United States Patent

[11] 3,596,981

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[45] Patented **Aug. 3, 1971**

[54] **SEAT-BED**
5 Claims, 21 Drawing Figs.

[52] **U.S. Cl.** **297/64,** 297/233, 297/357, 5/37
[51] **Int. Cl.** **A47c 4/00,** A47c 3/00, A47c 17/04
[50] **Field of Search** ..... 297/62-—66, 105, 233, 357; 5/37

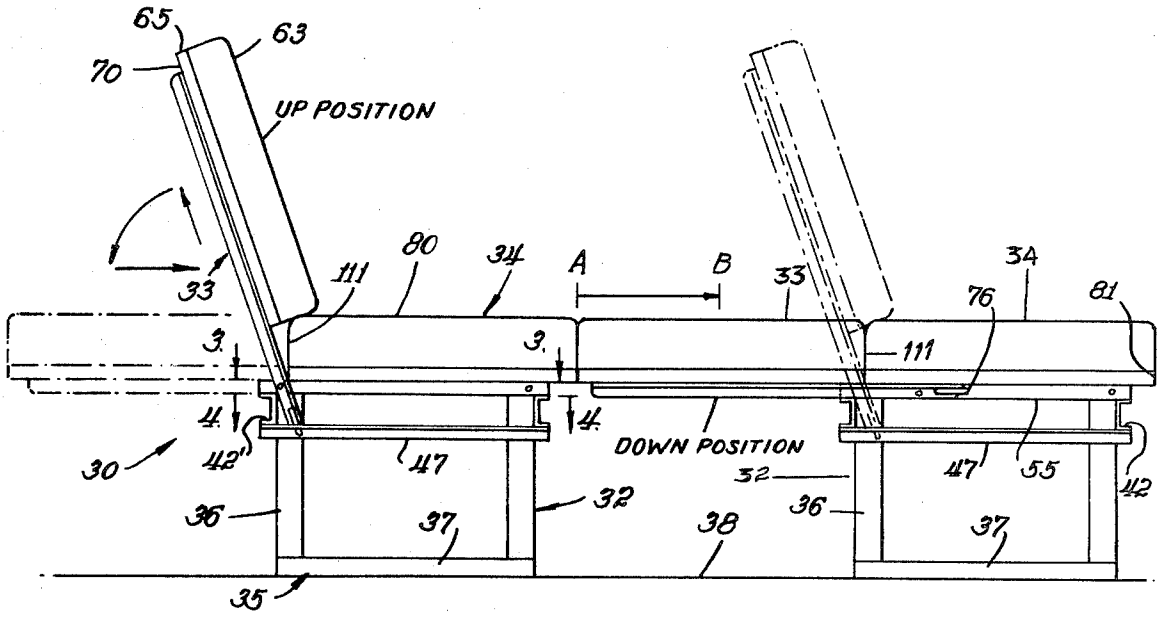
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Primary Examiner—Paul R. Gilliam
Attorney—Darbo, Robertson & Vandenburgh

ABSTRACT: A convertible seat-bed particularly well suited for vans, sport vans, campers, remodeled buses, etc., having distinct base, horizontal bench-type seat, and back, the horizontal seat being slideable horizontally, front and back on the base, the back including arms which fit under the seat when the back is placed horizontally on the base. A plurality of the seat beds of this invention, placed in appropriate juxtaposition, provides at least six and up to 12 or more relatively easily achieved combinations for maximum utilization of the seats. A preferred embodiment is conveniently collapsible to provide minimum volume to facilitate shipping, or storage of the unit when not in use.



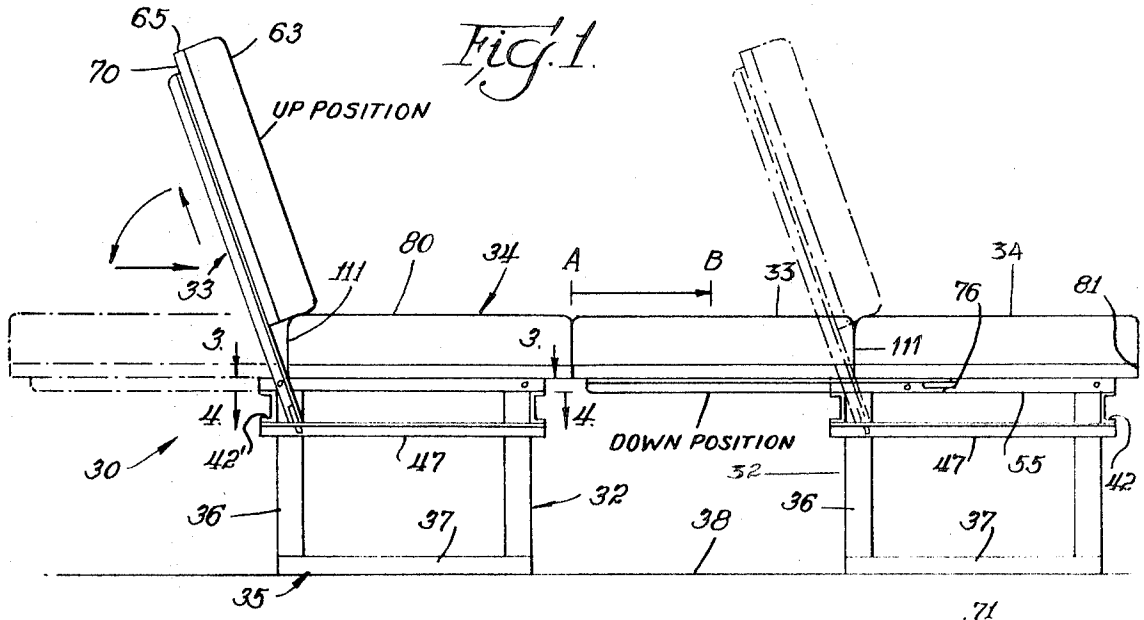


Fig. 1.

