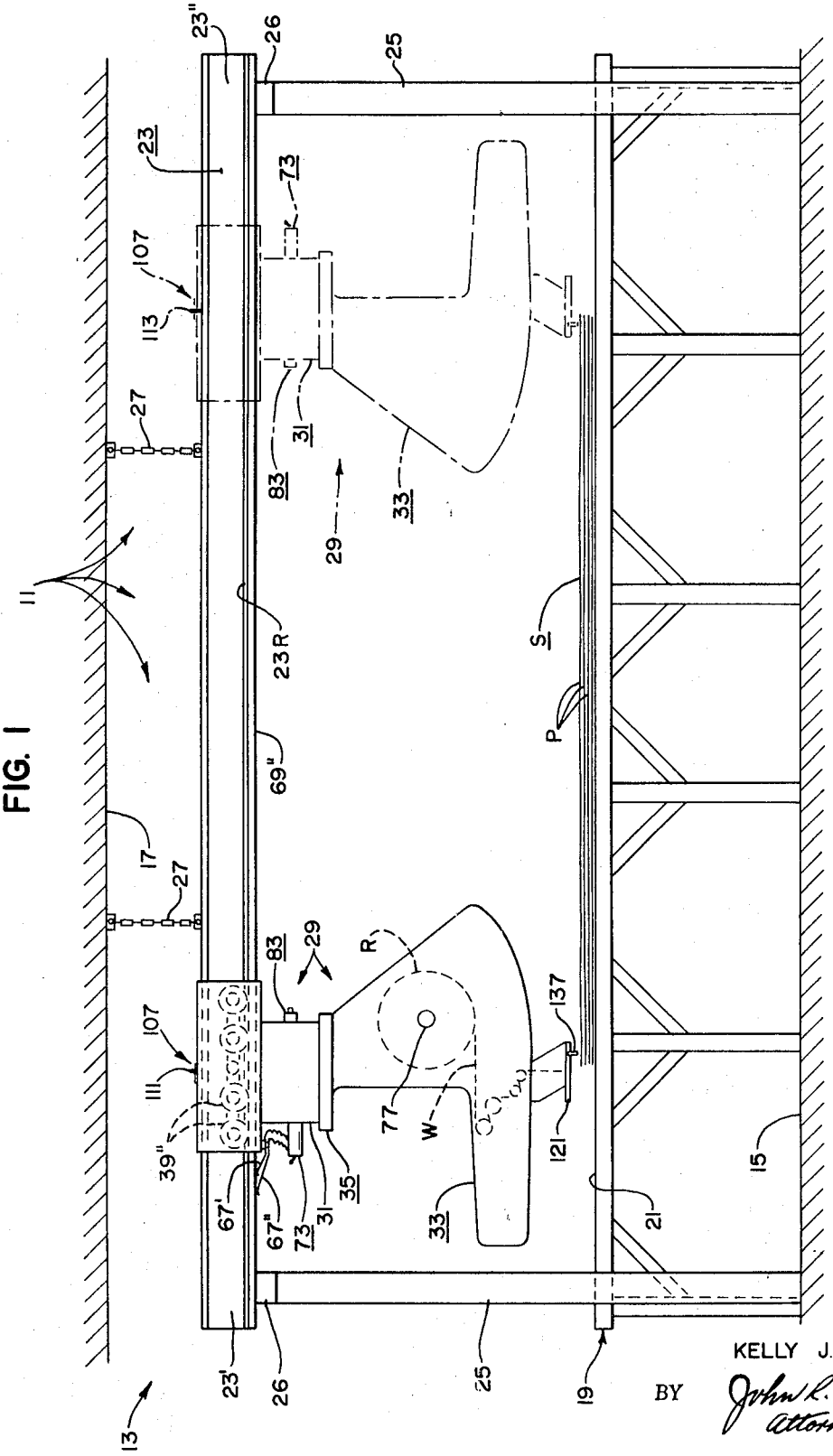
Sept. 20, 1971 K. J. JOHNSON 3,606,303

CLOTH SPREADING APPARATUS

Filed Oct. 30, 1969 5 Sheets-Sheet 1

FIG. 1



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CLOTH SPREADING APPARATUS

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