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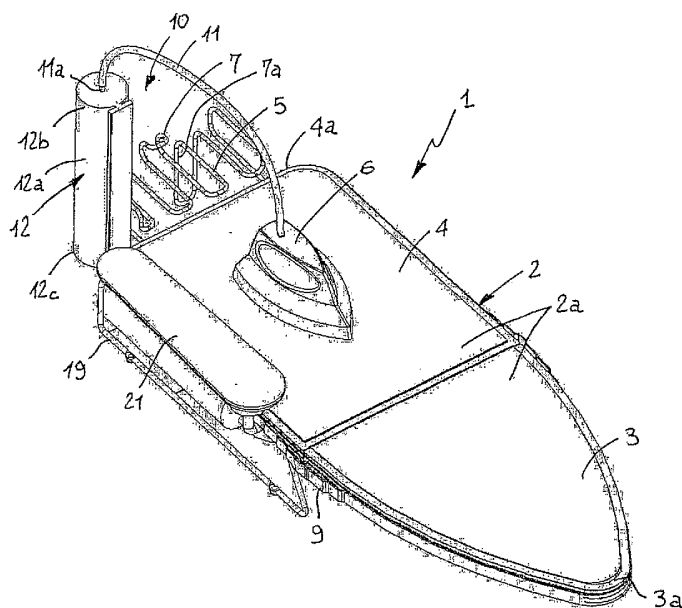
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(54) Title: IRONING DEVICE



(57) Abstract: Associated with the rear portion (4) of an ironing table (2) is a holding structure (9) of a boiler (10) the vaporization chamber (12) of which can be extracted from the rear of the holding structure (19) to be oriented in a substantially vertical axis. Combined with the ironing table (2) is a sleeve board (21) movable between an operating position at which it extends parallel over the ironing table (2) and a rest position at which it is oriented in a vertical plane and disposed close to one side of the table itself. A main ventilation chamber (8) and an auxiliary ventilation chamber associated with the ironing table (2) and the sleeve board (21) respectively, are mutually interconnected by an articulated tubular support (22) of the sleeve board itself.

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IRONING DEVICE

The present invention relates to an ironing device of the type comprising the features set out in the preamble of
5 claim 1.

In more detail, the invention is directed to an ironing device mainly but not exclusively for domestic use, possibly incorporating all accessories that can improve
10 and make an ironing operation quicker and that, when not in use, can be stored in a very reduced space while at the same time being immediately ready for use.

It is known that ironing of garments, linens and the like
15 is usually carried out with the aid of an iron equipped with means for steam delivery through appropriate openings provided in its lower surface operating in contact with the article of manufacture to be ironed. The steam-delivery means usually comprises a boiler for steam
20 production, connected with the iron by a pipe through which steam is fed.

Availability of a flat surface on which the article to be ironed is to be laid is also required. For the purpose,
25 usually a so-called "ironing board" is used that essentially comprises a table mounted on a support frame resting on the ground, usually consisting of a pantograph mechanism enabling the ironing board components to be folded pack-wise in one or more planes disposed in
30 parallel side by side relationship with the table, to enable storage of same in a limited space such as niches or cavities defined between a wall and a piece of furniture.

35 The ironing board however, is stored separately from the boiler and the iron, except when the ironing board is

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equipped with a support structure in the form of a cabinet that is adapted to receive the other components of the ironing device as well. However, in order to enable it to contain all components of the ironing
5 device, said cabinet must have sizes greatly bigger than those of the folded ironing board alone and, as a result, must necessarily be conceived and manufactured as a piece of furniture to be disposed in one of the rooms of a flat, this bringing about problems in terms of costs and
10 aesthetic appearance to enable it to be harmoniously integrated with the other pieces of furniture.

Ironing devices have been also conceived in which the boiler for steam production is integrated either as an
15 auxiliary part or appendage projecting at the rear from the overall dimensions of the board or into the legs of a pantograph structure constituting the support frame of the ironing table. For this technical solution however, a rather high support structure for the ironing table is
20 required, said high structure restricting the possibility of compacting the device sizes under conditions of non-use and reducing the device steadiness.

It is also known that for better ironing of some clothes
25 or garments, the presence of an accessory arm, generally called "sleeve board" is useful; said accessory arm at least in its forms for domestic use, is conceived as a separated component and therefore it can be easily lost and storage of same in an orderly manner together with
30 the other components of the ironing device is made difficult. The Applicant has also found that in the forms for domestic use the sleeve boards cannot be connected to the sucking and blowing devices possibly associated with the ironing board.

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It is an object of the invention to overcome the limits

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and drawbacks of the known art, by proposing an ironing device of improved efficiency and very compact structure under non-use conditions, while capable of receiving all the components that are internally locked for sale,
5 transportation and storage, but immediately available for use.

The above object and still others that will become more apparent in the course of the following description are
10 substantially achieved by an ironing device characterized in that it comprises the features set out in the characterizing portion of claim 1 and/or in one or more of the following claims.

- 15 Further features and advantages will be best understood from the detailed description of a preferred, but not exclusive, embodiment of an ironing device in accordance with the present invention. This description will be set out hereinafter with reference to the accompanying
20 drawings, given by way of non-limiting example, in which:
- Fig. 1 is a perspective view of the device in accordance with the present invention, under use conditions;
 - Fig. 2 is a perspective view of the device under non-
25 use conditions;
 - Fig. 3 is a rear perspective view of the device in a first step of the device preparation for use, in which the ironing table and sleeve board are disposed in the respective operating conditions;
 - 30 - Fig. 4 is a perspective view similar to Fig. 3, in which a first movement step of the boiler towards the operating condition is highlighted;
 - Fig. 5a shows a detail to an enlarged scale in which an intermediate movement step of the boiler towards the
35 operating position is highlighted;
 - Fig. 5b shows a movement step of the boiler subsequent

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to that in Fig. 5a;

- Fig. 5c shows a detail to an enlarged scale in which placement of the boiler to an operating position is highlighted;

5 - Fig. 6 is a perspective view of a sleeve board separated from the ironing table;

- Fig. 6a is a further detail to an enlarged scale showing connection between the ventilation chambers set in the ironing table and the sleeve board under work
10 conditions;

- Fig. 6b is a detail to an enlarged scale showing breaking of the connection between the ventilation chambers set in the ironing table and the sleeve board when the sleeve board is in a rest condition;

15 - Fig. 7 is a perspective view showing extraction of a tank for water loading;

- Fig. 8a, 8b and 8c show the movement sequence of the vaporization chamber of the boiler from the rest position to the work position, according to an alternative
20 embodiment of the invention.

With reference to the drawings, an ironing device in accordance with the present invention has been generally identified by reference numeral 1.

