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Watanabe

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[54] **DENTAL OPERATORY SYSTEM**

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[73] Assignee: **Takara Company, New York, Inc.**, Somerset, N.J.

[21] Appl. No.: **465,433**

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Related U.S. Patent Documents

Reissue of:

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Issued: **Jun. 1, 1982**
Appl. No.: **199,516**
Filed: **Oct. 22, 1980**

U.S. Applications:

[63] Continuation-in-part of Ser. No. 122,565, Feb. 19, 1980, abandoned.

[51] **Int. Cl.**[3] **A61C 1/14**
[52] **U.S. Cl.** **433/77**
[58] **Field of Search** 433/77, 78, 79

[56] **References Cited**

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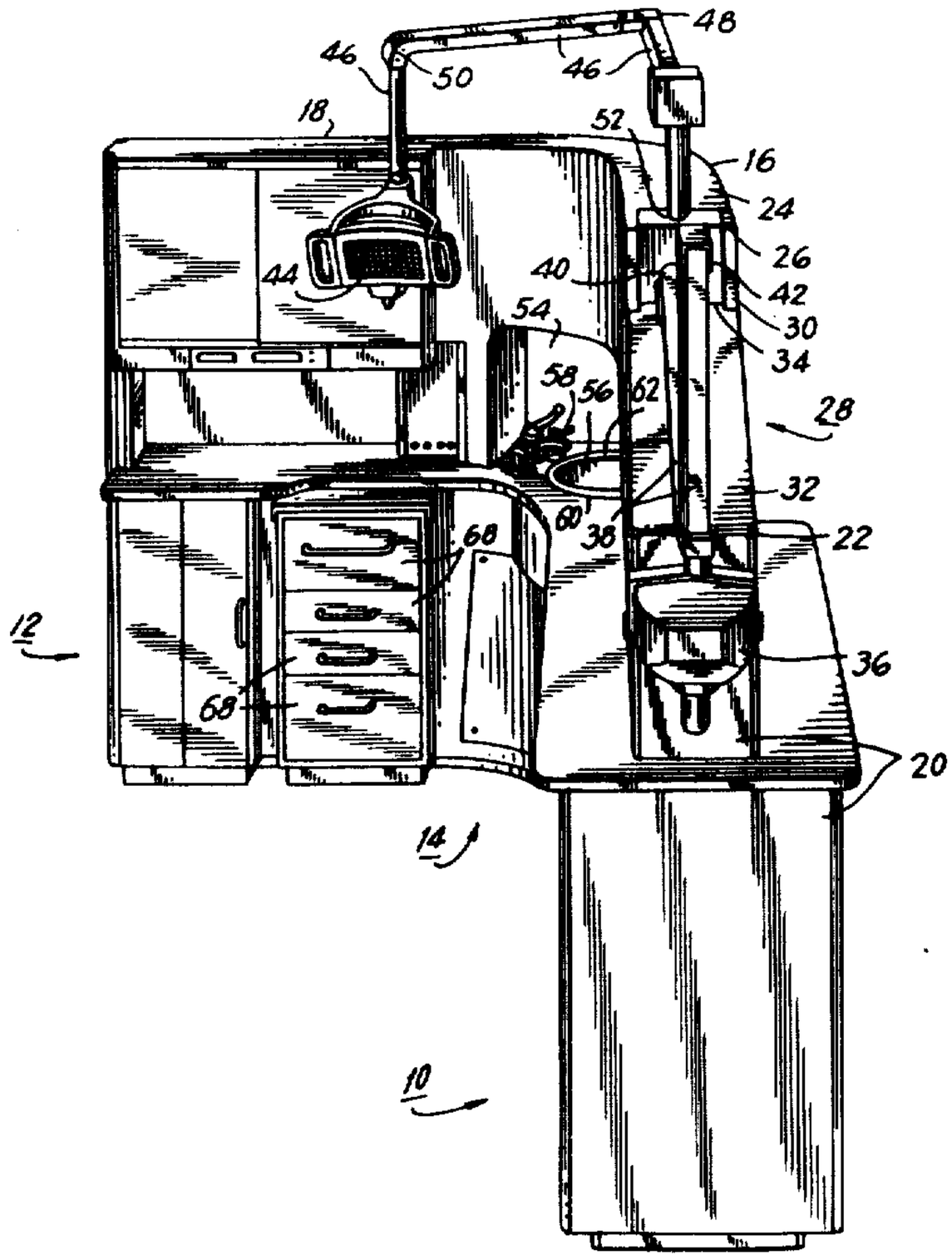
Primary Examiner—Robert Peshock
Attorney, Agent, or Firm—Stephen E. Feldman

[57] **ABSTRACT**

A dental operatory system is disclosed which converts generalized space to a multi-operatory dental clinic at minimum expense. Each dental operatory unit is generally L-shaped and forms a wall-like partition structure between a first operatory and a second operatory. The L-shaped structure incorporates lead-lined protective panels. An x-ray unit and light unit are mounted so as to be accessible to each operatory. Drawers are also cooperatively mounted to ease of access by the dentist or assistant in each operatory.

