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(71) Applicant: **Edwards, Malcolm Anthony, 5 Carbery Avenue Southbourne, Bournemouth (GB)**
Applicant: **Morgan, Edward Albert, 64 Mount Road, Penn Wolverhampton (GB)**

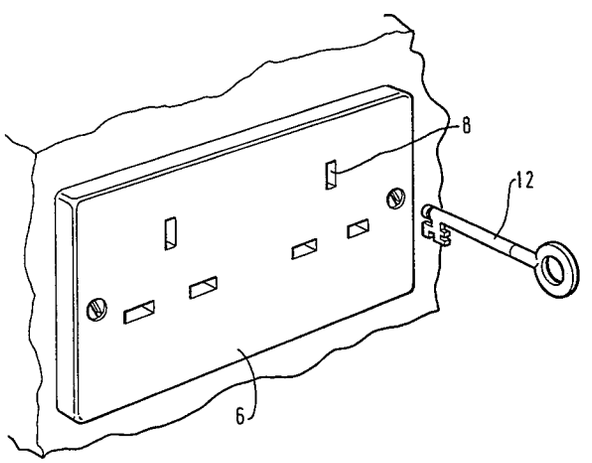
(72) Inventor: **Morgan, Edward Albert, 64 Mount Road, Penn Wolverhampton (GB)**

(74) Representative: **Leach, John Nigel, Forrester & Boehmert Widenmayerstrasse 5/IV, D-8000 München 22 (DE)**

(54) Improvements relating to wall safes.

(57) A wall safe is concealed behind a utility, preferably a dummy electric utility, such as a power socket.

An otherwise conventional face plate (6) of an electric socket may be secured to conceal an otherwise conventional wall safe, or may afford a door to the wall safe. In such latter circumstance, locking mechanism may be operated by the insertion of a key (12) through one of the pin apertures (8) of the dummy socket, to operate the locking mechanism to lock the dummy socket in position, or to release the dummy socket to permit access to the contents of the safe.



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Title: Improvements relating to wall safes.

Description of Invention.

This invention is concerned with improvements relating to wall safes, that is safes which are adapted to be mounted in walls of premises.

It is known to hide a wall safe behind a curtain, or behind a hanging picture, which may be displaced to obtain access to the door of the safe. However the security which this provides is minimal, since curtains and hanging pictures may readily be moved aside to reveal the location of the safe.

Premises invariably comprise a number of utilities, of the kind hereinafter referred to as being of the kind specified, which are conventionally fixed in or on the walls of the premises. Such fixed utilities include electrical fittings, such as electric sockets, light switches, wall mounted space heaters, extractor fans, thermostatic control units. Additionally fixed utilities include non-electrical fittings such as ventilation grills, cupboards.

As such fixed utilities are commonly seen in or on the wall of premises, they would not attract the attention of a burglar.

According to this invention there is provided a wall safe which is hidden behind a dummy utility of the kind specified.

If desired, the dummy utility may be adapted to conceal a cavity in the wall, within which the wall safe is located, removal of the dummy utility affording access to the door of the wall safe.

Alternatively, the dummy utility may afford a door of the wall safe itself, removal of the dummy utility providing access to the contents of the wall safe.

The dummy utility is conveniently a dummy electrical fitting, and may be a dummy power point, a dummy thermostatic control unit, or a dummy electric switch.

However, it is not necessary for a dummy fitting to be used, and in certain circumstances (for example to provide a high degree of security) a real utility may be utilised.

Thus, according to this invention there is also provided a wall safe, a door of which comprises, or is provided by, a utility of the kind specified.

In a simple form, a wall safe in accordance with this invention may comprise basically a hole in the wall, which may be lined by a conventional wall box, to which the face plate of the utility (e.g. socket outlet) may be secured in conventional manner by screws. The face plate may be removed, and valuables placed in the hole, and the face plate secured to the wall box to close the hole.

Preferably however, locking mechanism is utilised to provide additional security, and/or ease of removal for the key-holder.

Thus in accordance with another aspect of this invention there is provided a wall safe, comprising an open-fronted box, adapted to be secured in a hole in a wall, and locking mechanism secured to the inner side of a dummy electrical fitting, the construction and arrangement being such that when said fitting is placed over the front of the box, the locking mechanism may be operated to secure the electrical fitting to the box to conceal the hole and the box.

