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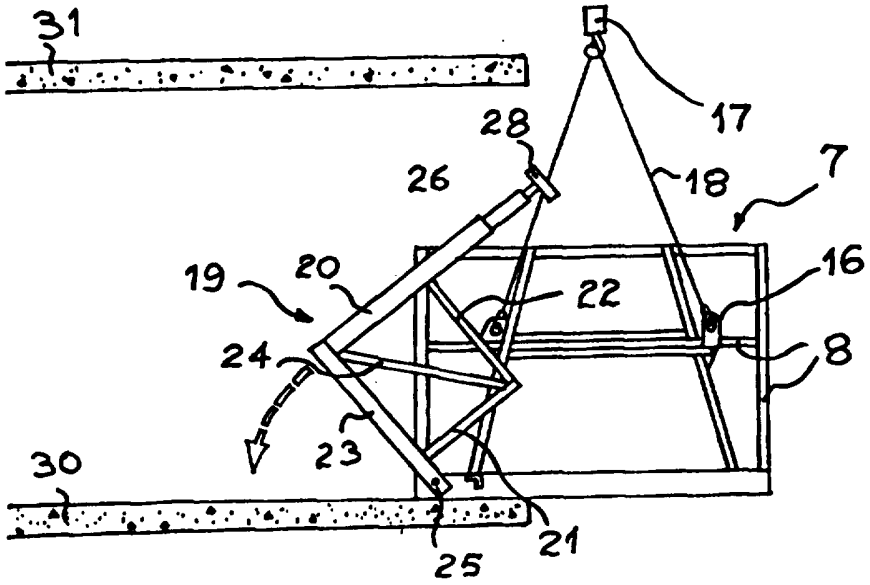
(54) Title: SUSPENDABLE CONTAINER

(57) Abstract

A suspendable container comprising a container body (7), anchorage means (19) carried by the body (7) and being movable from a transport position wherein said anchorage means is retracted to an in-use position wherein said anchorage means protrude from the container body, and releasable means, such as pin (37) to lock said anchorage means in the in-use position; the anchorage means (19) when in the in-use position, being able to be affixed to an exposed intermediate floor of a building and thereafter fixedly secure said container body relative to that floor. The anchorage means (19) comprising two frames each of which is pivotally connected to the body (7). Each frame having one or more props (26) vertically extendable when said frames are in the in-use position.



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SUSPENDABLE CONTAINER

Technical Field

This invention relates to load carriers of the kind used to deliver building supplies or other material to, and remove surplus material and debris or the like from individual floors of a multi-storey building under construction, usually before the building's external skin has been put in place.

Background

Formerly, when delivering material to or from an intermediate floor of a building under construction, that is to say a floor other than the top floor or the ground floor, it was the practice to bring the carrier into position beside the exposed edge of the floor by crane, and then load or unload the carrier while it was suspended from the crane hook. This involved shifting material across the gap between the edge of the floor and the swinging carrier. This obviously dangerous practice has now been largely discontinued. It is now more usual to provide temporary landing platforms which project from the floor and upon which the load carrier may be deposited for unloading and loading.

Such landing platforms are expensive and often constitute an inconvenient obstruction to other crane operations. Therefore, there has been a need for a load carrier which is able to be easily and safely secured to a building while suspended from a crane and which thereafter may be safely loaded and unloaded following disconnection from the crane.

An object of the present invention is to meet that need.

Another object is to provide a fully self-contained freight container that may be packed with goods or other material at a manufacturer's or wholesaler's

premises, carried to a building site, lifted by crane to an intermediate floor, secured to that floor and unloaded for return to the supplier without need for outside equipment other than the lifting crane.

Disclosure of Invention

In one aspect the present invention is a suspendable container comprising a container body, anchorage means carried by said body and being movable from a transport position wherein said anchorage means are retracted to an in-use position wherein said anchorage means protrude from the container body, and releasable means to lock said anchorage means in the in-use position; said anchorage means when in the in-use position, being able to be affixed to an exposed intermediate floor of a building and thereafter fixedly secure said container body relative to that floor.

Preferably said anchorage means comprises one or more props vertically extendable when said anchorage means is in the in-use position. Also, said anchorage preferably comprises at least one frame on which the props are fixed.

Preferably the frame is pivotably connected to said container body. Alternatively, the frame may be in slidable engagement with said container body.

