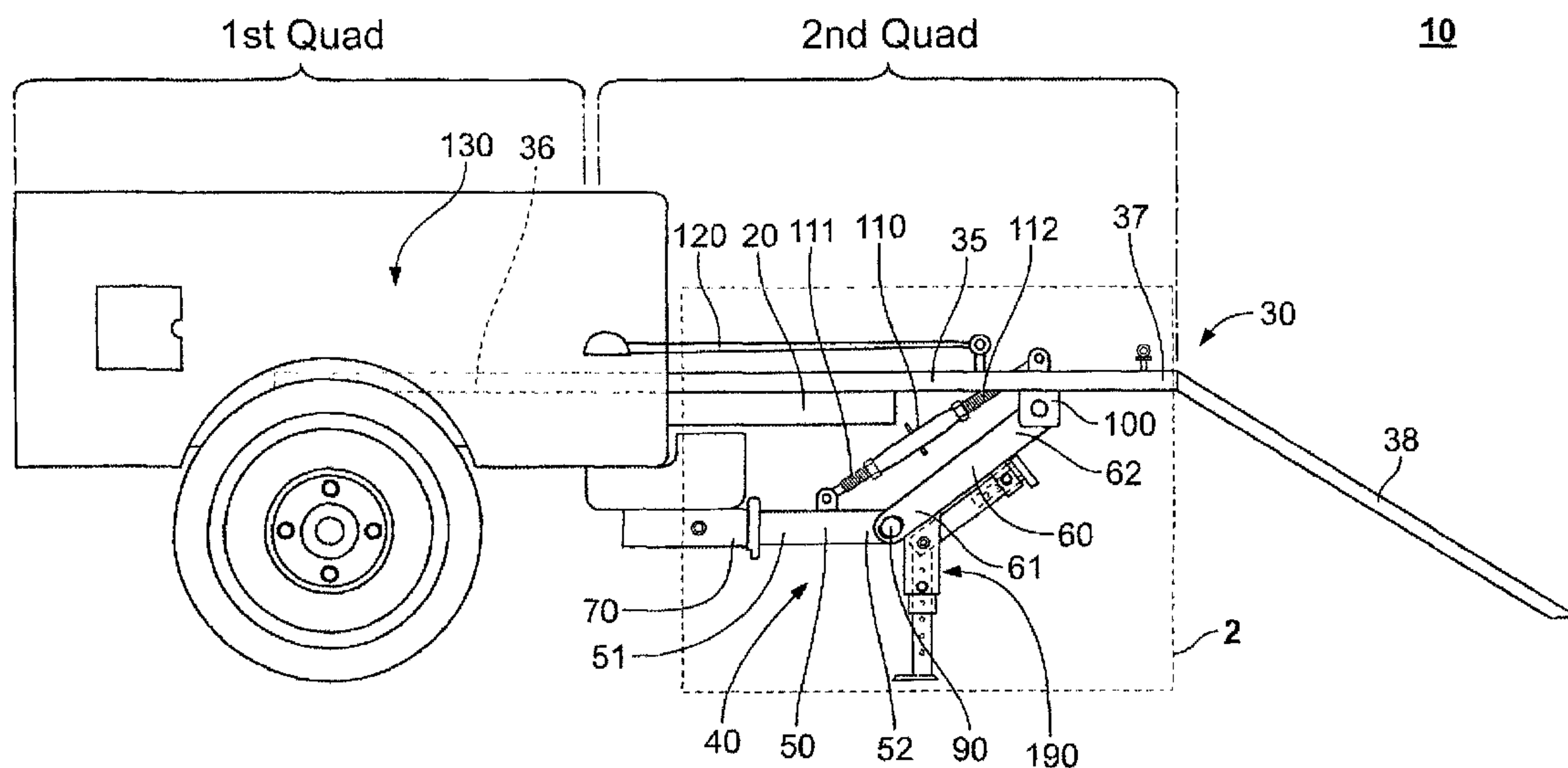




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(54) **Titre : RAMPE POUR VEHICULE TOUT-TERRAIN**  
 (54) **Title: ATV RAMP**



(57) **Abrégé/Abstract:**

The current invention discloses a light and easy to use support ramp assembly to be attached on a pick up truck to extend the cargo bed area. The assembly has preferably two retractable ramps, each having a horizontal ramp table/housing unit and a loading ramp. The ramp table housing unit is partially supported by cargo bed and by an open tail gate and further support is provided by a support arm and optionally by an adjustable loading support. The assembly is adjustable for any pickup truck.

**Abstract**

The current invention discloses a light and easy to use support ramp assembly to be attached on a pick up truck to extend the cargo bed area. The assembly has preferably two retractable ramps, each having a horizontal ramp table/housing unit and a loading ramp.

5 The ramp table housing unit is partially supported by cargo bed and by an open tail gate and further support is provided by a support arm and optionally by an adjustable loading support. The assembly is adjustable for any pickup truck.

## **ATV RAMP**

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### **Field of the Invention**

The invention relates to a set of ramp structures that may serve as a loading aid and an extender for pick-up trucks. In particular, this invention relates to ramp structures that may serve to extend the length of the cargo bed of a pick-up truck and facilitate loading and transporting all terrain vehicles.