25

Device 1 comprises an ironing table or board 2 defining at the top, a work surface 2a substantially extending in a horizontal plane. The ironing table 2 is preferably divided into a front portion 3 defining a tapering front
30 end, and a rear portion 4, these portions being mutually hinged and being foldable upon each other as shown in Fig. 2, to reduce the device bulkiness under non-use conditions. The two portions or halves 3, 4 can be fastened into the folded condition by a support shelf 5
35 slidably in engagement with a rear end 4a of the ironing table 2 and movable between a work position at which, as

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shown in Fig. 1, it projects in cantilevered fashion from the rear end of the table itself to support an iron 6, and a rest condition at which it is close to and possibly superposed on the rear end itself to hold, by a hooking seat 7 arranged therein, the end 3a of the front portion 3 of the table folded upon itself, as shown in Fig. 2. Ventilation means may be provided to be associated with the ironing table 2, which means is arranged to generate a sucked and/or blown air flow through the work surface 2a, so as to facilitate positioning and laying of the article of clothing to be ironed thereon.

The ventilation means, not shown in detail as known by itself, contemplates at least one fan associated with a ventilation chamber 8 defined in the ironing table, under the work surface 2a thereof. The fan can be activated upon the user's command to produce a sucked and/or blown air flow through appropriate holes (not shown) distributed along the work surface 2a. The ventilation chamber 8 is divided into two halves, a front one and a rear one respectively, that are correspondingly associated with the front portion 3 and rear portion 4 of the ironing table 2. Appropriate openings 8a formed in the junction walls between the front portion 3 and rear portion 4 of the ironing table 2 enable connection of the front and rear portions of the front and rear halves of the ventilation chamber 8 when the ironing table 2 is laid in its use condition. Under this condition the front 3 and rear 4 portions can be mutually fastened by mechanical engagement means 9 not described in detail as it can be made in any convenient manner.

Device 1 further comprises a boiler 10 for steam production which is connected to iron 6 by a steam-supplying flexible hose 11 and an electric cable (not shown) of appropriate length. Boiler 10 has a

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vaporization chamber 12 delimited by at least one side wall 12a and extending between an upper portion 12b carrying a valve union 11a connected with one end of the flexible hose 11 for connection to iron 6, and a base portion 12c, opposite to the upper portion 12b at which, with reference to the embodiment shown in figs. 1 to 7, one or more electrical resistances or other heating means operate to cause boiling of a predetermined amount of water introduced into the vaporization chamber itself.

10

According to an alternative embodiment shown in fig. 8a, 8b and 8c, said heating means operates within an auxiliary chamber 25 operatively connected with a water-feeding unit, as hereinbelow better explained. The auxiliary chamber 25 may be fixed under the ironing table 2 and connected to the base portion 12c of the vaporization chamber 12 through at least one flexible and/or extensible conduit 26.

Associated with the vaporization chamber 12 can be a water-feeding unit comprising a pump, not shown, operating along a duct 13a connecting the vaporization chamber 12 or the auxiliary chamber 25 with a tank 13. Advantageously said tank 13 can be of the removable type to facilitate filling and provided with a quick-fitting element working by mere pressure for insertion and by pulling for extraction, the function of which is also to keep said tank to the correct position during transportation and work and when stored. The pump is controlled in a manner known by itself by level sensors or equivalent means associated with the lower portion 12c of the vaporization chamber 12 or the auxiliary chamber 25 to restore the water level in the chamber on reaching a preset minimum level.

Advantageously, the vaporization chamber 12 of boiler 10 has an elongated configuration, the longitudinal

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extension axis of which extends between the base portion 12c and the upper portion 12b. In more detail, the ratio of the longitudinal extension of the vaporization chamber 12 measured between the base portion 12c and upper
5 portion 12b, to the diameter of the same chamber is at least equal to 3.

In addition, the vaporization chamber 12 is preferably connected to the ironing table 2 by link means 14
10 enabling movement of said chamber 12 between a rest position at which, as shown in Fig. 3 and 8a, it is disposed close to the table with its longitudinal extension axis substantially parallel to the work surface 2a, and a work position at which the longitudinal
15 extension axis of the vaporization chamber 12 is oriented in a substantially vertical direction or at all events a direction transverse to the work surface, preferably at an angle greater than 45° and smaller than or equal to 90° with respect to the work surface 2a. Preferably, in
20 the work position the vaporization chamber 12 has its base portion 12c laterally disposed with respect to the support shelf 5, substantially flush with the ironing table 2, so as to enable positioning of the whole device 1 on a table or other support surface, and projects
25 upwardly with its upper surface 12b at a higher position than the work surface 2a. This position is very advantageous, as compared with the known art, because the steam exiting the vaporization chamber 12 through the valve union 11a located on top of the chamber reaches
30 iron 6 through a flexible hose 11 which is as short as possible and forms a single upward loop without forming downward loops. It has been noticed in this connection that the flexible hose 11, since it is cooled by the air of the surrounding atmosphere, tends to cause steam
35 condensation in a manner proportional to its length and that possible downwardly-directed loops that may be

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possibly created receive said condensate in the form of water; said water passing through iron 6, tends to moisten the fabric too much so that many passages are required to dry it. Advantageously, in the device 1 the vaporization chamber 12 in its work position is disposed vertically with its base portion 12c tangent to the rear end 4a of the ironing table 2 and on the opposite side from the ironer. Under this situation a minimum length of the flexible hose 11 for steam supply is required for device 1 and possibly, if a short rod for supporting the hose is available and is slidably associated with the vaporization chamber 12 and is manually or automatically adjustable in height, said device may feed iron 6 with steam at a higher temperature and devoid of condensate. A further advantage of this conformation and position is the impossibility of hose 11 to trouble the ironer and to move along the garment surface getting in touch therewith and thus running the risk of creasing it again. The short flexible hose 11 also reduces delay in steam delivery to iron 6 after activation (opening) of a solenoid valve usually associated with the valve union 11a on top of the vaporization chamber 12.

It should be further noticed that, due to the small diameter, the vaporization chamber 12 can be located either on the right side or on the left side, exchanging its positioning for that of the tank 13, depending on whether the ironer is a right-handed or left-handed person and still leaving sufficient room for the support shelf 5; for carrying out this operation it is merely sufficient to dismantle the components from the ironing table 2 without acceding to the electric parts and then to reassemble them with a reverted position. It will be recognized in fact that the steam-feeding hose 11 gives less trouble during the ironing operation when the vaporization chamber 12 of boiler 10 is placed at the

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rear end 4 of the ironing table 2, in the extension of the long side of the table itself opposite to that where the operator is, and the rear end 4a is preferably disposed on the operator's right or left hand side, depending on which hand is better used by the operator itself.

