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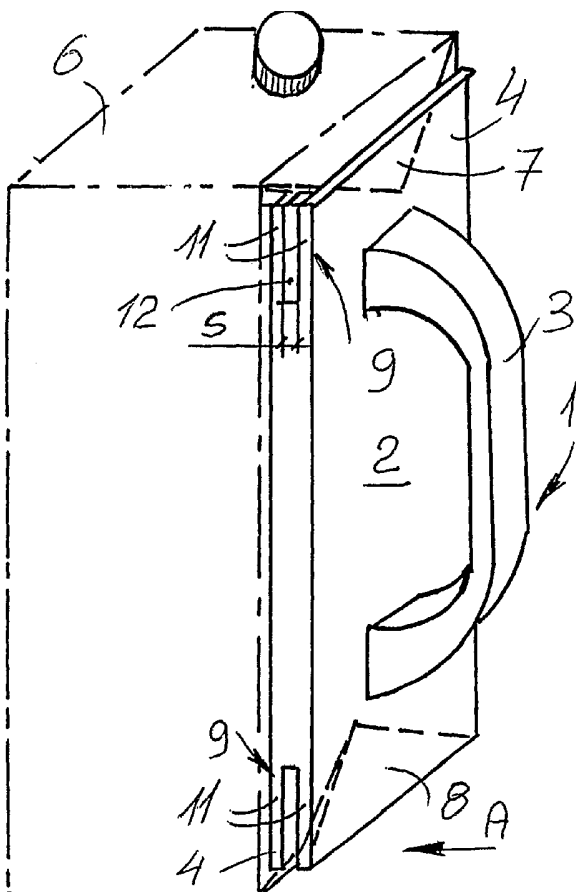
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(54) Title: REMOVABLE SUPPORT FOR HAND-HELD VESSELS



(57) Abstract: A removable support (1) for hand-held or grip-pable vessels (6), for example for containing liquids, such as fruit juices, wine, beverages, milk and the like, formed by a flexible or rigid material and in a parallelepiped or cylinder shape, comprises a substantially longitudinally extending support body (2), having a gripping handle (3) and clamp (9) or resilient (16) coupling means for providing a removable coupling with a related vessel (6). Advantageously, the subject support provides an efficient advertising medium.

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“REMOVABLE SUPPORT FOR HAND-HELD VESSELS”

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Background of the invention

The present invention relates to a removable support for hand-held or grippable vessels for containing, for example, liquids such as fruit juices, wine, beverages, milk and the like, said vessels being formed by a flexible or rigid material and having a substantially elongated shape, such as a parallelepiped or cylinder configuration, according to the preamble of claim 1.

As is known, beverages, fruit juices, wine, milk and the like are increasingly sold as packaged in flexible material vessels or containers, made, for example, of a paperboard material lined internally with a sheet of synthetic material. The mentioned flexible material vessels do not have a stable rigid form, and they can be deformed under gripping pressure provided by the user's hand, as the vessel is gripped and continuously held by the user. Moreover, such instability of the form or shape is affected by the amount of liquid product held in the vessel; in other words, the vessel in a sealed condition has greater form stability than that which would be available after delivering a certain amount of liquid.

More specifically, with respect to parallelepiped vessels, they are conventionally gripped on opposite faces thereof, thereby providing a pressure force toward the inside of the vessel. This, in particular for an open vessel still full or nearly full, would cause a simultaneous raising of the level of the liquid contained, with a consequent uncontrolled or undesired liquid delivery, which would soil the table or table cloth near the glass provided for receiving an intended liquid amount.

In this connection it should be moreover pointed out that parallelepiped shape vessels having, for example, a useful volume of 1 liter have a side of about 7 cm, thereby children and old persons encounter difficulties in gripping them with only one
5 hand, for example because of arthritic diseases and the like. Such a difficult gripping, furthermore, increases as the size of the vessel increases, and, moreover, it is also involved in vessels having a high shape stability, made, for example, of aluminium foil or processed sheet metal material.

10 Thus, it would be desirable to overcome the above mentioned drawbacks.

Summary of the invention

Accordingly, the aim of the present invention is to
15 provide such a removable support for hand-held or grippable vessels, which can simply and easily support said vessels, independently from the amount of liquid held therein.

According to the invention, the above mentioned aim is achieved by a removable support having the characterizing features
20 of claim 1.

Further improvements and advantageous embodiments of the invention are defined in the dependent claims.

The removable support for hand-held or grippable vessels according to the invention provides a lot of advantages. At
25 first, a gripping arrangement or handle is provided, allowing the vessel to be simply and safely supported, without concentrating any undesired pressing or crushing force on the central regions of opposite faces of the vessel, in particular for a flexible material parallelepiped shape vessel. This would prevent any undesired
30 liquid deliveries, caused by a pressing of the vessel handle. Moreover, conventional flexible material parallelepiped vessels are usually provided with end closure triangular flaps, which are glued

on the head or top sides of the vessel or, if a liquid delivery closure assembly is provided therein, said flaps being fixed on opposite faces of the vessel.

In an embodiment of the removable support according to the invention, two of said top opposite triangular flaps are used for forcibly directly engaging the clamp-like end portions of the subject support. A further advantage of the support according to the invention is that it can be made in a simple, quick and unexpensive manner, for example by molding plastic material. The support can have a solid plate-like body, or a frame-like body, or one or more central openings, to save material.

In a second embodiment of the support, including resilient fixing or clamping means, said support can be quickly applied to the vessel, independently from its parallelepiped or cylinder configuration, since said elastic clamping means would assume respectively a form corresponding to the vessel contour.

A further advantage of the removable support according to the invention is that the liquid can be poured in a desired manner and amount, without causing undesired liquid leaks due to a pressing of the vessel, or an unsafe or slipping gripping on its outer slipping surface, in particular if the user has wet or moist hands.

Yet another advantage of the removable support provided with resilient clamping means, is that said support can be arranged at different levels or heights on the vessel, thereby allowing the liquid held in said vessel to be easily and safely poured depending on the amount or level of the liquid in said vessel and, moreover, allowing said removable support to be used for different height vessels.

A further advantage of the removable supports according to the invention is that, they can be made, in addition to a synthetic material, also of metal or wood material, thereby a

specifically selected material can facilitate the achievement of good aesthetic advantages.

A high facility use and reliability of the subject support can be moreover advantageously achieved by providing a L-shape support body, wherein the bottom narrow leg of the L-shape operates as a bearing surface for the bottom of the vessel, in which case said support would require a single clamping means or resilient clamping, the free edge of the L-shape optionally including a projecting portion adapted to precisely arrange or locate the vessel as it is handled.

Yet another advantage of the support according to the invention, in the embodiment thereof including clamp-like end portions, is that screw fixing elements can be formed in said clamp means, thereby providing a simple configuration and efficient clamping properties.

A further advantage of the inventive supports is that they provide further gripper-like closure means, adapted to reliably close the closure end portion of the vessel, for example for milk vessel, after an opening thereof. Such an approach would provide a perfect insulation of the vessel contents from the outer environment, thereby extending the freshness characteristics of the product.

