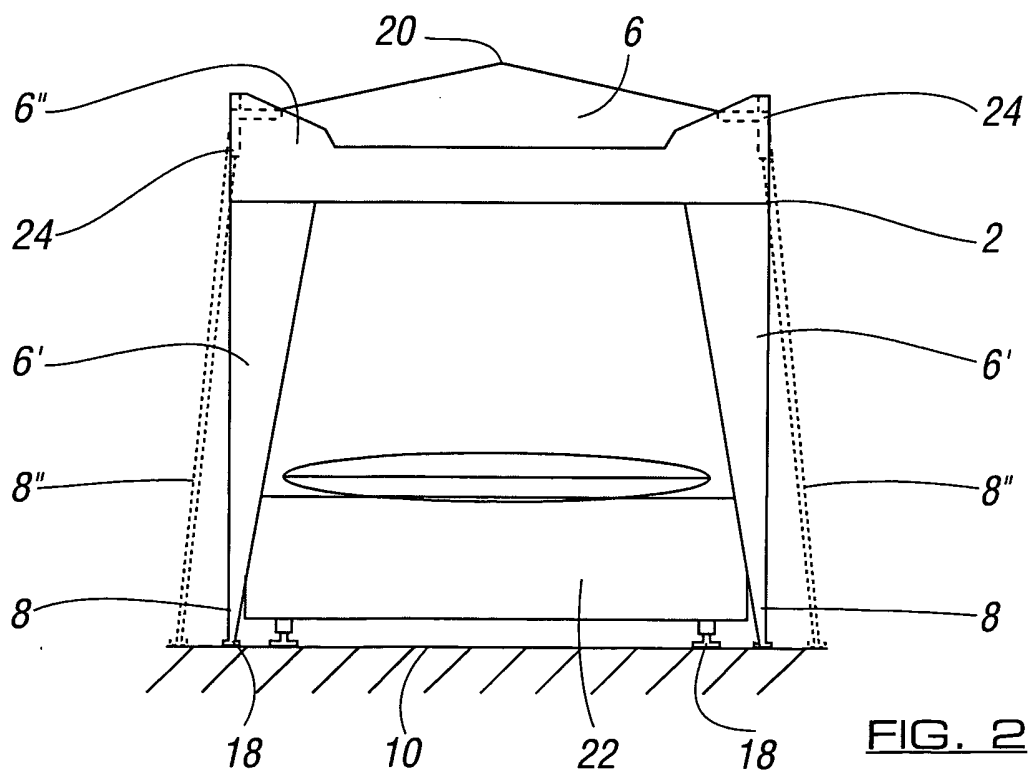
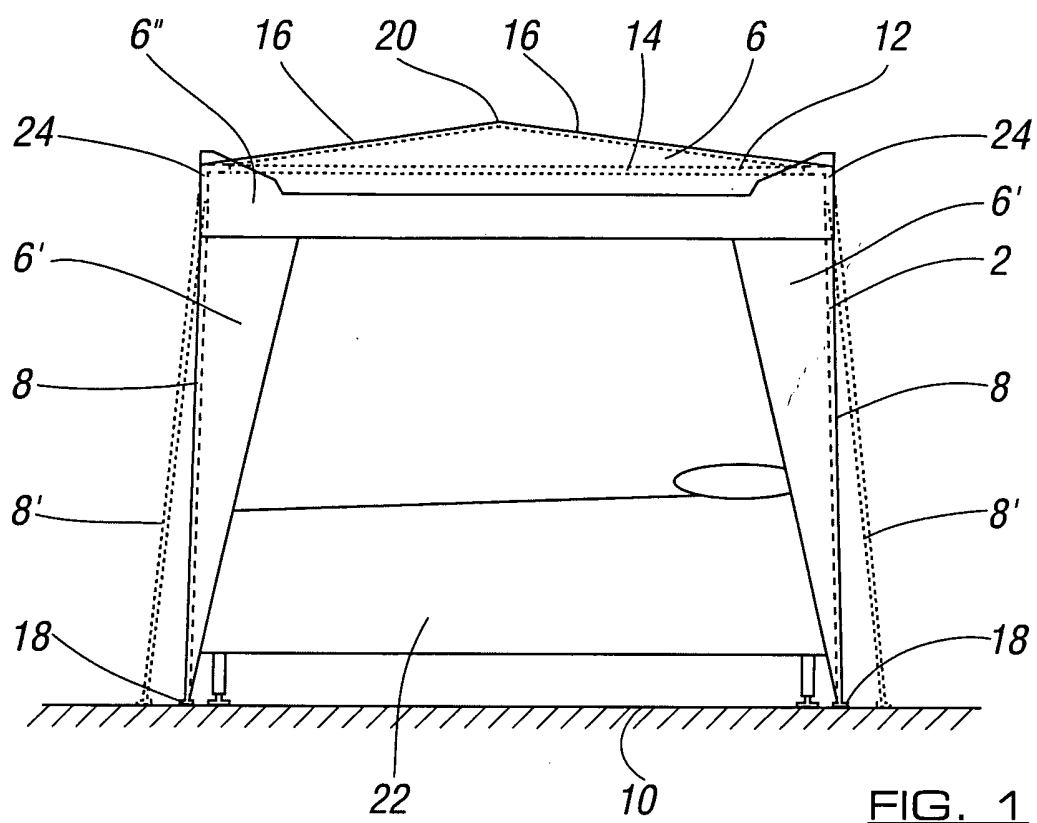