The link means 14 preferably comprises a slide guide 15 in engagement with the ironing table 2 on the opposite side from the work surface 2a and extending parallel to the longitudinal extension of said ironing table. Slidably engaged along the slide guide 15 is a hinge 16 consisting of a housing seat 16a in the form of an elongated slot and engaging a pin 16b integral with the vaporization chamber 12 close to the bottom or base portion 12c of the latter. Movement of the vaporization chamber 12 from the rest position to the operating position therefore involves a first step during which the vaporization chamber 12 horizontally disposed under the ironing table 2, is drawn out of the rear end 4a of said table by dragging hinge 16 along the slide guide 15 until an intermediate extraction position is reached at which the vaporization chamber 12 is disposed externally of a vertical projection of the peripheral edge of the ironing table 2 in a plane parallel to the work surface 2a. More specifically, in the intermediate position the vaporization chamber 12 projects from the peripheral edge of the work surface 2a, at the rear end 4a of the ironing table 2, as shown in Fig. 4 and 8b. As better viewed from Fig. 5a, when such an intermediate extraction position is reached, the bottom portion 12c of the vaporization chamber 12 has gone beyond the rear end 4a of the ironing table 2 and the vaporization chamber 12 lends itself to be oriented in a vertical direction by rotation of pin 16b in its seat 16a, as shown in Fig. 5b.

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Once a vertical orientation has been reached, a slight translation of the vaporization chamber 12 downwardly causes sliding of pin 16b along the housing seat 16a and simultaneous fitting of a fastening block 17, integral with the bottom portion 12c of the vaporization chamber 12, in a fitting seat 18 formed in hinge 16, to fasten positioning of the vaporization chamber 12 to the work position. Electric switching means for example comprising fixed contacts 18a associated with the fitting seat 18 and cooperating with movable contacts 17a carried by the fastening block 17 enables power supply to boiler 10 and possibly to iron 6 and other components of the device 1, when the vaporization chamber 12 reaches the operating position. This power supply is on the contrary advantageously disabled when the vaporization chamber 12 is in its rest position or is not correctly inserted in the operating position.

A holding structure 19 engaged at the rear end 4a of the ironing table 2, at a lower position with respect to the work surface 2a, allows the vaporization chamber 12, tank 13 and iron 6 to be housed when the device is not in use. More particularly, iron 6 is preferably housed in a central compartment confined between the spaces designed to receive tank 13 and the vaporization chamber 12 of boiler 10. An auxiliary appendage 7a can be arranged in the support shelf 5 to conveniently retain iron 6 in the respective compartment in its rest position. At the end of the ironing operations the iron is very hot and therefore very dangerous in case of accidental contact. In the device 1 iron 6 locked in the respective compartment of the holding structure 19 by the auxiliary appendage 7a is not directly accessible, so that the risk of accidental burns is eliminated.

Said holding structure 19 may also perform the task of

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conveniently supporting the ironing table 2 over a table or other support surface, during normal use of the device 1. For the purpose, the support structure 19, devoid of legs or other supports resting on the ground, is provided to project from the ironing table 2, on the opposite side from the work surface 2a, by an amount not exceeding 30 cm, and preferably included between 10 and 15 cm. In addition, the front portion 3 of the ironing table 2 is preferably provided to be equipped with a retractable support element 20 that, in a non-use condition, is adapted to be knocked down in a plane substantially adjacent to the ironing table itself. If required, the holding structure 19 or device 1 as a whole can be put on a trestle or within any suitably-conceived cabinet or piece of furniture of small sizes.

Also associated with the ironing table may be a sleeve board 21 movable between a work position at which it extends in an overlying plane with respect to the work surface 2a, and a rest position at which, as shown in Fig. 2, it is disposed substantially under the lying plane of the work surface itself. More particularly, the sleeve board 21 is in engagement with the ironing table 2 by an articulated tubular support 22 that, as can be seen by comparing Figs. 3 and 7 for example, enables orientation of same around a vertical axis when it is disposed in the work position. The articulated tubular support 22 is rotatably in engagement with the ironing table 2, on a rotation axis parallel to the longitudinal extension of the table itself. For the purpose, as shown in Figs. 6a and 6b, in the lower part of the ironing table 2 and internally of the ventilation chamber 8 there is a connecting block 23 rotatably engaging an end shank 24 of the articulated tubular support 22 so that, in the rest position, the sleeve board 21 is disposed along one side of the ironing table 2, in a plane substantially

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perpendicular to the ironing surface 2a, as shown in Fig. 2.

Advantageously, formed in the sleeve board 21 is a an
5 auxiliary ventilation chamber (not shown) connected to a plurality of vent holes formed close to the upper surface 21a of the sleeve board itself. The auxiliary ventilation chamber advantageously lends itself to be selectively brought into fluid communication with the main
10 ventilation chamber 8 associated with the ironing table 2, when the sleeve board 21 is brought to its work position.

For the purpose the end shank 24 of the articulated
15 tubular support 22 is conceived so as to have a tubular conformation and to be laterally provided with a valve port 24a. When the sleeve board 21 is in its work position, the valve port 24a is in communication with the inside of the main ventilation chamber 8 associated with
20 the ironing table 2, as shown in Fig. 6a. When the sleeve board 21 is in its rest position, the valve port 24a is on the contrary disposed against one shutting wall 23a being part of the connecting block 23, so as to interrupt the fluid communication between the main ventilation
25 chamber 8 and auxiliary ventilation chamber associated with the sleeve board 21.

In this way an effect of ventilation can be also obtained through the sleeve board 21 when the latter is in its
30 work position. On the contrary, when the sleeve board is in a rest position, the ventilation effect produced by the fan can be completely addressed to the ironing table 2 without losses through the sleeve board 21 not in use being involved.

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The present invention achieves the intended purposes.

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The concerned ironing device in fact has a very reduced bulkiness when in its non-use conditions so that it can be easily stored within reduced spaces, at the inside of a piece of furniture for example. In fact, due to the modality of use of the vaporization chamber 12, said vaporization chamber can be stored horizontally under the ironing table 2, in the limited space available within the holding structure, in spite of the limited sizes of the latter, due to the absence of elements resting on the ground that are usually provided in the known art. In this connection it is to be noted that the vaporization chamber 12, as well as iron 6 and tank 13, can be comfortably inserted and extracted from the holding structure 19 while device 1 is maintained resting on a table or other horizontal plane. In the work position, the vaporization chamber 12 extends in a vertical direction so as to ensure formation of an important steam dome within the same, thereby creating the optimal conditions for availability of important flow rates of steam drawn from a point sufficiently far from the free surface of the water optionally contained in the bottom surface 12c of the vaporization chamber itself, in order to avoid entrainment of water particles along the duct for connection with the iron.