35 Claims, 10 Drawing Figures



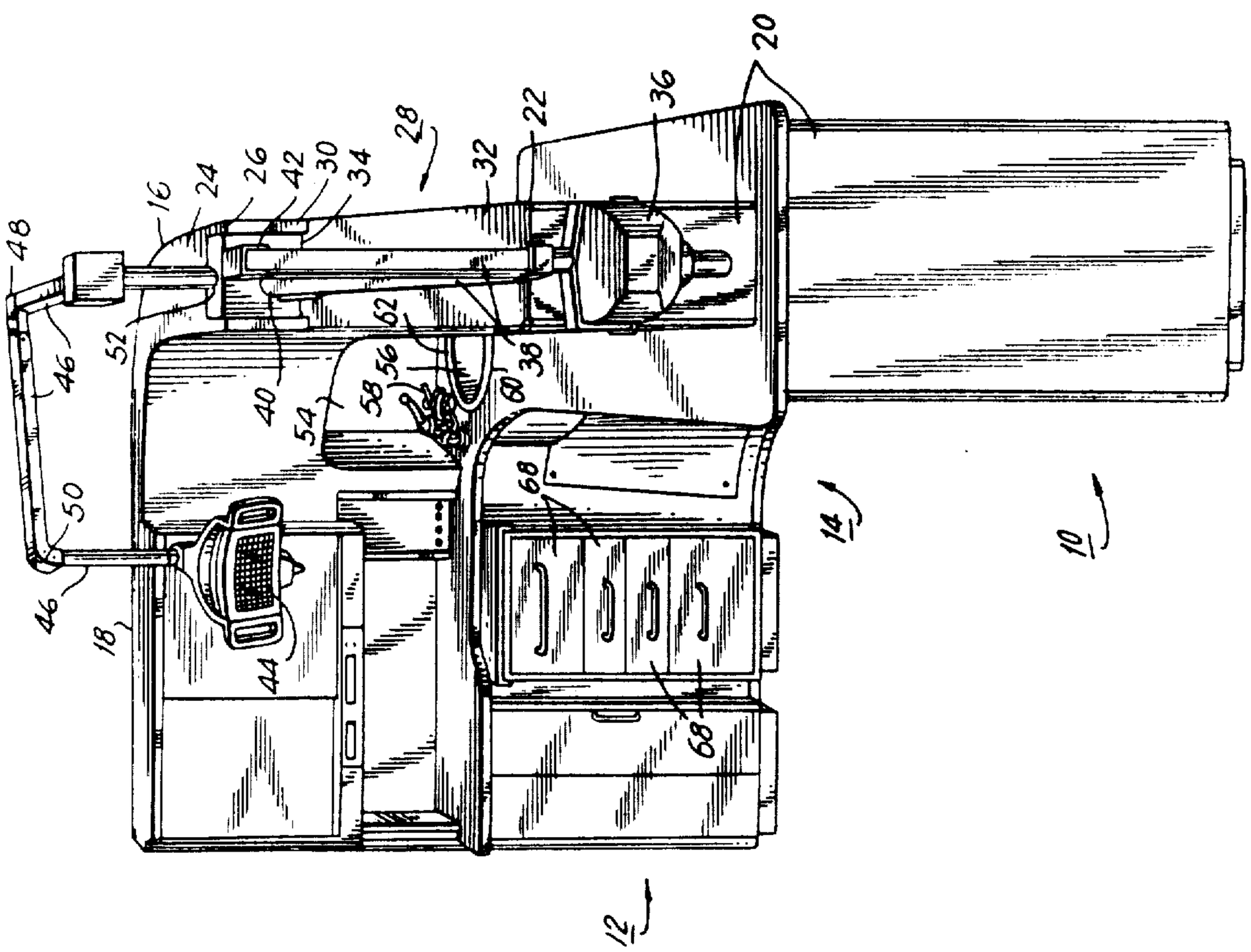

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FIG. 1

FIG. 2

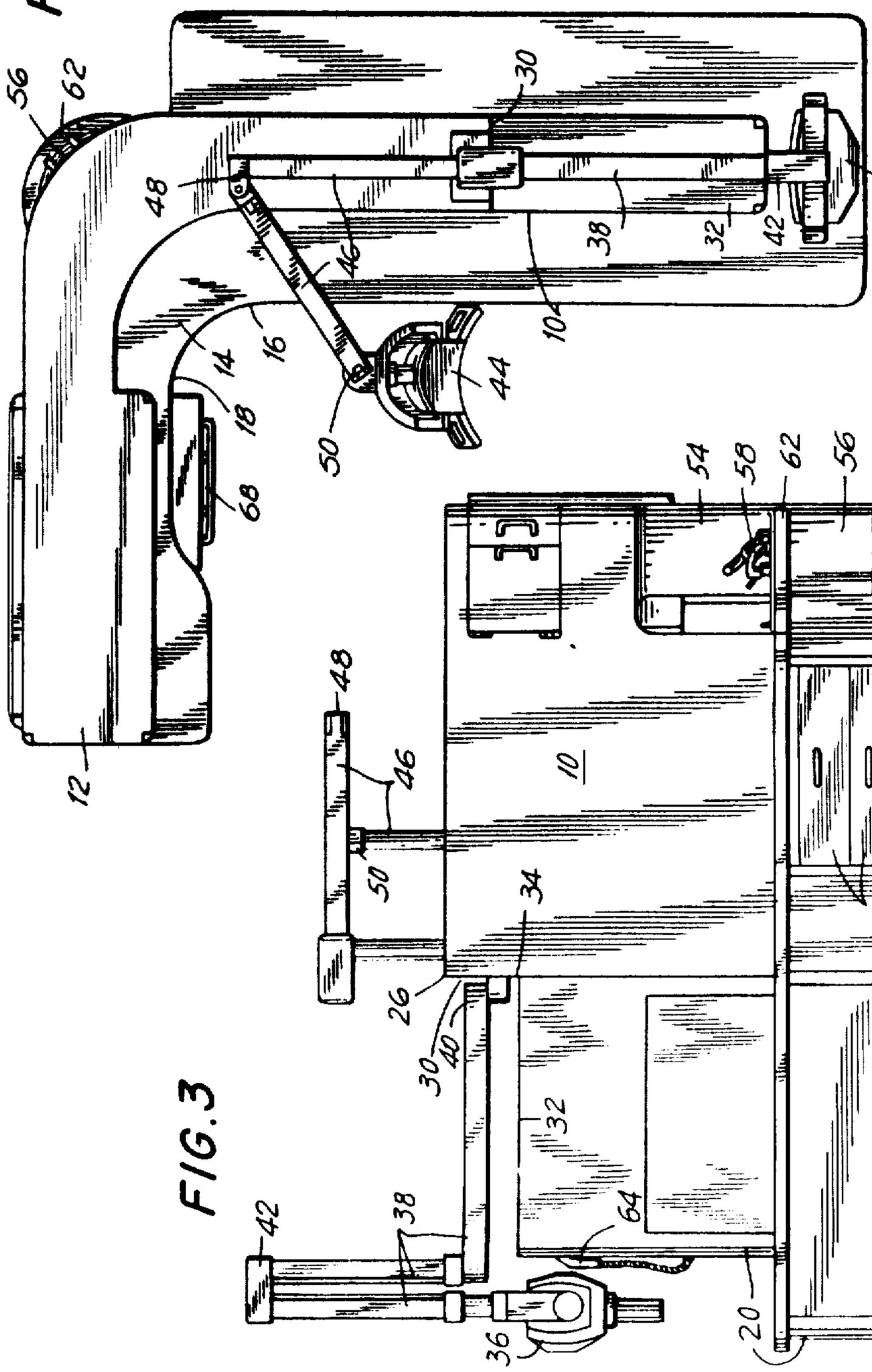
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FIG. 3