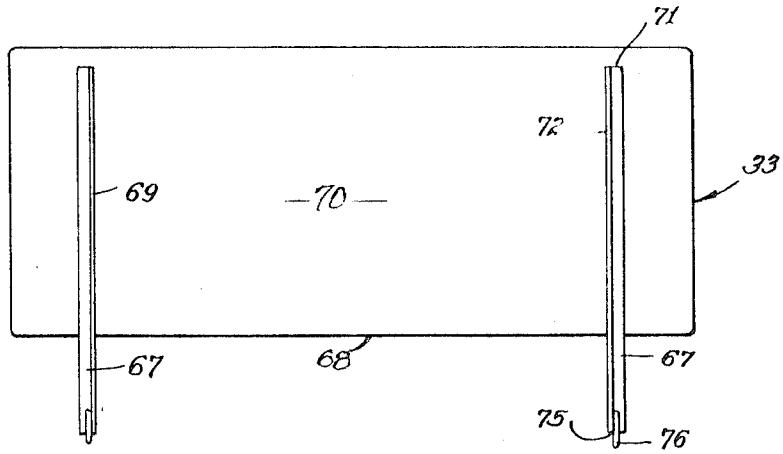


Fig. 2.

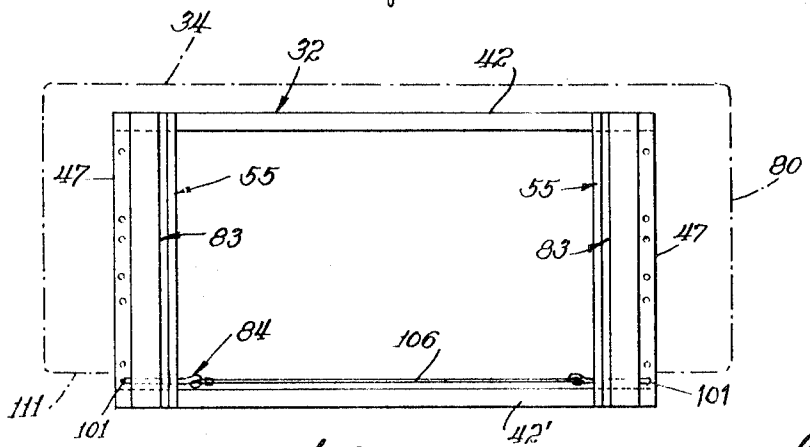


Fig. 3.

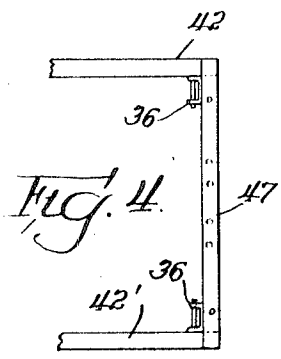
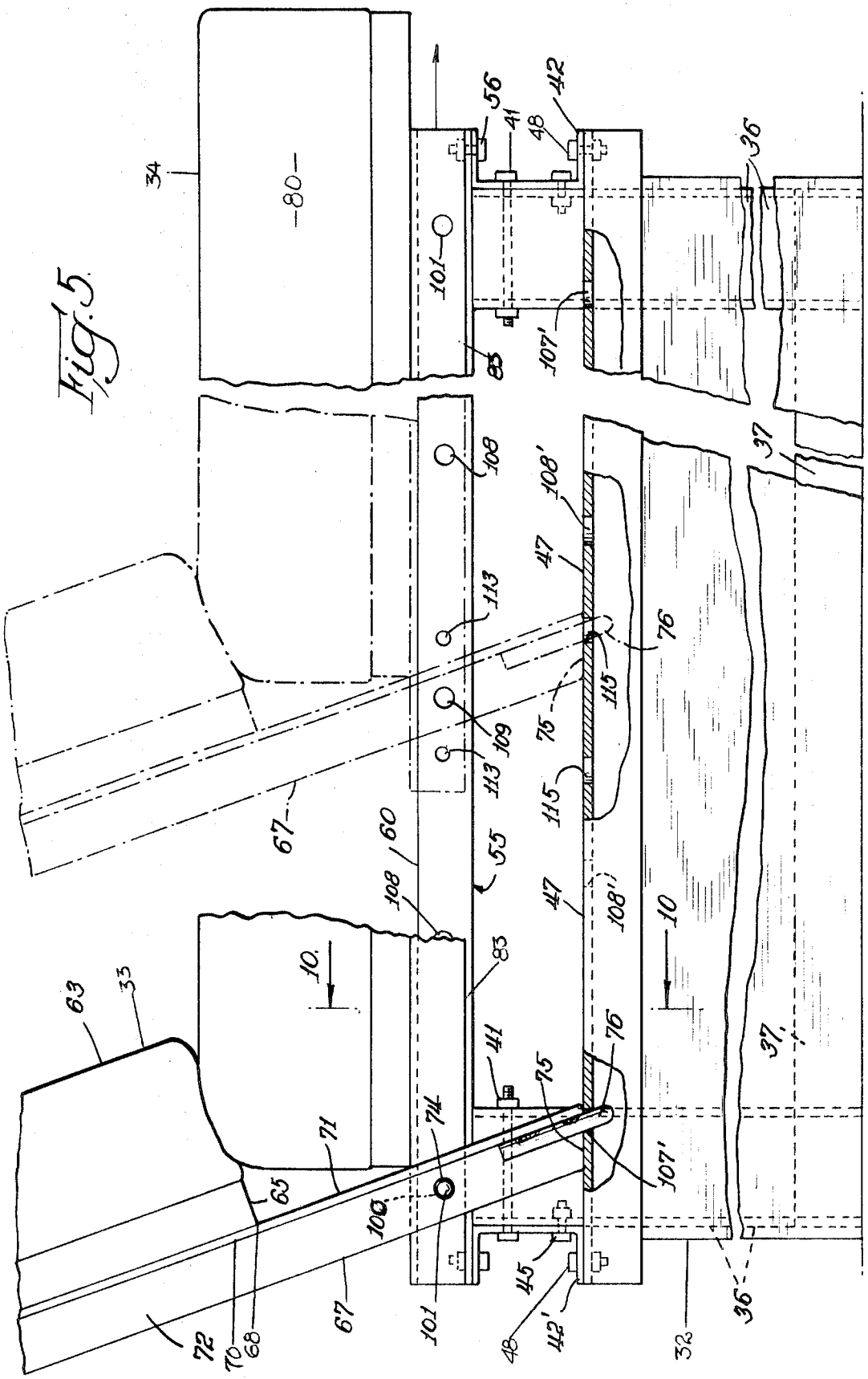