C L A I M S

1. An ironing device comprising:
- an ironing table (12) defining a work surface (2);
 - 5 - a boiler (10) for steam production, having a vaporization chamber (12) confined by at least one side wall (12a) extending between an upper portion (12b) carrying a valve union for connection with an iron (6), and a base portion (12c) opposite to the upper portion
 - 10 (12b);
- characterized in that:
- the vaporization chamber (12) has an elongated configuration, with a longitudinal-extension axis extending between the base portion (12c) and upper
 - 15 portion (12b),
 - said vaporization chamber (12) being movable between a rest position, at which the vaporization chamber (12) is close to the ironing table (2), its longitudinal extension axis being substantially parallel to the work
 - 20 surface (2a), and a work position at which the longitudinal extension axis of the vaporization chamber (12) is oriented in a direction substantially perpendicular to the lying plane of the work surface (2a).
- 25
2. A device as claimed in claim 1, wherein in the work position the longitudinal-extension axis of the vaporization chamber (12) is oriented in a direction forming an angle greater than 45° with respect to a lying
- 30 plane of the work surface (2a).
3. A device as claimed in claim 1, wherein in the work position the upper portion (12b) of the vaporization chamber (12) is disposed in an overlying position with
- 35 respect to the ironing table (2).

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4. A device as claimed in claim 3, wherein in the work position the base portion (12c) of the vaporization chamber (12) is disposed substantially flush with the ironing table (2), adjacent to a rear end (4a) of the latter.

5. A device as claimed in claim 4, further comprising a support shelf (5) in engagement with a rear end (4a) of the ironing table (2), wherein in the work position the base portion (12c) of the vaporization chamber (12) is laterally disposed relative to the support shelf (5).

6. A device as claimed in claim 1, further comprising link means (14) to guide the vaporization chamber (12) between a rest position and an intermediate extraction position at which the vaporization chamber (12) is disposed externally of a projection of the peripheral edge of the ironing table (2) in a plane parallel to the work surface (2a).

7. A device as claimed in claim 6, wherein in the intermediate extraction position the vaporization chamber (12a) is shifted along its longitudinal extension axis relative to the rest position.

8. A device as claimed in claim 7, wherein said link means (14) comprises a slide guide (15) in engagement with the ironing table (2) on the opposite side from the work surface (2a), and a hinge (16) movable along the slide guide (15) and oscillatably engaging the vaporization chamber (12a) close to the base portion (12c).

9. A device as claimed in claim 8, wherein said hinge (17) comprises a locking pin (16b) to be coupled with a housing seat (16b) and a fastening block (17) set to be

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aligned and engaged for insertion in a fitting seat (18) to lock the vaporization chamber (12) in the work condition.

5 10. A device as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a water-feeding unit to supply water to the boiler, said feeding unit comprising a tank (13) removably in engagement with the ironing table (2) on the opposite side from the ironing surface (2a).

10

11. A device as claimed in claim 10, wherein said ironing table (2) has a tapering front end (3a) and a rear end (4a) opposite to the front end (3a), and further comprising a holding structure (19) in engagement at the rear end (4a) to house the tank (13) and the vaporization chamber (12) in the rest position.

15

12. A device as claimed in claim 11, wherein said holding structure (19) further has a compartment for housing an iron (6) connected with said boiler (10).

20

13. A device as claimed in claim 11, wherein the holding structure (19) preferably devoid of legs or other elements resting on the ground projects from the ironing table (2) on the opposite side from the work surface (2a) by an amount not exceeding 30 cm.

25

14. An ironing device, in particular as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a sleeve board (21) movable between a rest position at which it is disposed substantially under the lying plane of said work surface (2a), and a work position at which it extends in an overlying plane with respect to the work surface (2a).

30

15. A device as claimed in claim 14, wherein in the rest position the sleeve board (21) extends along one side of

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the ironing table (2) in a plane substantially perpendicular to the ironing surface (2a).

16. A device as claimed in claim 14, wherein the sleeve board (21) is in engagement with the ironing table (2) by an articulated tubular support (22).

17. A device as claimed in claim 16, wherein the articulated tubular support (22) defines a connecting duct between a main ventilation chamber (8) associated with the ironing table (2) on the opposite side from the work surface (2a), and an auxiliary ventilation chamber associated with said sleeve board (21).

18. A device as claimed in claim 16, wherein the articulated tubular support (22) comprises, on the opposite side from the sleeve board (21), an end shank (24) rotatably engaged in a connecting block (23) rigidly fixed to the ironing table (2), the end shank (24) comprising at least one valve port (24a) to be selectively positioned against a shutting wall (23a) associated with the connecting block (23) to interrupt a fluid communication between the main ventilation chamber (8) and the auxiliary ventilation chamber when the sleeve board (21) is in the rest position.

19. An ironing device, in particular as claimed in claim 1, wherein said ironing table (2) comprises a front portion (3) and a rear portion (4) that are mutually hinged and foldable upon each other.

20. A device as claimed in claim 1 or 19, further comprising a support shelf (5) slidably in engagement with a rear end (4a) of the ironing table (2) and movable between a work position at which it projects in cantilevered fashion from the rear end of the ironing

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table itself and a rest condition at which it is close to said rear end (4a).

21. A device as claimed in claim 20, wherein the support
5 shelf (5) comprises a hooking seat (7) to retain, in the rest position, the front portion (3) of the folded ironing table (2).

22. A device as claimed in claim 20, wherein the support
10 shelf (5) comprises an auxiliary appendage (7a) to retain the iron (6), in the rest position, in a housing compartment set in a holding structure (19) in engagement at the rear end of the ironing table (2).

23. A device as claimed in claim 1, further comprising
15 electric switching means (17a, 18a) to enable power supply to the boiler (10) when the vaporization chamber (12) reaches the operating position.

24. A device as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a
20 hose-supporting rod slidably associated with one side of the vaporization chamber (12).

25. A device as claimed in claim 11 or 12, wherein the
25 vaporization chamber (12) and tank (13) have mutually invertible positions.

26. A device as claimed in claim 1, wherein said boiler
30 (10) further comprises an auxiliary chamber (25) connected to the vaporization chamber (12) and accommodating means for heating water supplied in said auxiliary chamber (25).