Preferably the container body comprises one or more movable sling attachments slidable along one or more guide rails. The sling attachments may be connected to respective handle members.

In a second aspect the present invention is a suspendable container comprising a container body and an anchorage means adapted to be affixed to

an exposed intermediate floor of a building, wherein said anchorage means is detachably connected to said container body.

Preferably said anchorage means comprises a frame with at least one or more extendable props.

Preferably the container body comprises one or more movable sling attachments slidable along one or more guide rails. The sling attachments may be connected to respective handle members.

By way of example, an embodiment of the above described invention is described in more detail hereinafter with reference to the accompanying drawings.

Brief Description of Drawings

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a suspendable container according to the invention with its anchorage means in their in-use position.

Figures 2 to 7 are side elevations of the container of figure 1 showing it in successive stages of its approach to and affixture to an intermediate building floor.

Figure 8 is an enlarged perspective view of a portion of the container of figure 1 showing the details of a movable sling anchorage.

Figure 9 is a side elevation of a load carrier according to a second aspect of the invention being brought into juxtaposition with a floor.

Figure 10 is a view similar to figure 9 showing the load carrier of figure 9 lodged between two floors.

Figure 11 is a view similar to figure 9 showing the load carrier being unloaded.

Figure 12 is a view similar to figure 9 showing the container of the carrier of figure 9 being removed and the cantilever support means being left in place.

Figure 13 is a perspective view of the figure 12 matter drawn to a larger scale.

Figure 14 is a view similar to figure 10 of another embodiment of the second aspect of the invention.

Figure 15 is a perspective view of the container of the figure 14 embodiment, drawn to a larger scale.

Figure 16 is a view similar to figure 14 of another embodiment of the second aspect of the invention.

Mode for carrying out Invention

In a first aspect of the invention as shown in Figures 1 to 8, a container comprises a container body 7 comprising a robust, fabricated, skeletal frame 8 supporting, and clad with, a floor panel 9, and mesh side wall panels 10. The container body 7 further comprises upper front swing doors 11, lower front swing doors 12, a fixed or removable upper rear wall panel 13 and a drop down rear door 14. For the sake of clarity those panels and doors have been omitted from figures 2 to 8. The front doors 11 and 12 may be opened to permit the

container body 7 to be loaded and unloaded. The doors 12 and 14 may be opened when the illustrated container is to be used purely as a crane load carrier and long articles are to be lifted or lowered, which articles may lie on the floor 9 and protrude at each end of the container body through the open doors 12 and 14.

The illustrated container is adapted to be slung from a crane hook 17 by means of slings 18 or the like and to facilitate this is provided with fixed sling attachments 15 and novel, movable sling attachments 16 described more fully hereinafter. In other embodiments any conventional arrangements may be present to enable the container to be suspended from a crane hook or the like.

Anchorage means 19 are carried permanently by the container body 7. In the present instance the anchorage means comprise two separate assemblies, positioned one on each side of the container body 7. Each such assembly comprises an essentially square frame comprising (when in the in-use position) front and rear vertical members 20 and 21 respectively, upper and lower horizontal members 22 and 23 respectively and a diagonal brace 24. The member 23 of each assembly is pivoted to the frame 7 at 25, and thus each assembly may be swung by hand from the non-protrudent (or retracted) transport position shown in figures 2 and 3 to the protrudent in-use position shown in figures 1, 5, 6 and 7, and vice versa.

The front members 20 are the outer members of telescopically extendable props in the nature of screw or hydraulic jacks. For example, each member 20 may be a length of Rectangular Hollow Section (RHS) able to receive, to a greater or lesser extent, a smaller sized RHS extension piece 26 able to be pinned or otherwise fixed by conventional means (not shown) at each of a plurality of selectable positions to the outer member 20. Each inner member 26 may receive a non-rotatable jack screw 27, furnished with a

rotatable, and maybe self-aligning, pressure pad 28, and wing nut 29 adapted to bear against the end of the outer member 20.

Thus it will be apparent that the props may be extended to cause them to bear firmly against each of two adjacent building floors 30 and 31, as seen in figures 5, 6 and 7. In other, less preferred embodiments the jack screw may be dispensed with and simple wedges used to take up the space between the ends of members 26 and floor 31. In still other embodiments the props may be hydraulic cylinder and piston assemblies with manual pump means for pressurising same to cause extension thereof, as will be well understood to a person skilled in the art.