FIG. 4

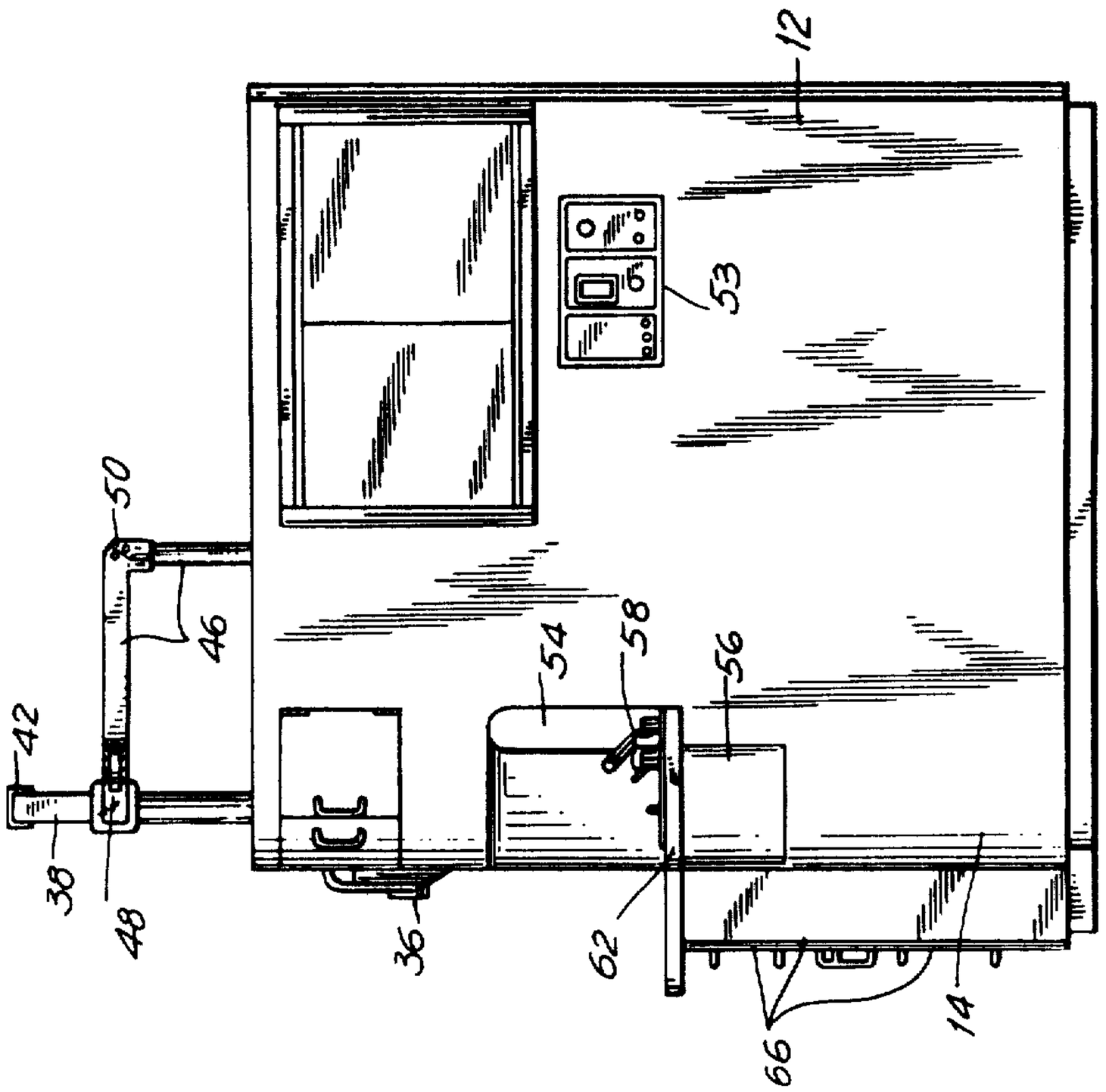
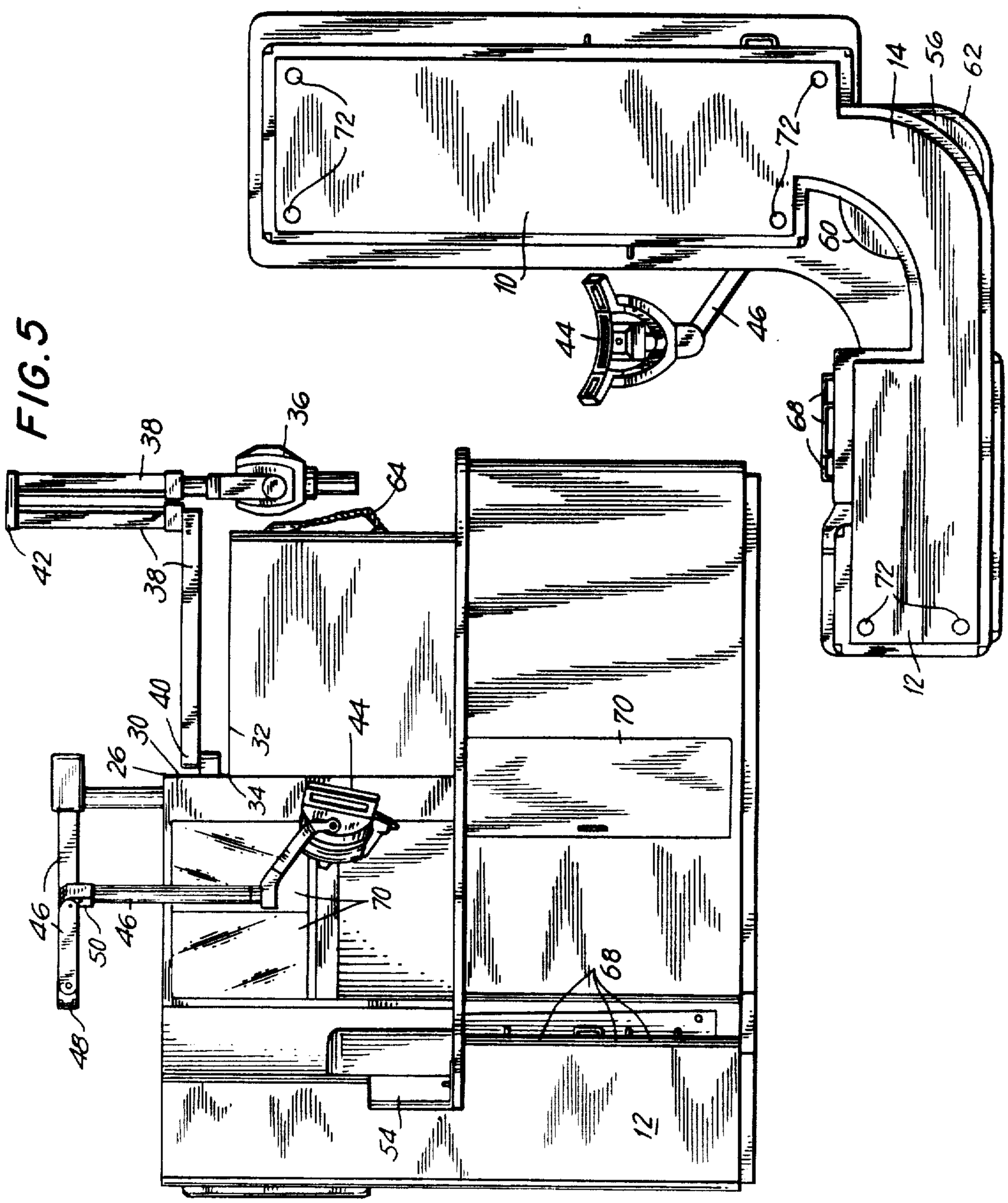


FIG. 6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72
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FIG. 5

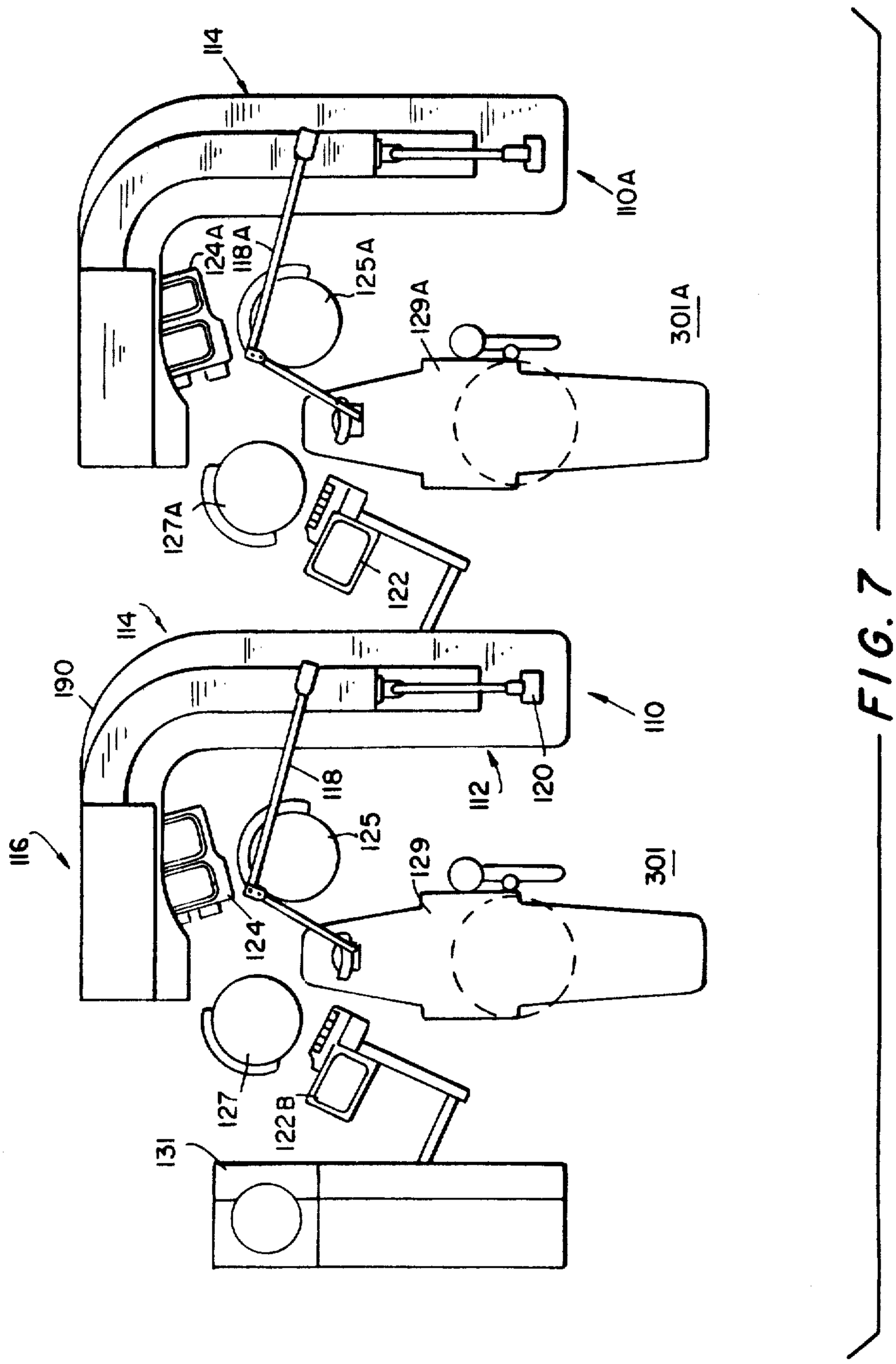
114
110A
124A
118A
125A
129A
301A
127A
122
114
190
110
118
112
120
116
125
129
301
124
127
122B
131