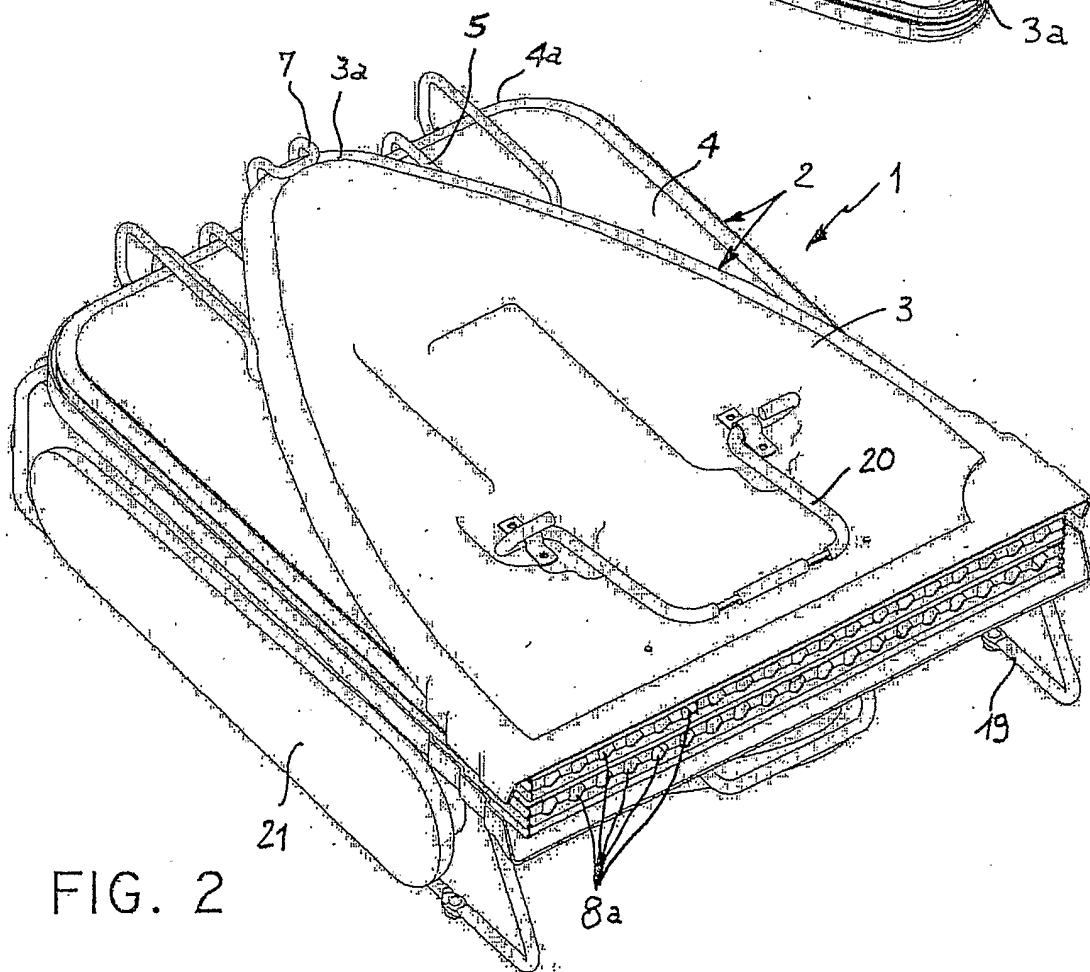
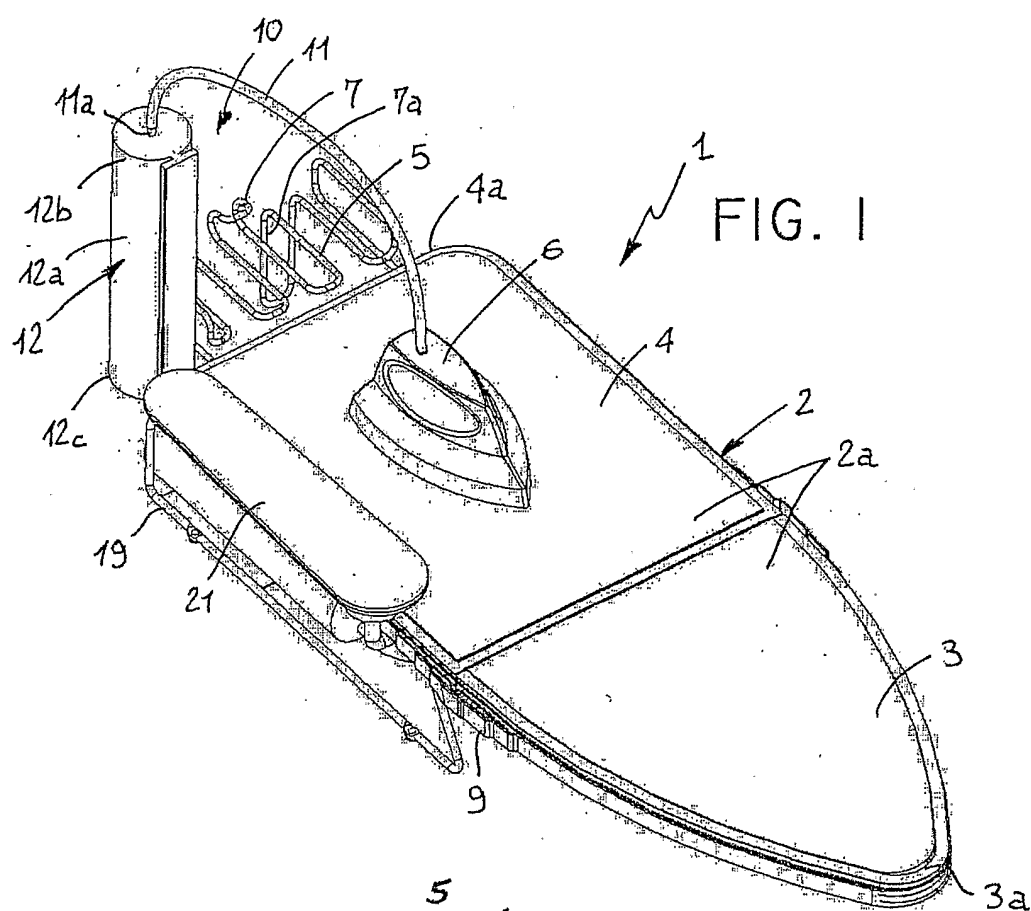