Yet another advantage is that the inventive supports are provided with a retracting handle, for example of the type used in suitcases. This would allow to advantageously reduce the vessel and related support size for an easy use in refrigerators.

Yet another advantage of the supports according to the invention is that would provide an efficient advertisement "vehicle".

Brief description of the drawings

Further characteristics, advantages and details of the removable support for hand-held or grippable vessels according to

the invention will become more apparent hereinafter from the following disclosure with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which are shown, by an indicative example, some preferred embodiments of the removable support according to the invention.
5 For facilitating the illustration, the drawing figures have been drawn on convenient scale.

In the drawings:

Figure 1 shows a perspective view of a first embodiment of a removable support according to the invention, applied to a flexible material parallelepiped-shape vessel,
10

Figure 2 shows a view taken according to the arrow A of figure 1,

Figure 3 shows a cross-sectional detail of an end portion of the support shown in figures 1 and 2,

15 Figures 4 and 5 shows a view like figure 2, without the vessel, of two modified embodiments of the removable support provided respectively with a frame support body, figure 4, and a strip support body, figure 5,

20 Figure 6 shows a side view of a further modified embodiment of the removable support,

Figure 7 shows a further modified embodiment of a removable support according to the invention, including resilient coupling means,

25 Figure 8 shows a modified embodiment of the support shown in figure 7,

Figure 9 shows an embodiment of the removable support according to the invention specifically designed for circular cross-section vessels,

30 Figures 10 and 10A show a removable support with resilient coupling means, which can be used at different heights or levels of said vessel, or for smaller vessels,

Figure 11 shows a detail illustrating a further

embodiment, in which a clamp-like end portion of the removable support comprises a screw clamping element,

Figure 12 shows a side view of a further modified embodiment of a removable support according to the invention, including a closure means for closing the open end portion of the vessel, after the opening thereof, and

Figures 13 and 14 show two further embodiments in which the coupling means are provided in the form of suckers.

10 Description of the preferred embodiments

In the drawing figures, like or equivalent parts have been referred to by the same reference elements.

Reference is at first made to figures 1 and 2, in which the removable support has been generally indicated by the reference number 1. Said support comprises a substantially longitudinally extending support body 2, having a handle 3 which, in the illustrated embodiment, has a U-shape handle configuration, rigid with said body 2. The support comprises moreover, at the end portions thereof, removable coupling means 4, for providing a removable coupling with an associated or related vessel 6 which, in the illustrated example, has a parallelepiped shape and is made of a flexible material. In a per se known manner, said vessel 6 comprises a quadrangular tubular element closed, at the end portions thereof, by respectively two top and bottom glued and folded flaps 7 and 8. In the example shown in figures 1 and 2, the coupling means 4 comprise a clamp 9 having a substantially U-shape cross section and including opposite plate-like legs 11 defining therebetween a narrow slot 12, the width S of which is adapted to house therein, practically without any clearances, or with a forced engagement, the folded closure flaps 7, 8 of the vessel 6.

As shown in figure 2, the clamp coupling means 4 are spaced from one another by a length l substantially corresponding

to the distance or spacing of the apex portions of the two triangular flaps 7 and 8, outward and downward upturned, parallel to the vessel 6, thereby said triangular flaps 7 and 8 can be engaged, in a forced manner, between the legs 11 of the clamps 9 of the support 1, being slidably driven along the vessels 6, as shown in figures 1 and 2. Thus, the support 1 will have a full surface thereof abutted against the vessel 6 and in engagement, with a forced type of engaging, with portions of said vessel, i.e. with said triangular flaps 7 and 8 thereby, by gripping the handle 3, it would be possible to raise and orient at will the vessel 6 for pouring the contents thereof, without providing any manual pressure on the opposite sides of the vessel 6, as it would be otherwise necessary.

After having emptied the vessel 6, the support 1 can be removed from the flaps 7 and 8 and applied to a fresh vessel.

To provide a high gripping force between the clamps 9 and triangular flaps 7, 8, the inner faces of the legs 11 can be upward tapered, to a nearly contacting relationship, in order to exploit the resilient properties of the legs or wings 11 to provide a high clamping force of the triangular flaps 7 and 8, as taught by the invention. This can be achieved, in particular, by forming the supports 1 of a synthetic or metal material. If the support 1 is made of a wood material, then the two opposite legs 11 can be spaced by a thin or narrow slot, of even or tapering configuration, formed by cutting by a corresponding serrated or toothed chain. The height of 2.5-3 cm of the mentioned triangular flaps 7, 8 is so designed as to provide, in each case, a reliable forced engagement between said flaps and clamps 9, even for wood supports.

For supports 1 made of a synthetic or plastic material, the handle 3, having a U or L shape, can be formed as a single piece with the body of the clamp 1. For metal material supports 1, the gripping portion or handle 3 can be simply welded or soldered, whereas, for wood supports 1, said handle 3 would be glued or

fixed or clamped by a clamping screws.

As shown in figures 4 and 5, to reduce the material amount for making synthetic or plastic material supports, the plate-like portion of the body 2, in addition to being solid, as shown in figures 1 and 2, can have a frame configuration, or it can include one or more inner cavities 13, as shown in figure 8, or it can comprise a strip-like body 2, as shown in figure 5.

In the modified embodiment shown in figure 6, the bottom end portion of the body 2 has a plate-like configuration and is angularly folded so as to provide a bearing bottom 14 for the vessel 6. At the free edge portion of the bottom 14, a projecting portion for restraining the vessel can be provided, said projecting portion extending upward 14 as an abutment, which can involve or affect the overall width of the bottom 14, or one or more portions thereof, for example a central part thereof. The coupling between the support 1 and the vessel 6, accordingly, will be performed only by force engaging the top clamp 9 and top triangular flap 7 of the vessel. The combined restraining of the bottom 14, 14A and locking of the clamp 9 will provide a firm holding or clamping of the vessel 6 by the removable clamp 1.

In the different embodiments of the support 1 shown in figures 1 to 6, the coupling means 4 are formed as resilient or rigid clamp elements.

According to a modified embodiment of the present invention, said coupling means 4 are formed as resilient coupling means and will assume, in their most simple configuration, the form of a resilient ring made of a rubber or the like material 16, as shown in figure 7. In the support 1 embodiment shown in figure 7, at the end portions of the support body 2 is respectively provided a cross recess 17 for housing therein a resilient ring 16. The circumference of said resilient ring 16, in a non use condition thereof, will be less than the contour of the parallelepiped vessel 6, thereby, in its

application position, as shown in figure 7, the two resilient rings 16 will provide a reliable clamping operation on the vessel 6, thereby providing a firm coupling of the support 1 and vessel 6. The provision of said cross recesses 17 for housing said rings 16 would allow said rubber rings 16 to be safely applied on the support in a non use condition thereof, thereby preventing said rings from being lost. In this connection it should be pointed out that the configuration of said recesses 17 can be selected at will and, in the most simple embodiment of the support 1, said recesses 17 can also be omitted, and, for simplicity, said resilient rings 16 can also be formed by conventional resilient rubber rings, like those for office and kitchen uses.