Preferably the dummy electric fitting is provided by the face plate of a conventional electric socket, and advantageously the locking mechanism is adapted to be operated by the insertion of a key through one of the pin apertures of the socket.

This invention also provides a method of concealing a wall safe, in which a dummy utility is secured over the wall safe.

Difficulty would be encountered by a burglar, in examining all the fixed utilities of a premises, in order to determine that which provided or concealed the door of a wall safe of the premises.

There will now be given a number of examples, which have been selected to illustrate the invention by way of example. The first and second of the examples are to be read with reference to the accompanying drawings.

EXAMPLE 1.

An open-fronted steel safe body 2 is secured in a wall cavity 4 with the lip of the body generally flush with the wall surface (Figure 2). A door of the body is in the form of a dummy double electric socket 6, adapted to be seated against the wall to cover the aperture, and locked to the safe body by locking mechanism 10, Figure 3, on the interior of the dummy socket. When the dummy socket is secured to the safe body, as is shown in Figure 1, the appearance provided is one of a conventional flush-mounted double electric socket. By the insertion of a key 12 through one of the "pin apertures" (conveniently the earth pin aperture 8, Figure 1, since this is conventionally larger than the other two apertures) of the dummy socket, the locking mechanism may be released, and the door of the safe body removed, to permit access to the interior of the safe.

The householder will know a supply of electricity is not available from the dummy socket. However, if desired, the pin aperture arrangement of the dummy socket may differ marginally from that of a real socket, to prevent a plug from being inserted therein, in an attempt to obtain a supply of electricity from the socket.

Such a wall safe will not raise the suspicions of a burglar, who in any event would be unlikely to attempt to open the safe by the insertion of a key or like article through one of the pin apertures of the dummy socket.

Alternative to the use of locking mechanism and a key, the dummy socket may be secured to the wall over the safe body 2 by the use of screws inserted through the conventional screw holes 18 of the electric socket, and into tapped holes, such as those shown in dotted lines in Figure 2 and indicated by the numeral 19.

As a further alternative, the dummy electric socket may be so secured to the wall, removal of the socket revealing the door of a conventional wall safe.

EXAMPLE 2

As with Example 1, an open-fronted steel safe body 2' is secured in a wall cavity 4' with the lip of the body generally flush with the wall surface (Figure 4). An open-topped steel drawer 16' is secured to the dummy double electric socket 6' (Figure 5), by the screws 18' which are normally utilised to secure the socket face plate to its wall mounting box. Valuables may be placed in the drawer 16', and the drawer 16' inserted into the safe body 2', and when the dummy socket 6' engages the wall, the key 12' may be operated to cause the locking mechanism 10' to retain the drawer 16' and the face plate 6' in their closed positions.

Whilst Examples 1 and 2 have been described and illustrated in the drawings in relation to a British 13 amp, square-pin electric socket, it will of course be appreciated that the invention may be utilised with other pin aperture configurations, such as two or three pin round hole sockets, including the type as are commonly found in other countries of Europe. It may however be necessary, when utilising European-type sockets, to provide a slightly different system for unlocking, in view of the relatively small size of the pin apertures.

EXAMPLE 3

A wall-mounted safe is located in a wall cavity, over which a dummy, double or triple-gang light switch is secured. Only when the switch rockers are in a specific relationship may the dummy light switch be prised from

the wall to reveal the door of the wall safe, which may be opened by a key. If a wall safe of larger size is required, the dummy light switch may comprise a conventional backing plate, increasing the area which the dummy light switch is capable of enclosing.

A potential burglar is unlikely to attempt to operate the light switches of a domestic premises, and is more unlikely to attempt to prise the switch away from the wall in an attempt to determine whether or not the light switch is genuine.

EXAMPLE 4

A dummy thermostatic control unit, of the kind conventionally utilised to control the temperature of a premises heated by central heating, is mounted on the body of a safe located in a wall cavity, locking mechanism being provided to secure the dummy unit to the safe body. When the control knob of the unit is rotated to a particular temperature setting, it may be depressed, releasing the locking mechanism and allowing the control unit to open as a door to permit access to the wall safe.

EXAMPLE 5

This is similar to example 3, but a genuine thermostatic control unit, suitably connected to the heating system of the premises, is utilised as the door of the wall mounted safe. Concealed locking mechanism is utilised, and the wiring is arranged such that access to the interior of the safe is not impeded thereby.