FIG. 3

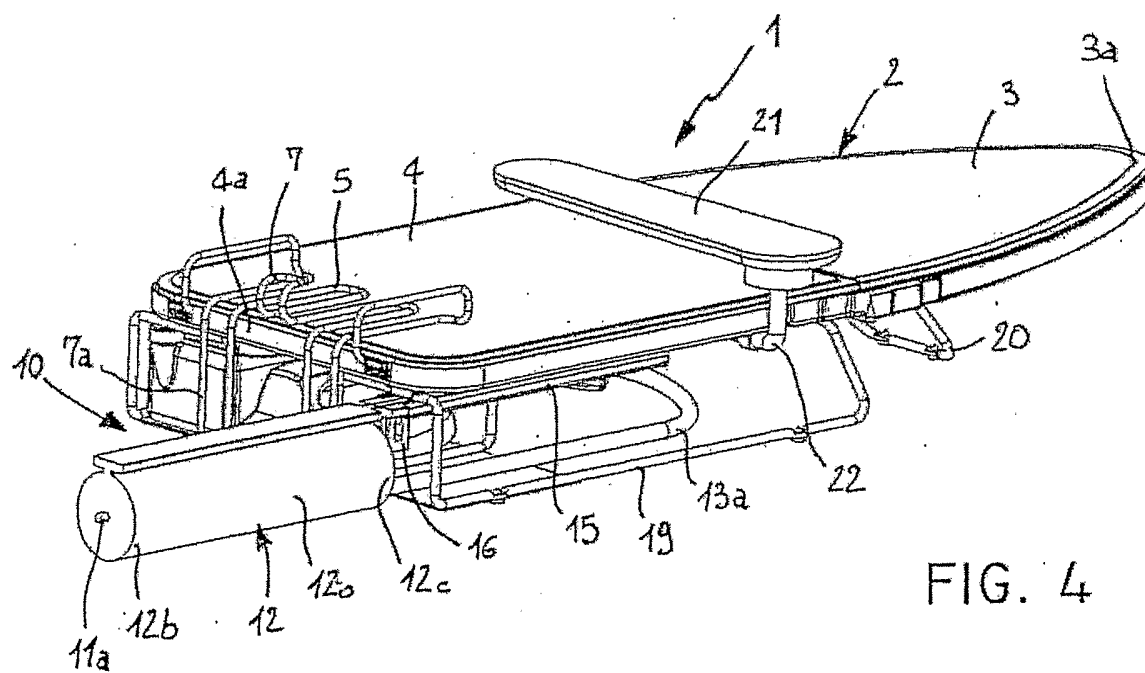
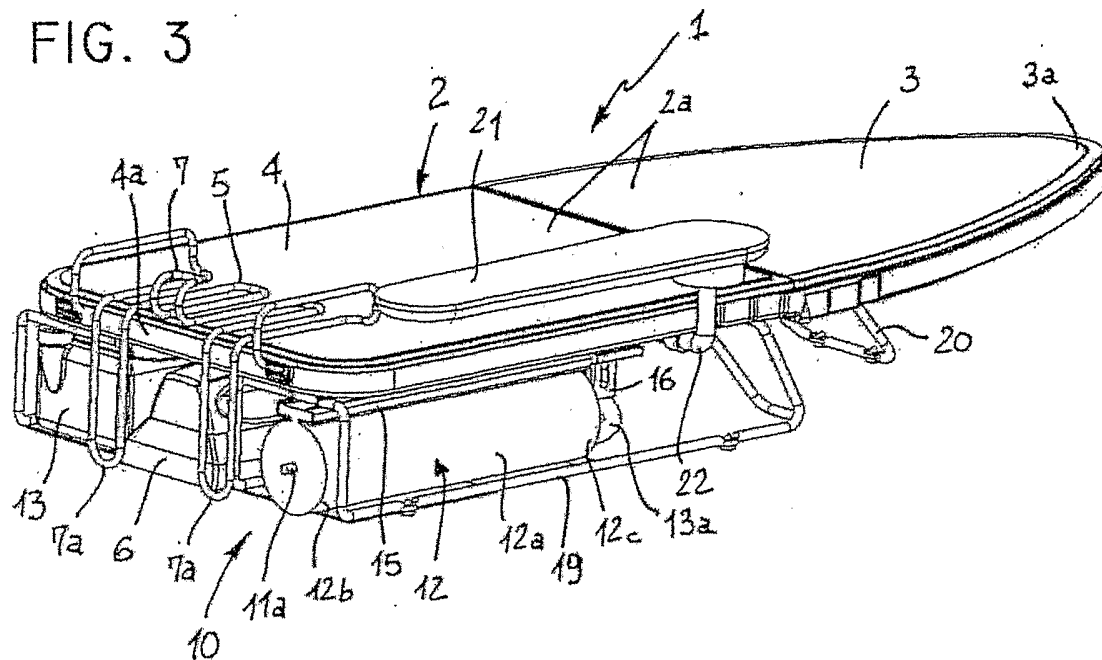