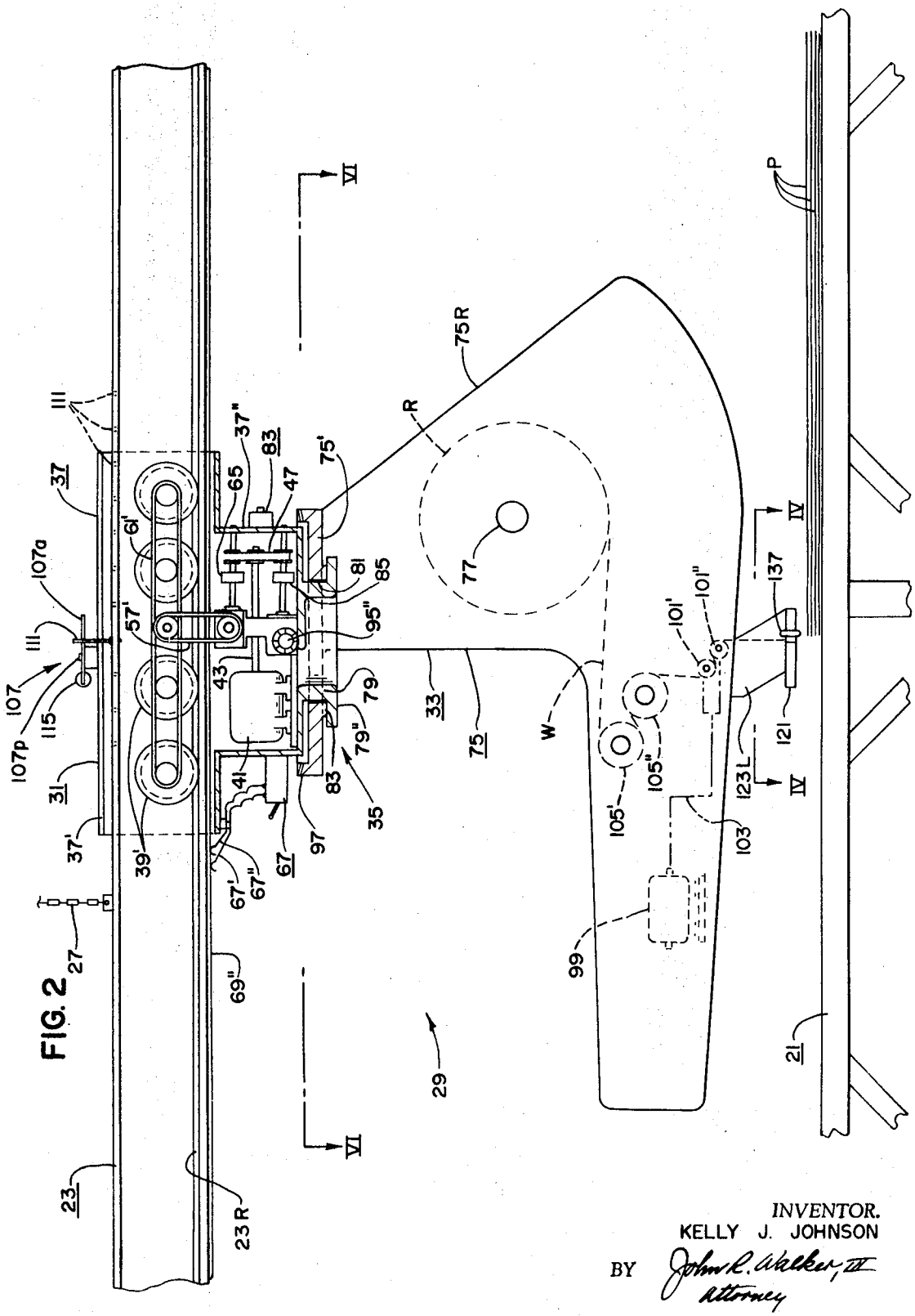


FIG. 2

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CLOTH SPREADING APPARATUS

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FIG. 3

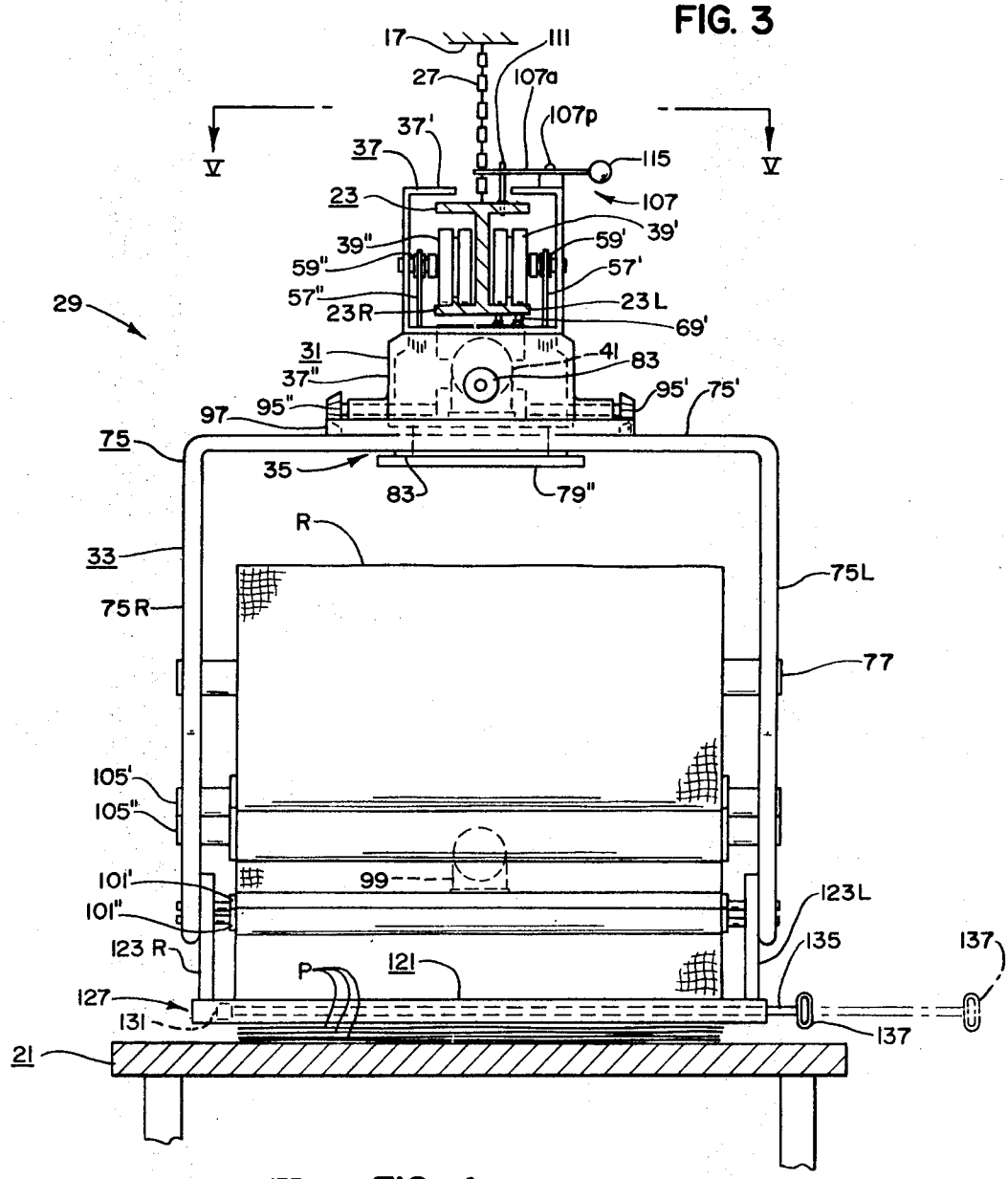
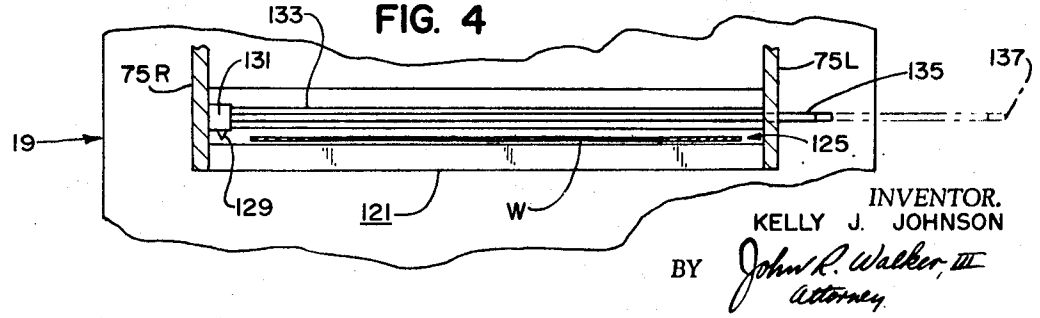