As shown in figure 8, resilient coupling means 16 can also be used for a support body 2 having a bottom 14 likewise the embodiment shown in figure 6, or possibly provided with one or more locating abutments 14A. In the embodiment shown in figure 18 too, the upper or top coupling means 4, as a resilient element 16, provides a safe and reliable clamping of the vessel 6 on the support 1 for an easy and quick handling thereof. In figure 8, the dashed line shows moreover an alternative position for applying the coupling means 16, which can be optionally lowered, starting from the top, as the emptying of the vessel continues. This would facilitate the handling of the vessel in particular by children.

As clearly shown in figure 9, the support 1 can comprise an arched plate-like body 2, to support a cylindrical vessel 6 made of either a flexible or rigid material. The use of resilient coupling means 16 would allow to provide, in each case, an optimum supporting of the vessel 6, independently from its cross-section configuration, and also with vessels devoid of projecting portions or flaps.

In the embodiments shown in the preceding figures 1 to 9, the height of the removable supports 1 is substantially equal or

slightly less than the height of the vessels. According to the invention, by providing resilient coupling means 16, the height of said supports can also be substantially less than the height of the vessels, as shown in figures 10 and 10A, in which said support 1 is applied at a lower position in figure 10 and a raised position in figure 10A. This, on a side, would allow to save material for forming supports provided for higher vessels and, on another side, would allow said supports 1 to also be used with smaller height vessels, i.e. vessels having a contents less than 1 liter, for example 0.5 liters. This would be possible since the resilient coupling means 16 can be arranged, in a very easy manner, at any height or level position of the vessel.

To prevent the folded flaps 7, 8 of the vessels 6 from undesirably disengaging from the clamp end portions 9 of the removable support 1 as the vessel 6 is handled, in a further embodiment of the support 1 according to the invention, the end portions of the clamp 9 are advantageously formed with clamping or fixing means, such as a clamping screw 18, engaged in a respective outer leg 11, as shown in figure 11. For further facilitating the handling, the head portion of the screw 18 has a disc-like configuration, being for example textured or knurled on the outside thereof. Thus, after having engaged the respective flap 7, 8 in the clamp 9, the screw 18 will be screwed-on thereby its inner end portion will press the flap 7, 8 against the inner leg 11 thereby preventing it from being disengaged. A slight unthreading of the screw 18, on the other hand, will allow the support 1 to be easily disengaged from the vessel 6, after the emptying of the latter.

Moreover, according to the present invention, figure 12 shows the further aspect of the invention of associating with a removable support 1 a clamping element 19, which, in the shown embodiment has a fly spring configuration, adapted to be easily used for reclosing the flaps 20 and 21 of the opening end portion of

the vessel 6 after having opened it for pouring the vessel contents, said spring clamp 19 being coupled to the removable support 1 through a small chain or the like 22, to prevent said spring clamp 19 from being lost.

5 In the embodiments shown in Figures 13 and 14 the removable coupling means are provided as suckers. In Fig. 13 is provided a simple rubber or plastic sucker 23 the pin-like boss 24 of which is fastened in the handle 3. For easily removing the sucker 23 from the vessel 6 said sucker 23 is provided with a tongue 25.

10 In the embodiment shown in Fig 14 the sucker 26 is of the so-called glazier type, wherein the pin-like boss 27 of said sucker 26 is slidably housed in the U-shaped profiled handle end 28 and hinged therein by means of an articulation pin 29. The rigid external sucker cup is indicated by 30 and the eccentric rounded
15 corner of said handle end 28 cooperating with said cup 30 is indicated by 31.

In both embodiments the handles 3 may be provided with a bent bottom portion 14 as shown with dashed lines.

20 The operation of both embodiments of Figures 13 and 14 is the typical one of similar suckers.

Finally, according to the invention, it is provided to use a handle 3 of the withdrawing type, or an articulated type, as is well known, and accordingly not shown in any details, for example with a configuration of suitcases handles or the like. This would allow
25 vessels 6 and associated support 1 according to the invention to occupy a less space in a refrigerator.

From the above it should moreover be apparent that the exposed to the view surface of the removable supports 1 according to the invention provides an optimum supporting surface for
30 wordings and/or trademarks, which would provide the inventive supports 1 with a great advertisement "vehicle" efficiency.

From the constructional and functional above

disclosure of the different embodiments of the supports according to the invention, it should be apparent that said removable supports allow to efficiently achieve the indicated aim and advantages.

In particular, it should be apparent that the removable supports according to the invention can be easily handled and used, both in their embodiment with coupling means engaging projecting portions of the vessel, and in their embodiments with resilient coupling means, said handling operation being performed without any difficulties even by children and old persons having difficulty in hand movement.

While the invention has been above disclosed with reference to vessels substantially provided for beverages and the like, it should be apparent that the contents of the vessels can be chosen at will and comprise, for example, cleansing agents, detergent products and the like, either in liquid or powder form.

Moreover, it should be apparent that one skilled in the art could differently modify and change the removable supports according to the invention with respect to their geometrical configuration, the configuration of the handle, telescopic arrangements, in which a half-body of the support would be made in a pocket form and the other half-body would be made as a plate-like skid adapted to slide in the pocket half-body and fixed at different positions thereof by screw clamping elements, in a per se known manner and, moreover, it would be possible to make the support of the most suitable materials, and in different shapes, without departing from the scope of the invention as disclosed, illustrated and claimed.

Moreover, in the scope of the invention it would be possible to further include removable supports having any desired combinations of the individual indicated characteristics, of the different shown, disclosed and claimed embodiments thereof.

Claims

1. A removable support for hand-held vessels for containing, for example, liquids such as fruit juices, wine, beverages, milk and the like, said vessels being formed either of a flexible or rigid material and having either a parallelepiped or cylinder shape, **characterized** in that said removable support comprises a substantially longitudinally extending removable support body and comprising a gripping element and removable coupling means for removably coupling it with an associated vessel.

2. A support according to Claim 1, **characterized** in that said support has a flat or solid curved plate-like body, a frame or a strip-like body.

3. A vessel, according to Claims 1 and 2, **characterized** in that said coupling means comprise end clamps, for example including opposite clamp legs, said clamp legs being spaced from one another so as to allow to forcibly engage therein folded flap portions of said vessel.

4. A support according to Claim 3, **characterized** in that said two end clamps are equal, i.e. said support having a symmetrical configuration.

5. A support according to one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized** in that said gripping element has a substantially handle configuration, for example of U or L-shape.

6. A support according to one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized** in that said support, made either of a plastic and/or metal material, has said end clamps having a U cross-section with slightly tapering legs and a small spacing from one another, or opposite legs which can be resiliently preloaded as in said clamps foldable flaps of said vessel are engaged.

7. A support according to one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized** in that said support body is made with a

telescopic configuration, i.e. said body has a variable length and comprises locating means, for example screw locating means.

8. A removable support, according to Claim 1, **characterized** in that said removable coupling means for providing
5 a removable coupling with an associated vessel respectively comprise a resilient ring, made for example of rubber, having, in a non-use condition thereof, a circumference smaller than a contour of said vessel, and arranged at opposite positions along the support body, for example at end portions thereof.

