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(54) **Process and apparatus for cleaning metal strip**

(57) A process and apparatus for cleaning metal strip without the use of pickling acids, including an uncoiler (1), a leveller (2) capable of removing substantially all dimensional irregularities from the strip, and a cleaner (3), including at least one grinder unit, brushing unit and polishing unit, for removing surface oxide from the

strip. Tension is applied to the cleaned strip to enhance material handling and control and to facilitate leveling. The cleaned strip may be treated (5) with acid to remove ground surface material and to condition the strip. Such strip, having a reduced surface roughness of about 5 to 30 microinches, is suitable for many post-processing operations.

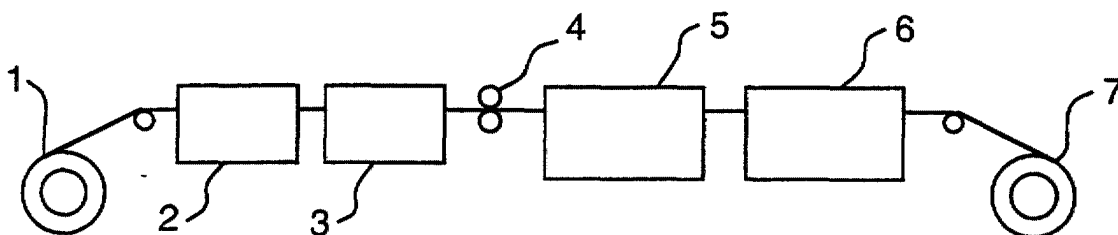


FIG. 1



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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 99 12 2944

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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 4 June 2002	Examiner van der Zee, W
<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>			

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