FIG. 4



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CLOTH SPREADING APPARATUS

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FIG. 6

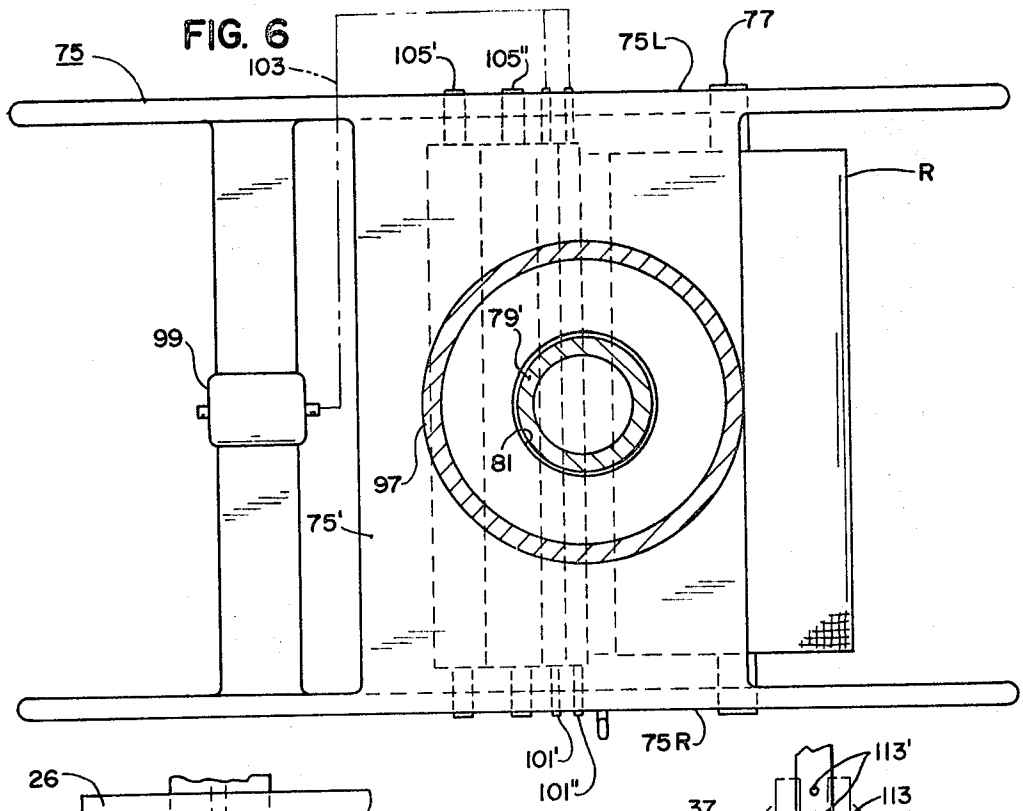


FIG. 5

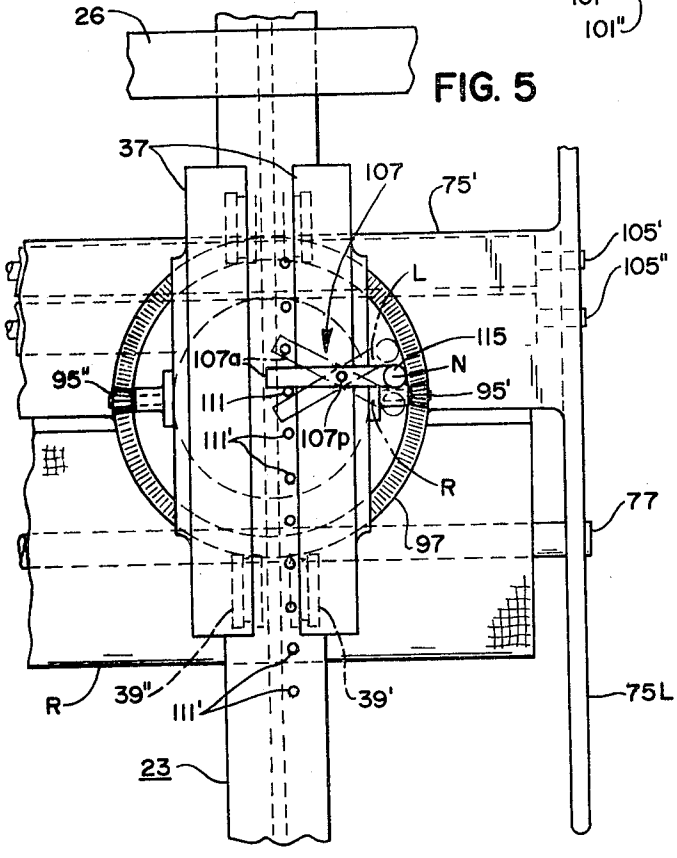
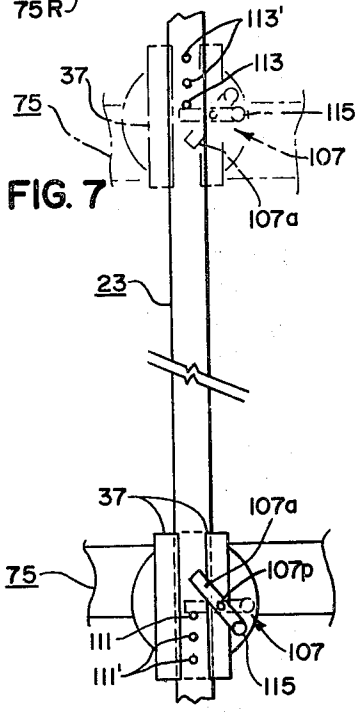