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### **Background of the Invention**

Pick-up trucks are widely used in the United States, mainly for transporting or hauling of building materials, goods, and sometimes entertaining vehicles such as boats or all terrain vehicles (ATVs). There are many types of pick-up trucks, ranging from compact trucks to so-called full-size pick-up trucks in terms of dimensions and carrying capacities. In general, it is not easy to load a pickup truck because the goods need to be lifted before

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being positioned in the cargo area of the truck. When the goods are heavy, it would be almost impossible to lift them without additional equipment.

To facilitate the loading of goods, many kinds of removable or attachable ramps and slopes have been developed. In these designs, generally the ramp will be formed with one end of the ramp being positioned on the edge of the truck cargo area and the other end of the ramp abutting the ground. Then the goods may be pushed or trolleyed on the ramp from ground level to the cargo area of the truck. The following patents may serve as examples for the general ramp designs:

U.S. Patent No. 5,273,335 discloses a combination ramp and tailgate structure for installation and use in pickup trucks in which the structure would replace a conventional tailgate. The ramp/tailgate structure includes first, second, third and fourth generally rectangular frame member, the first and second of which are slidably coupled together to move between a nested or collapsed position and an extended position, and a third and fourth of which are likewise slidably coupled together to move between a nested or collapsed position and an extended position. The slidable movement between frame members is in the planes thereof so that a low profile, compact configuration may be maintained when in the collapsed position, yet allowing sufficient thickness of the members to permit the ramp to support heavy loads. When the frame members are in nested positions and the when the third frame member is pivoted into a position parallel with the second frame member, the frame members may be pivoted as a unit to an upright position to serve as a conventional tailgate. When the frame members are moved respectively to their extended positions and when the third frame member is pivoted so that all frame members are generally parallel in the same plane, with a rearward side or edge of

the fourth frame member in contact with the ground, the ramp/tailgate serves as a ramp extending from the ground to the bed of the pickup truck.

U.S. Patent No. 5,244,335 discloses a telescopic tailgate ramp having a base tray and a series of telescopically-connected trays that are slidable with respect to one another and are stackable to replace a tailgate of a vehicle. Each tray is a plate with end pieces on each side that engage the end pieces of a preceding or succeeding tray. The end pieces have a channel and a tenon-like portion that engage a corresponding tenon or channel portion of a preceding or succeeding tray. Each plate has a corrugated surface for enhancing traction. The trays are prevented from being fully withdrawn from one another due to the placement of pins in corresponding channels and the tenons that engage each other. The trays succeeding the base tray are prevented from sliding past the rear portion of a preceding tray or the rear portion of the base tray securing an obstruction over the rear portion of each channel. The base tray holds the other trays and is pivotable within the tailgate frame of a vehicle upon which it is mounted. The base tray is also pivotable about an axis through points on support bars that are attached to the base tray. Handles facilitate movement and the manipulation of the ramp in general and the individual tray section.

Another problem that is widely encountered by users of pick-up trucks is that the exterior cargo area—the cargo “bed”—is not spacious enough to accommodate the goods that are being transported. In particular, the most likely scenario is that the cargo bed is not long enough—the length of the bed from back of the truck cab to the tailgate is not sufficient—to hold certain articles. For example, one likely use of a pick-up truck is to transport ATVs. However, while the length of the cargo bed for a full-size pick-up truck generally ranges from 90 to 100 inches (229 to 254 cm), a typical ATV usually has a length of about

65-75 inches (165 to 190 cm). Therefore, the cargo bed of a full-size pick-up truck is more than enough for a single ATV, but not enough for two, while the capacity to transport two ATVs may be crucial for the economical planning of sports activities or utility usages with ATVs. Here, the transport of ATV serves only as an example. Enhancing the capacity to carry more goods is desirable without attenuating safety precautions.

To address the issue of carrying capacities, some patents have aimed at providing an extender to the cargo bed of a pickup truck. The following patent is an example of such designs:

U.S. Patent No. 7,703,825 discloses an extender for a bed of a truck, wherein the extender comprises a frame that has front end, a rear end and side. At least one, and preferably two, spaced apart connector brackets extend outwardly away from the rear end of the frame.

The connector brackets are designed to rest upon an end portion of the truck bed when the truck's tailgate has been removed. The connector brackets are preferably bolted into the truck bed, but may be frictionally engaged therewith. A strut extends downwardly from the frame and is connected to a rearward extending longitudinal support. The support is secured to the truck's trailer hitch. The extender is therefore supported by both the connector brackets and the hitch. The length of the strut is vertically adjustable to allow the extender to be secured to any type of truck. The longitudinal support is also slidably adjustable onto the trailer hitch to provide for the extender to be secured to any type of truck. The frame preferably is formed with a pair of spaced-apart wheel wells so as to receive a pair of wheels of a vehicle loaded onto the truck bed. The frame may be provided with a pair of ramps to assist in loading of the truck and with an extended hitch to allow a trailer to be connected to the truck.

In addition, some patents teach structural modifications of the cargo bed and/or the tailgate to a ramp/extender combination. The following patent serves as an example:

U.S. Patent No. 7,309,202 discloses a system for transporting and storing a portable combination table/ramp device in a truck bed, including a substantially flat platform

5 supported by a plurality of support members positioned between the platform and the truck bed and defining a plurality of elongated recesses therebetween. Elongated table top portion and elongated bench seat portions with tailgate-engaging portions connected thereto are received in the recesses. A plurality of retractable table leg assemblies are connected to the table top portion. A connector is coupled to each respective table leg

10 assembly for connecting the elongated bench seat portion thereto. Each respective table leg assembly is retractable to a storage position substantially adjacent the elongated table top portion and extendable to a deployed position extending between the table top portion and the ground.