Fig. 4.

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Att'ys.

Fig. 5.


34
80
A
56
41
48
42
36
101
107'
83
37
108
108'
47
113
76
115
75
109
67
60
55
10
63
33
71
74
65
100
72
70
68
45
42'
32

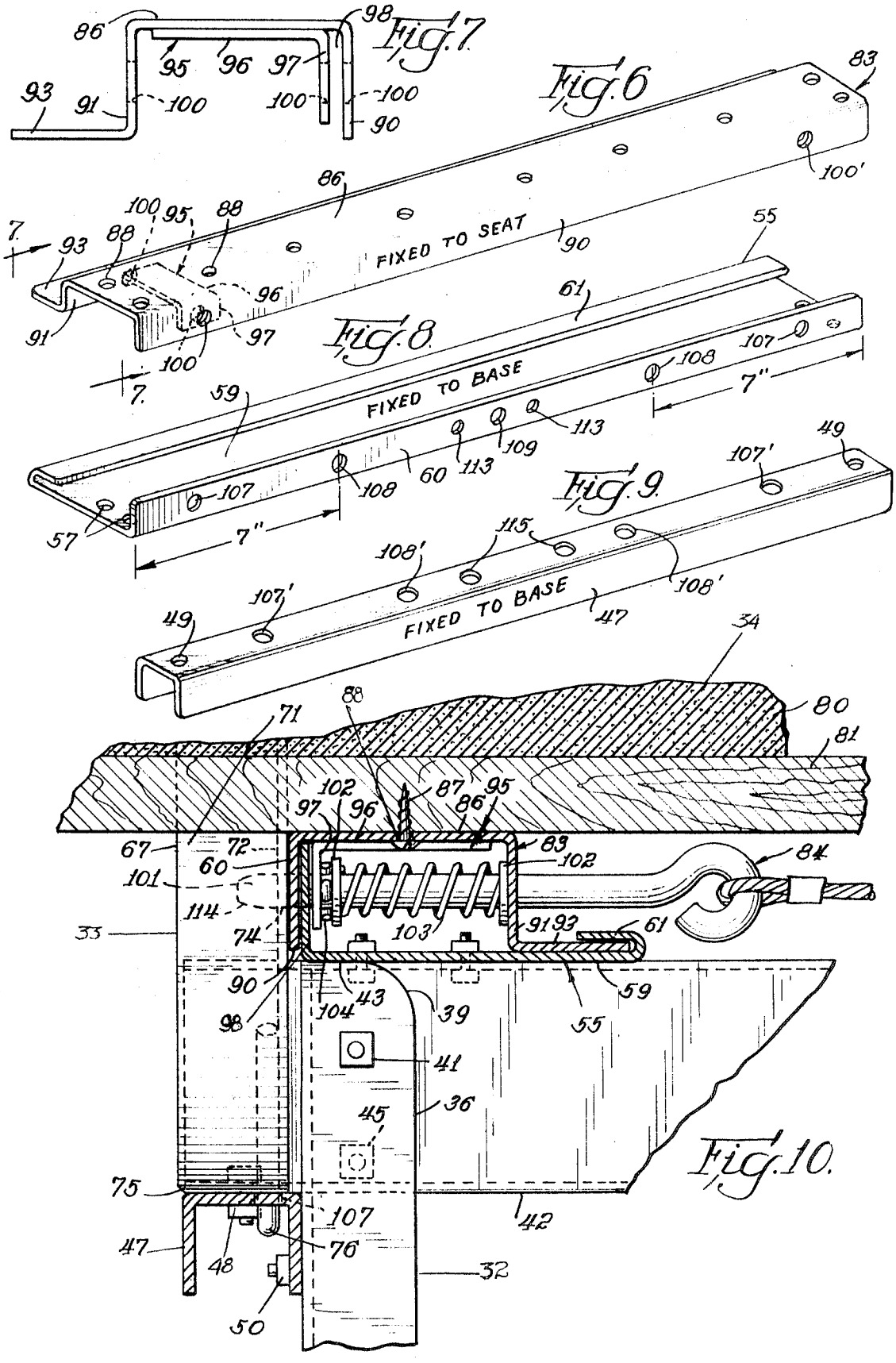

Fig. 7
Fig. 6
Fig. 8
Fig. 9
Fig. 10
FIXED TO SEAT
FIXED TO BASE
FIXED TO BASE
7"
7"

Fig. 11

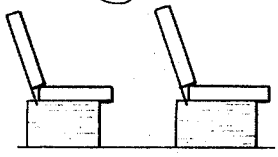


Fig. 12.

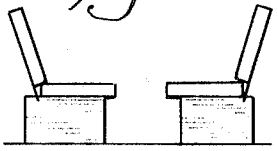


Fig. 13.

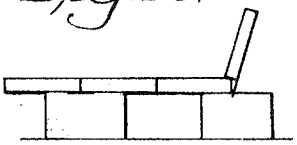


Fig. 14.

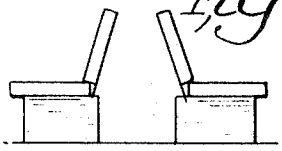


Fig. 15.

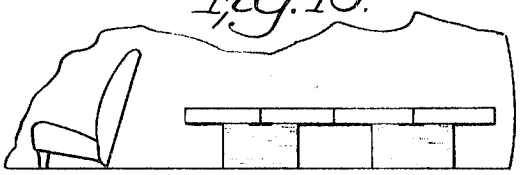


Fig. 16.

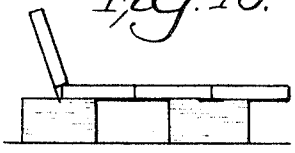


Fig. 17

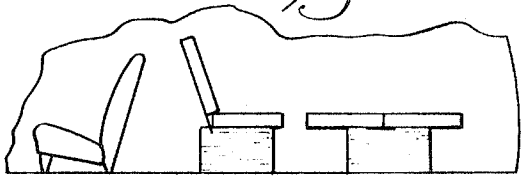


Fig. 18.

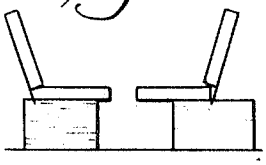
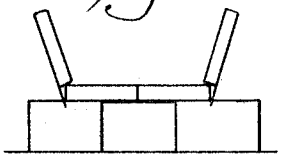


Fig. 19.



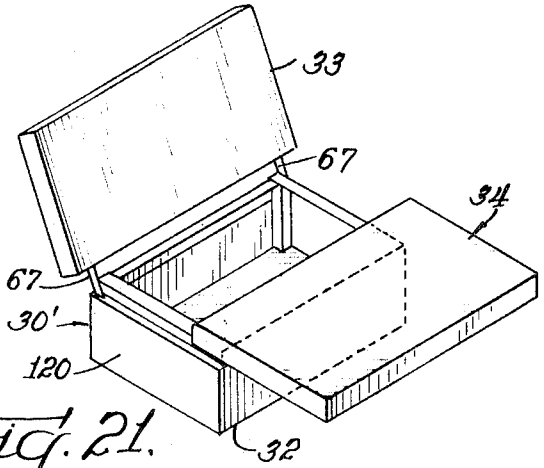
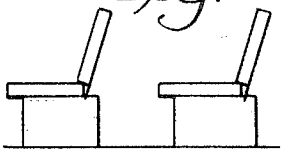


Fig. 21.

Fig. 20



SEAT-BED

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The seat-bed of this invention is intended for use primarily in vehicles such as vans, buses, and other passenger utility-type vehicles to provide seats which are readily convertible into beds. Thus, the invention is particularly directed to the convenient conversion of such vehicles into camper use for camping trips, family outings, hunting and fishing trips. Seat-beds heretofore available, have been generally bulky and not particularly adaptable for quick installation and removal from a vehicle. Moreover, the seat-beds heretofore available have not been suitable for convenient removal from a vehicle and installation in a cabin or on a raised tent platform, for example. Moreover, the seat-beds heretofore available have been so bulky and inconvenient and difficult to assemble, generally, that their design did not lend itself to merchandising through mail order outlets, and did not lend itself to convenient installation by the vehicle owner himself. Also, when the seat-beds heretofore available were installed in a vehicle, it was substantially a permanent installation making it extremely difficult to return the vehicle, such as a van, to utility conditions with the seats removed therefrom. It is an object of this invention to provide a seat-bed arrangement for use in vehicles which can be converted, without tools, to a large number of different positions and arrangements.

It would also be highly desirable to provide a seat-bed which is extremely adaptable to a large number of different positions without disturbing the condition of the the base of the seat-bed.