FIG. 7

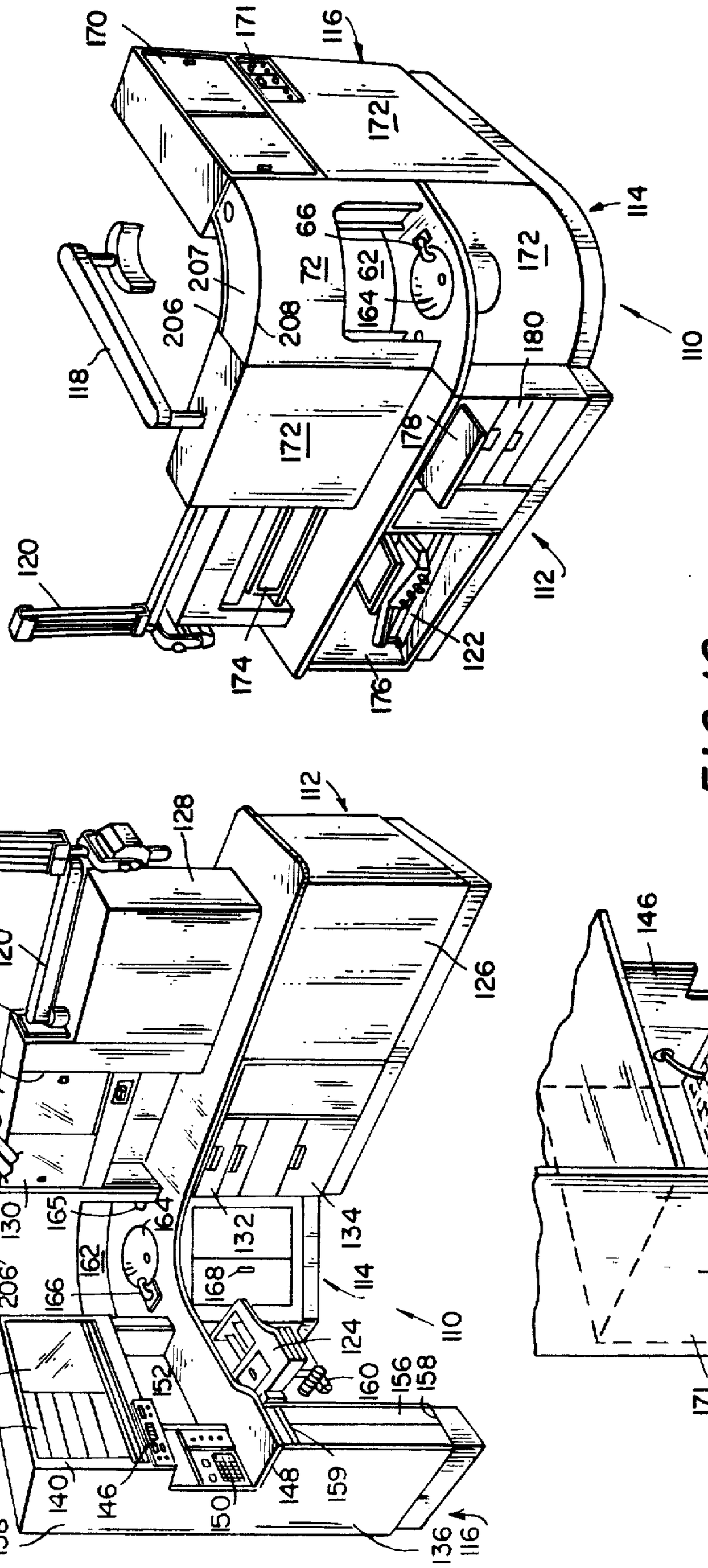

FIG. 9

FIG. 8

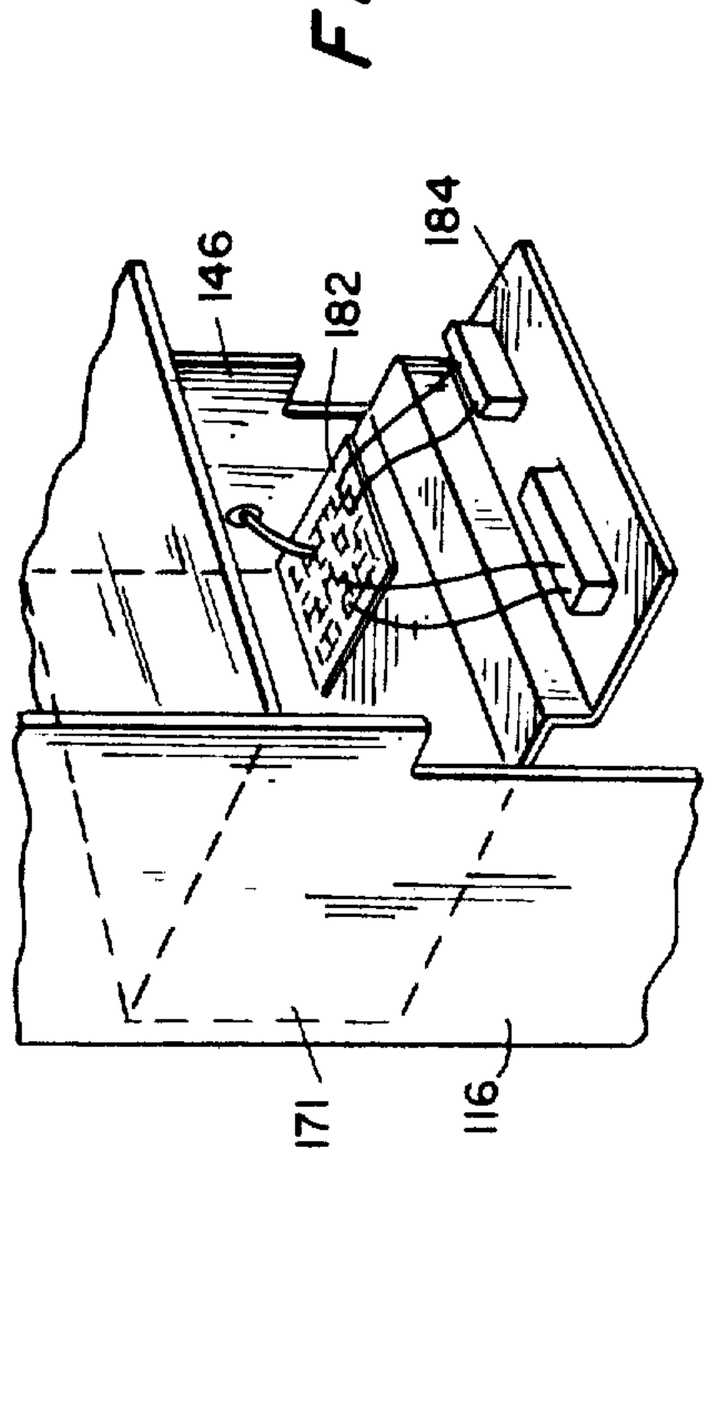

FIG. 10

DENTAL OPERATORY SYSTEM

Matter enclosed in heavy brackets [ ] appears in the original patent but forms no part of this reissue specification; matter printed in italics indicates the additions made by reissue.