While the ramp designs and the extender designs address only part of the problem, the prior

15 art ramp/extender combinations tend to employ complicated structures that are difficult to make and to operate. Not only may the complication add to cost as to manufacturing and implementation, it may also increase the chances of accidents due to the failure of operation. The current invention discloses ramp structures that may serve as extenders for the truck cargo bed. The structure disclosed in the current invention is distinctive and

20 simple and it addresses the problems raised above with a cost-effective design.

In conclusion, various implements are known in the art, but their structures are distinctively different from the current invention. Moreover, the prior art fails to address all of the problems solved by the invention described herein. One embodiment of this invention is

illustrated in the accompanying drawings and will be described in more detail herein below.

### Summary of the Invention

5 Disclosed is a support ramp assembly for loading and transporting vehicles on a pickup truck, said assembly comprising: two parallel retractable ramps; a support arm; and an adjustable loading support; the retractable ramps comprising a horizontal ramp  
table/housing unit and a loading ramp; said ramp table/housing unit comprising a front  
end and a rear end, the front end resting on cargo bed and on open tail gate of the pickup  
10 truck; the loading ramps being pivotably attached to the rear ends of the ramp table/housing units and leaning on the rear ends in an angle; the support arm comprising a horizontal support bar and a pivotable support bar, said horizontal bar having a first end and a second  
end, and the first end of the horizontal bar being attached to a receiver connected to pickup  
truck's frame; the pivotable support bar having a first and a second end, the first end of the  
15 pivotable support bar being connected to the second end of the horizontal bar through an adjustable pivot point, and the second end of the pivotable support bar being removably attached to a rear support bar, said rear support bar locating under the ramp table/housing units and being removably attached to them, and said rear support bar comprising lights and blinkers; the support ramp assembly further having a turn buckle, said turn buckle  
20 having a first end and a second end, said first end of the turn buckle being attached to the horizontal support bar and the second end being removably attached to the rear support bar; said turn buckle being capable of being elongated or shortened, whereby the rear bar is lowered or lifted and the height of the ramp table is adjusted for the front end to rest on

the cargo bed and the open tail gate; the adjustable loading support comprising a U-bar housing attached to the pivotable support bar and a pivotable bar; said pivotable bar having a first solid end attached to the U-bar housing through a pivot point, a second hollow end and at least one hole; said pivotable bar slidably housing an extendable support bar having a foot and at least one hole to secure the extendable support bar through a selected hole to the second end of the pivotable bar; and the ramp table/housing units each being supported by a support strap, said straps being attached to the ramp table/housing units and to truck wall.

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It is an object of the present invention to provide a retractable support ramp assembly for increasing the cargo bed area of a pickup truck.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide a retractable support ramp assembly for extending the cargo bed area of a pick up truck to fit two ATV-vehicles one behind another.

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It is another object of the present invention to provide a retractable support ramp assembly that comprises a horizontal area and a loading ramp.

Yet another object of the present invention is to provide a retractable support ramp assembly that can be easily assembled and disassembled.

Still another object of the present invention is to provide a retractable support ramp assembly that can be adjusted by its height to fit on any pickup truck.

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Yet another object of the present invention is to provide a retractable support ramp assembly that is light and easy to handle but sturdy enough to carry a heavy load.

Another object of the present invention is to provide a retractable support ramp assembly that is supported from below to enable loading and transportation of heavy ATV-vehicles.

### Brief Description of the Drawings

**Fig. 1** is a side view of the retractable support ramp assembly ready to be used for loading and transporting the ATV-vehicles (quads).

5 **Fig. 2.** is a detailed view of the support mechanism according to one preferred embodiment.

**Fig. 3** is a back view of the retractable support ramp assembly without the loading ramp.

**Fig. 4.** is a perspective view of the retractable support ramp assembly.

### 10 Description of the Preferred Embodiments

The preferred embodiments of the present invention will now be described with reference to the drawings. Identical elements in the various figures are identified with the same reference numerals.

Reference will now be made in detail to embodiments of the present invention. Such  
 15 embodiments are provided by way of explanation of the present invention which is not intended to be limited thereto. In fact, those of ordinary skill in the art may appreciate upon reading the present specification and viewing the present drawings that various modifications and variations can be made thereto without diverting from the spirit of this invention.

20 The invention is now described by referring to Figures 1 and 2. Figure 1 is a side elevational view of the support ramp assembly **10** for a pickup truck showing the tailgate **20** of the pickup truck in opened position and the support ramp assembly **10** being in extended position ready to be used. Figure 2 is a close up of the support system according