It is an important object of this invention to provide a seat-bed which can be used in conjunction with another identical seat-bed to provide adaptability so that the individual seats can be conveniently adjusted to face each other, to both face frontwardly, to both face rearwardly, to convert the combined unit into a lounge arrangement, to bring the unit into a butting relationship, to permit the unit to be used en route as a sleeper-playpen for small children, etc. It is also an important object of this invention to provide a seat-bed which is readily installed using simple tools, and which can be shipped in a relatively compact package to facilitate distribution to users through mail order outlets.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The seat-bed in accordance with this invention includes a base means, back means, and platform means, the base means having horizontal slide or track means at the top thereof. The platform means includes mating slide or track for releasably securing the platform means to the base means, to provide for movement in a front and back direction of the platform means on the base means. The back means includes a plurality of arm members extending from the bottom of the back means, and a planar hind surface. The back arms are insertable under the seat means when the seat means in secured to the frame means. The planar hind surface of the back means rests on the horizontal slide means of the base when the back arms are inserted under the seat.

DESIGNATION OF THE FIGS. OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a side elevational view showing a pair of the seat-beds fixed to a floor in juxtaposition.

FIG. 2 is a plan view of the hind side of the back.

FIG. 3 is a plan view taken approximately along the line 3–3 of FIG. 1.

FIG. 4 is a fragmentary plan view taken approximately along the line 4–4 of FIG. 1.

FIG. 5 is an enlarged fragmentary elevational view showing detail of construction, and showing the seat and back in a moved position.

FIG. 6 is a perspective view of a slide element which is secured to the underside of the seat platform in accordance with this invention.

FIG. 7 is an elevational view taken approximately along the line 7–7 of FIG. 6.

FIG. 8 is a perspective view of a slide means which is secured to the base.

FIG. 9 is a perspective view of the supporting structural framing member which engages the back arm and which assists in the supporting of the back in the upright position.

FIG. 10 is an enlarged fragmentary cross-sectional view taken approximately along the line 10–10 of FIG. 5. FIGS. 6, 8, and 9 are positioned on the sheet of drawings to show the relative positions of the components shown in FIGS. 8 and 9 which are affixed to the frame and to show the orientation of the components shown in FIG. 6 with respect to the components shown in FIG. 8.

FIGS. 11 to 20 illustrate the various positions and arrangements which are possible in accordance with the preferred embodiment of this invention using a pair of seat-beds of this invention.

FIG. 21 illustrates the appearance of a preferred embodiment of this invention in which the base-framing members are enclosed by panels to provide storage space therein.

DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

In accordance with this invention, seat-bed generally 30 includes base means 32, back means 33 and platform means 34.

Base means 32 includes vertical legs 36 preferably made from U-shaped metal stock, and base crosspiece 37 preferably made of angle stock to facilitate attachment of crosspiece 37 to floor 38. Legs 36 preferably include upper rounded corner 39 to facilitate pivoting of legs 36 around nut and bolt 41 which extends through a front or back horizontal crosspiece 42, 42'. It is preferred that the upper ends 43 of legs 36 butt base members which are fixed to the frame or base means 32 to enhance rigidity. When leg assembly 35 is in upright position as illustrated in FIG. 10, it is preferred that the position be doubly secured by second nut and bolt 45. Extending horizontally between legs 36 is inverted U-shaped horizontal member 47 secured to underside of horizontal member 42, 42' by nuts and bolts 48 passing through holes 49 and member 47.

Thus, each leg assembly 35, comprising legs 36 and base crosspieces 37, pivots inwardly around nuts and bolts 41, and is limited in its outward pivoting by abutment with crosspiece 47. It is preferred that legs 36 be secured at crosspieces 47 by suitable means such as nuts and bolts 50. Secured to the upper edge of horizontal crosspiece 42 is first slide means 55 which extends front and back and which constitutes the very topmost part of base means 32. First slide means 55 is fastened to horizontal crossmembers 42 by nuts and bolts 56 which pass through holes 57. First slide means or rail generally 55, includes a planar base 59, short vertical member 60 which runs the entire length of slide means 55 along one edge thereof, and slightly elevated ledge 61 which folds back toward the direction of elevated member 60 and which also runs the entire length of the edge of slide means 55 opposite the edge which includes vertical member 60. Thus, it is noted that even though members 47 and 55 are important functioning members in the operation of the seat-bed of this invention, they serve as important structural members adding to the strength and rigidity of base means 32.

Back means 33 includes cushion 53, planar backing member 65 at hind side of back means 33, and a plurality of legs 67. Legs 67 extend from that back edge 68 of back means 33, which is downward when back means is in the relatively upward position indicated at the left of FIG. 1, which is also the inner edge 68 when back means 33 is in the down position as indicated at the unit at the right of FIG. 1. It is noted that legs 67 are merely extensions of angle members 69 which are secured to hindmost surface 70 of planar back member 65. It will be appreciated from a consideration of the operation of the novel seat-bed of this invention that it is necessary that legs 67 extend outwardly beyond edge 68 in a plane which is hindwardly or below the plane of surface 70 when the surface is upright or horizontal, respectively. Moreover, it will be

better appreciated from the discussion hereinafter that it is also preferred that legs **67** and members **69** be positioned symmetrically on backing member **65** so that the distances from the center to the members is equal at all points.