10 9. A support according to Claim 8, **characterized** in that said support comprises housing recesses for housing therein said resilient rings, and adapted to prevent said resilient rings from being accidentally disengaged from said support body.

15 10. A support according to Claim 8, **characterized** in that said support comprises, on said support body, a plurality of projections or ribs for locating said resilient rings.

20 11. A support according to one or more of claims 1 to 7, **characterized** in that said support body comprises, at a top thereof, a gripping clamp according to claim 3 and, at a bottom thereof, a bottom end portion which is angularly folded to provide a bearing portion for a bottom of said vessel, a free edge of a bottom of said support having preferably at least an upward projecting abutment.

25 12. A support according to Claim 8, **characterized** in that said support body comprises at a top thereof resilient ring coupling means and, at a bottom thereof, an end portion angularly folded to provide a bottom portion to bear an associated vessel, a free edge of said support bottom having preferably at least an upward projecting abutment.

30 13. A support according to one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized** in that said support has a height substantially equal to or slightly less than a height of the vessel to

be supported thereby.

14. A support according to one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized** in that said support has a height substantially less than a height of standard vessels having a volume
5 of 1 liter.

15. A support according to one or more of claims 8 to 14, **characterized** in that said support is sold either with or without resilient ring elements for fixing said vessels.

16. A support according to one or more of the
10 preceding claims, **characterized** in that said clamp end portions has an outer leg housing herein a screw clamping element.

17. A support according to one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized** in that to said support body is coupled, through a coupling chain, cord or the like, a spring-like
15 clamp element, for example a fly spring element, for safely reclosing opening flaps of an opening end portion of said vessel.

18. A support according to one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized** in that said support gripping element or handle is of a withdrawable or articulated type.

20 19. A support according to one or more of the preceding claims, **characterized** in that said removable coupling means for providing a removable coupling with an associated vessel comprise a simple plastic or rubber sucker or a so-called glazier
25 sucker, wherein said sucker is directly supported on a support handle.

20. A support according to claim 19, **characterized** in that said handle is provided with a lower bent portion acting as a vessel supporting bottom.