FIG. 4

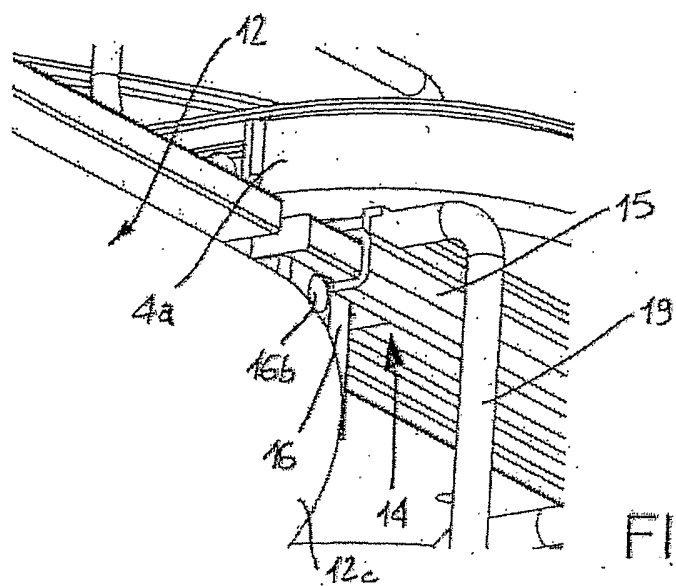


FIG. 5A

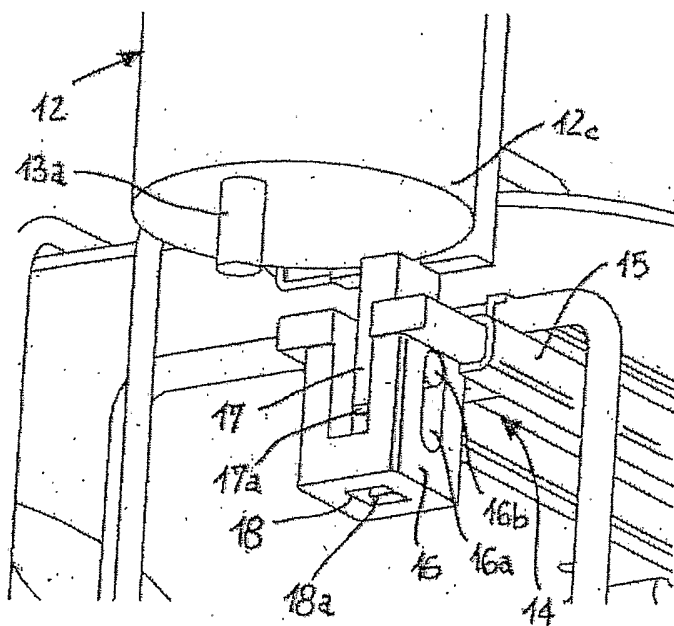


FIG. 5B

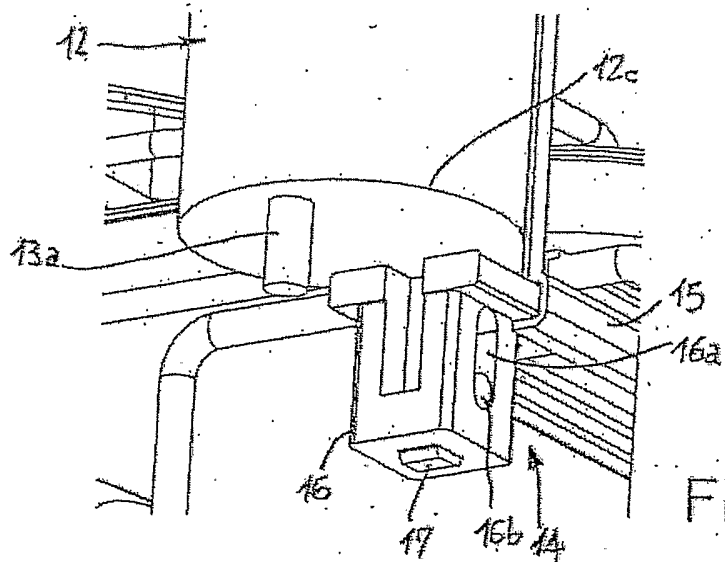


FIG. 5C

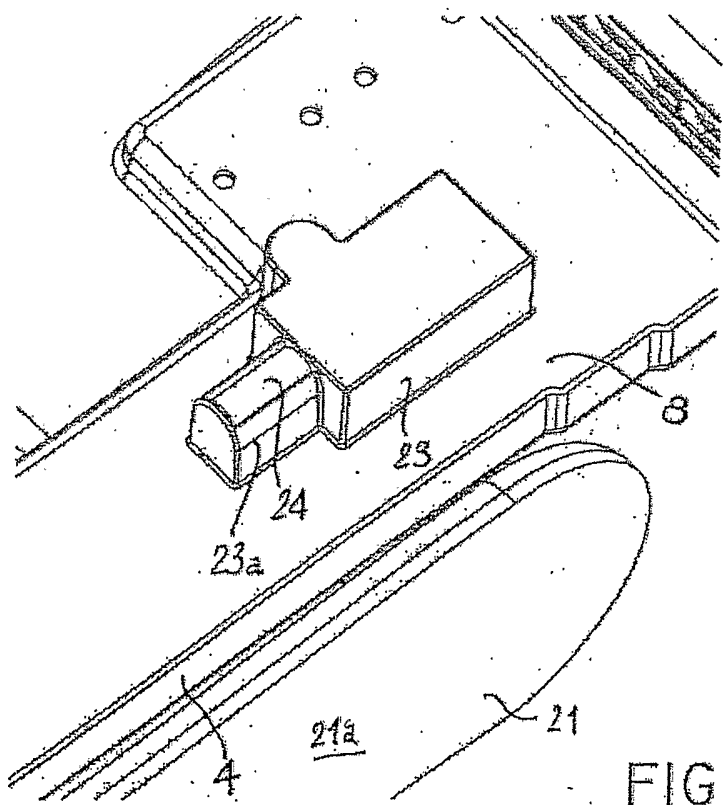
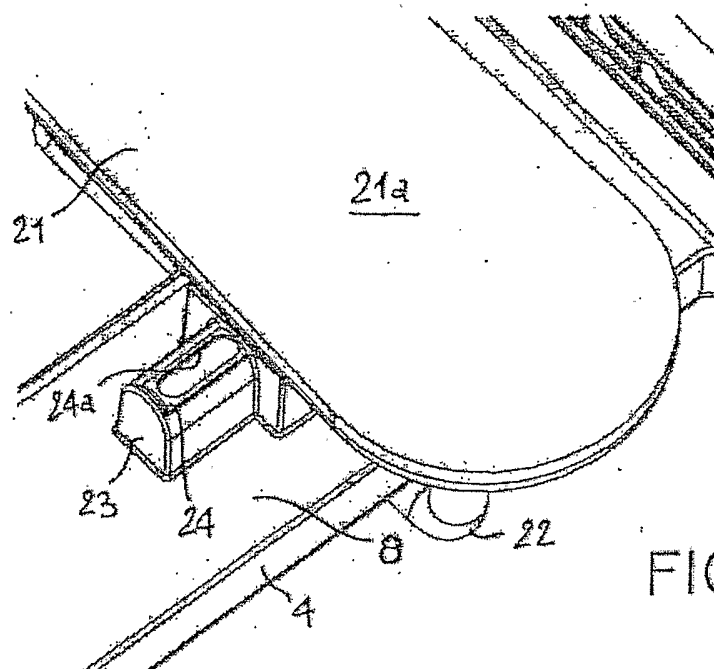


