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(54) **Hardcopy apparatus and method for providing uniform pressure to hold down media**

(57) A hardcopy apparatus comprising a media holddown unit, having a platen (400), and a vacuum source (700) for generating negative pressure on a medium positioned on said platen (400) to keep it flat on said platen (400), the unit comprises at least two vacuum chambers (382, 383, 690, 691, 692, 693), both in air communication with the vacuum source. Each of said vacuum chambers (382, 383, 690, 691, 692, 693) can apply a negative pressure to a different portion of the medium positioned on a corresponding different

region of the platen. A method for holding down a medium when placed on said platen. First the vacuum source is placed into independent air communication with a number of distinct regions of the platen, then the medium is positioned to cover one or more regions of the platen, and finally a negative pressure is applied to the back of the medium via the independent air communication.

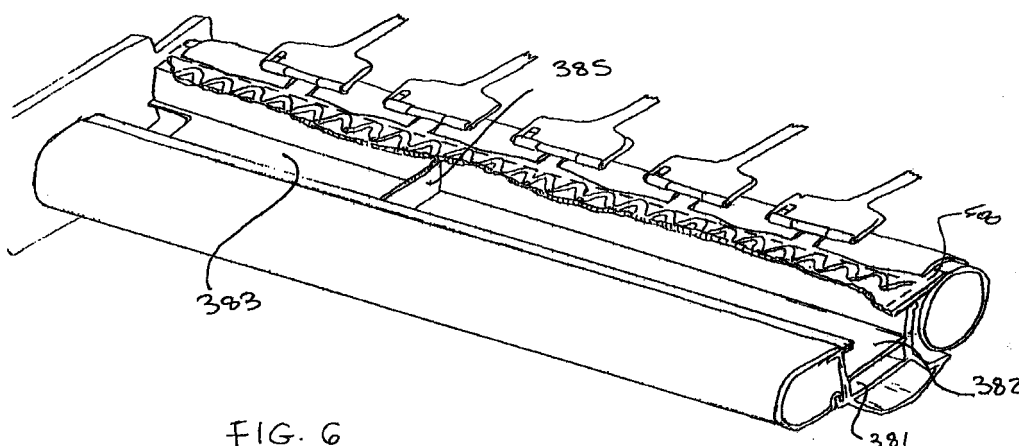
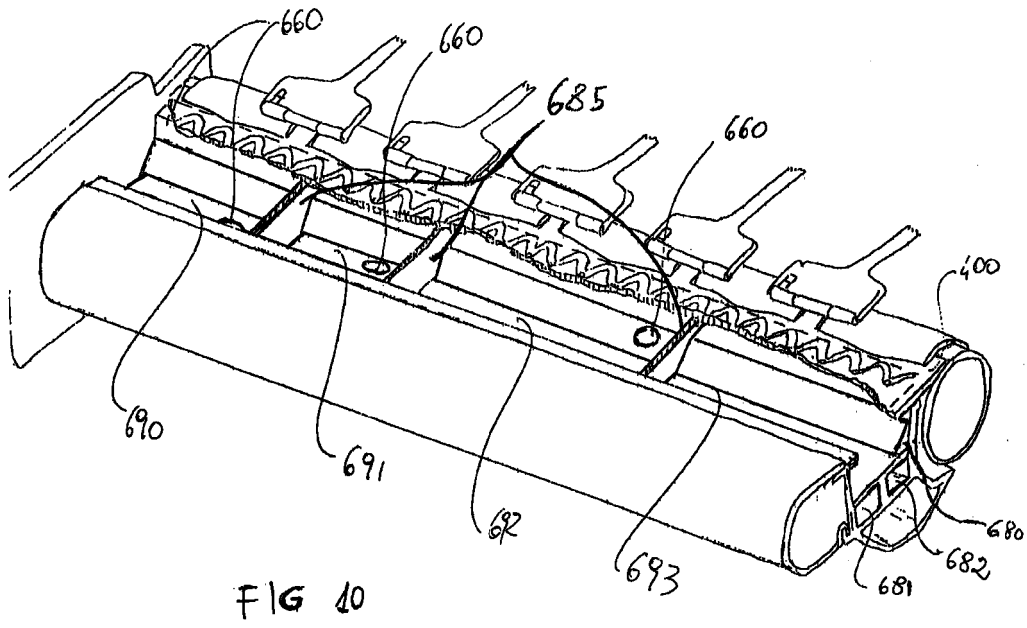


FIG. 6

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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
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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.7)
X	US 3 584 954 A (NAST ROBERT) 15 June 1971 (1971-06-15) * abstract * * column 4, line 48 - line 65; figures 2,3 *	1-3,6, 8-10	B41J13/22
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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.7) B41J B65H
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 4 September 2000	Examiner Wehr, W
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			

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**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
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04-09-2000

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