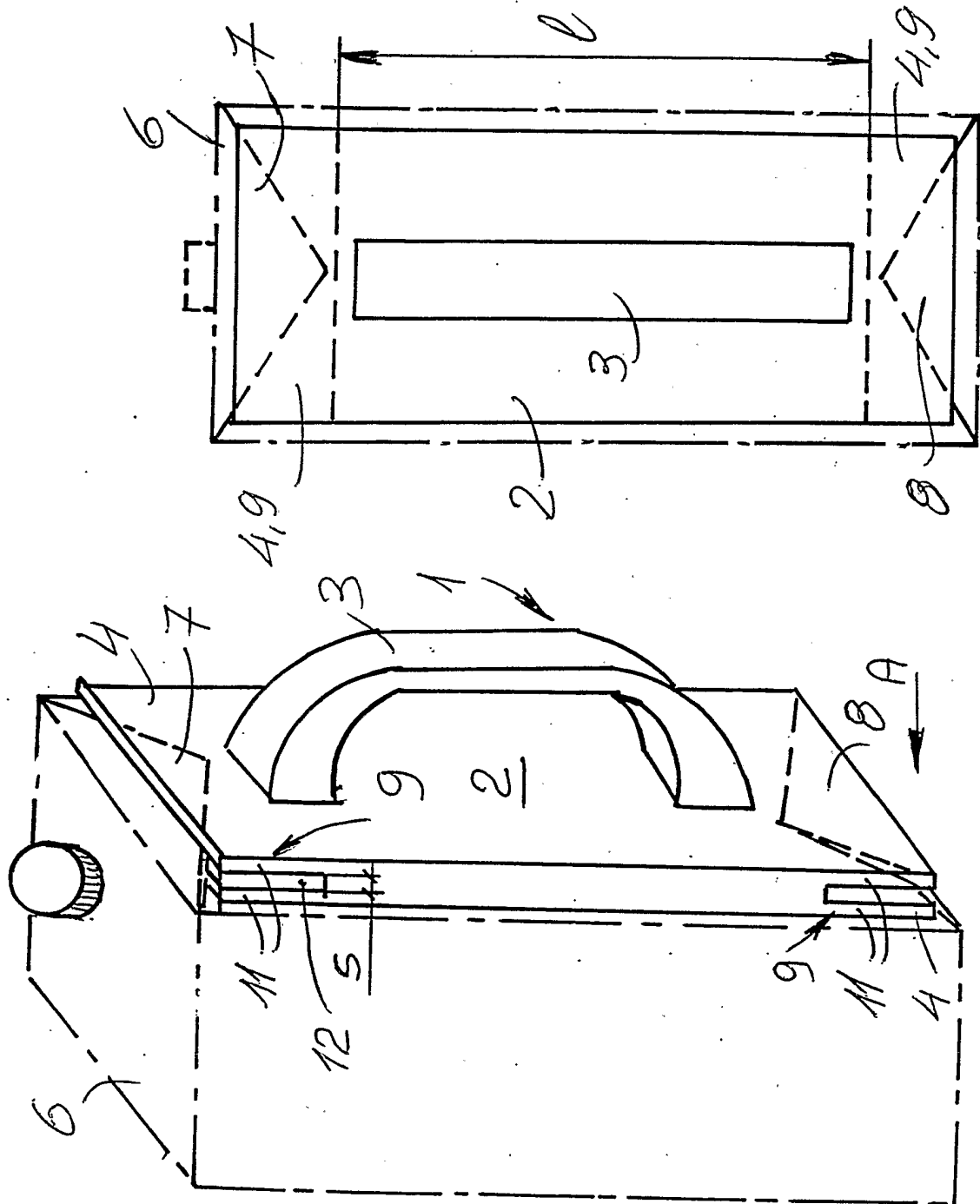


Fig. 2

Fig. 1

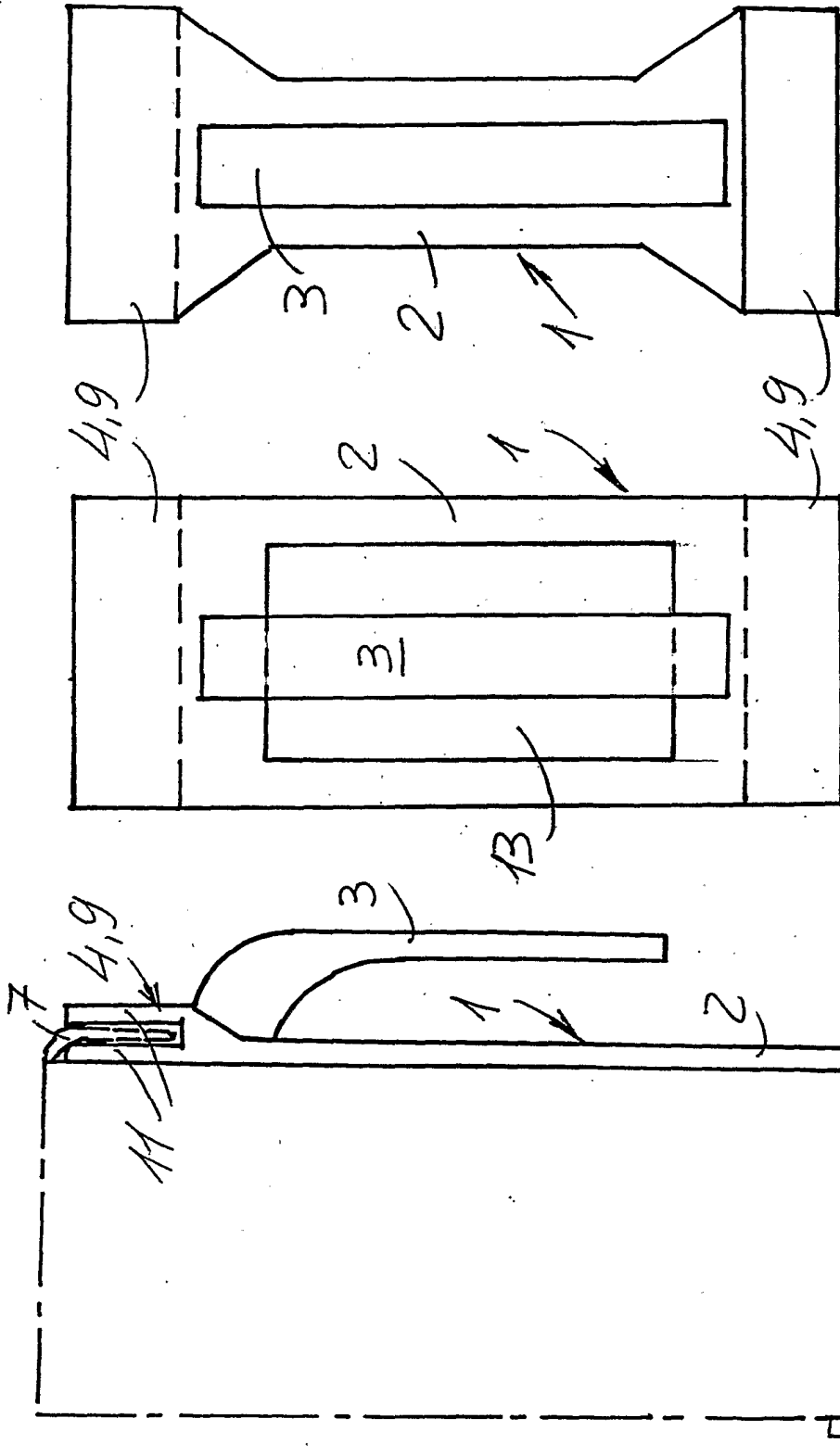


Fig. 5

Fig. 4

Fig. 6

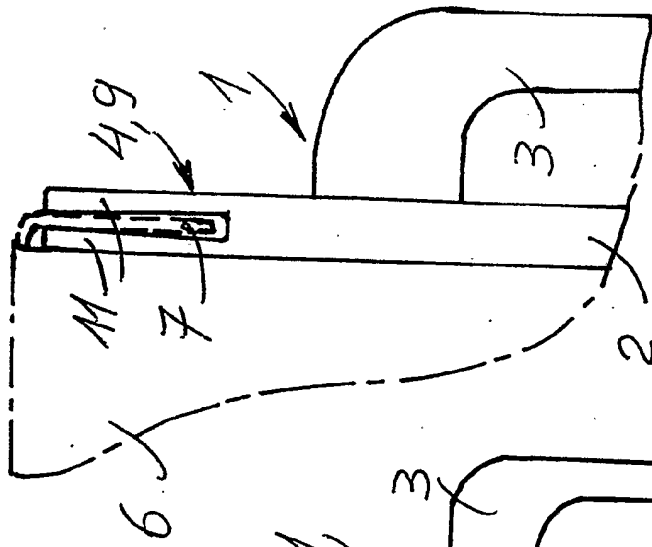


Fig. 3

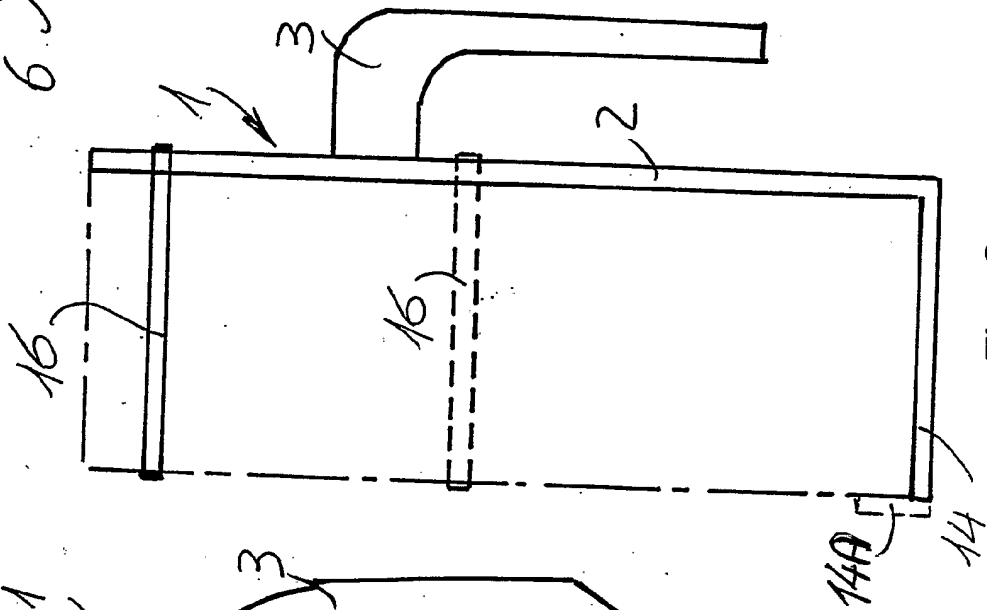


Fig. 8

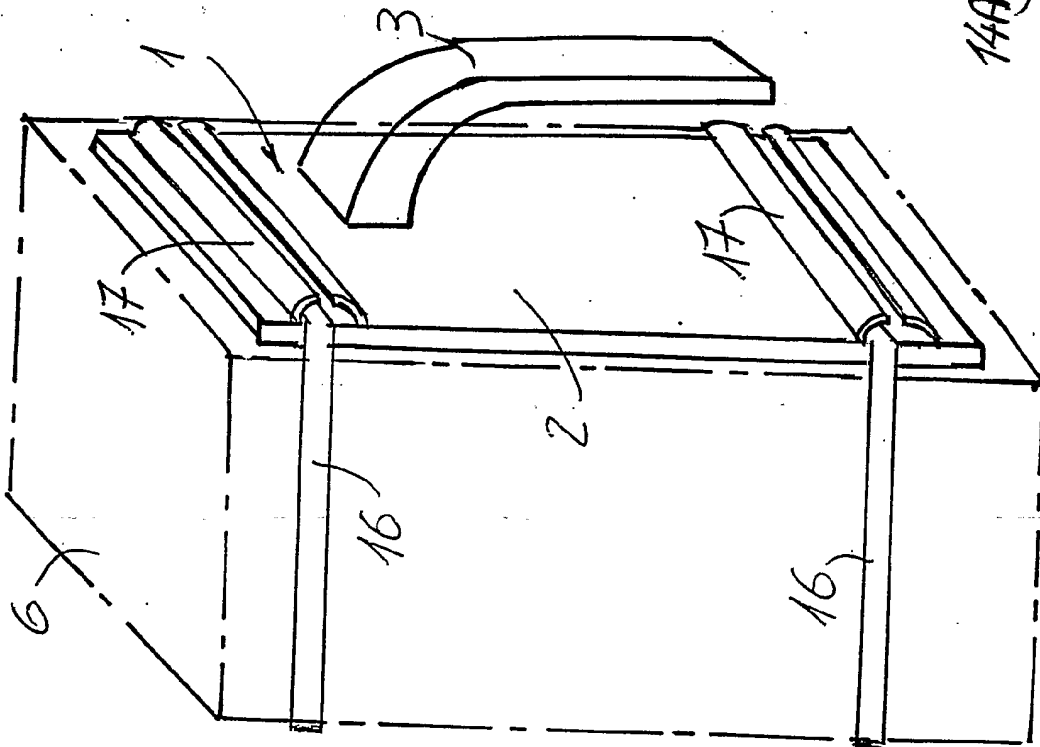


Fig. 7

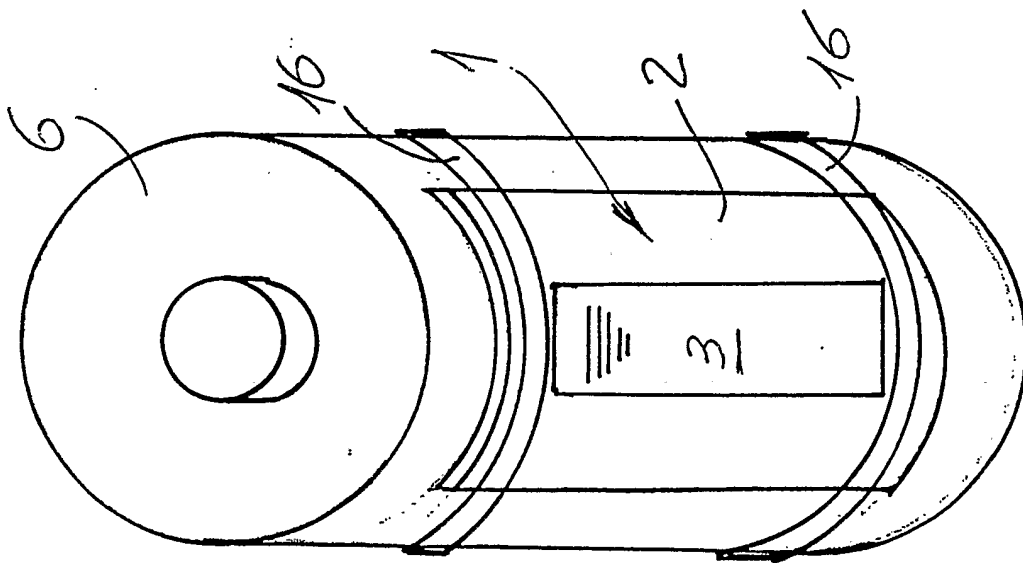


Fig. 9

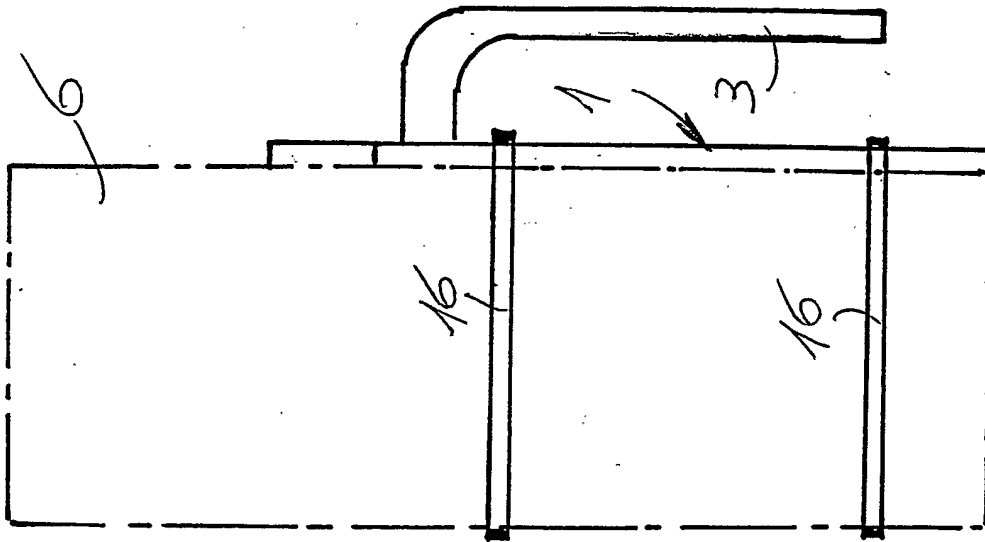


Fig. 10

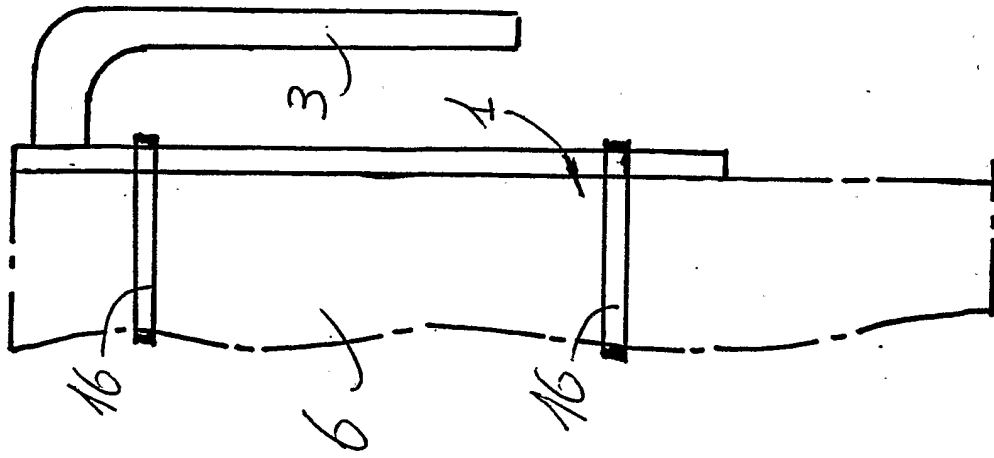


Fig. 10A

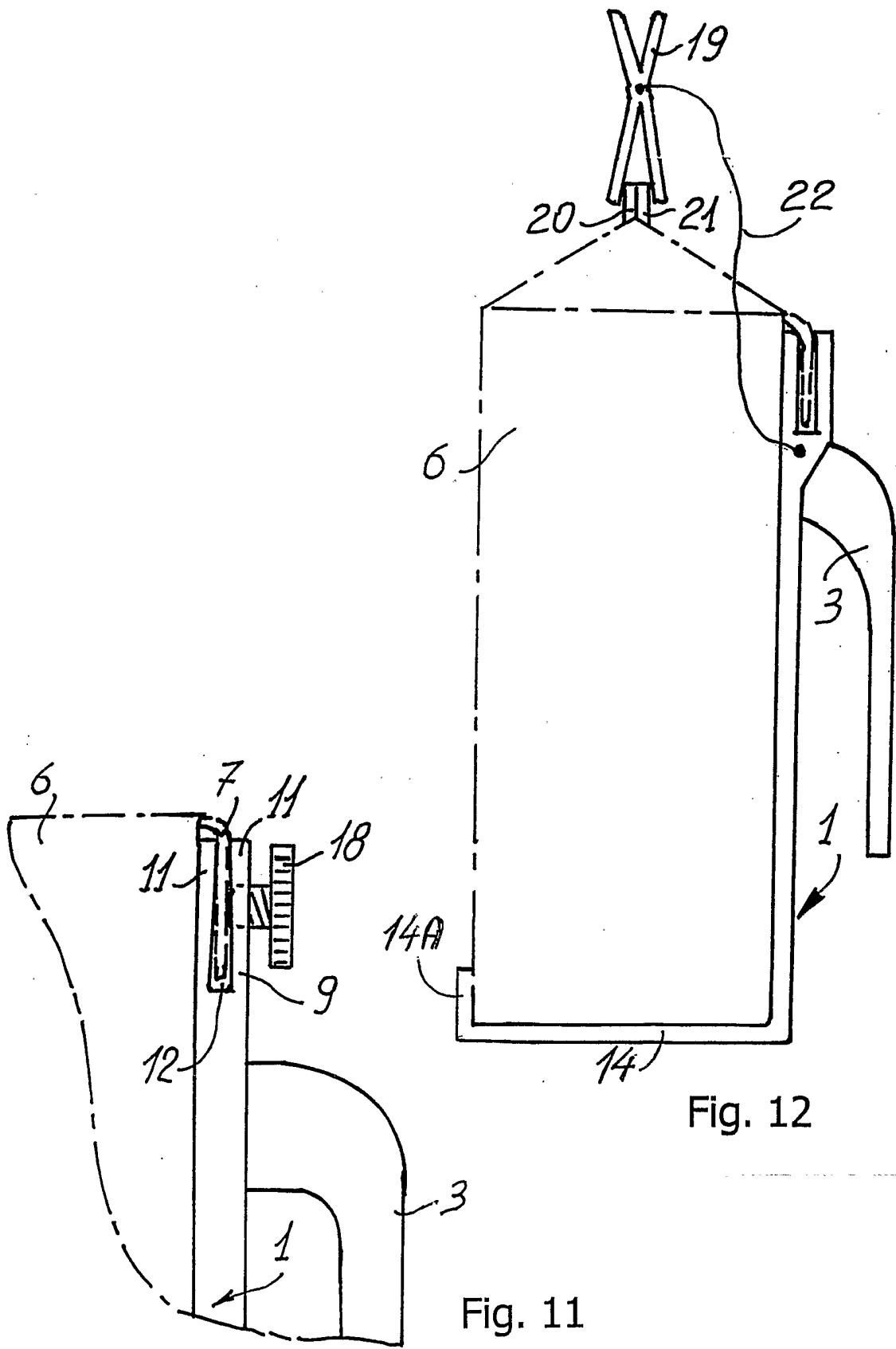


Fig. 12

Fig. 11

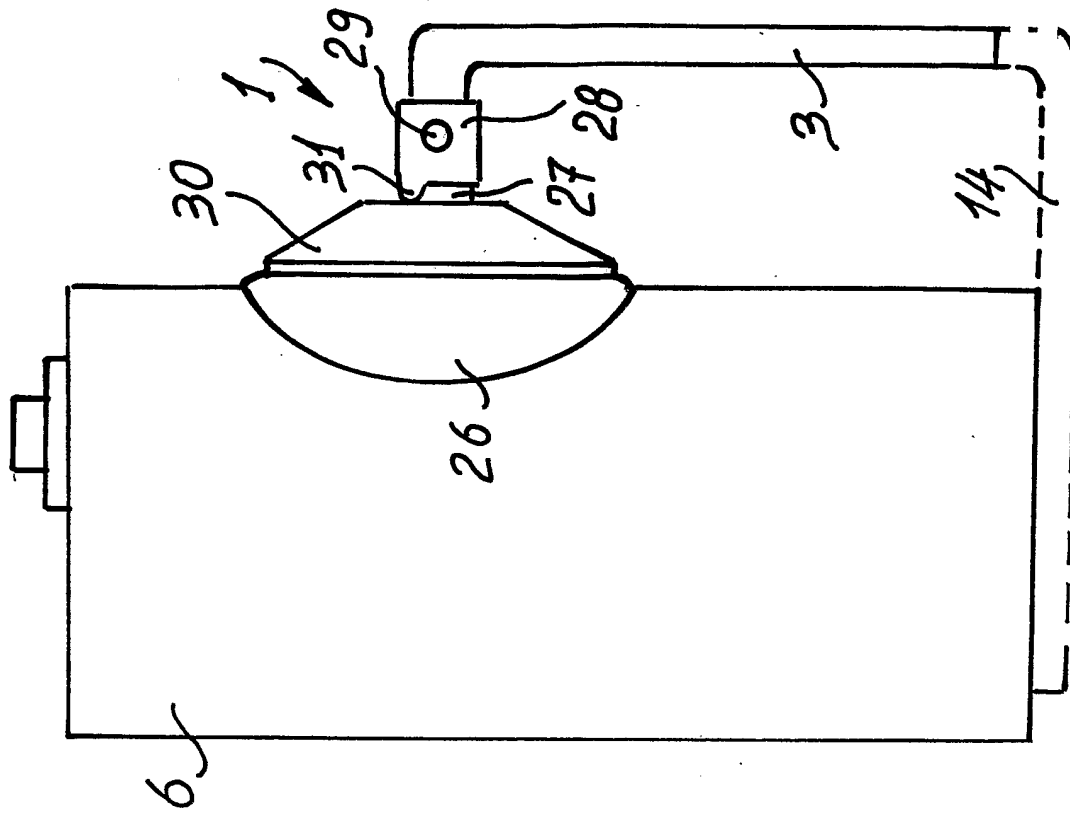


Fig. 13

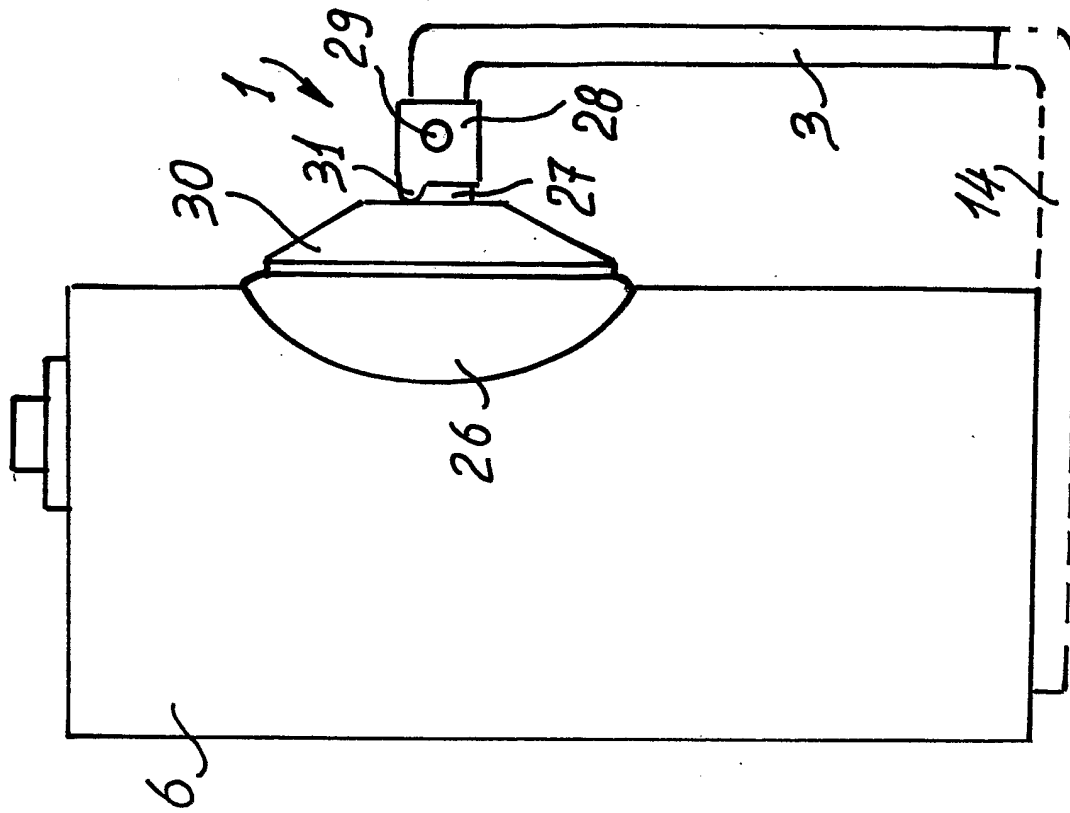


Fig. 14

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No
PCT/EP2004/012908

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
IPC 7 A45F5/10 B65D25/28

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)
IPC 7 A45F B65D A47G

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)
EPO-Internal, WPI Data, PAJ

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	GB 2 128 077 A (* BIRCHLEAF PRODUCTS LIMITED) 26 April 1984 (1984-04-26) abstract; figures	1-3, 5
X	US 4 420 178 A (TAYLOR ET AL) 13 December 1983 (1983-12-13) abstract; figures	1-6, 13
X	US 3 231 138 A (SERAFINI ANGELO) 25 January 1966 (1966-01-25) figures	1, 2, 5, 13, 16
X	US 2 913 275 A (ROCCA SALVATORE LA) 17 November 1959 (1959-11-17) figures	1, 3-5, 14, 16
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Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C. Patent family members are listed in annex.

* Special categories of cited documents :

A document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance	*T* later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
E earlier document but published on or after the international filing date	*X* document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