FIG. 6

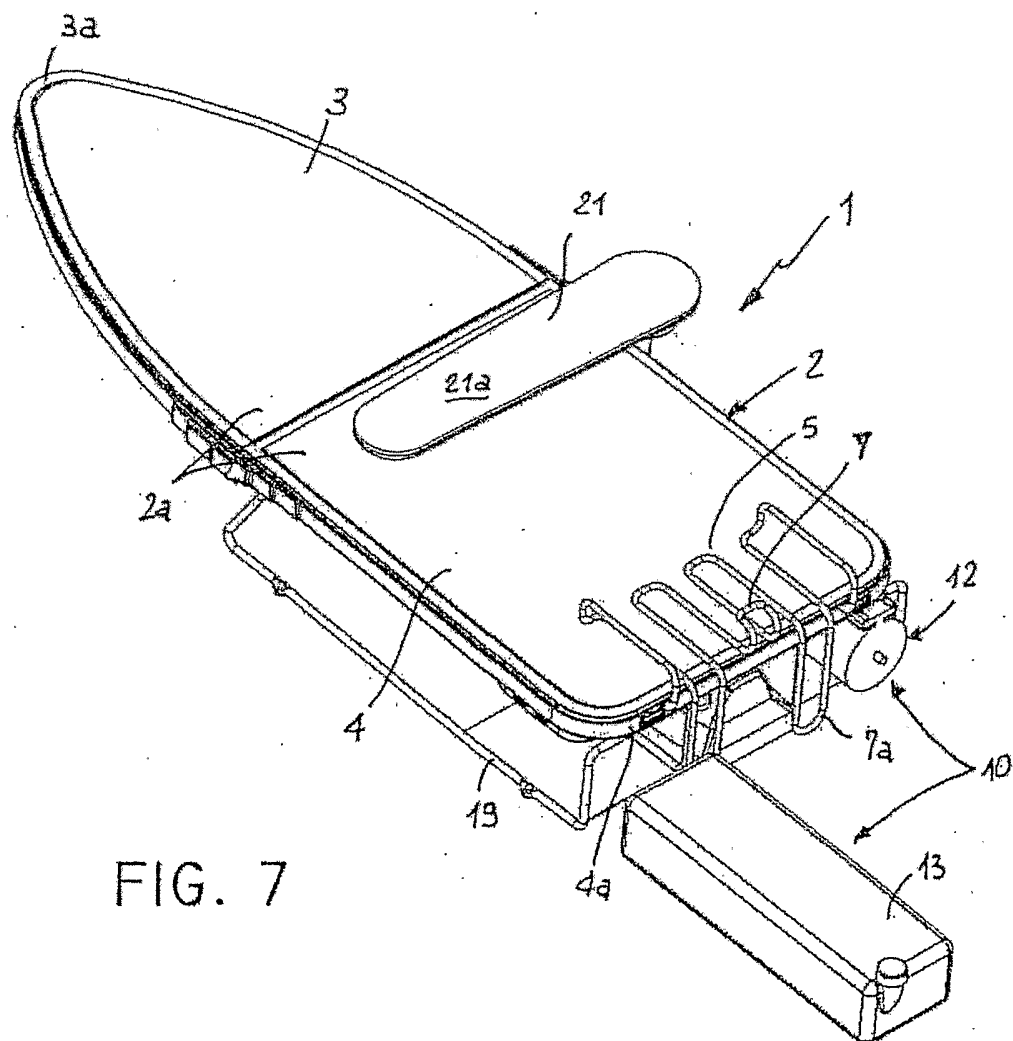
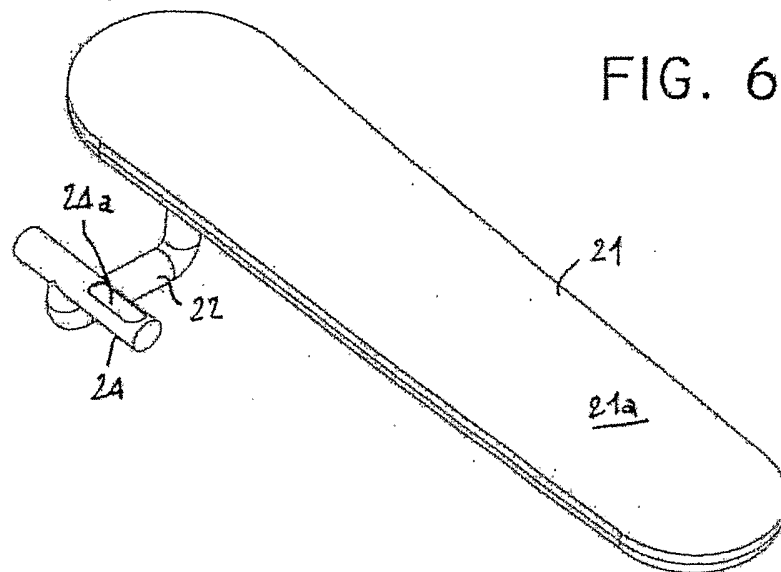


FIG. 7

FIG. 8a

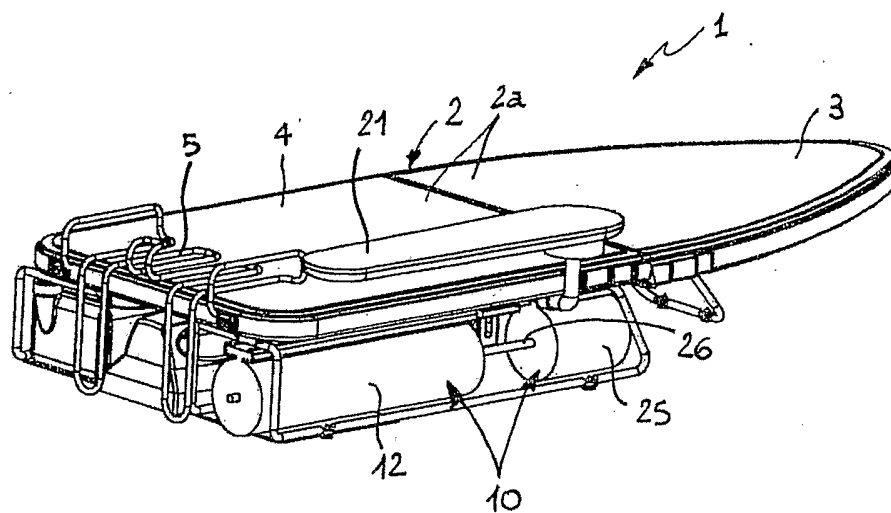


FIG. 8b

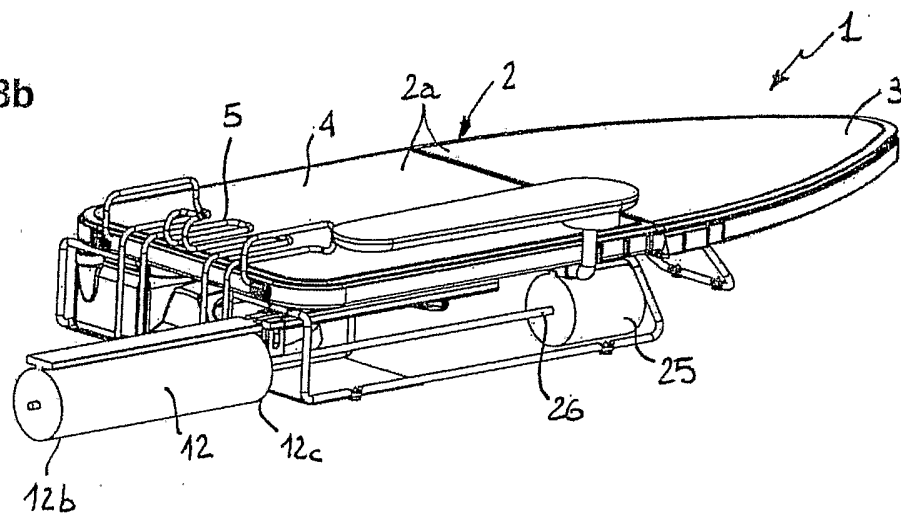


FIG. 8c