In the illustrated embodiment member **69** is manufactured from angular stock, one base **71** being attached to backing member **65**, and the portion **72** which is perpendicular to surface **70** assists in maintaining the back means in the proper alignment when the back means **33** is in the down position. However, elevated portion **72** also includes hole **74** for receiving stop means which will be described hereinafter. The outermost end **75** of legs **67** is at sufficient length from backing member **65** to rest on crosspiece **47**. Pin **76** is welded securely to legs **67** and extends beyond end **75** of legs **67**. The particular function of hole **74** and pin **76** in supporting back means **33** in an upright position will be described in detail hereinafter.

Platform means, generally **34**, include seat cushion **80**, rigid backing member **81**, second slide means or rail **83**, and stop means generally **84**. Slide means **83** include a flat base portion **86** which is secured to backing member **81** by screws **87** which pass through holes **88** into backing member **81**. Dependent skirts **90, 91** extend along the entire length of base portion **86** of slide means **83**. Flange **93** extends outwardly from the bottom of skirt **91** and it also runs the entire length of skirt **91**. Slide means **83** can be considered to provide an inverted "U," the crosspiece of which is base portion **86** and the open arms of which are skirts or curtains **90** and **91**. Within the enclosure of the inverted "U," in the illustrated embodiment, is retaining member **95** consisting of flat base portion **96** and tab **97** perpendicular to flat base portion **96**. It is noted that tab **97** is spaced apart from skirt **90** to provide gap **98** between tab **97** and skirt **90**. A series of holes **100** are provided in a line through skirts **91** and **90** and tab **97**. Base portion **96** of retainer **95** is secured to base portion **86** by suitable means such as spot welding. Preferably a pair of slide members **83** are positioned symmetrically on the bottom of backing plate or member **81** so that the members **83** are equidistant from a centerline of backing member **81**. Thus, during assembly, platform means **34** is attached slideably to base means **32** by sliding members **83** into base slide **55** starting at one edge as suggested in FIG. **21**. Flange **93** mates with overlying edge **61** and vertical member **60** resides in gap **98** between vertical member **97** and **90**. As a greater portion of first slide **55** and second slide **83** come into engagement, and particularly when pairs of these slides are used in symmetry on opposite sides of seat means **34**, seat means **34** becomes fixed with respect to motion in virtually every direction save the front and back direction parallel to slides **83** and **55**. It is manifest from the above description and from the drawings attached thereto that slide means **83** and **55** must be positioned on their respective backing members **81** and **55** to mate as shown in FIG. **10**. Thus, retainer member **95** assists in the maintaining of slide means **83** in mating relationship with slide means **55** although use of symmetrical opposing pairs of slide means **83** and **55** on opposite ends of seat means **34** with flanges **93** being directed toward the middle of the seat makes it impossible, for this additional reason, for seat slide means **83** to be removed from base slide means **55** other than by sliding in the front or back direction. This also makes possible the insertion of platform means **34** onto base means **32** in either direction, from front or back.

Retainer member **95** also serves to maintain stop means **84** and particularly bolt **101** passing through holes **100** in proper alignment with the holes **100** in skirt **90**. Stop means or locking mechanism, generally **84**, includes bolt **101** passing through holes **100**, washers **102**, spring **103** and cotter pin **104**. Bolt mechanism **84** can be controlled manually by pulling centerwardly on bolts **84** or by pulling cable **106** to simultaneously partially withdraw bolts on both sides of the seat-bed as perhaps best appreciated from consideration of FIG. **3**. Bolt **101**, passing through either hole **107**, **108**, or **109** in vertical member **60** thus serves to lock the front back position of seat means **34** on base means **32**.