L document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)	*Y* document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art.
O document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means	*&* document member of the same patent family
P document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed	

Date of the actual completion of the international search 31 March 2005	Date of mailing of the international search report 21/04/2005
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Name and mailing address of the ISA European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2 NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040, Tx. 31 651 epo nl, Fax: (+31-70) 340-3016	Authorized officer SERRANO GALARRAGA, J
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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No

PCT/EP2004/012908

C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 5 011 536 A (BOOM ET AL) 30 April 1991 (1991-04-30) abstract; figures -----	1,8
X	US 3 012 809 A (TREMAINE DARWIN V) 12 December 1961 (1961-12-12) figures -----	1,5,13, 18
X	CH 297 344 A (RAPPE,HERMANN) 31 March 1954 (1954-03-31) the whole document -----	1,8,12
X	DE 201 09 142 U1 (VOIGT, CLAUS-DIETER) 27 September 2001 (2001-09-27) abstract; figures -----	1,7

FURTHER INFORMATION CONTINUED FROM PCT/ISA/ 210

Continuation of Box II.2

Claims Nos.: 15

Claim 15 does not disclose any technical features.

The applicant's attention is drawn to the fact that claims relating to inventions in respect of which no international search report has been established need not be the subject of an international preliminary examination (Rule 66.1(e) PCT). The applicant is advised that the EPO policy when acting as an International Preliminary Examining Authority is normally not to carry out a preliminary examination on matter which has not been searched. This is the case irrespective of whether or not the claims are amended following receipt of the search report or during any Chapter II procedure. If the application proceeds into the regional phase before the EPO, the applicant is reminded that a search may be carried out during examination before the EPO (see EPO Guideline C-VI, 8.5), should the problems which led to the Article 17(2) declaration be overcome.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/EP2004/012908

Box II Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of item 2 of first sheet)

This International Search Report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2)(a) for the following reasons:

1. Claims Nos.:
because they relate to subject matter not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:

2. Claims Nos.: 15
because they relate to parts of the International Application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to such an extent that no meaningful International Search can be carried out, specifically:
see FURTHER INFORMATION sheet PCT/ISA/210

3. Claims Nos.:
because they are dependent claims and are not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of Rule 6.4(a).

Box III Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of item 3 of first sheet)

This International Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this international application, as follows:

see additional sheet

1. As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this International Search Report covers all searchable claims.

