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(54) **Self contained, gas-enhanced electro-surgical instrument**

(57) An electrosurgical apparatus for coagulating tissue includes an elongated housing and an electrode located adjacent the distal end of the housing. The electrode can be connected to a source of electrosurgical energy. At least one actuator is included which electro-surgically energizes the electrode. The apparatus also

includes a relatively small gas cylinder which contains a pressurized gas consisting of inert gas and which is selectively seated in the housing. Upon actuation of the actuator, gas is dispersed under pressure from the gas cylinder to the electrode and is ionized prior to the distribution of the gas into the operating field.

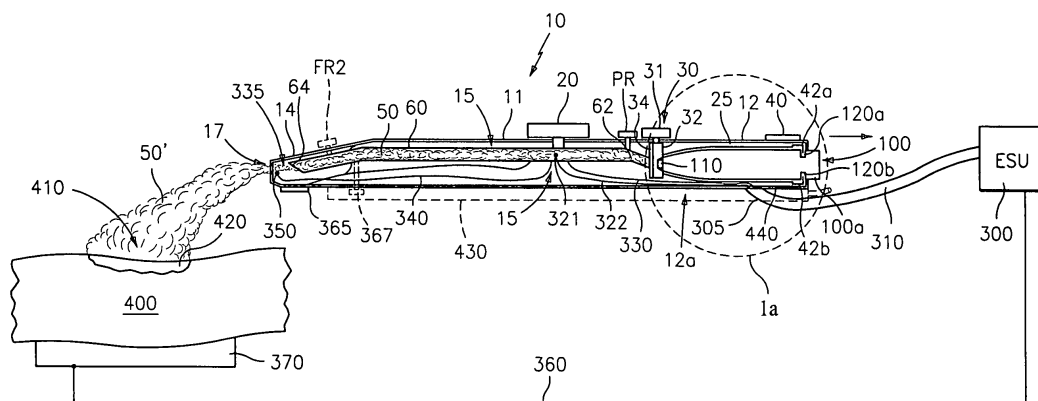


FIG. 1

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