EXAMPLE 6

The door of a larger wall safe is in the form of, and provides, an electrically-powered, fan-driven space heater. With the heater switched off, the heater as a whole may be swung about a concealed hinge mounting to open the wall safe.

EXAMPLE 7

A wall safe is concealed behind a dummy burglar alarm. Conveniently dummy wires are provided which will

allow a burglar to "disarm" the alarm, diverting the attention of the burglar away from the fact that the alarm is in fact the door to the wall safe.

CLAIMS:

1. A wall safe which is hidden behind a dummy utility of the kind specified.

2. A wall safe according to claim 1 wherein the dummy utility is adapted to conceal a cavity within the wall, within which the wall safe is located, removal of the dummy utility affording access to the door of the wall safe.

3. A wall safe according to claim 1 wherein the dummy utility affords the door of the wall safe, removal of the dummy utility providing access to the contents of the wall safe.

4. A wall safe according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the dummy utility is a dummy electrical fitting.

5. A wall safe according to claim 4 wherein the dummy electrical fitting is a dummy electrical power point.

6. A wall safe according to claim 4 wherein the dummy electrical fitting is a dummy thermostatic control unit.

7. A wall safe according to claim 4 wherein the dummy electrical fitting is a dummy electric switch.

8. A wall safe, wherein a door of or to which is provided by an electric fitting of the kind specified.

9. A wall safe, comprising an open-fronted box, adapted to be secured in a hole in a wall, and locking mechanism secured to the inner side of a dummy electrical fitting, the construction and arrangement being such that when the box is placed in the hole in a wall, and the fitting is placed over the front of the box, the locking mechanism

may be operated to secure the dummy electrical fitting to the box to conceal the hole and the box.

10. A wall safe according to claim 9 wherein the dummy electrical fitting is provided by the face plate of a conventional electric socket.

11. A wall safe according to claim 10 wherein the locking mechanism is adapted to be operated by the insertion of a key through one of the pin apertures of the socket.

12. A method of concealing a wall safe, involving the securing over the wall safe of a dummy utility.

13. A wall safe, constructed and arranged substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to a) any of the examples; b) Figures 1, 2 and 3 of the accompanying drawings; or c) Figures 4 and 5 of the accompanying drawings.

14. Any novel feature, or novel combination of features, hereinbefore described and/or shown in the accompanying drawings.

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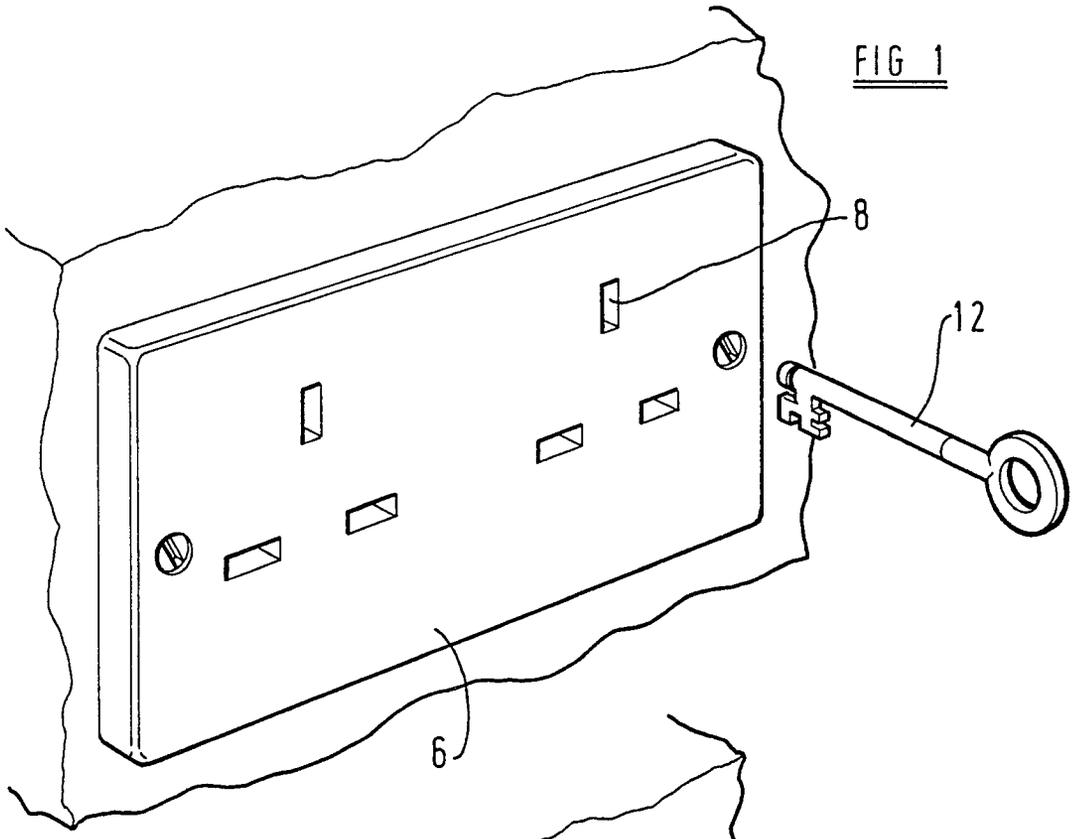
FIG 1