CROSS REFERENCED RELATED APPLICATIONS

[This] *The present* application is *for Reissue of United States Patent No. 4,332,557 issued to Tony Watanabe on June 1, 1982 from application Ser. No. 199,516 filed October 22, 1980, as* a continuation-in-part of [my related] application Ser. No. 122,565 filed Feb. 19, 1980 and now abandoned.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

This invention generally relates to a dental operatory system.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION AND DISCUSSION OF PRIOR ART

Heretofore, dental operatory systems have attempted to duplicate the conditions and facilities which exist when a dental operatory is installed in a room such as used by an individual dental operator. In fact, it is still the practice in some instances to construct a multiplicity of small rooms for use as separate dental operatories.

The systems which are based on the foregoing description generally do not share equipment with adjacent operatories nor do they provide for movement into and out of the operatory area by more than one exit or entrance.

Some of the prior art patents which concern themselves with dental operatory systems are U.S. Pat. Nos. 4,095,379; 3,922,788; 3,524,256; 3,497,955; 3,455,620; 3,250,583; 3,229,368 and 3,111,759.

Also pertinent is a dental operatory system made available by the Den-tal EZ Co., the G15 System, requiring two operatory modules for each dental operatory.

OBJECTS OF THE INVENTION

It is an object of the present invention to provide an improved dental operatory system.

Another object is to provide a dental operatory system which can be used as a basic module for multi-operatory dental offices.

A further object is to provide a dental operatory system as aforesaid with units in which two or more dental operators can simultaneous utilize.

An additional object is to provide a dental operatory system which is more efficient and less costly than prior art systems.

Still another important object is to provide a dental operatory system in which personnel on either side of a partition structure have common access to common dental appliances.

Still a further object is to save time and effort in a dental office by providing a more efficient dental operatory.

Yet another object is to provide a portion of the operatory structure having facilities for use by a dental assistant.

Yet an additional object is to provide another portion of the structure having multiple requisite facilities for use by a dental operator.

Yet another object is to conveniently and easily convert a given area into a modern dental clinic by installing a plurality of movable partition structures such as herein described.

A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The operatory of the present invention incorporates a multi-functional integral L-shaped operatory unit for simultaneously serving multiple operatory needs.

Each generally L-shaped operatory of the present invention provides everything needed by each set of the dental operators, (that is each dentist and his assistant), thereby preventing each from crossing over into the others area. Eliminating the crossover results in greater efficiency and productivity.

Therefore, one side of the present invention contains the assistant's cabinetry and equipment whereas the other side contains the doctor's cabinetry and equipment. When the present invention is used in multiple operatory arrangements each side of the structure provides the needs of each respective operator.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

In the accompanying drawings in which is shown one of the various possible embodiments of the invention:

FIG. **1** is a front perspective view of the first dental operatory system;

FIG. **2** is a top plan view of the first dental operatory system;

FIG. **3** is an elevation view of the outer side of the partition structure of the first dental operatory system;

FIG. **4** shows the rear side of the first system in elevation view;

FIG. **5** shows the inner side of the first system in elevation view;

FIG. **6** is a bottom plan view of the first dental operatory system;

FIG. **7** is a plan view of the second dental operatory;

FIG. **8** is a perspective elevational view of the inner side of the second dental operatory;

FIG. **9** is a perspective elevational view of the outer side of the second dental operatory; and

FIG. **10** is fragmentary elevational view of the power module.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Referring now to the Figures, the first dental operatory system includes, viewed in toto, a unitary generally L-shaped partition structure as shown in the Figures. The present partition structure is characterized by the provision of a first upright vertical flat planar partition, generally designated as **10**, and a second upright vertical flat planar partition, generally designated as **12**. The partitions **10** and **12**, as shown, are generally perpendicular to each other and of generally equal height. A curved partition, generally designated as **14**, is disposed between the partitions **10** and **12**. The curved partition **14** extends between the inner end **16** of the first partition **10** and the inner end **18** of the second partition **12**, so that the partitions **10** and **12** are joined by the partition **14** into a unitary entity capable of being disposed in an upright orientation (as shown) in a room.

The outer edge **20** of the partition **10** terminates at **22** below the upper edge **24** of the first partition **10**, and the

upper edge **24** of the first partition **10** terminates at **26** short of the outer edge **20** of the partition **10**, so that a rectangular recess generally designated as **28** is provided in the upper outer corner of the first partition **10**. This recess **28** is defined by a vertical wall **30** which depends from the outer end **26** of the upper edge **24** of the first partition **10**, and a horizontal wall **32** which extends from the lower end **34** of the vertical wall **30** to the upper end **22** of the outer edge **20** of the first partition **10**.

A common dental X-ray apparatus **36** is provided, the X-ray apparatus **36** being accessible to dental operators, not shown, on either side of partition **10**. Thus, the X-ray apparatus **36** is suspended from a first pivotable bracket **38** which is mounted and attached to the first partition **10** proximately at the vertical wall **30**, i.e. at **40**, and is pivotable at **42** and **40**. As shown, at least a portion of the first bracket **38** extends out of the recess **28**.

A dental operatory lamp **44** is suspended from a second pivotable bracket **46**, the bracket **46** being pivotable at **48** and **50** and being mounted and attached at **52** to the top edge **24** of the first partition **10** proximately at the vertical wall **30**, i.e. at **26**. The lamp **44** may alternatively be fixedly mounted to **10**.

The curved partition **14** has a through opening **54** proximately at its middle region. A common sink **56** is mounted to the curved partition **14** at the through opening **54**, so that the sink **56** is accessible to dental operators on either side of the first partition **10** without entering the other respective operatory. A common faucet **58** is provided to pass water or other liquid to the common sink **56**, the common faucet **58** being disposed, as shown, indermediate the opposite sides **60**, **62** of the common sink **56**, so that the common faucet **58** is accessible to dental operators on either side of the first partition **10** without entering the other respective operatory.

A dental operatory tool **64** (FIGS. **3** and **5**) is mounted to the first partition **10** below the rectangular recess **28**. A first plurality of drawers **66** (FIG. **3**) constituting a first means for containing dental accessories is integral with the first partition **10** and disposed in the first partition **10** below the level of the rectangular recess **28**. A second plurality of drawers **68** constituting a second means for containing dental accessories is integral with the second partition **12** and disposed in the second partition **12** on the inner side of the second partition **12**, as shown. Additional drawers or cabinets **70** (FIG. **5**) may be provided on the inner side of the first partition **10**. The entire partition structure may be readily and detachably attached to the floor of a room or other enclosure by means of bolt holes **72** (FIG. **6**).

It is evident that the pivotable bracket **38** constitutes a means for mounting the common dental appliance, consisting of X-ray apparatus **36**, on the partition structure **10** for swinging movement between the first and second dental operatories respectively on the inner and outer sides of the first partition **10**. Thus, common accessibility of the apparatus **36** is granted to both dental operators. It is also apparent that the common sink **56** in the through cutout opening **54**, which opening extends through the partition structure to opposite sides thereof, is also accessible to both dental operators. Thus, either the first dental operator on the inner side of partition **10** (the inner side being designated with cabinets **70**, FIG. **5**, and with the dental operatory lamp **44**), or the second dental operator on the outer side of partition **10** (the outer side being shown with drawers **66**), has common

access to the common sink and common dental appliances without the necessity for entering the other respective operatory on the opposite side of partition structure **10**.

It should also be noted that the pivotable bracket **38**, constituting a means for mounting the common dental appliance **36**, mounts the same on a pivotable mounting **40** in the recess **28** proximately at the top of the partition **10**, at a location characterized by recess **28** so that the common dental appliance **36** is free from mechanical interference with any part of the partition structure **10** during transfer of the common dental appliance **36** between the dental operatories on either side of partition structure **10**.

It thus will be seen that there is provided a dental operatory system which achieves the various objects of the invention and which is well adapted to meet the conditions of practical use.

