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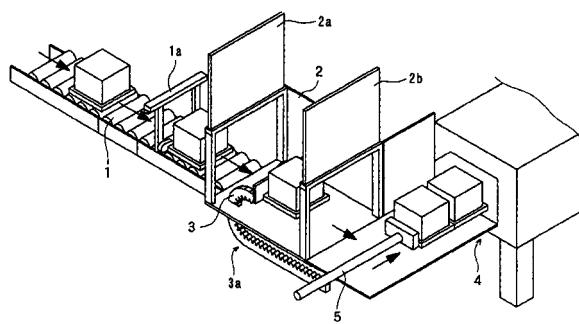
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(54) Material feeding mechanism in association with continuous sintering apparatus

(57) In a material feeding mechanism in association with a continuous sintering apparatus, a material (S) carried by a transporting conveyer (1) into an atmosphere-displacement chamber (2) is fed into a furnace casing (4) of the continuous sintering apparatus by using a loading pusher (3). The transporting conveyor (1), the atmosphere-displacement chamber, and the loading pusher (3) are arranged in such a manner that a direction in which the material is carried by the transporting conveyor and a direction in which the material is fed from the atmosphere-displacement chamber into the furnace

casing by the loading pusher are linearly aligned, and the loading pusher and a drive unit (3a) thereof are installed under a floor of the atmosphere-displacement chamber (2) so that the loading pusher moves up over the floor surface of the atmosphere-displacement chamber and moves forward and backward on the floor surface of the atmosphere-displacement chamber when the material is fed into the furnace casing (4). By such a construction, the longitudinal dimension of the continuous sintering apparatus can be made as short as possible to realize a compact design as a whole.

FIG. 2





DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.7)						
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim							
A	US 4 833 302 A (HUNTT ROBERT L) 23 May 1989 (1989-05-23) * column 4, line 67 - column 5, line 66; figure 4 *	1	F27B21/00 F27D3/00 F27D3/04 F27B9/04						
A	FR 1 495 178 A (DEGUSSA) 15 September 1967 (1967-09-15) * figures 1-7 *	2							
A	GB 219 445 A (FRANCIS GERALD RATCLIFF) 31 July 1924 (1924-07-31) * claims 1-3; figures 1-4 *	2							
A	PATENT ABSTRACTS OF JAPAN vol. 007, no. 242 (C-192), 27 October 1983 (1983-10-27) & JP 58 133369 A (TOYOTA JIDOSHA KOGYO KK; OTHERS: 02), 9 August 1983 (1983-08-09) * abstract *	1							

			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.7)						
			F27D F27B						
<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>MUNICH</td> <td>25 September 2003</td> <td>González-Junquera, J</td> </tr> </table> <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>				Place of search	Date of completion of the search	Examiner	MUNICH	25 September 2003	González-Junquera, J
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MUNICH	25 September 2003	González-Junquera, J							

**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO.**

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This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report. The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on The European Patent Office is in no way liable for these particulars which are merely given for the purpose of information.

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