FIG. 7



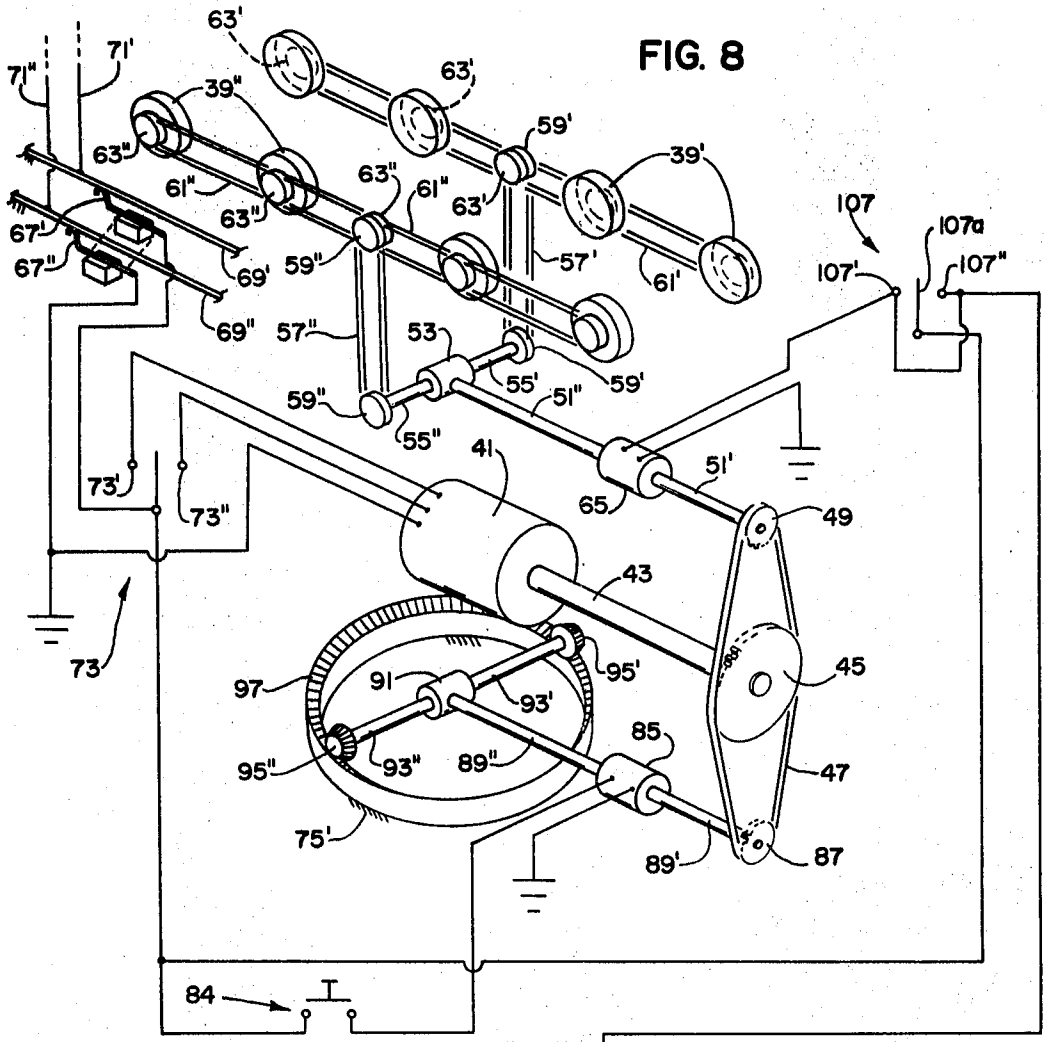
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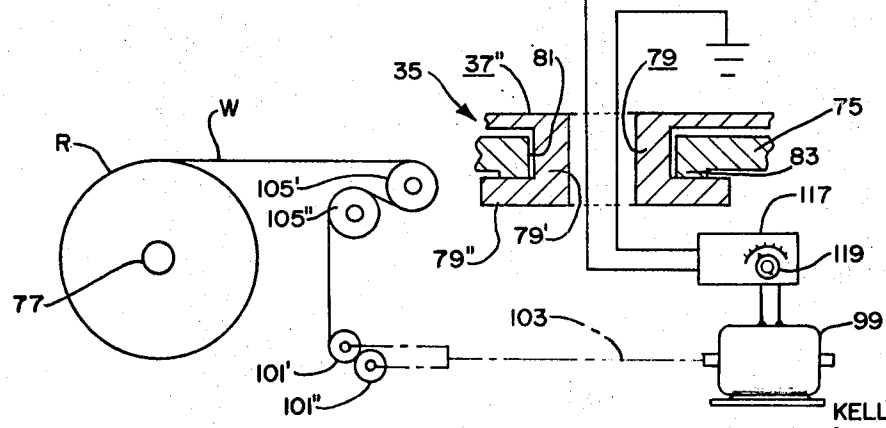
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CLOTH SPREADING APPARATUS

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FIG. 8





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Patented Sept. 20, 1971

3,606,303

CLOTH SPREADING APPARATUS

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Int. Cl. B65h 29/46
U.S. Cl. 270—31 8 Claims