A unitized second dental operatory system showing two adjacent operatories generally designated **110** and **110A**, defining operatories areas **301** and **301A**, respectively is shown in FIGS. **7–10**.

Operatories **110** and **110A** have similar features with similar distinction number designations, with the suffix "A". Operatory **110** is seen to have a straight portion **112** joined to a curved portion **114** which in turn is joined to a shorter straight portion **116** to form the wall **190**.

A dental operatory lamp **118** is shown pivotably attached to the top most part **201** of cabinet **221** of straight portion **114**. An X-ray unit **120** is shown pivotably attached to a vertical part **203** of cabinet **202** of straight portion **112**. In this manner of construction lamp unit **118** and x-ray **120** may be pivoted and serve operation areas **301** and **301A** respectively.

A delivery drawer unit is shown to dispose the outer side of straight portion **112**. Extending from shorter straight portion **116** is an assistant's unit **124** containing dental tools and materials used by the dental operators.

An assistant stool **126** and a doctor stool **128** are shown in disposition to a dental chair **130** in dental space **110**. In the left portion of FIG. **7** is seen a starting unit **131** having attached thereto a side delivery unit **122B**.

Straight portion **112** is further comprising a base section **126** having attached an upper section **128**. Upper section **128** is seen to pivotably support lamp **118** and x-ray unit **120** as aforesaid. A portion of upper section **128** has an inwardly facing first cabinet **130** and directly below and within base section **126** is a first drawer set **132** and a single drawer **134**.

Shorter straight portion **116** is seen to consist of a second base section **136** having attached a second upper section **138**. Upper section **138** is further seen to comprise a second cabinet **140** having a pair of transparent sliding doors **142**. Cabinet **140** contains a series of horizontal shelves **144** and a vertically disposed compartment **140**. Immediately below cabinet **140** is a power section **146** which is seen with greater detail in FIG. **10**. Below power section **146** and proximate to a counter top **148** is an intercommunication system **150**. Alongside intercommunication system **150** and vertically arranged is a series of plug-in connections **152**. Further, located at the end of straight portion **116** is a compartment for installation of analgesia equipment. This compartment comprises a front portion **156** which is pivotally attached by a hinge **158** so that when a handle **159** is pulled forward, compartment opens for access to the

analgesia equipment. Alongside the compartment is the dental assistant's unit **124** which is pivotally secured to second base section **136** by a set of arms **160**. Therefore, unit **124** can be pulled out for use or pushed into the recess provided in shorter straight portion **116**.

Curved portion **114** serves to provide support and rigidity to portion **112** and portion **116**. The required rigidity is derived from double steel wall curved portions **206** and **208** being interconnected by an intermediate portion **207**. Just above opening **162** is an intermediate portion (not shown) similar to portion **207**. The aforedescribed portions are attached together by spot welding means or other fastening means to form a rigid box structure. Curved portion **114** has an opening **162** which provides accessibility to a sink **164** located on counter top **148**. Counter top **148** begins at shorter straight portion **116** and continues through curved portion **114** and thence to straight portion **112**. Sink **164** is therefore accessible from either side of operatory **110** as can be seen when reference is made to FIG. **8** and FIG. **9**. Sink **164** has proximate one of the side walls secured a faucet set **166** which is shown positioned so as to also be easily accessible from either side of operatory **110**. Alongside sink **164** is an opening **165** which provides access to a waste receptacle (not shown). Below sink **164** is located a pair of access doors **168** which provide an opening in the cabinet for plumbing connections to sink **164** and faucet set **166**.

FIG. **9** shows a number of items which are not shown in FIG. **8** and will therefore be described. Located on the outside of generally L-shaped operatory **110** and in the upper part of portion **116** are a pair of sliding opaque doors **170**. Opaque doors **170** provide rear access to second cabinet **140** (best seen in FIG. **9**) for records delivery. Below opaque doors **170** and in the rear wall is found an X-ray control unit **171**. Opaque doors **170**, the rear portion of shorter straight portion **116**, the rear of curved portion **114** and the upper part of straight portion **112**, contain an x-ray shielding material **172** which provides protection for an operator using control unit **171**.

The rear part of straight portion **112** of operatory **110** comprises an X-ray film viewer **174** and below, contained within a storage compartment **176** is side delivery unit **122**. Further, there is seen a pull out shelf **178** and a second drawer set **180** which is made to fit between first drawer set **132** and single drawer **134** both best seen in FIG. **8**.

FIG. **10** is a fragmentary view of power section **146** in an opened position. Power section **146** is shown opened to illustrate internal wiring and the accessibility to a printed circuit board **182**. Accessibility is provided by a hinged panel **84** which can be closed to prevent unauthorized access to the contents within power section **146**. The rear part of power section **146** houses the x-ray control unit.

FIG. **7** illustrates a typical installation of unitized dental operatory **110** as used by first and second dental operators. Each operator has access to his side of the generally L-shaped operatory **110**. Referring to FIG. **7**. we see operatory **110** duplicated as structure **110A** and between them is placed assistant's stool **125A**, doctor's stool **127A** and dental chair **129A**.

Directing our attention to operatory **110** we see that contained within the first side (inside) of L-shaped operatory **110** is doctor's stool **127**, assistant's stool **125** and dental chair **129**. Operatory **110** is further seen to contain dental operatory lamp **118** and X-ray unit **120** both pivotally attached to operatory **110**. To the left of doctor's stool **127** is starting unit **131** which houses side delivery unit **122A**. Between starting unit **131** and the first side (inside) of L-shaped operatory is contained all that is necessary for first dental operators.

Between the second side (outside) of L-shaped operatory **110** and the first side (inside) of operatory **110A** is a replica of the aforedescribed operatory for the first dental operator. This replica is now available to the second dental operators who have for their use side delivery unit **122**, doctor stool **127A**, assistant stool **125A**, and dental chair **129A**. Operatory **110A** has dental lamp **118A** and X-ray unit **120A** for use by the second dental operators.

Each dental operatory **110** contains a series of leveling devices (not shown) and a series of brackets (not shown) for adjusting each operatory **110** to compensate for an uneven floor. Operatory **110** can then be demountably fastened to the floor using the series of brackets. This demountable fastening to the floor stabilizes operatory **110** as dental light **118** is moved, X-ray unit **120** is moved to X-ray a patient or as side delivery **122** is moved.

The foregoing generally describes the most general features of dental operatory **110** and illustrates the application of operatory **110** to a plurality of dental operation systems for use in a multi-patient clinic. Operatory **110** provides the partition between individual operatories to ensure each patient privacy while at the same time not requiring extensive alteration of the room housing the plurality of dental operatory systems.

FIGS. **8** and **9** shows in greater detail the novel features of operatory **110**.

The first side (inside) of L-shaped operatory **110** is shown in FIG. **8**. Here is seen assistant unit **124** which is pivotally attached to operatory **110** and can be moved out for use by the assistant when sitting in assistant's chair **125** or pushed in to clear the working area. To the left of assistant unit **124** is compartment **154** which houses the analgesia unit. Access to the analgesia unit is had by pulling on handle **159**. Above the analgesia unit is found an intercommunication system unit **160** for use by the first operator to send or receive information. Alongside intercom **160** are plug in connections **152** providing water and air to dental tools when required. Above the intercom unit **160** is a novel power section **146** which serves as a junction box for all the electrical equipment mounted on operatory **110**. X-ray control unit **171** is shown mounted on the rear of power section **146** and control unit **171** is connected to X-ray unit **120** by the control board **182** and some of the wiring seen within power section **146**. Mounted on hinged panel **184** are some components shown wired to board **182**. When panel **184** is open easy access is had to all operatory **110** electrical wiring at a central location. In normal use panel **184** is closed preventing unauthorized access to the wiring.