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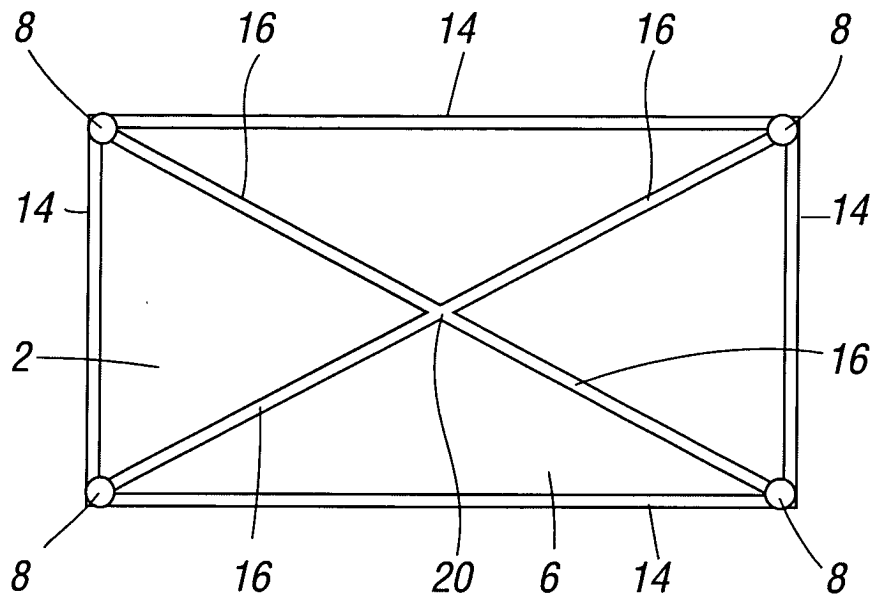