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Rolled fabric cloth spreading or cloth laying apparatus adapted for use in the cutting room of a garment factory and operative for use in intermittently severing and dispensing the severed fabric web material of a cloth roll on a cutting table and to form a multi-layer stack of fabric plies preparatory to pattern-cutting the layered stack of cloth material. The fabric spreading apparatus includes trackway structure elevatingly arranged over the cutting table and includes cloth dispensing trolley means pendantly supported from the trackway means and movable back and forth along the trackway. The trolley means includes a cloth roll carrying and cloth dispensing lower section pendantly turnably supported from the trolley upper section. The cloth roll carrying lower section is pivotally turnably 180° on a vertical pivot axis and is operative for turning the front of the trolley lower section leftward or rightward at longitudinally spaced apart portions of the overhead trackway structure. The trolley means is adapted for dispensing cloth as it travels in one or the other direction along the trackway structure. The spreading apparatus is particularly adapted for face-one-way type cloth spreading procedure and for use in depositing a multi-layer stack of cloth on a cutting table with a particular side surface of each cloth layer being in corresponding arrangement.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

(1) Field of the invention

Relates to cloth spreading apparatus generally and particularly to such apparatus adapted for face-one-way type cloth spreading procedure.

(2) Description of the prior art

Heretofore, the typical practice in the garment industry for face-one-way type cloth spreading was by utilizing a cloth spreading machine which spread the cloth web material while traveling in one direction only and with the machine dead-heading back to its initial starting position after laying each ply or lay of material. Another cloth laying machine adapted for face-one-way type cloth laying procedure is designed for carrying two rolls or bolts of cloth material and with the material from one roll being adapted to be laid as the machine travels in one direction and the material from the second roll being adapted to be laid as the machine moves in the opposite direction and returns to its initial starting position. A third type of cloth laying machine adapted for face-one-way type cloth laying procedure is provided with turntable support means for the roll of material and with the roll being adapted to be turned around at each end of each lay or ply of material. In the operating procedure of a turntable type cloth laying machine, the bolt or roll of cloth goods is turned 180° or endwise at the beginning and ending of each cloth lay or correspondingly with the turnaround or reverse travel movement of the cloth laying machine. Conventional face-one-way type cloth laying procedure utilizing the above-mentioned machines was rather a slow and time-consuming operation; not

infrequently, the output or production of the garment installation may be limited or restricted by congestion in the cloth laying step of the garment making process. Moreover, the prior art cloth laying machines adapted for laying cloth in one direction or the other direction were of complex design and construction. Such machines were subject to malfunctioning and required substantial repair and maintenance. In operation of many of the face-one-way type spreader machines, a workman of considerable skill or practice was required for efficient operation of the machine.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The machine of the present invention is particularly directed toward expediting the cloth laying step in garment manufacture. The cloth laying machine of the invention is effective for quickly and accurately laying a multiplicity of plies of material on a cutting table work surface. The cloth spreading machine of the invention is of substantially simple mechanical design and does not include complicated or intricate mechanisms subject to malfunctioning and a workman of negligible skill or practice may efficiently operate the machine.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

FIG. 1 is an environmental showing of the cloth laying apparatus of the present invention.

FIG. 2 is a side elevational view of the cloth dispensing trolley means and a fragmentary showing of the trackway structure and cutting table means of the cloth spreading apparatus.

FIG. 3 is a front elevational view of the cloth dispensing trolley means taken as from the right in FIG. 2.

FIG. 4 is a horizontal plane sectional view of the material web cutting means of the trolley unit taken as on the line IV—IV of FIG. 2.

FIG. 5 is a fragmentary top view of the cloth dispensing trolley unit means taken as on the line V—V of FIG. 3.

FIG. 6 is a horizontal plane sectional view taken as on the line VI—VI of FIG. 2.

FIG. 7 schematically illustrates the trolley travel controlling electric switch means of the apparatus.

FIG. 8 schematically illustrates the various electrical drive components and circuit means of the invention.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

The cloth spreading apparatus of the invention is indicated generally by numeral **11** and is illustrated as being installed in a typical garment factory cutting room **13** having respectively floor and ceiling structure **15**, **17**. Cloth spreading apparatus **11** basically includes a cutting table **19** defining a long narrow horizontal work surface **21**; an I-beam configured trackway **23** elevatingly supported directly above cutting table work surface **21** preferably by upright and horizontal support members **25**, **26**, and chain members **27** supported respectively from the cutting room ceiling structure **17**; a cloth dispensing trolley unit **29** basically including a traction section **31** runningly pendantly supported from trackway structure **23**; a carrier section **33** adapted for turnably supporting a roll R of fabric material; and, bearing means **35** pendantly turnably supporting carrier section **33** from traction section **31**.

Cloth dispensing trolley unit **29** is adapted for movement to and fro along trackway structure **23** and between a leftward end portion **23'** and rightward end portion **23''**. Carrier section **33** is adapted for horizontal movement 180° leftward or rightward about a vertical axis; carrier section **33** is adapted to be turned around

at each end of each ply P of web material W deposited on the cutting table work surface (see FIG. 1).

Traction section **31** includes a main housing **37** including an upper housing portion **37'** and a lower housing portion **37''** and a plurality of pairs of traction wheels **39'**, **39''** laterally symmetrically arranged relative to I-beam trackway **23** and runningly engaging the oppositely projecting lower flange portions **23L**, **23R** of the trackway. Trolley unit traction section includes primary electric motor means **41** stationarily supported in housing **37** and includes power transmission means interconnecting output shaft **43** of electric motor **41** with the plurality of traction wheel members **39'**, **39''**. The power flow from output shaft **43** is transmitted through a drive sprocket **45** mounted on the output shaft; through chain and sprocket means **47**, **49** to traction wheel drive shaft means **51'**, **51''**; through a right angle drive gearbox **53** having side gear structure (not shown) driving oppositely projecting unidirectionally operatively drive shafts **55'**, **55''**; through chain and sprocket means **57'**, **59'**, **57''**, **59''**; and, through chain and sprocket means **61'**, **63'**, **61''**, **63''**. Electric clutch means **65** interposedly arranged respectively between drive shaft structure **51'**, **51'** is operative for engaging and disengaging traction wheel members **39'**, **39''** from electric motor means **41** as in stopping and starting traveling movement of trolley unit **29** along trackway structure **23**. Electrically energizing clutch means **65** is operative for causing positive drive connection between drive shaft means **51'**, **51''** and for driving the series of traction wheel members **39**, **39'**. Electric motor means **41** is clockwise-counterclockwise operative respectively for causing leftward or rightward movement of trolley unit **29** along the trackway structure.