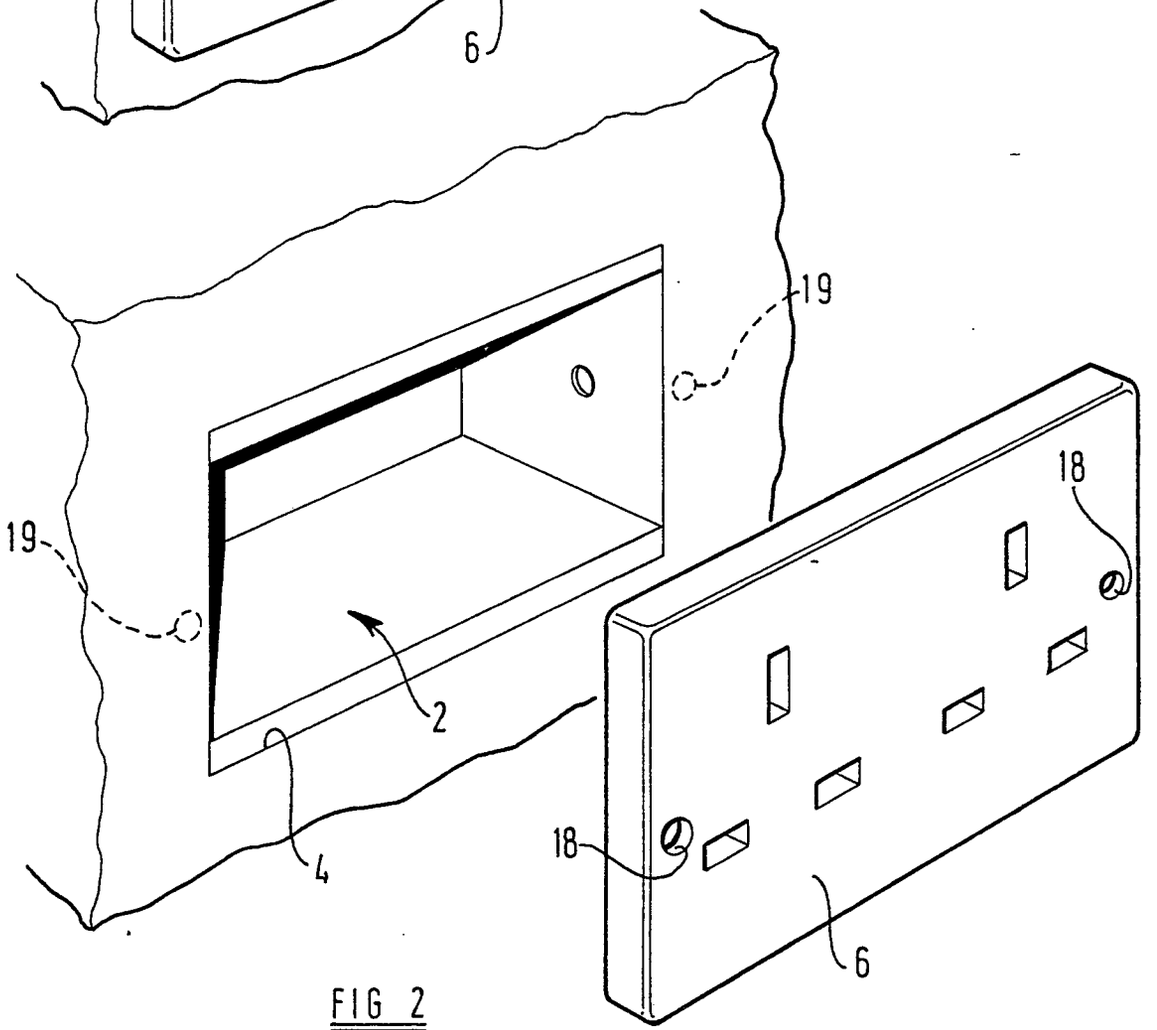


FIG 2

