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71 Applicant: **LUCAS INTERNATIONAL S.R.L.**
Via dell'Artigianato 23
I-40057 Granarolo dell'Emilia (Bologna)(IT)

72 Inventor: **Italici, Rino**
Via Don Minzoni 22
I-40068 San Lazzaro di Savena Bologna(IT)

74 Representative: **Porsia, Dino, Dr. et al,**
c/o Succ. Ing. Fischetti & Weber Via Caffaro 3
I-16124 Genova(IT)

54 An article of luggage.

57 The bag presents two head walls (4) at the inner side of which there are obtained pockets for the housing of removable stiffening panels (8). When it is desired to reduce the dimensions of the bag, for example for purposes of storage, the two stiffening panels (8) are removed from the pockets,

and the head walls (4) can be folded in a bellows like manner, thus considerably reducing the overall dimensions of the bag. The two side walls (6) can be folded over the top wall (2), after having inserted the removed stiffening panels (8) inside the folded bag.

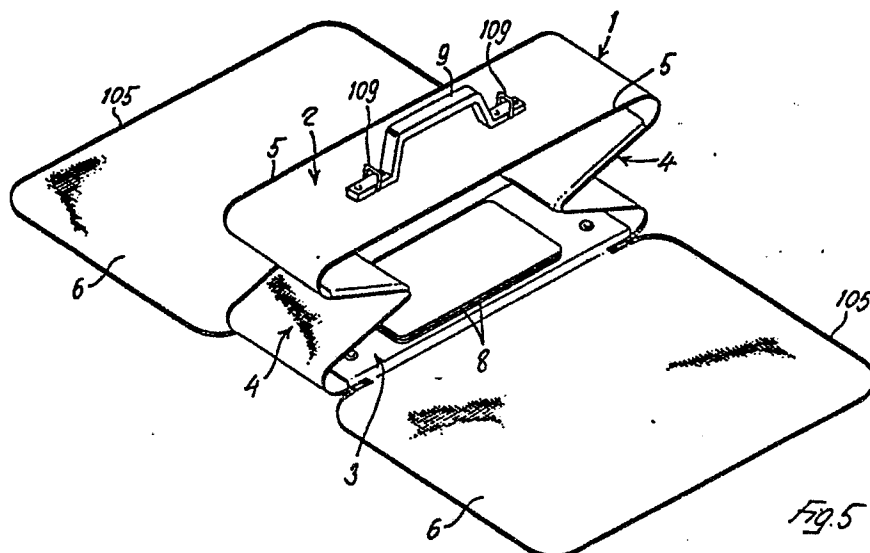


Fig. 5

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1 DESCRIPTION"An article of luggage"

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The invention relates to an article of luggage, such as a
10 bag or suitcase which can be considerably reduced in its
dimensions when it is empty, so that it can be stored in a
space of small dimensions, with advantages not only for the
user, but also for the manufacturer and dealer of such a
product, who can sensibly reduce the costs for the storage
15 and transport.

The bag is made of flexible material, for example
waterproof fabric, it is provided with opposite side members
which can be both opened, and is characterized by the fact
20 that the top wall, the bottom wall and the two head walls
are provided with inner pockets inside which there are
inserted stiffening panels of sufficiently rigid material,
for example plastics material. When the bag is empty, at
least the stiffening panels of the head walls are removed so
25 that the said bag can be compressed like a bellows and can
be stored in a very limited space.

Further characteristic features of the invention, and the
advantages deriving therefrom, will appear better evident
30 from the following description made with reference to the

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1 figures of the attached drawings, in which:

Figure 1 shows the bag in perspective view and in its open condition;

5 Figure 2 shows the bag in vertical section, in its upright position.

Figure 3 is a horizontal trasverse section of one of the two head walls of the bag.

10 Figure 4 shows the bag of Figure 2 being folded for the removal of the stiffening panels from the head walls.

Figures 5 and 6 show the bag in perspective view, during as many significant steps of the reduction of the dimensions of the bag itself.