to one preferred embodiment of the invention. The support ramp assembly **10** comprises of at least one, preferably two parallel retractable ramps **30**, each having a substantially horizontal ramp table/housing –unit **35** and a loading ramp **38**. The ramp table/housing –units **35** have a dual use: they serve as ramp table to extend the cargo bed **135** (shown in Figure 4) , thereby allowing the truck to accommodate larger loads, for example two ATV-vehicles (quads), but they may also serve as housing for the loading ramps **38** when the support ramp assembly **10** is not in use. In the preferred embodiment where the assembly comprises two parallel retractable ramps **30** as shown in Fig. 4, the distance between the ramps preferably equals to the length of the axle of a standard ATV-vehicle, but the distance may also be adjustable to allow loading and transportation of vehicle with different axle widths. The ramp table/housing units **35** have a front end **36** and a rear end **37**. The loading ramps **38** are preferably detachably attached to the rear ends **37** of the ramp table/housing –units **35**. The attachment may be with pins, hooks or clamps but other means may also be used. The attachment allows the loading ramps **38** to lean on the ramp table/housing units **35** in a convenient angle to enable loading of a vehicle, such as an ATV vehicle, onto the truck cargo bed and onto the ramp table/housing –portion that extend the length of the truck cargo bed. The front ends **36** of the horizontal ramp table/housing –unit **35** rest on the opened tail gate **20** and on the cargo-bed **135** , whereby the tailgate provides a partial support to the ramp table/housing units **35**. The front ends **36** of the ramp table/housing units may be anchored to the cargo bed with security pins, hooks, clamps or the likes. The support ramp assembly **10** further comprises a support arm **40**; said support arm comprises a horizontal support bar **50** and a pivotable support bar **60**. The horizontal support bar has two ends **51**, **52** and the pivotable support bar has two ends **61**, **62**. The

first end **51** of the horizontal bar is attached to a receiver **70**, said receiver being attached to the truck frame. The second end **52** of the horizontal bar is attached via an adjustable pivot point **90** to the first end **61** of the pivotable bar and the second end **62** of the pivotable arm is movably attached to a rear support bar **100**. The rear support bar **100** locates under  
5 the ramp table/housing units **35** and is attached to both of the ramp table/housing units.

The support ramp assembly **10** further has a turn buckle **110** and said turn buckle has a first end **111** and a second end **112**, and the first end **111** of the turn buckle is connected to the horizontal support bar **50** and the second end **112** of the turn buckle is connected to the rear support bar **100**. The turn buckle **110** can be elongated or shortened. Elongating the

10 turnbuckle **110** would lower the rear support bar **100** and accordingly lower the level of the ramp table/housing -units **35** so as to adjust the support ramp assembly **10** to be used with a smaller truck. Shortening the turnbuckle would respectively result in lifting the rear support bar **100** and accordingly lowering the ramp table/housing units so as to adjust to a bigger truck. The adjustable pivot point **90** connection between the horizontal support bar  
15 **50** and the pivotable support bar **60** allows the support arm **40** to adjust to the different levels of the rear support bar **100**. The support ramp assembly **10** is further supported with preferably two support straps **120** attached to the horizontal ramp table/housing units **35** from one end and to the truck wall **130** from the other end.

According to one preferred embodiment, the support arm **40** is further supported in loading  
20 situation with an adjustable loading support **190**. The adjustable loading support is depicted in details in Figure 2. The adjustable loading support comprises a U-bar housing **200** preferably attached to the pivotable support bar **60**. A pivotable bar **210** having a first end **211** and a second end **212** is pivotably attached from its first end **211** to the housing

**200** through a pivot point **215**. The first end **211** of the pivotable bar is preferably solid and the second end **212** is hollow and has at least one hole **225** and is slidably housing an extendable support bar **230**. The extendable support bar **230** has one or more holes **235**. The extendable support bar **230** is secured to the second end **212** of the pivotable bar with a pin **240** through the hole **225** and one of the holes **235**. According to one preferred embodiment the U-bar housing **200** also comprises holes and the pin **240** secures the extendable support bar **230** through the holes in the U-bar housing **200**, in the second end **212** of the pivotable bar and in the extendable support bar **230**. The extendable support bar further has a foot **250**.

Referring now to Figure 3, a back view of the retractable support ramp assembly **10** is shown without the loading ramps **38**. The ramp table/ housing units **35** have a flattened U-shape cross-section and have two longitudinal sides **37** and a top **36**. The ramp table/housing units **35** are attached to the rear support bar **100** from the longitudinal sides **37**. Figure 3 shows an embodiment where the ramp table/housing units **35** are attached from their longitudinal sides **37** to the rear support bar **100** with bolt headed screws **160** and fasteners **162**, but other kind of attaching mechanisms are also available and would fall under the scope of this invention. Figure 3 shows an embodiment with security pins **170** through the top **36** of ramp table/housing-units. The security pins **170** may be used to attach the loading ramps **38**. According to a preferred embodiment tail lights and blinkers **270** are attached to both ends of the rear support bar.

Now referring to Fig. 4, a perspective view of the invention is shown. Fig. 4 shows a preferred embodiment where the support ramp assembly **10** has two parallel retractable ramps **30**, each having a horizontal ramp table/housing unit **35** and a loading ramp **38**. The

table/housing units **35** are resting partially on the cargo bed **135** and partially on an open tailgate **20**. The support ramp assembly **10** is in the loading position and the loading support **190** is in use.

When the ramp assembly of this invention is not used for transporting and holding vehicles,  
5 the retractable ramps **30** are easily pushed into the cargo bed area. The user first detaches the loading ramps **38** from the rear ends **37** of ramp table/housings **35**. Then the rear support bar **100** is detached from the ramp table/housing units **35**. In the embodiment where an adjustable loading support **190** is included the extendable support bar **230** is pushed inside the pivotable bar **210** and the pivotable bar **210** is pivoted toward the  
10 horizontal support bar **60** and secured to the securing holder **260** preferably with a pin **262**. The ramp table/housing units **35** can now be pushed inside the cargo area and the loading ramps **38** may be inserted inside the ramp table/housings and secured inside by security pins **170**.