The functioning of the illustrated embodiment of the invention is readily seen from the drawings. First, the loaded container may be lifted to a position adjacent the edges of the two floors and slightly above floor 30 (figure 2). It may then be moved partly inboard of the floor edges and lowered to contact floor 30 while remaining suspended on the crane hook 17 (figure 3). The anchorage means 19 may then be pivoted by hand into the in-use position (figure 4). The two props are then extended to jam the anchorage means into fixed engagement with the two floors 30 and 31 (figure 5). Then each anchorage assembly is locked in place by securing the corner portion of each assembly at the junction of members 21 and 22 to the then adjacent upright member of the container body frame 8, by means of pins 37, utilising clearance holes through the respective members provided for the purpose. For preference pins 37 are captive, self-locking pins of known kind, however, bolts or other releasable conventional fasteners may be used. Next the props are re-tightened or checked for tightness and the crane hook lowered to slacken the slings 18.

This enables an operator to unhook the slings from the sling anchorages. However it may be that the nature of the load in the container

prevents access to the remote sling anchorage 16 from within the container. Thus those anchorages are designed to be able to be shifted towards the front of the container by an operator who is outside the container. To that end each anchorage 16 comprises an anchor plate 32 loosely but permanently held by a headed pin 33, extending through a slotted guide rail 34 constituting a member of the frame 8. A pull rod 35 or other tensile member extends from the pin 33 through eyes or other supporting means (not shown) to the front of the container body. The slot in the guide rail 34 has an upturned end portion 36 in which the pin 33 may be lodged. Tension in the relevant sling 18 keeps the pin fixed in that end portion while the container is suspended, but when the sling tension is relaxed the operator may pull on the rod 35 to draw the anchor plate towards him (figure 6) until he is able to reach it and unhook the sling. Thereafter the slings 18 may be lifted away and the container entered by the operator for unloading (figure 7).

It will be clear from the foregoing that the preferred anchorage means affix the container in position by virtue of the fact that the feet of the props 20 cannot rise, so that the front end of the container body cannot rise so preventing the container body from rotating about the edge of the floor 30. Other anchorage means preventing such rotation may be used in other embodiments. In particular, extendable members corresponding to props 20 may be pivoted directly to the container body at 25. Such props may be swung from a generally horizontal transport position to an upright in-use position, then extended to clamp against floor 31, and thereafter locked in the upright position.

It should be readily understood that in other not shown embodiments the suspendable container may differ in shape and configuration. For instance, in a not shown embodiment each frame of the anchorage means may carry two or more props, rather than a single prop. Also, in a further not shown embodiment

the two frames of of the earlier shown embodiment of the anchorage means may be replaced by a single frame.

Also, whilst the earlier shown embodiment depicts an anchorage means 19 which comprises frames pivotal with respect to the container body 7, a further not shown embodiment may utilise one or more frames which are slidably connected to the container body, and may be moved between a retracted transportable position and an extended (protruded) in-use position.

In a second aspect of the invention a load carrier illustrated by figures 9 to 13 comprises a container 110 and anchorage means 111.

The container 110 may be a walk-in cubicle comprising a fabricated frame, comprising floor members 112 corner posts 113 and side ribs 114, carrying wall panels 115, a floor panel (not seen), and front doors 116.

Sling anchorages 117 comprising studs, eyes or other conventional devices are provided at or near each end of the ribs 114 for the attachment of slings 118 whereby the carrier may be suspended from a crane hook 119. For preference intermediate sling anchorages are provided between the end anchorages 117, to enable adjustment of the slings 118 to suit unbalanced loads in the container 110, or to provide a better balance between an empty container 110 and its cantilever support means 111, for example as shown in ghost in figures 9 and 10.

The anchorage means 111 comprise two bearers 120 adapted to rest on the lower floor 121 of a pair of adjacent floors 121 and 122 of a building under construction, four corner posts 123, two side members 124 and four top braces 125, all constituting a generally cubical, rigid frame.