15 Figure 7 shows, in a view similar to Figure 2, a modified embodiment of the bag according to the invention.

In Figure 1 there is shown the bag or suitcase which is made with flexible or soft material, for example with waterproof fabric, and which comprises a tubular body 1
20 formed by the top wall 2, by the bottom wall 3 and by the head walls 4, said body being provided on its opposite edges all around with slide fasteners 5 in such a manner that to the said body there can be removably secured the side walls 6 which are also provided on their perimeter with slide
25 fasteners 105 which are complementary to the above mentioned ones 5. As shown in Figures 2 and 3 the four walls of the tubular body 1 are constructed by the superposition and longitudinal sewing of at least two layers 7 and 107 of soft material. The inner layer 107 is interrupted at the ends of
30 the said walls, so as to obtain longitudinal and inner

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1 pockets , inside which there can be inserted the
sufficiently rigid stiffening panels 8 for the head walls 4,
108 for the top wall 2 and 208 for the bottom wall 3, said
stiffening panels 8, 108 and 208 being made for example of
5 plastics material and suitably rounded at their corners and
edges. Thanks to the presence of these stiffening panels,
the body 1 of the bag or suitcase is perfectly stabilized in
its parallelepiped shape when to said body there are secured
the side walls 6 which avoid any oscillations of the walls
10 2, 3 and 4 around the zones of reciprocal connection where
the said stiffening panels terminate.

The stiffening panels 108 and 208 are preferably
permanently secured at the interior of the respective walls,
15 since externally of the top wall 2 there is fixed the handle
9, and externally of bottom wall 3 there are fixed the
supporting feet 10 or suitable supporting wheels. The
securing of the handle 9 and of the feet 10 is effected by
involving also the respective stiffening panels 108 and 208
20 which therefore distribute in a uniform manner the stresses
to the whole body of the bag or suitcase.

When the bag is empty, the stiffening panels 8 of the
head walls 4 may be easily removed by folding the body 1 of
25 the said bag as illustrated in Figure 4, and taking out said
stiffening panels through the horizontal openings 11 at the
top and bottom of the head walls 4. After having removed the
stiffening panels 8 from the corresponding housing pockets,
it is possible to perform the operation shown in Figure 5
30 which consists in bringing near to each other the walls 2

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1 and 3, by folding in a bellows like manner the flexible
walls 4. The removed stiffening panels 8 can be
advantageously stored at the interior of the body 1 of the
bag, as shown in Figure 5. In order to avoid that these
5 stiffening panels be lost, same can be connected with inner
parts of the body 1 by means of a flexible cord (not shown).
Thereafter, by folding the side walls 6 onto the body 1, as
shown in Figure 6, the bag may be remarkably reduced in its
dimensions and it can be stored into a very limited space,
10 with the evident advantages which derive from this reduced
condition. On the walls 6 there can be fixed self-adhesive
bands or straps made of the self-adhesive material known
under the commercial name of "VELCRO" (registered trademark)
or other means for securing said walls in the reduced
15 dimension condition shown in Figure 6.

It is to be understood that instead of the above
mentioned housing pockets' other suitable means can be used,
for example holding strips transversally secured at the
20 interior of the bag. Instead of the above mentioned securing
means, there can be used other securing means such as for
example self-adhesive strips, buttons or the like means.

According to a modified embodiment of the invention, the
25 stiffening panels can be made of flexible or elastic
material, or can be made of rigid material, as above said,
but provided in their intermediate portion with a transverse
articulation hinge 12, as diagrammatically shown in Figure 7
(where the stiffening panels are indicated by reference
30 numeral 80), in order to be able to perform the operation of

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1 reduction of dimension, without removing the stiffening
panels 80 from their respective housing pockets.

5 As it appears from the drawings, the handle 9 is
provided, at the zones where the handle itself is secured to
the top wall, with a pair of rings 109 to which there can be
connected the releasable clamp members of an auxiliary
shoulder strap (not shown) for carrying the bag.

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CLAIMS

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1) An article of luggage such as a bag or
suitcase, made of flexible material, comprising a tubular
5 body (1) defined by a bottom wall (3), a top wall (2) and
two opposite head walls (4), said tubular body being closed
by two openable opposite side walls (6), characterized by
the fact that it further comprises stiffening panels (8)
which can be applied in a removable manner to the said two
10 head walls (4).

2) An article of luggage according to claim 1, in
which the stiffening panels (8) are housed inside pockets
provided on the inner side of the two head walls (4).

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3) An article of luggage according to claim 2, in
which each pocket is open (11) at least at one end of the
respective wall.

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4) An article of luggage according to claim 3, in
which each pocket is open at two opposite ends, defining two
horizontal openings (11).

5) An article of luggage according to claim 1, in
25 which the stiffening panels (8) are applied to the inner
side of the two head walls (4) by means of self-adhesive
strips or by means of buttons.

6) An article of luggage according to claim 1, in
30 which the stiffening panels (8) are applied to the inner

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1 side of the two head walls by means of transversally
arranged holding strips.