Trolley motor means **41** preferably is energized through running brush contacts **67'**, **67''** fixedly supported on trolley upper housing portion **37'**. Brush contacts **67'**, **67''** are adapted to runningly engage insulated contact rails **69'**, **69''** dependingly fixed in parallel arrangement to the underside surface of I-beam flange projection **23L**. Electrical conductors **71'**, **71''** connect respectively contact rails **69'**, **69''** with electric supply line means (not shown). Electric circuit means including a single-pole double-throw switch **73** having contact points **73'**, **73''** is selectively operative for energizing motor **41** clockwise or counterclockwise and is operative respectively for causing leftward or rightward movement of trolley unit **29** along trackway structure **23**.

Carrier section **33** includes a generally inverted U-shaped frame **75** having an upper horizontally arranged frame portion **75'** and depending vertical opposingly arranged planar side portions **75L**, **75R**. The roll of fabric material R is preferably freely turnably supported between frame side portions **75L**, **75R** on horizontal axle means **77**.

The bearing means **35** pendantly turnably supporting carrier section **33** from traction section **31** permits horizontal swinging movement of the carrier section substantially 180° leftward or rightward about a vertical axis. Bearing means **35** preferably includes a circular flange projection **79** dependingly centrally fixed on lower housing **37''** of traction section **31** and projecting downwardly through a large aperture **81** formed in upper horizontal frame portion **75'** of trolley carrier section **33**. Flange projection **79** preferably is right angular in radial section and includes a cylindrical ring portion **79'** projecting downwardly through aperture **81** and a rim-like external flange portion **79''** flared outwardly and supportingly engaging an annular bearing portion **83** formed on the underside of carrier section frame upper horizontal portion **75'** (see FIGS. 2 and 3).

Trolley carrier section **33** preferably includes electrically energized means for causing turning movement of the carrier section 180° leftward or rightward about the vertical pivot axis of the bearing means **35**. The turning

movement of trolley carrier section **33** preferably is powered from primary electric motor means **41** selectively energized through a push-button switch means **84** and electric clutch unit **85** (see FIG. 8). Mechanical power generated by motor means **41** is transmitted through drive chain **47**, through sprocket **87**, shaft means **89'**, **89''**, through gearbox **91**, and oppositely through contradirectionally operative output shaft means **93'**, **93''**. Miter gears **95'**, **95''** fixed respectively on output shaft means **93'**, **93''** runningly engage diametrically opposite portions of a ring gear **97** fixedly supported on carrier frame upper horizontal portion **75'**. Simultaneous contradirectional driving movement of miter gears **95'**, **95''** turnably drives ring gear **97** in one of the other direction and is operative in swinging carrier section **33** leftward or rightward 180° and operatively at the leading and trailing end of each ply P of the fabric web material.

Selective manipulation of switch **73** closes contact point **73'** or **73''** and respectively energizes motor means **41** clockwise or counterclockwise, and thus simultaneously correspondingly rotates input shaft means **51'**, **89'** respectively of electric clutch means **65**, **85**. When input shaft **89'** is driven clockwise, closing push-button switch **84** energizes and engages electric clutch **85** and causes clockwise turning movement of carrier section **33** about the vertical pivot axis of bearing means **35**. When shaft means **89'** is driven counterclockwise, closing push-button switch means **84** engages clutch means **85** and causes counterclockwise rotation of carrier section **33** about the vertical pivot axis of bearing means **35**.

Carrier section **33** preferably includes electrically powered feed roll drive means arranged in positive feed engagement with the web W of rolled fabric material R. An electric motor unit **99** is mounted in carrier section **33** and is drivingly interconnected with a pair of feed rollers **101'**, **101''** by mechanical drive means **103** (schematically illustrated in FIGS. 2 and 8). A pair of auxiliary rollers **105'**, **105''** also preferably is freely turnably supported between carrier section frame portions **75L**, **75R** and guidingly conduct the fabric web material W from fabric roll R to feed rollers **101'**, **101''**.

A single-pole double-throw switch unit **107** preferably is mounted on trolley **29** and is operative for simultaneously energizing and de-energizing clutch means **65** and electric motor means **99**. Switch **107** simultaneously controls the traveling movement of trolley unit **29** along trackway structure **23** and the feeding movement of web material W through feed rollers **101'**, **101''**. Switch **107** includes contact points **107'**, **107''** and an arm **107*a*** pivotally supported on a vertical axis on trolley traction section upper housing **37'** by vertical pivot pin means **107*p*** (see FIGS. 2, 3, 5 and 7). Switch **107** is semi-automatically operative and responsive to the traveling movement of trolley **29** back and forth along trackway structure **23**.

Two spaced apart abutment pins **111**, **113** arranged respectively at longitudinally distant points on trackway structure **23** provide abutment means for actuation of switch arm **107*a*** and for stopping the leftward or rightward movement of the trolley unit along the trackway (see FIGS. 1 and 7). Arm means **107*a*** of switch **107** is moved to a non-energized neutral disposition upon engagement with a pin member **111**, **113** (see FIG. 5). Arm **107*a*** is adapted to be manipulated from a neutral position by handle means **115**. After the movement of trolley unit **29** has been halted by engagement of arm **107*a*** with an abutment pin **111**, **113**, the operator of the apparatus moves arm **107*a*** to energize a respective switch contact **107'**, **107''** and thus prepare the electrical circuit means for the turnabout movement of the trolley unit. Two spaced apart series of apertures **111'**, **113'** are arranged at longitudinally spaced apart locations along the trackway. Each aperture of each series of apertures **111'**, **113'** is adapted to removably receive respectively an abutment pin **111**, **113**. Inserting pin members **111**, **113** in

selected apertures **111'**, **113'** is operative for controlling the distance of movement of trolley unit **29** along trackway structure **23** and for stopping the trolley at a predetermined position along the trackway structure.