FIG. 3

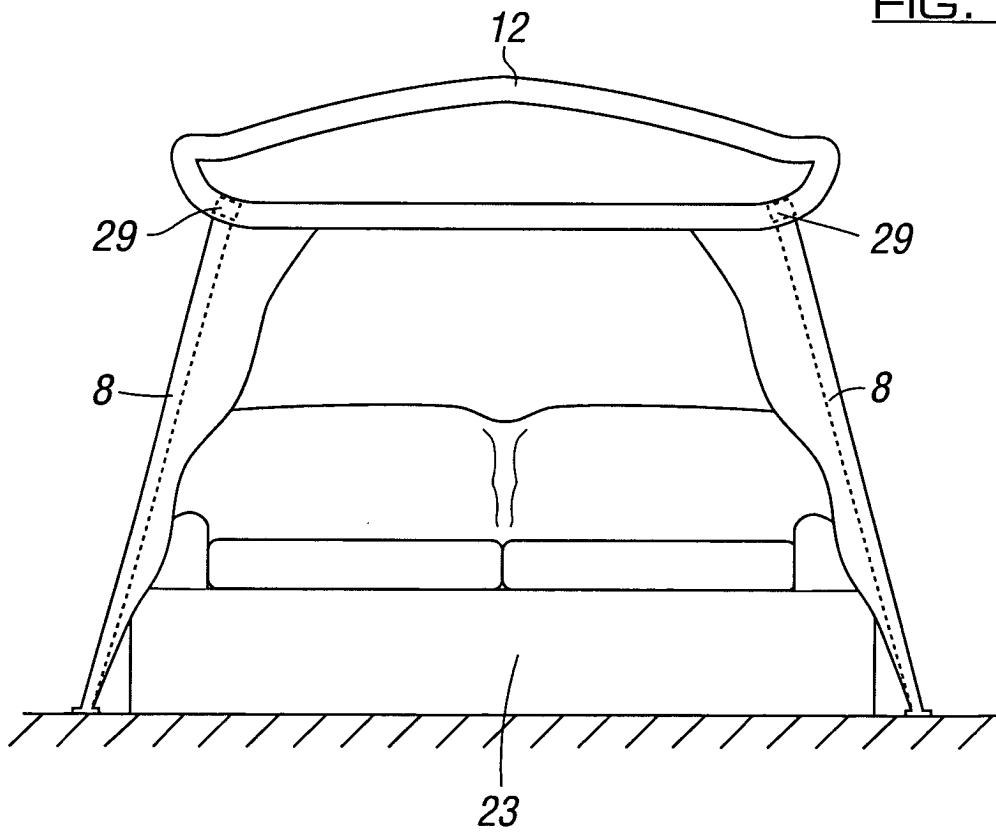


FIG. 4

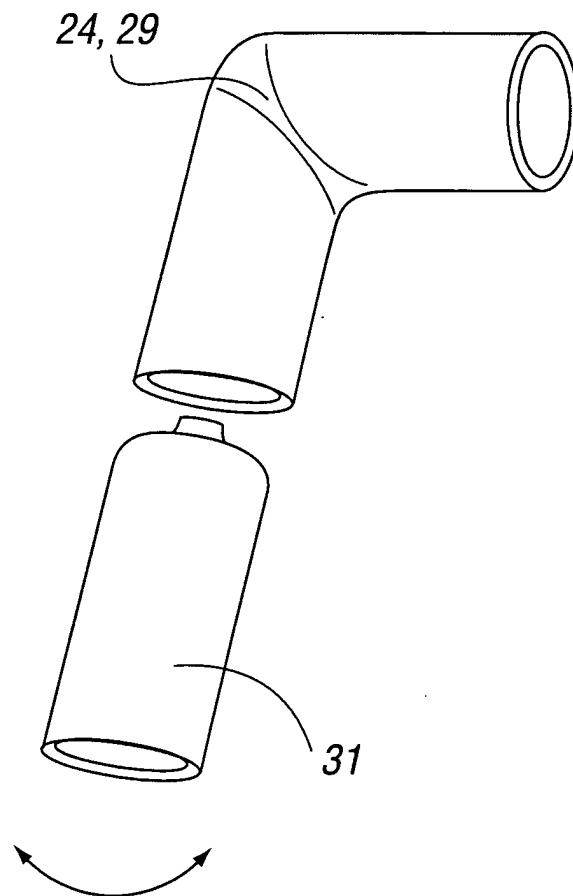


FIG. 5



European Patent
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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 04 25 4116

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.7)
A	FR 2 569 547 A (PORENTRU) 7 March 1986 (1986-03-07) * claims 1,4; figures * -----	1-15	A47C29/00
A	US 5 241 717 A (WARD) 7 September 1993 (1993-09-07) * abstract; figures * -----	1-15	
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.7)
			A47C
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search The Hague		Date of completion of the search 11 October 2004	Examiner VandeVondele, J
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS		T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document	
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**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO.**

EP 04 25 4116

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The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on
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11-10-2004

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FR 2569547	A	07-03-1986	FR 2569547 A1	07-03-1986

US 5241717	A	07-09-1993	NONE	

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For more details about this annex : see Official Journal of the European Patent Office, No. 12/82