Second cabinet **140** (FIG. **8**) is located in the upper part of shorter straight portion **116** and has the following features. FIG. **8** shows the pair of sliding doors **142** which are transparent and permit the assistant to select the appropriate trays for use in assistant's unit **124**. The various trays may be color coded and the color coding corresponds to particular operatory procedures. FIG. **9** shows the pair of opaque doors **170** which open to make shelves **144** accessible to a person in the rear operatory **110**. Therefore, new trays can be placed onto shelves **144** from the rear and used trays removed without inter-

ferring with the area containing the first operator and patient. Cabinet **140** also contains vertically disposed compartment **141** for the storage of next patient records which can be inserted from the rear and then is accessible to either of the first operators when the next patient arrives.

Located within curved portion **114** is sink **164** which is placed so as to be accessible from the first side and second side of operatory **110**. Opening **162** is designed to permit easy access to faucet set **166**. Immediately below is the pair of access doors **168** for making plumbing connections to sink **164** and faucet set **166**, as well as giving access to a waste receptacle which may be stored therein.

In FIG. **8** is also seen the various features of straight portion **112** which are conveniently accessible to the operator or his assistant. Specifically seen is first cabinet **130** having sliding doors and shelves within for storage of various dental supplies. Below cabinet **130** is an open space which may be used to house a computer terminal for use in recalling information if patient's records are computerized. In the base of straight portion **112** and below the open space are the first drawer set **132** and single drawer **134**. It will be seen that drawer set **132** and drawer **134** are separated by a blank panel. Where the blank panel appears in FIG. **8** there is located second drawer set **180** best seen in FIG. **9**, the foregoing is another feature of operatory **110**.

FIG. **9** shows items which are conveniently accessible to the doctor. Seen herein is x-ray film viewer **174** which is available to the doctor for diagnostic purposes and can be readily seen by the patient. Further seen is storage compartment **176** which houses side delivery unit **122**. Compartment **176** is used when it is necessary to move side delivery unit **122** out of the operatory area. FIG. **7** shows unit **122A** in a position close to doctor stool **127**. In this position unit **122A** or unit **122** enables doctor to control the various functions of dental chair **129**. Shown partially withdrawn is pull out shelf **178** which provides a temporary surface for use by the first operator or the assistant.

The second side (outside) of shorter straight portion **116** shows X-ray control unit **171** from which the first operator (doctor) controls the operation of X-ray unit **120**. After placement of X-ray unit **120** near the patient's mouth the first operator retreats to the rear part of portion **116**. In this position the first operator is shielded from any stray X-rays by X-ray shielding material **172** which is attached to the indicated areas of operatory **110**. Operatory **110** then has an in built shielding which prevents the first operator from receiving an overdose of x-ray exposures during the course of a day when x-ray machine **120** is used on plurality of patients. Shielding material **172** also is placed to prevent stray x-ray exposure to the adjacent operator.

The embodiments of the invention particularly disclosed an described herein above is presented merely as an example of the invention. Other embodiments, forms and modifications of the invention comming within the proper scope and spirit of the appended claims, will of course, readily suggest themselves to those skilled in the art.

What is claimed is:

1. A dental operatory system comprising:

a generally L-shaped first dental operatory unit, wherein the inside of the L defines an operatory work space for a first dental operator, and wherein the outside of one leg of the L provides an operatory work space for a second dental operator, said L leg outside comprising dental operatory implements for dental operations, and means to mount said implements for accessing into said second operatory work space for use by said second dental operator, said unit further comprising dental operatory means said dental operatory means comprising an X-ray unit, and means to mount said X-ray unit on said one leg of the L-shaped unit, and means to permit alternative use of said X-ray unit by said operators in the respective operatory work spaces, and further comprising an X-ray operatory control unit, and means to mount said X-ray operatory control unit on the outside of the other leg of the L-shaped unit for use by the operators, and whereby a generally L-shaped second dental operatory unit, is spacedly positionable from and in registration with and performing the dental operatory functions as in said first unit with said one leg of said second L-shaped unit being substantially parallel to one leg of said first L-shaped unit, and the other leg of said second L-shaped unit being aligned substantially along a common rectilinear axis and in tandem with the other leg of said first L-shaped unit, so that L-shaped units may be incrementally added in registration with one another.

2. The dental operatory system of claim **1**, wherein said dental operatory means comprises a dental lamp.

3. The dental operatory system of claim **1**, wherein said dental operatory means comprises a sink and faucet.

4. The dental operatory system of claim **1**, wherein said generally L-shaped structure comprises a first portion and a second portion joined together by a curved portion for strengthening said structure.

5. The dental operatory of claim **4**, wherein said curved portion comprises a double steel wall so that said curved portion provides strength to said L-shaped structure.

6. The dental operatory of claim **5**, wherein said L-shaped structure is affixed to the floor of said room, and spaced from the ceiling.

7. The dental operatory system of claim **1**, further comprising x-ray shielding means being mounted to said L-shaped unit.

8. The dental operatory system of claim **1**, said L-shaped unit comprising doors, communicating from the x-ray control space, said doors further comprising x-ray shielding material.

9. The dental operatory system of claim **1**, said L-shaped unit comprising a dental assistant's tray, and means to swing said tray from a first position within said unit to a second position into the operatory work space.

10. The dental operatory system of claim **1**, further comprising a plurality of storage drawers, and means to permit at least one drawer to open to said second operatory area work space.

11. The dental operatory system of claim **1**, said L-shaped unit being formed as a curved L.

12. The dental operatory of claim **11**, said curved portion being formed with reinforcing walls disposed in the inside and the outside, and said unit being floor mounted but spaced from a ceiling.

13. The dental operatory system of claim **1**, said means to mount said elements comprising retractably extensible means.

14. The dental operatory system of claim **13**, said elements comprising a tray.

15. The dental operatory system of claim 1, further comprising said second L-shaped operatory unit in registration with the first unit, whereby two operatory work spaces are provided, and wherein the second L-shaped unit comprises operatory elements mounted on the outside of the L to permit incremental expansion to a third unit.

16. A dental operatory system comprising:

a generally L-shaped first dental operatory unit, wherein the inside of the L defines an operatory work space for a first dental operator, and wherein the outside of one leg of the L provides an operatory work space for a second dental operator, said first unit further comprising dental operatory means, together with means to mount said dental operatory means on said one leg of said first L-shaped dental operatory unit, so as to permit alternative use of said dental operatory means by said first and second dental operators in their respective operatory work spaces, said outside of said one leg comprising means to provide dental operatory implements for use in said second operatory work space; a generally L-shaped second dental operatory unit, said second unit being in registration with and spaced from said first unit, said second unit performing substantially the same dental operatory functions as in said first unit, with one leg of said second L-shaped unit being substantially parallel to said one leg of said first L-shaped unit, and the other leg of said second L-shaped unit being aligned substantially along a common rectilinear axis and in tandem with the other leg of said first L-shaped unit, so that L-shaped units may be incrementally added in registration with one another, and said second L-shaped operatory unit being substantially identical to and in registration with said first unit so as to provide said two operatory work spaces, whereby the second L-shaped unit permits incremental expansion to a third L-shaped unit substantially identical to, and in registration with, said first and second units.

17. The dental operatory system of claim 16 in which a dental operatory element is mounted in the first L-shaped dental operatory unit, at the junction of the one leg and the other leg of the first unit, so as to permit alternative use of said dental operatory element by the first and second dental operators in their respective operatory work spaces.

18. The dental operatory system of claim 17 in which the dental operatory element is a sink-and-faucet combination.

19. A dental operatory system comprising:

a generally L-shaped first dental operatory unit, wherein the inside of the L defines an operatory work space for a first dental operator, and wherein the outside of one leg of the L provides an operatory work space for a second dental operator, said first unit further comprising dental operatory means, together with means to mount said dental operatory means on said one leg of said first L-shaped dental operatory unit, so as to permit alternative use of said dental operatory means by said first and second dental operators in their respective operatory work spaces, said outside of said one leg comprising means to provide dental operatory implements for use in said second operatory work space; a generally L-shaped second dental operatory unit, said second unit being in registration with and spaced from said first unit, said second unit performing substantially the same dental operatory functions as in said first unit, with one leg of said second L-shaped unit being substantially parallel to said one leg of said first L-shaped unit, and the other leg of said second L-shaped unit being aligned substantially along a common rectilinear axis and in tandem with the other leg of said first L-shaped unit, so that L-shaped units may be incrementally added in registration with one another, and said second L-shaped operatory unit being substantially identical to and in registration with said first unit so as to provide said two operatory work spaces, whereby the second L-shaped unit permits incremental expansion to a third L-shaped unit substantially identical to, and in registration with, said first and second units, each of said first and second operatory work spaces being adapted to receive a respective dental chair, each of said dental chairs being capable of being aligned substantially parallel to and spaced from the one leg of its respective L-shaped dental operatory unit, with the operative end of said dental chair being juxtaposed and disposed adjacent the junction of the one leg and the other leg of the respective L-shaped dental operatory unit.