5 7) An article of luggage such as a bag or
suitcase, made of flexible material, comprising a tubular
body (1) defined by a bottom wall (3), a top wall (2) and
two opposite head walls (4), said tubular body (1) being
closed by two openable opposite side walls (6),
characterized by the fact that it further comprises
10 stiffening panels (80) provided with a transversal median
articulation (12) and applied to the said two opposite head
walls (4).

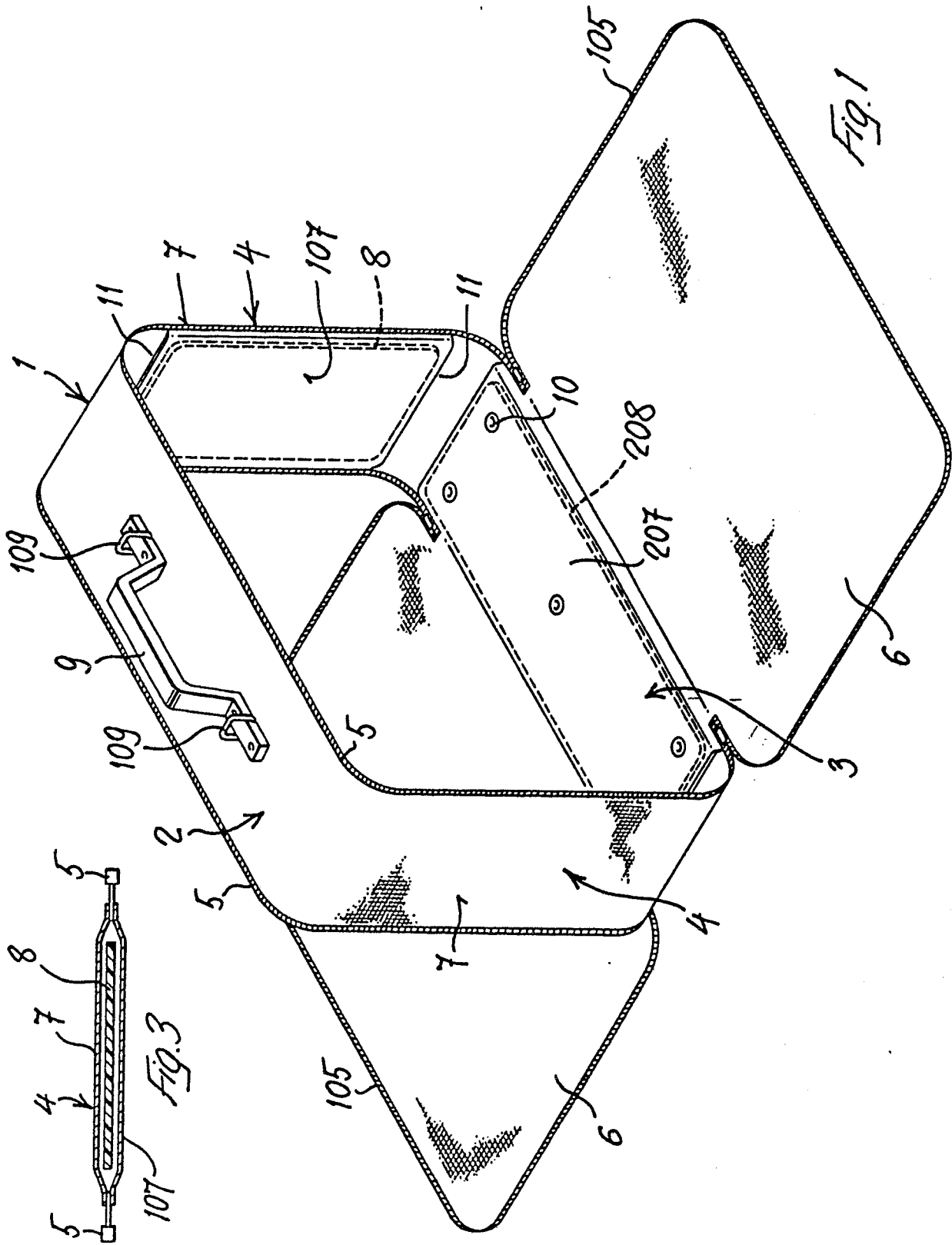
15 8) An article of luggage according to claims 1 or
7, characterized by the fact that it comprises a handle (9)
secured to the top wall (2), said handle (9) being provided,
at the zones where it is secured to the top wall (2), with a
pair of rings (109) to which there can be connected the
releasable clamp members of an auxiliary shoulder strap.