The trolley unit **29** of the cloth dispensing apparatus also preferably includes means for synchronizing the feed output travel of fabric web W with the travel of trolley unit **29** along the trackway. The means for synchronizing the trolley travel and the output feed of fabric web W preferably is in the form of an adjustable rheostat unit **117** interposedly arranged in the electrical circuit means energizing motor **99**. Selectively manipulating adjustment knob **119** of rheostat **117** is operative for increasing or reducing the speed of motor **99** and for synchronizing the output travel of web W with the travel of trolley **29**.

Trolley carrier section **33** preferably is fitted with horizontal shoe structure **121** dependingly supported by vertical side supports **123L**, **123R** respectively from side portions **75L**, **75R** of carrier section frame **75**. Horizontal planar shoe structure **121** is arrangeable in closely spaced arrangement directly above the uppermost one of plies P of a multi-ply stack S of material being spread on cutting table work surface **21**. A slot **125** extending between side supports **123L**, **123R** guidingly constrain the fabric web material in output travel as it is unrolled from fabric roll R. Although not specifically shown, the trolley apparatus preferably includes elevator means operative for selectively positioning horizontal shoe structure **121** at a selected elevation above cutting table work surface **21** or above the uppermost ply P of the multi-ply stack of fabric material.

Knife means **127** preferably is provided for transversely severing the web of material at the end of the leftward or rightward travel of trolley unit **29** and in the forming each fabric ply P (see FIGS. 3 and 4). A thin knife blade **129** is supported by carriage means **131** which in turn is guidingly constrained by guide rail means **133** extending horizontally between vertical side supports **123L**, **123R**. A horizontally extending, push-pull operative actuator rod **135** having handle means **137** is connected with blade carriage **131** and is operative for causing horizontal cutting movement of blade **129**. When fabric web W is being paid out or unrolled from roll R, blade **129** is arranged along the right side edge of the fabric web and blade carriage **131** is disposed in an at-rest disposition. The operator of the apparatus may transversely sever the fabric web by pulling outwardly on handle means **137** and until blade **129** moves fully across the web. After the web is severed, the operator may push handle **137** inwardly and return the blade to its initial at-rest disposition.

In the operation of the cloth dispensing apparatus the following procedure may be carried out: considering first that trolley unit **29** has completed traveling movement leftward and such movement has been stopped by engagement of arm **107***a* with abutment pin **111** (see FIGS. 1 and 5) and consider further that trolley carrier section **33** is facing rightward and switch **73** is disposed in an open circuit disposition. Trolley unit **29** may be caused to move rightward and deposit the web or a ply of fabric material on the cutting table by sequentially carrying out the following actions:

The operator may first arrange switch **73** to a disposition closing contact **73'** thereby clockwise energizing motor **41** and clockwise rotating shaft means **51'**, **89'** (see FIG. 8). The operator may then move switch arm **107***a* away from abutment pin **111** and the open circuit neutral disposition, to a disposition closing contact point **107'** (see FIG. 5 and the illustrated movement of arm **107***a* from position indicated N to position indicated R). Closing contact point **107'** simultaneously energizes and engages clutch means **65** causing traveling movement of trolley unit **29** and energizes electric motor **99** driving feed rollers **101'**, **101''** and causing output feed of the

fabric web material from roll R. Trolley unit **29** will continue rightward along trackway **23** and simultaneously feed web material through slot **125** in horizontal shoe **121** until switch arm **107***a* engages abutment pin **113** which actuates the switch arm to an open circuit disposition thereby simultaneously stopping travel of the trolley unit and output feed travel of the web material from the fabric cloth roll. By manipulating rheostat knob **119** the feed output of the web material may be synchronized with the trolley travel along trackway **23**; rheostat knob **119** may be adjusted for effecting a smooth unwrinkled disposition of the fabric web on the cutting table or on a previously laid ply of fabric material. The fabric web is then severed by pulling outwardly on knife rod handle **137** thereby causing knife blade **129** to move across the full width of the fabric web. The actuator rod **135** may then be moved inwardly to return blade carriage **131** to an at-rest disposition arranged along the edge of the fabric web. Push-button switch **84** may then be held in a closed circuit disposition for causing 180° turnabout movement of trolley carrier section **33** (see the broken line illustration of the trolley shown on the right in FIG. 1). Closing push-button switch **84** energizes electric clutch **85**, thereby causing horizontal swinging turnabout movement of trolley carrier section **33** through actuation of coacting miter and ring gear means **95'**, **95''**, **97**. Trolley unit **29** may be caused to move leftward and to dispense the fabric material in leftward movement by sequentially manipulating switch means **73** and **107** in a manner as above-described. Switch unit **73** is first moved to close contact point **73''**, thereby energizing motor **41** in a counterclockwise direction and then switch **107** is arranged at a disposition whereat contact point **107''** is energized thereby simultaneously causing traveling movement of the trolley leftward along the trackway and feed output movement of the web material through slotted shoe structure **121** and onto the cutting table. Switch arm **107***a* abutting pin **111** moves switch **107** to an open circuit disposition thereby stopping travel of the trolley and the web feed. Knife means **127** is then actuated to sever the web of material. Switch **84** may then be held in a closed circuit disposition for turnaround movement of the trolley carrier section. The above description describes the operation of the cloth laying apparatus for laying one ply of cloth with the trolley moving in one direction and a second ply of cloth with the trolley moving in the opposite direction. It will of course be understood that the above-described cloth laying procedure is carried out repetitiously and until a desired number of plies of cloth material is dispensed on the cutting table work surface.