OVERALL OPERATION

In accordance with a preferred embodiment of this invention, leg assembly **35**, comprising legs **36** and floor crosspiece **37**, is initially attached to base means **32** solely by nut and bolt **41**; and seat-bed **30** is shipped with leg assembly **35** pivoted to the folded-in condition, and with platform slide **83** mating with base slide **55**. Back means **33** are shipped separated from base **32** and platform **34** and lying flat with cushion **53** facing cushion **80**. Thus, the seat-bed of this invention is readily shipped in a relatively compact package. On being set up for use, leg assemblies **35** are pivoted outwardly, nuts and bolts **41** are tightened, and nut and bolts **45** and **50** are inserted to thereby secure leg assembly **36** from movement in any direction. Stop means **84** is drawn inwardly to withdraw bolt **101** from hole **107** and permit slide means **83** to move along slide means **55** to a desired position, for example, to bring bolt **101** into alignment with hole **107**. Back means **33** can be positioned in an up position, for example, by inserting pin **76** in hole **107'** in crosspiece **47** which is fixed to base means **32** and this brings hole **74** into alignment with holes **100**, thus permitting bolts **101** to pass through holes **74** in leg members **72**. It will be appreciated that when legs **67** are arranged to reside outside of, or laterally with respect to slide means **83**, **55**, as illustrated in FIG. **10**, lateral movement of back means **33** is prevented. In this configuration bottom end **75** of leg **67** rests on crossmember **47**, and pin **76** residing in hole **107'** prevents pivoting of leg **67** around bolt **101** which passes through hole **74**. Release of bolt **101** by pulling on cable **106** or manually withdrawing bolt **101** from both sides, permits seat platform means, generally **34**, to slide in a front and back direction e.g., away from back member **33** as suggested in FIG. **21**. In this condition, e.g. as shown in FIG. **21**, back means **33** can be removed from base means **32** by simply lifting back means **33** upwardly a short distance. Back means **33** can be laid to rest on slide means **55**, in which condition back means **33** contacts slide means **55** at surface **70** which is hindmost surface of backing member **65**. Since legs **67**, and generally speaking angle members **69**, reside in a plane rearwardly of backing member **65** when the seat is in the up position and below the plane of surface **70** of backing member **65** when the seat is in horizontal position, legs **67** of back means **33** can and do pass below seat means **34** when the seat, in the horizontal position, is moved along slide means **55** to bring edge **68** of backing means into abutment with the rearward edge **111** of cushion **80** as indicated in the right hand unit in FIG. **1**. In this condition both seat means **34** and back means **33** can slide along in a front and back direction on base means **32**. It is preferred that a plurality of stop holes **113** be provided to engage outwardly biased bolt **101** to limit front and back movement of seat means **34**. It is more preferred that holes **113** be sized to permit only tapered end **114** of bolt **101** to pass into hole **113**, thereby preventing the passage of bolt **101** through holes **113**, leaving no opportunity for bolt **101** to engage or obstruct the free movement of back means **33** and more particularly leg means **67** from passing alongside vertical member **60** independently of seat means **34**. Thus, upon movement of the unit illustrated in FIG. **1** in which back means **33** and seat means **34** on both units are positioned in the horizontal orientation as suggested in FIG. **1**, from the condition indicated by the letter "A" to the position marked by the letter "B" in FIG. **1**, a configuration substantially that illustrated in FIG. **15** is achieved, in which case the pair of seats is converted to a highly useful and practical bed. As presented in FIG. **3**, slide means **83** are shown with backing member **81** removed, for the sake of clarity and simplicity of illustration. Thus, as viewed from the top, one would not normally observe bolt **101** within the enclosed channel formed by slide means **83** and **55**. However, FIG. **3** is valuable as illustrating what is meant by opposed symmetrical positioning of the members **83**, **55**. Thus, it is apparent from the consideration of FIG. **3** that platform means **34** can be withdrawn from base means **32**, rotated in a horizontal plane 180°, and reinserted in the opposite direction along slide means **55** of base means **32**. It is further noted that holes

drilled in vertical member **60** of slide **55** are positioned such that all holes are symmetrically positioned inasmuch as holes will be positioned opposite one another when two members **55** are placed next to each other with vertical members **60** into abutment with each other. For example, in an embodiment in which slides **55** are 20 inches long, holes are preferably positioned in member **60** at center, and 1 inch, 3 inches 8½ (in both directions) from center. Likewise, the holes **107** and **108** etc. in base crosspiece **47** are also symmetrically positioned so that two members **47** have opposing holes whether the pieces are laid next to each other or one of the pieces is rotated 180° and then laid next to each other. In this manner there is no right side or left side with respect to the individual pieces and any piece **47, 55, 83** can be used on either side of the seat-bed of this invention. Stop means, e.g. holes **107, 108, 109, 113** are preferably provided to secure the horizontally slidable members e.g. **32**, in every intended operating position.

Ordinarily, retaining member **95** is welded to one end or the other of member **83** so that any given seat-retaining member **95** is slightly behind rearward edge **111** of platform means **34**. Once retaining member **95** is welded into position, that piece is either a right-side or left-side piece, unless members **95** are positioned at both ends of member **83**. Bolt **101** and the corresponding members on the other side are positioned to serve the double purpose of not only locking slide means **83** with respect to base slide **55**, but furthermore for the purpose of engaging leg **67** to support back means **33** in upward position.

Upon withdrawal of platform means **34** to the right and sliding it off the right side of the unit as illustrated in FIG. **1**, and rotating platform means **34** in the horizontal plane 180°, and reinserting platform means **34** on base means **32**, the back can be attached to base means **34** in the identical manner illustrated above to provide the structure illustrated in FIG. **12** attached hereto. FIG. **11**, of course, represents the configuration with both backs in the "up position" as illustrated in FIG. **1**. Upon release of bolt **101** and sliding seat means of the left-hand unit forward, followed by lifting of back means **33** and placing back means **33** next to platform means **34**, the condition prevailing in the left-hand unit of FIG. **13** is obtained.

Release of bolts **101** in the right-hand member, the sliding of platform means **34** toward the left-hand unit, and the moving of back means **33** centerwardly to bring back means pin **76** into engagement with hole **115** and hole **74** directly opposite center hole **109**, reorients the members so that bolt **101** can again pass through all members including vertical member **60** at hole **109** and leg means **67** at hole **74** to again lock the back means in an upright position approximately midway at the base of the unit. The latter mentioned step provides the orientation illustrated in FIG. **13**. In a similar manner, the details of the steps of which will not be repeated herein insofar as they are substantially identical to the steps described hereinbefore, a pair of seat means can be arranged in back to back position illustrated in FIG. **14**, in either frontwardly or rearwardly facing lounge positions illustrated in FIGS. **13** and **16**, seat-work space configuration illustrated in FIG. **17**, which of course can also be arranged in a frontwardly facing direction and in the face to face arrangement illustrated in FIGS. **18** and **19** in which the seats are either brought into close proximity as illustrated in FIG. **18**, or brought into abutting relationship as illustrated in FIG. **19**. It is noted that the arrangement of FIG. **19** is particularly useful as a confining arrangement for use as a playpen or the like for permitting small children a limited degree of freedom. Likewise, both seats can be faced in the same direction, as illustrated in FIG. **20**, opposite to the direction illustrated in FIG. **11**. It is noteworthy that all the various arrangements of seats illustrated in FIGS. **11** to **20** are achieved without moving or changing the position of base means **34**, and without the use of tools of any sort.

