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### (54) Sheet separating and feeding device

(57) A sheet separating and feeding device (10) for use as a component of a sheet processing apparatus is disclosed in which a first feeding device (24) acts on the top of a stack of sheets to feed the top sheet toward a take away feeder (70) for removal from the stack, during which a retaining device (26) applies a force to the upper surface of the exposed trailing edge portion of the next to top sheet to apply a retaining force thereto and to the rest of the stack, and simultaneously lifts the first

feeding device (24) off of the top sheet to remove the normal force from the weight of this device from the stack. When the top sheet is entirely removed from the stack, the first feeding device (24) is lowered to engage the new top sheet and the retaining force is removed therefrom so that it can now be fed to the take away feeder (70).

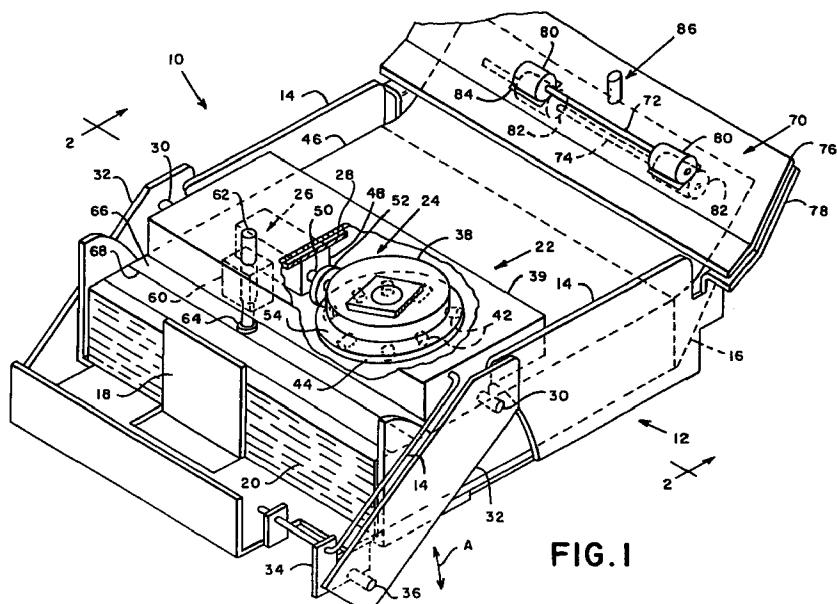


FIG. 1



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## EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number  
EP 97 11 4564

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.6)						
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim							
X	DE 147 879 C (E. J. HALLBERG) * the whole document * ---	1-7	B65H3/52 B65H3/06						
X	DE 161 697 C (AKTIEBOLAGET DUX) * the whole document * ---	1-7							
X	DE 281 653 C (KOENIGS BOGENANLEGER) * page 2, line 25 - page 3, line 3; figure 2 * ---	1-7							
A	US 2 082 239 A (E. W. BELLUCHE ET AL) 1 June 1937 * page 2, line 12 - page 4, line 44; figures * ---	1-7							
A	DE 208 437 C (FISCHER & KRECKE GMBH) * the whole document * ---	1-6							
D, A	US 4 165 870 A (FALLON ET AL) 28 August 1979 * the whole document * ----	1							
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.6)						
			B65H						
<p>The present search report has been drawn up for all claims</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%;">Place of search</td> <td style="width: 33%;">Date of completion of the search</td> <td style="width: 34%;">Examiner</td> </tr> <tr> <td>THE HAGUE</td> <td>3 November 1998</td> <td>Raven, P</td> </tr> </table>				Place of search	Date of completion of the search	Examiner	THE HAGUE	3 November 1998	Raven, P
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