According to a preferred embodiment the length of the ramp table/housing units **35** is such  
15 that when the ramp in extended position, the ramp tables would extend the cargo bed area to fit two ATV-vehicles. When the support ramp assembly **10** is extended the ATV-vehicles can be loaded on the truck with the help of the loading ramps **38**. The first vehicle would fit on the cargo bed area of the truck having one pair of wheels on the cargo bed floor and another pair of wheels on the front end **36** of the ramp table/housing unit. The  
20 second vehicle would have one pair of wheels on the front end **36** of the ramp table/housing unit and another pair of wheel would be on the rear portion **37** of the ramp table/housing units . The second vehicle may be tied on one or more tie down hooks **180** locating on the ramp table/housing unit **35**.

According to a preferred embodiment the length of the ramp table/housing units **35** is between 8 and 10 feet. The length of the ramps **38** is preferably between 5 and 6 feet and the width of the support bar **100** is preferably about 6 feet.

5 Although this invention has been described with a certain degree of particularity, it is to be understood that the present disclosure has been made only by way of illustration and that numerous changes in the details of construction and arrangement of parts may be resorted to without departing from the spirit and the scope of the invention.

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CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A support ramp assembly for loading and transporting vehicles on a pickup truck, said assembly comprising:

at least one retractable ramp; and

a support arm;

the retractable ramp comprising a horizontal ramp table/housing unit and a loading ramp;

said ramp table/housing unit comprising a front end and a rear end, the front end resting on cargo bed and on open tail gate of the pickup truck;

the loading ramp being pivotably attached to the rear end of the ramp table/housing unit and leaning on the rear end in an angle;

the support arm comprising a horizontal support bar and a pivotable support bar,

said horizontal bar having a first end and a second end, and the first end of the horizontal bar being attached to a receiver connected to pickup truck's frame;

the pivotable support bar having a first and a second end,

the first end of the pivotable support bar being connected to the second end of the horizontal bar through an adjustable pivot point, and the second end of the pivotable support bar being removably attached to a rear support bar, said rear support bar locating under the ramp table/housing units and being removably attached to them, and the rear support bar further comprising lights and blinkers;

the support ramp assembly further having a turn buckle, said turn buckle having a first end and a second end, said first end of the turn buckle being attached to the horizontal support bar and the second end of the turn buckle being attached to the rear support bar;

said turn buckle further being capable of being elongated or shortened, whereby the rear bar is lowered or lifted and the height of the ramp table is adjusted for the front end to rest on the cargo bed and on the tail gate;

the ramp table/housing unit being further supported by at least one strap, said strap being attached to the ramp table/housing unit and to truck wall.

2. The support ramp assembly of claim 1 further comprising an adjustable loading support.
3. The support ramp assembly of claim 2 wherein the adjustable loading support comprises a U-bar housing attached to the pivotable support bar and a pivotable bar; said pivotable bar having a first solid end attached to the U-bar housing through a pivot point, a second hollow end and at least one hole; said pivotable bar slidably housing an extendable support bar having a foot and at least one hole to secure the extendable support bar through a selected hole to the second end of the pivotable bar.
4. The support ramp assembly of any one of claims 1 to 3 wherein said ramp table/housing unit is secured to the cargo bed.
5. The support ramp assembly of any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein the assembly comprises two parallel retractable ramps.
6. The support ramp assembly of claim 5, wherein the loading ramps are detached when not in use.
7. The support ramp assembly of claim 5, wherein the ramp table/housing units are pushed to the cargo bed when not in use.
8. The support ramp assembly of claim 5, wherein the ramp table/housing units have a flattened U-shape cross section and comprise two longitudinal sides and a top, the top having a hole through which a security pin extend, the ramp table/housing unit being attached to the rear support bar from the longitudinal sides, and the loading ramps being detachably attached to the ramp table/housing units with the security pins.
9. The support ramp assembly of claim 5, wherein distance between the two parallel retractable ramps equals to a length of the axle of a standard ATV-vehicle.
10. The support ramp assembly of claim 5, wherein the width of the parallel retractable ramps is such that they accommodate the wheels of an ATV-vehicle.
11. The support ramp assembly of claim 5, wherein distance between the two parallel retractable ramps is adjustable.
12. The support ramp assembly of claim 5, wherein the length of the table ramps is such that a truck with extended support ramp assembly is capable of carrying two ATV-vehicles.

13. The support ramp assembly of claim 5, wherein the parallel retractable ramps are made of aluminum.

14. A support ramp assembly for loading and transporting two ATV-vehicles simultaneously on a pickup truck, said assembly comprising:

two parallel retractable ramps;

a support arm; and

an adjustable loading support;

the retractable ramps comprising a horizontal ramp table/housing unit and a loading ramp;

said ramp table/housing unit comprising a front end and a rear end, the front end resting on cargo bed and on open tail gate of the pickup truck;

the loading ramps being pivotably attached to the rear ends of the ramp table/housing units and leaning on the rear ends in an angle;

the support arm comprising a horizontal support bar and a pivotable support bar,

said horizontal bar having a first end and a second end, and the first end of the horizontal bar being attached to a receiver connected to pickup truck's frame;

the pivotable support bar having a first and a second end, the first end of the pivotable support bar being connected to the second end of the horizontal bar through an adjustable pivot point, and the second end of the pivotable support bar being removably attached to a rear support bar, said rear support bar locating under the ramp table/housing units and being removably attached to them, and said rear support bar comprising lights and blinkers;

the support ramp assembly further having a turn buckle, said turn buckle having a first end and a second end, said first end of the turn buckle being attached to the horizontal support bar and the second end being removably attached to the rear support bar;

said turn buckle being capable of being elongated or shortened, whereby the rear bar is lowered or lifted and the height of the ramp table is adjusted for the front end to rest on the cargo bed and the open tail gate;

the adjustable loading support comprising a U-bar housing attached to the pivotable support bar and a pivotable bar; said pivotable bar having a first solid end attached to the U-bar housing through a pivot point, a second hollow end and at least one hole; said pivotable bar slidably

housing an extendable support bar having a foot and at least one hole to secure the extendable support bar through a selected hole to the second end of the pivotable bar; and

the ramp table/housing units each being supported by a support strap, said straps being attached to the ramp table/housing units and to truck wall.