2. As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, this Authority did not invite payment of any additional fee.

3. As only some of the required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this International Search Report covers only those claims for which fees were paid, specifically claims Nos.:

4. No required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant. Consequently, this International Search Report is restricted to the invention first mentioned in the claims; it is covered by claims Nos.:

Remark on Protest

- The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest.
- No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.

FURTHER INFORMATION CONTINUED FROM PCT/ISA/ 210

This International Searching Authority found multiple (groups of) inventions in this international application, as follows:

1. claims: 1-4 6 11 13 14 16

Removable support comprising end clamps as coupling means.

2. claim: 7

Telescopic removable support.

3. claims: 8-10 12

Removable support comprising a resilient ring as coupling means

4. claim: 17

Removable support with attached reclosing element.

5. claims: 19-20

Removable support comprising a sucker element as coupling means.

6. claim: 5 18

Removable support presenting a handle.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International Application No

PCT/EP2004/012908

Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
GB 2128077	A	26-04-1984	NONE
US 4420178	A	13-12-1983	CA 1153351 A1 06-09-1983 EP 0052013 A2 19-05-1982 ES 269715 Y 01-05-1986 GB 2086977 A ,B 19-05-1982
US 3231138	A	25-01-1966	NONE
US 2913275	A	17-11-1959	NONE
US 5011536	A	30-04-1991	NONE
US 3012809	A	12-12-1961	NONE
CH 297344	A	31-03-1954	NONE
DE 20109142	U1	27-09-2001	NONE