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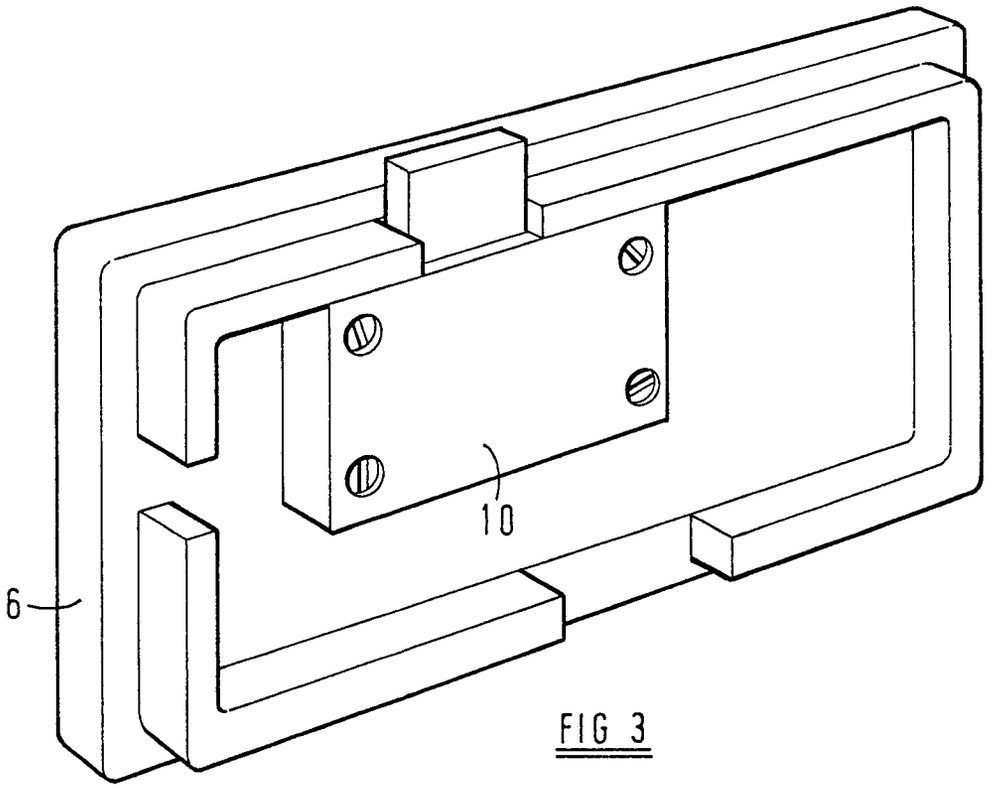