15. The support ramp assembly of claim 14, wherein the loading ramps are detached when not in use.

16. The support ramp assembly of claim 14, wherein the ramp table/housing units are pushed to the cargo bed when not in use.

17. The support ramp assembly of claim 14, wherein the ramp table/housing units have a flattened U-shape cross section and comprise two longitudinal sides and a top, the top having a hole through which a security pin extend, the ramp table/housing unit being attached to the rear support bar from the longitudinal sides, and the loading ramps being detachably attached to the ramp table/housing units with the security pins.

18. The support ramp assembly of claim 14, wherein distance between the two parallel retractable ramps equals to a length of the axle of a standard ATV-vehicle.

19. The support ramp assembly of claim 14, wherein the width of the parallel retractable ramps is such that they accommodate the wheels of an ATV-vehicle.

20. The support ramp assembly of claim 14, wherein distance between the two parallel retractable ramps is adjustable.

21. The support ramp assembly of claim 14, wherein the length of the table ramps is such that a truck with extended support ramp assembly is capable of carrying two ATV-vehicles.

22. The support ramp assembly of claim 14, wherein the parallel retractable ramps are made of aluminum.

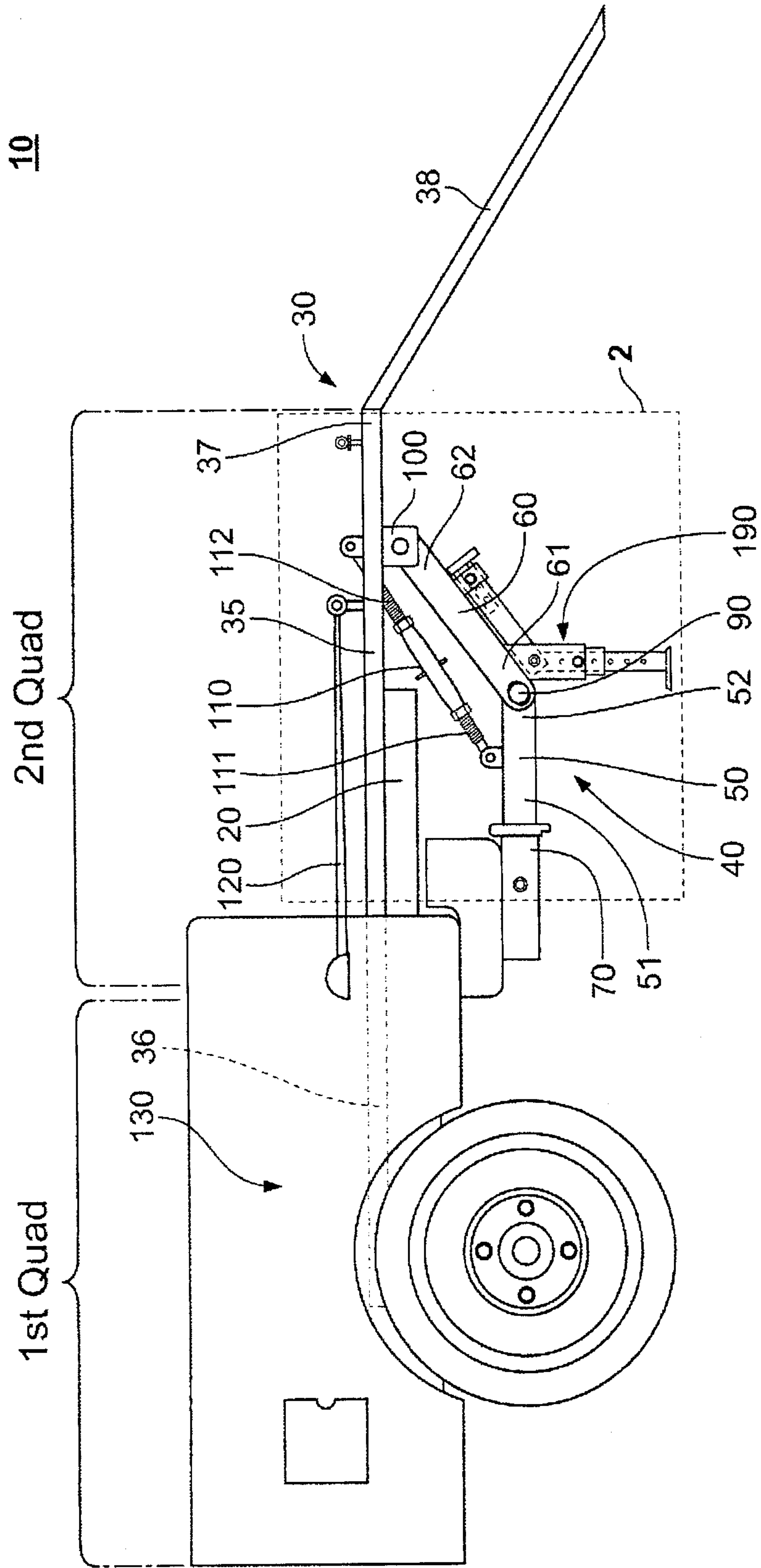


FIG. 1

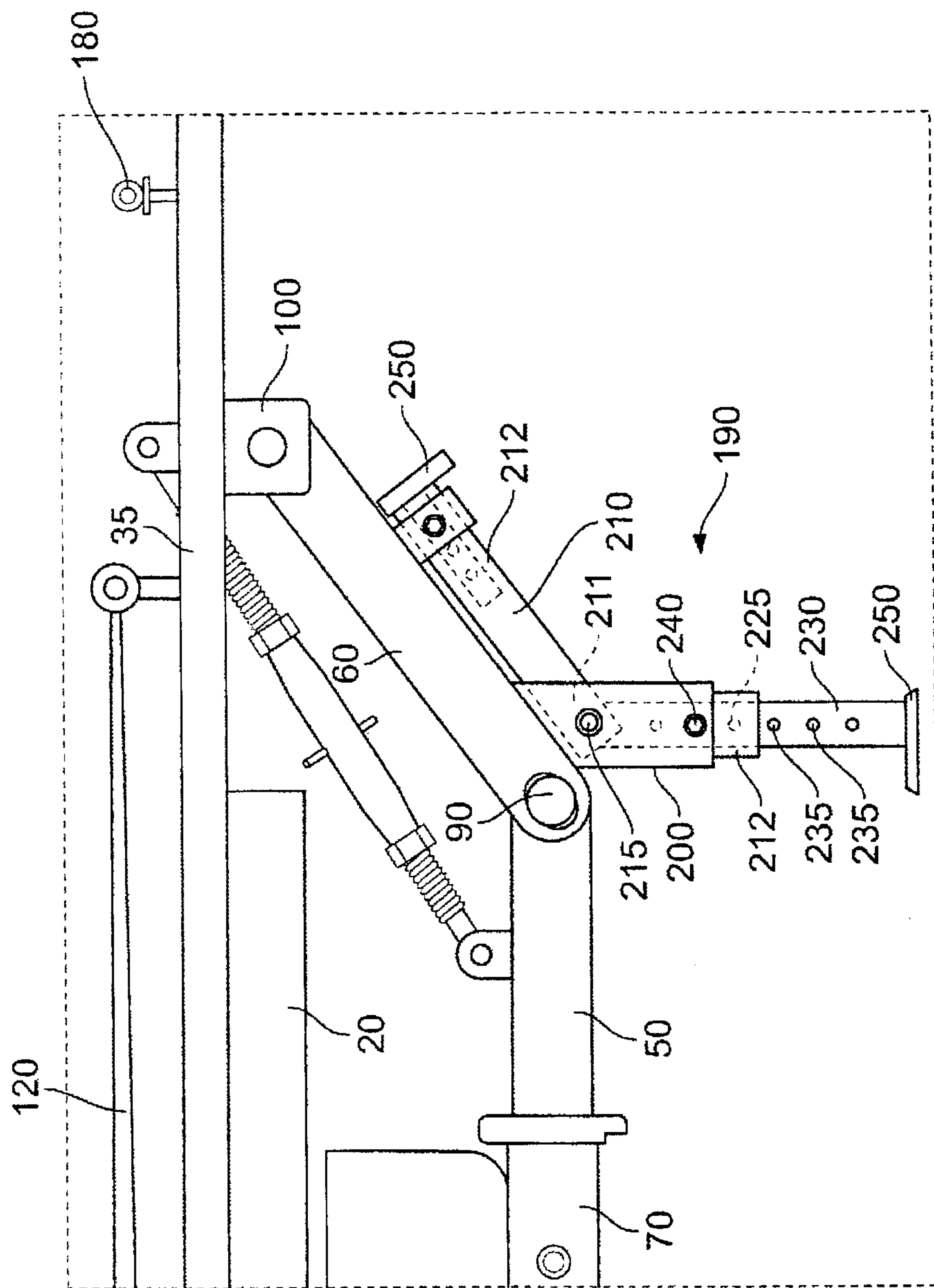


FIG. 2

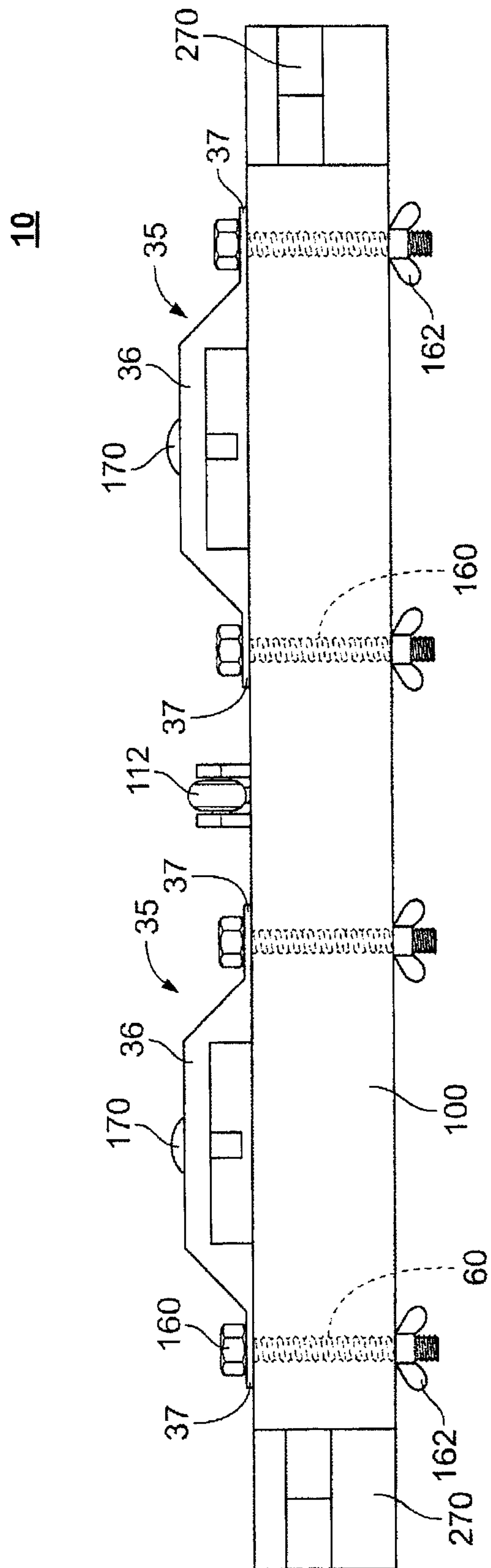


FIG. 3

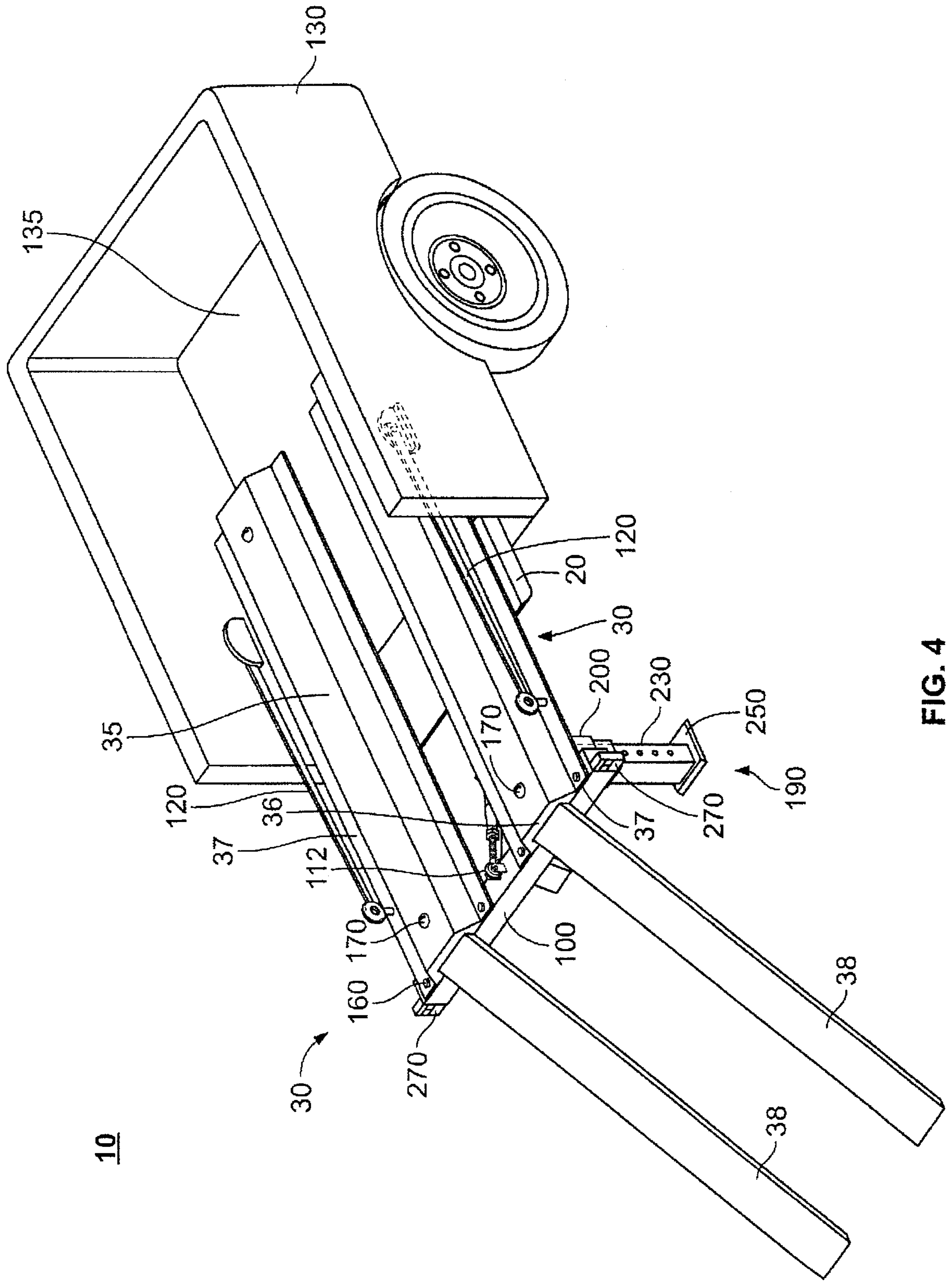


FIG. 4