20. The dental operatory system of claim 19 in which the dental operatory means comprises a pivotally attached dental operatory lamp.

21. The dental operatory system of claim 19 in which the dental operatory means comprises a pivotally attached X-ray unit.

22. The dental operatory system of claim 19 in which a dental operatory element is mounted in the first L-shaped dental operatory unit, at the junction of the one leg and the other leg of the first unit, said junction of said legs being continuous above and below said dental operatory element, but discontinuous at said dental operatory element, so that said element is accessible from both said first and second operatory work spaces, so as to permit alternative use of said dental operatory element by the first and second dental operators in their respective operatory work spaces.

23. The dental operatory system of claim 22 in which the dental operatory element is a sink-and-faucet combination.

24. The dental operatory system of claim 19 in which retractably extensible means comprising a dental operatory tool is mounted to a partition below a rectangular recess.

25. A dental operatory system comprising:

a generally L-shaped unitary modular first dental operatory unit, wherein the inside of the L defines an operatory work space for a first dental operator, and wherein the outside of one leg of the L provides an operatory work space for a second dental operator, said first unit further comprising dental operatory means together with means to mount said dental operatory means on said one leg of said first L-shaped dental operatory unit, so as to permit common and dual accessibility and alternative use of said dental operatory means by said first and second dental operators in their respective operatory work spaces, said operatory work spaces being oriented in areas disposed on opposite sides of said one leg of said first L-shaped dental operatory unit, the inside of the other leg of said first L-shaped dental operatory unit comprising means to provide dental operatory implements for use in said first operatory work space, said outside of said one leg comprising means to provide dental operatory implements for use in said second operatory work space; a generally L-shaped unitary modular second dental operatory unit, said second unit being in regis-

tration with and spaced from said first unit, said second unit performing substantially the same dental operatory functions as in said first unit, with one leg of said second L-shaped unit being substantially parallel to said one leg of said first L-shaped unit, and the other leg of said second L-shaped unit being aligned substantially along a common rectilinear axis and in tandem with the other leg of said first L-shaped unit, so that L-shaped units may be incrementally added in registration with one another, and said second L-shaped operatory unit being substantially identical to and in registration with said first unit so as to provide said two operatory work spaces, whereby the second L-shaped unit permits incremental expansion to a third L-shaped unitary modular unit substantially identical to, and in registration with, said first and second units, each of said first and second operatory work spaces being adapted to receive a respective dental chair, each of said dental chairs being capable of being aligned substantially parallel to and spaced from the one leg of its respective L-shaped dental operatory unit, with the operative end of said dental chair being juxtaposed and disposed adjacent the junction of the one leg and other leg of the respective L-shaped dental operatory unit, retractably extensible means including a dental operatory tool mounted to a partition below a rectangular recess, a dental operatory element comprising a sink-and-faucet combination being mounted in the first L-shaped dental operatory unit, at the junction of the one leg and the other leg of the first unit, said junction of said legs being continuous above and below said dental operatory element, but discontinuous at said dental operatory element, so that said element is accessible from both said first and second operatory work spaces, so as to permit alternative use of said dental operatory element by the first and second dental operators in their respective operatory work spaces.

26. The dental operatory system of claim 25 in which the dental operatory means comprises a pivotally attached dental operatory lamp.

27. The dental operatory system of claim 25 in which the dental operatory means comprises a pivotally attached X-ray unit.

28. The dental operatory system of claim 25 in which the means to mount the dental operatory means on the one leg of the first L-shaped dental operatory unit, so as to permit common and dual accessibility and alternative use of the dental operatory means by the first and second dental operators in their respective operatory work spaces oriented in areas disposed on opposite sides of the one leg of the first L-shaped dental operatory unit, comprises a pass through cabinet.

29. The dental operatory system of claim 28 in which shielding material against X-rays is disposed about the pass through cabinet, and on the outside of the legs of the first L-shaped dental operatory unit.

30. A dental operatory system comprising:

a generally L-shaped unitary modular dental operatory unit, wherein the inside of the L defines an operatory work space for a first dental operator, and wherein the outside of one leg of the L provides an operatory work space for a second dental operator; said unit further comprising dental operatory means, together with means to mount said dental operatory means on said one leg of said L-shaped dental operatory unit, so as to permit common and dual accessibility and alternative use of said dental operatory means by said first and second dental operators in their respective operatory work spaces, said operatory work spaces being oriented in areas disposed on opposite sides of said one leg of said L-shaped dental operatory unit, the inside of the other leg of said L-shaped dental operatory unit comprising means to provide dental operatory implements for use in said first operatory work space, said outside of said one leg comprising means to provide dental operatory implements for use in said second operatory work space; said first operatory work space being adapted to receive a respective dental chair, said dental chair being capable of being aligned substantially parallel to and spaced from the one leg of its respective L-shaped dental operatory unit, with the operative end of said dental chair being juxtaposed and disposed adjacent the junction of the one leg and other leg of the respective L-shaped dental operatory unit, retractably extensible means including a dental operatory tool mounted to a partition below a rectangular recess, a dental operatory element comprising a sink-and-faucet combination being mounted in the L-shaped dental operatory unit, at the junction of the one leg and the other leg of the first unit, said junction of said legs being continuous above and below said dental operatory element, but discontinuous at said dental operatory element, so that said element is accessible from both said first and second operatory work spaces, so as to permit alternative use of said dental operatory element by the first and second dental operators in their respective operatory work spaces.

31. The dental operatory system of claim 30 in which the dental operatory means comprises a pivotally attached dental operatory lamp.

32. The dental operatory system of claim 30 in which the dental operatory means comprises a pivotally attached X-ray unit.

33. The dental operatory system of claim 30 together with a generally L-shaped unitary modular second dental operatory unit, said second unit being in registration with and spaced from the first unit, said second unit performing substantially the same dental operatory functions as in the first unit, with one leg of said second L-shaped unit being substantially parallel to said one leg of the first L-shaped unit, and the other leg of said second L-shaped unit being aligned substantially along a common rectilinear axis and in tandem with the other leg of the first L-shaped unit, so that L-shaped units may be incrementally added in registration with one another, and said second L-shaped operatory unit being substantially identical to and in registration with the first unit so as to provide said two operatory work spaces, whereby the second L-shaped unit permits incremental expansion to a third L-shaped unitary modular unit substantially identical to, and in registration with, said first and second units, each of the first and second operatory work spaces being adapted to receive a respective dental chair, each of said dental chairs being capable of being aligned substantially parallel to and spaced from the one leg of its respective L-shaped dental operatory unit, with the operative end of each dental chair being juxtaposed and disposed adjacent the junction of the one leg and the other leg of the respective L-shaped dental operatory unit.

34. The dental operatory system of claim 30 in which the means to mount the dental operatory means on the one leg of the first L-shaped dental operatory unit, so as to permit common and dual accessibility and alternative use of the dental operatory means by the first and second dental operators in their respective operatory work spaces oriented in areas disposed on opposite sides of the one leg of the first L-shaped dental operatory unit, comprises a pass through cabinet.

35. The dental operatory system of claim 34 in which shielding material against X-rays is disposed about the pass through cabinet, and on the outside of the legs of the first L-shaped dental operatory unit.

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