FIG 3

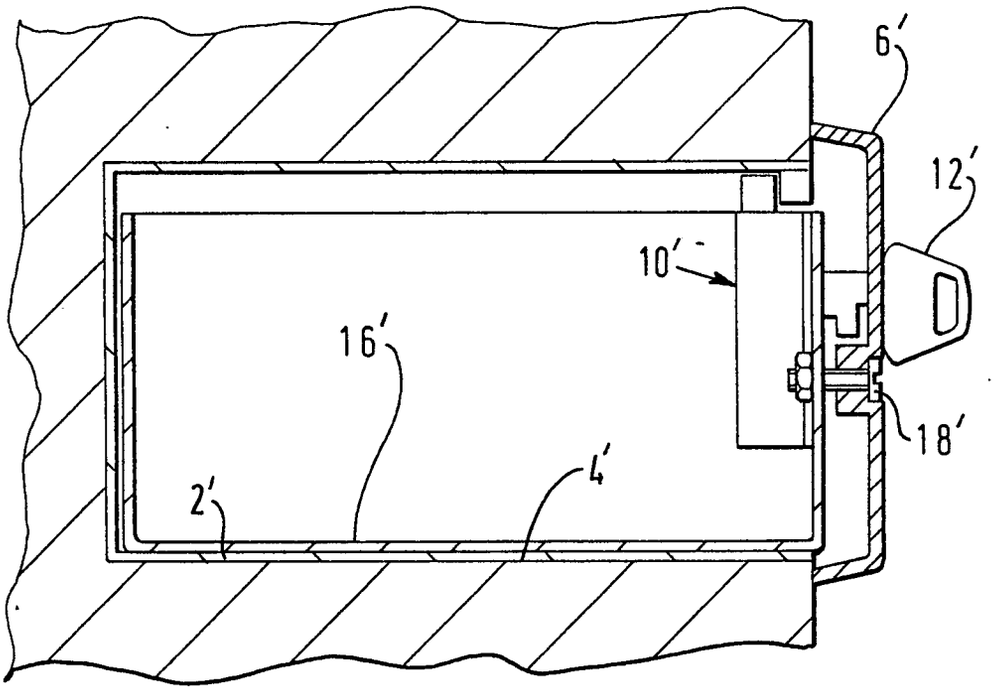

FIG 4

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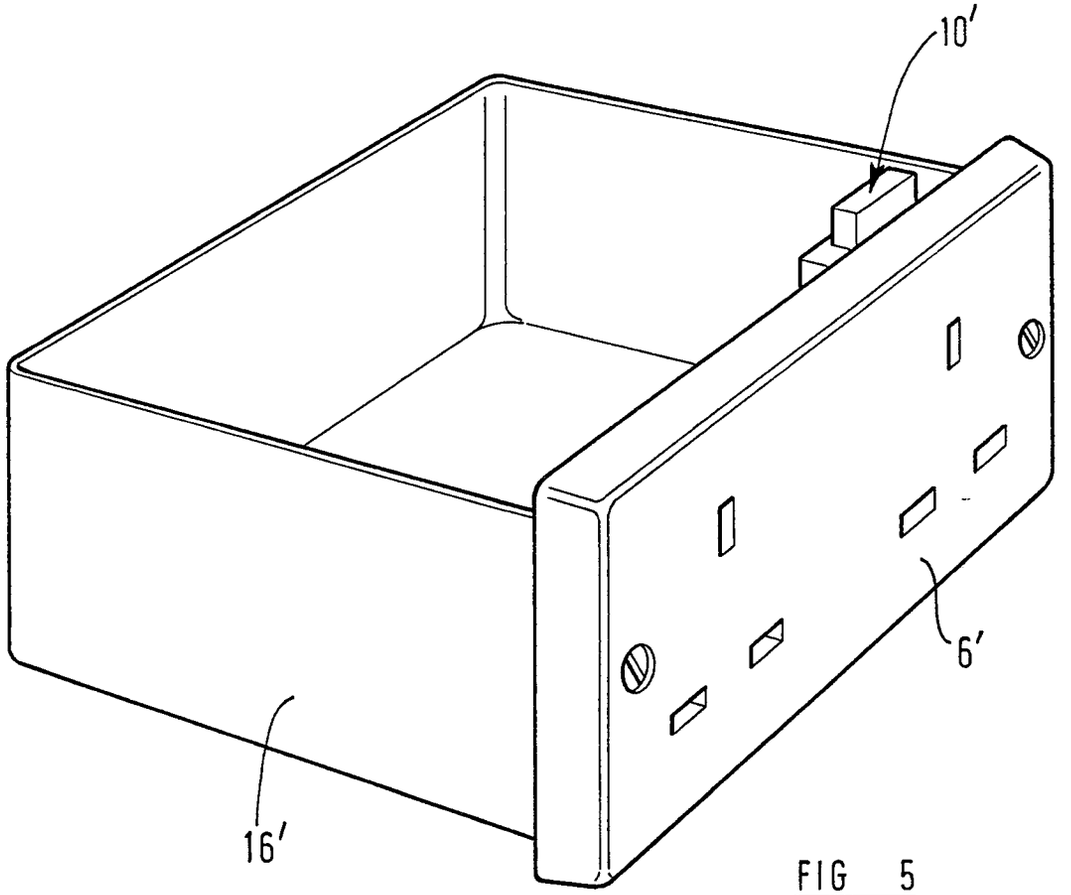

FIG 5