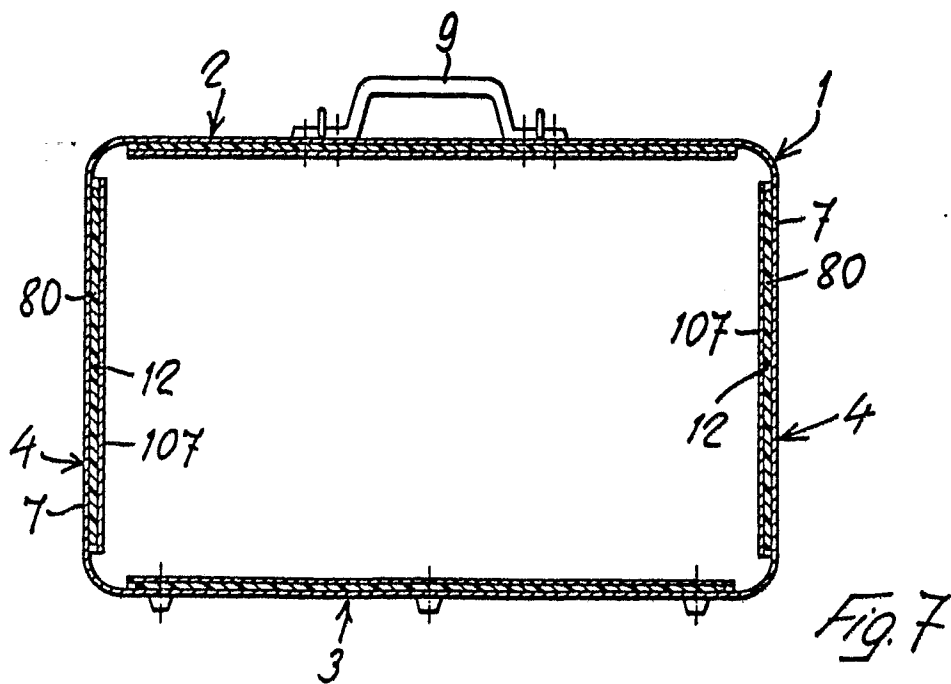
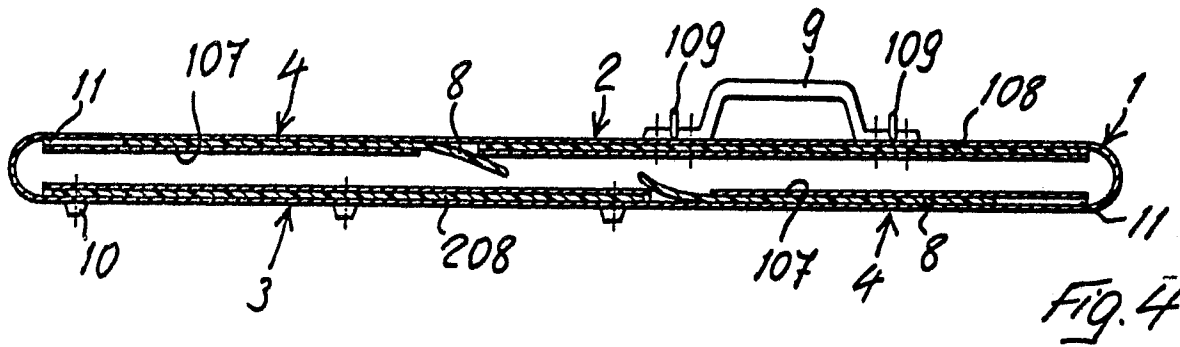
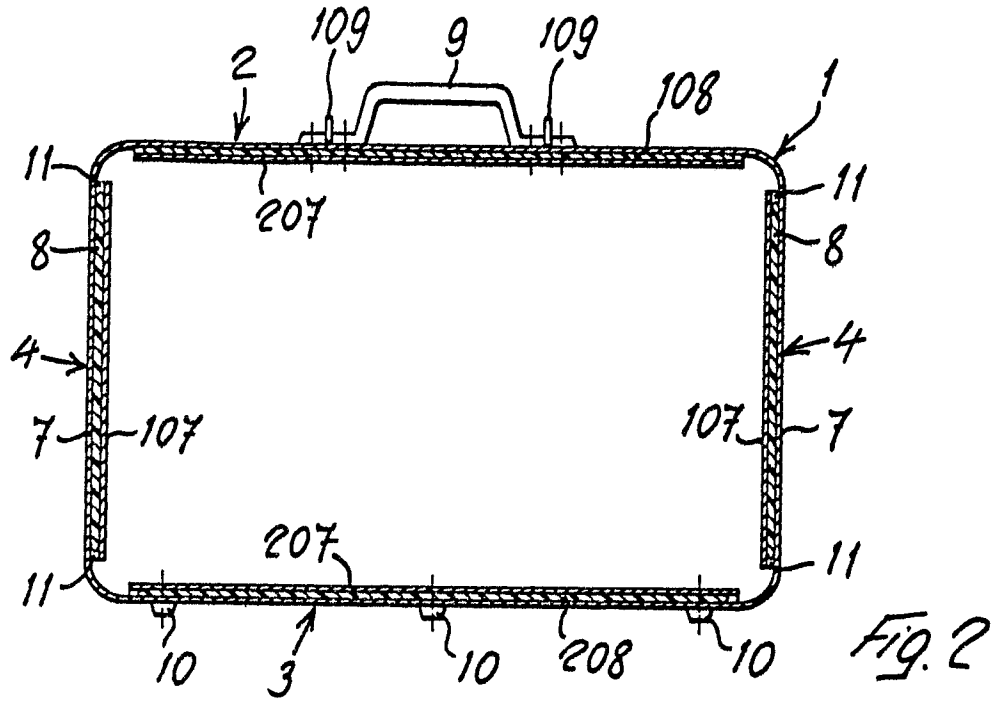
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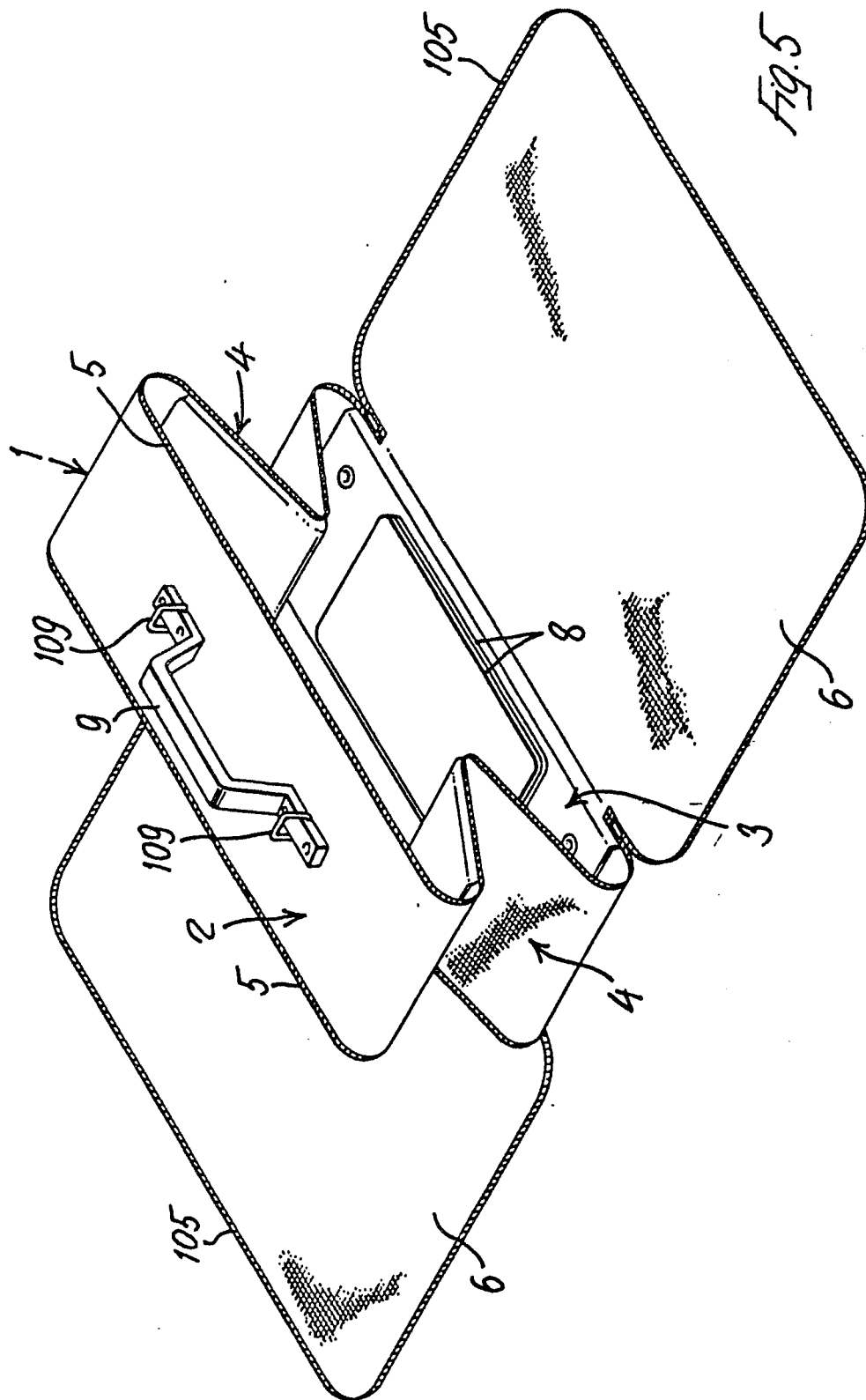
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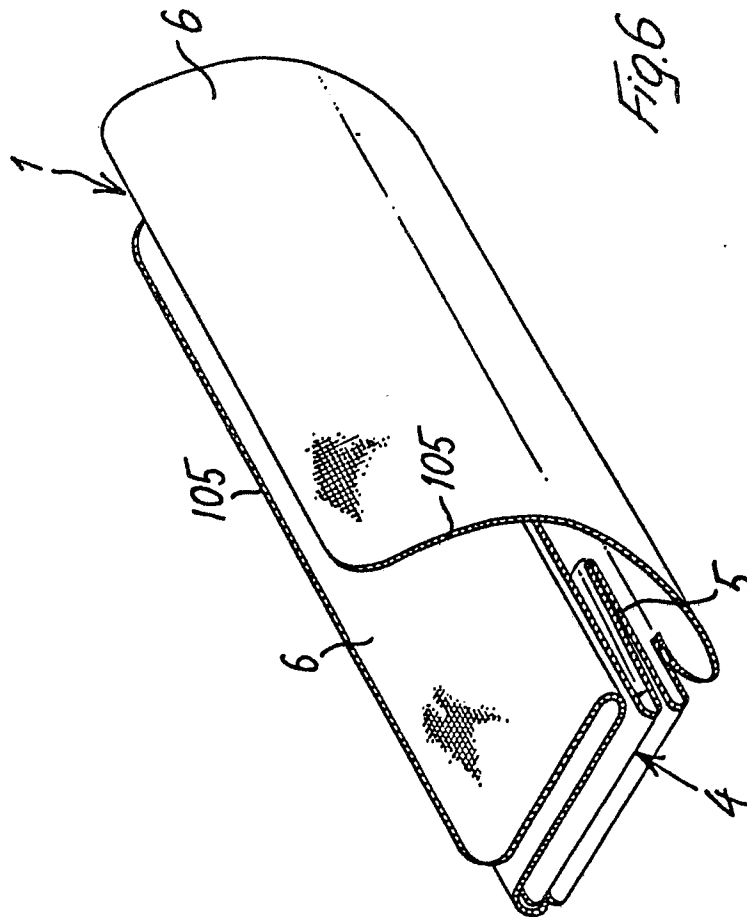
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DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int. Cl. 4)
X	GB-A- 520 473 (CROSS) * Page 3, line 47 - page 4, line 79; figures 1-5 *	1	A 45 C 7/00
X	GB-A- 284 003 (VEREKER PRENDERGAST) * Page 3, lines 27-34; figures 1,2 *	1	
X	US-A-1 387 597 (FETTERS) * Page 1, line 103 - page 2, line 14; figures 1,3,6 *	1	
A		2,3	
A	US-A-4 030 768 (LUGASH) * Column 3, lines 50-68; figure 2 *	1-3	TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int. Cl. 4)
A	US-A-4 210 230 (WEINER) * Column 2, line 60 - column 3, line 66; figures 2,7 *	1-4	A 45 C
A	FR-A-1 191 799 (DANTAN) * Figures 1-5 *	5	
A	FR-A-2 147 444 (WEIL) * Figures 1-3 *	7	
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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 14-08-1986	Examiner SIGWALT C.
<p>CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS</p> <p>X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document</p> <p>T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document</p>			



DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			Page 2
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int. Cl. 4)
A	FR-A- 934 983 (TAPAJ) * Figures 8,9 * -----	8	
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int. Cl. 4)
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 14-08-1986	Examiner SIGWALT C.
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS			
X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document		T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document	