It will be understood that although switches **84** and **73** are shown for purposes of simplicity as being manually actuated switches, they may be otherwise. As for example, they may be automatically actuated by means well known to those skilled in the art, without departing from the spirit and scope of the present invention. Also, the same is true of switch **107** which may be fully automatic. In addition, knife means **127** may be automatically actuated, rather than manual, without departing from the spirit and scope of the present invention.

I claim:

1. The combination with a long narrow cutting table arranged as in a garment manufacturing installation, of cloth spreading trolley apparatus adapted for unrolling, cutting and dispensing on the work surface top of said table a multiple layer stack of plies of the rolled cloth web material, said cloth spreading trolley apparatus comprising trackway means stationarily supported over and spaced from the table work surface and oriented in longitudinal extension corresponding with the longitudinal extension of said table work surface and with said trackway means having a leftward end and a rightward end and including a cloth dispensing trolley unit including a traction section runningly pendantly supported on said

trackway means, a carrier section having a front portion and having means adapted for turnably supporting a roll of fabric material, and including bearing means pendantly turnably supporting said carrier section from said traction section on a vertical pivot axis and operative for turning said carrier section front portion toward the rightward or leftward end of said trackway means, drive means supported substantially in said trolley unit traction section and operative for causing bidirectional movement of said trolley unit toward the leftward or rightward end of said trackway means, fabric web dispensing means operative for causing unidirectional unrolling movement of said roll of fabric material and dispensation of the fabric web material on the cutting table work surface, and including knife means for transversely severing the fabric web material at intermittent locations along the longitudinal extension of said web material.

2. The combination with a long narrow cutting table arranged as in a garment manufacturing installation, of cloth spreading trolley apparatus adapted for unrolling, cutting and depositing on the work surface top of said table a multiple layer stack of plies of the rolled cloth web material, said cloth spreading trolley apparatus comprising trackway means stationarily supported over and spaced from the table work surface and oriented in longitudinal extension corresponding with the longitudinal extension of said table work surface and with said trackway means having a leftward end and a rightward end and including a cloth dispensing trolley unit including a traction section runningly pendantly supported on said trackway means, a carrier section having a front portion and having means adapted for turnably supporting a roll of fabric material, and including bearing means pendantly turnably supporting said carrier section from said traction section on a vertical pivot axis and operative for turning said carrier section front portion toward the rightward or leftward end of said trackway means, electrically energized primary drive means supported substantially in said trolley unit traction section and operative for movement of said trolley unit toward the leftward or rightward end of said trackway means electrically energized secondary drive means supported substantially in said trolley unit carrier section and operative for causing positive drive unidirectional feed movement of said roll of fabric material during unrolling of the fabric roll and dispensation of the fabric web material therefrom, means for substantially synchronizing the feed output travel of the fabric web material with the travel of said trolley unit leftward or rightward along said trackway means and for substantially synchronously stopping or starting the traveling movement of the fabric web feed means and the trolley unit movement along said trackway means, and knife means for transversely severing the fabric web material at intermittent locations along the longitudinal extension of said web material.

3. Apparatus for unrolling and spreading the cloth web of a cloth fabric roll or the like and such apparatus being adapted for use in the cutting room of a garment factory, said cloth spreading apparatus comprising table means defining a long narrow horizontal planar substantially continuous work surface adapted to supportingly receive unrolled fabric from the fabric material roll and including cloth dispensing means adapted for laying cloth web portions in layers on said table work surface preparatory for the cloth cutting operation and including trackway means stationarily supported over and spaced from said table work surface and oriented in longitudinal extension corresponding with the longitudinal extension of said table work surface; and including a cloth dispensing trolley unit supported on said trackway means including a traction section runningly pendantly supported on said trackway means, a carrier section having a front portion and adapted for carrying a roll or the like of fabric material and including bearing means pendantly turnably supporting said carrier section from said traction section on a vertical pivot axis, means for causing selective turning movement of said carrier section at least one-half turn relative to said traction section and respectively toward one or the other end of said table work surface, traction wheel means included in said traction section runningly engaging said trackway means, primary electric motor means included in said traction section, means for energizing said primary electric motor means from an electric power line supply and including mechanical linkage drive means drivingly interconnecting said primary motor means and said traction wheel means for causing clockwise or counterclockwise movement of said traction drive wheels and respectively bidirectional movement of said trolley unit along said trackway means; means turnably horizontally supporting a roll or the like of fabric material on said carrier section of said trolley unit, feed roller means included in said carrier section adapted for positive feed engagement with the web of a roll of fabric material supported on said carrier section, secondary electric motor means included in said carrier section and adapted to be energized from the electric power line supply, secondary mechanical drive linkage means drivingly interconnecting said feed roller means and said secondary electric motor means, means for substantially synchronizing the output travel of the web of material at said feed roller means with the travel of said traction section along said trackway, and means for substantially synchronosly stopping or starting traveling movement of said feed roller means and said traction section of said cloth dispensing trolley, and including knife means for transversely severing the web of material at a point downrun from said feed roller means.

4. A cloth spreading apparatus as defined in claim 3 which additionally includes electrically energized means for causing turning movement of said carrier section relative to said traction section and respectively for turning said carrier section front portion leftward or rightward relative to said trackway and so correspondingly leftward or rightward relative to said cutting table work surface.

5. A cloth spreading apparatus as defined in claim 4 wherein said means for causing turning movement of said carrier section relative to said traction section includes electric circuit power means including selectively operative switch means.

6. A cloth spreading apparatus as defined in claim 3 wherein said knife means is operatively supported on said carrier section and includes a knife blade adapted to engage and sever the web of material, means guidingly constraining said knife blade in movement across the full web width of the fabric material and includes selectively operative actuator means for causing traveling movement of the knife blade in severing the web of material.

7. A cloth spreading apparatus as defined in claim 3 which additionally includes means for stopping the travel of said traction section at a certain point along the longitudinal extension of said trackway means.

8. A cloth spreading apparatus as defined in claim 3 wherein said trackway means is of single I-beam form and wherein said traction drive wheels are laterally symmetrically arranged relative to the I-beam structure and runningly ridingly engage the opposite lower flange portions of the I-beam configured trackway structure.

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