In a particularly preferred embodiment, side panels **120** are attached to structural members of base means **32** to enclose the area under the seats to provide highly useful storage area accessible through the top platform. It should be noted that leg **67** is preferably arranged in such an upright position that when seat means **34** is drawn forward, leg **67**, secured by pin **76** in crossmember **47**, rests against adjacent crossmember **42**, **42'** as perhaps best illustrated in FIG. **1**. Thus, there is a minimum of strain of pin **76** in hole **49** even when seat means **34** is moved forward. This is highly desirable, i.e. the configuration in which bolts **101** are not required to secure leg **67** in upright position when seat means **34** is moved forward to make accessible the storage area under seat **34**.

ACHIEVEMENT

Thus it will be apparent upon consideration of the disclosure of this specification that the seat-bed of this invention is highly adaptable to a very large number of orientations and arrangements without the necessity of removal of base means **32** and without the use of tools. Moreover, the seat-bed of this invention readily converts from a seating condition in which back means **33** is secured in an "up" position, to a bed in which the back means is secured in a "down" position without the use of tools and with a minimum of time. It is further apparent that the preferred seat-bed of this invention can be shipped or stored in a compact condition with the back means **33** lying on face-to-face abutment with platform means **34** and with leg assembly **35** folded or pivoted upwardly to provide a relatively narrow package. Furthermore, by use of symmetrical slide members and back-engaging crossmembers, an absolute minimum of parts are required for the manufacture and assembly of the unit. The latter consideration are extremely important from the practical economic point of view. The first-mentioned considerations are extremely important from the utility and use point of view.

I claim:

1. A convertible seat-bed including: base means, back means, and platform means; said base means including first slide means at the top thereof and above the remainder of the base means; said platform means including a cushion at the top thereof; second slide means at the bottom of the platform means, a portion of said second slide means engaging a mating portion of said first slide means, said first and second slide means when mated positioning the platform means above the remainder of the base means with a space therebetween, providing for movement of said platform means with respect to said base means along a first horizontal line, and arresting movement of said platform means in any other direction; said back means including a cushion and a planar hind member, a plurality of arms extending beyond said planar member and beyond the rest of the back member, said arms residing in a plane which is parallel to the plane of said planar hind member, said arms extending downwardly when the back is in its relatively upright condition; said seat-bed also including releasably stop means for securing said platform means to said first slide means, at a plurality of platform positions thereon and releasable support means for securing said back to said base means in a plurality of relatively upright back positions, adjacent the platform means when the platform means are in one of the corresponding platform positions; said arms being inserted in said space under said platform means when the back means is positioned horizontally on said base means, in which condition the planar hind member rests on said first slide means and is anchored vertically by its position between the base means and the platform means; said combination including a planar floor support; said base means fixed to said floor support in such spaced-apart juxtaposition that said seat means and said back means, when lying horizontally on said first slide means of their respective base means, form a continuous bed.

2. The seat-bed of claim **1** in which the base means includes a pair of pivotal leg assemblies and includes: means for pivoting each of said leg assemblies through an arc from horizontally under the seat means to vertical position, the center of the pivot being near the lateral edge of the seat-bed; and means for preventing further pivoting of the seat assemblies in an outward direction beyond said vertical position.

3. The seat-bed of claim 1 in which the base means includes wall means for enclosing the space within the base means.

4. In a convertible seat-bed having a seat with a cushion side and a mounting side, a back with a cushion side and a mounting side, and a frame, the improvement wherein said frame comprises:

a base having a top which is generally rectangular with two sides and two ends, said seat being positioned over said base with its mounting said adjacent the base;

a pair of crosspieces positioned respectively outboard of the ends, below and parallel to the ends and approximately the length of the ends;

a pair of generally horizontal base rails extending between said sides, each rail being adjacent a respective end and fastened to said base;

a pair of seat rails each supported on a respective base rail and fastened to the mounting side of the seat;

means releasably connecting said seat rails to said base rails;

a back support secured to the mounting side of the back and forming two legs, each of said legs being outboard a respective end extending downwardly from the respective end to about the respective crosspiece, said back support supporting said back in an upright position with respect to the seat, said legs being inwardly of the ends at the back; and

releasable mounting means connecting each leg to the respective end and connecting each leg to the respective crosspiece;

said seat overhanging said base at said ends,

whereby said releasable mounting means may be released and said back removed, said releasable connecting means may be released and said seat moved to a position at which it is approximately half overhanging said base thereby exposing portions of said rails, and said back mounting side positioned on the exposed portion of the rails with said legs hooked below the seat mounting side.

5. In a convertible seat-bed as set forth in claim 4, wherein said releasable connecting means and said releasable mounting means include:

said rails and said legs having a horizontally aligned series of openings therethrough,

a latch bolt movable through said openings, in a direction generally parallel to the top sides, and resiliently urged toward the respective ends, and

a pin and socket combination for each leg with one being on the leg and the other being on the respective crosspiece, said combination being aligned so that an upward movement of the leg will withdraw the pin from the socket.