The anchorage means 111 further comprise a projecting rear portion comprising extensions of the bearers 120 and side members 124 and rigidifying braces 126. The extensions of the bearers 120 and members 124 are furnished with eyes or pin clearance holes 127 positioned so as to be able to be brought into respective register with similar holes 128 in short, forwardly projecting lugs or the like on the ends of the side floor members 112 and side ribs 114 of the container 110. Thus, coupling pins or the like may be inserted through the respective pairs of holes to secure the container 110 to the support means 111, and of course removed later to separate those components when the container is not supported by the support means. It will be appreciated that other conventional coupling means may be used for this purpose. It will also be appreciated that, in other embodiments, the container and the anchorage means are permanently united.

The anchorage means 111 further comprise four clamps respectively associated with the corner posts 123. In this embodiment the each clamp comprises a clamping screw 129 projecting upwardly from the interior of its associated corner post 123, a pressure distributing pad 130 mounted on the free end of the screw 129 by means leaving it free to rotate about the axis of the screw and a wing nut 130 threaded upon the screw 129. The screw 129 may rise and fall within the corner post 23, but is keyed so as not to rotate therein.

Thus it will be clear that rotation of the wing nuts 131 will cause the screws to move axially up and down.

The operation of the load carrier of figures 9 to 13 will be readily apparent. The container 110 may be loaded at ground level. Then, with its anchorage means 111 attached it may be lifted by crane to the position shown in figure 9. It may then be manoeuvred by the crane into the position shown in figure 10. During that last operation the clamps are, of course, retracted. They

may then be extended to clamp the support means between the two floors. If desired the crane may then be removed to leave the container available at the floor for unloading or loading as the case may be, as shown in figure 11.

If desired the crane may be returned and the container alone lifted away after being uncoupled from the anchorage means 11. This leaves those means behind for receipt of a second container without them constituting an obstruction outboard of the building.

The load carrier illustrated by figures 14 and 15 is very similar to that of figure 9 and only the differences therebetween are detailed below. This embodiment comprises a container 210 which may be the same as container 110 except that the front sling anchorages 217 are lowered to the bottom front corners of the container. Also, for preference sling guides 232 may be provided to assist in stabilising the suspended carrier.

The anchorage means 211 of this embodiment are essentially the same as the support means 111, except for the omission of the extended rear portion and the shortening of the bearers 220, side ribs 224 and side top braces 225, by comparison with the corresponding components of the earlier described embodiment.

As can be seen from figure 14, the positioning of the front sling anchorages 217 ensures a degree of clearance between the front slings and the upper floor when the carrier is being emplaced, or when a container is being coupled to or uncoupled from the support means.

Such clearance may be obtained in other ways, for example, in other embodiments rigid, cruciform spreader devices may be provided, either detachably or permanently fixed to the container and providing a central point for attachment of a crane hook close to the top of the container.

The figure 16 embodiment is similar to the earlier described embodiments of the second aspect of the invention in principle and function, and once again only the salient differences are described. In this instance the cantilever support means 311 comprises four vertical frame members that project downwardly below the members 320 and are furnished with feet adapted to bear against a floor 321. This enables the support means to be used where the floor has a balustrade 334 or like formation preventing the support means from resting bodily on the floor surface, as in the earlier described embodiments. If desired the feet 333 may be telescopically extendable as well as or instead of the upper ends of the members 323. In this instance the container is held some distance above the floor 321, and a ramp 335 may be used to facilitate loading and unloading the container.

If desired, in respect of all illustrated embodiments of the second aspect of the invention, the front sling may be removed, once the front end of the support has been placed on a lower floor, especially if a tackle or other haulage device is available for drawing the support means into the floor while the rear sling supports the rear of the carrier.

It is emphasised that whereas the illustrated anchorage means are presently preferred, they may be replaced by other devices able to be fastened to a floor. In the ultimate they may comprise no more than a pair of beams projecting forwardly from the container at or closely below its floor level. In which event those beams require to be chocked or otherwise secured in position by separate suitable equipment. Also the slinging arrangements, in particular the positions of the sling anchorages may be modified in other versions of the invention. For instance the slidable sling attachments as detailed for the first aspect of invention may be used with the load carrier of the second aspect of invention. In other instances a pair of sling attachments may be provided on the anchorage means of the second aspect of invention.

CLAIMS

1. A suspendable container comprising a container body, anchorage means carried by said body and being movable from a transport position wherein said anchorage means are retracted to an in-use position wherein said anchorage means protrude from the container body, and releasable means to lock said anchorage means in the in-use position; said anchorage means when in the in-use position, being able to be affixed to an exposed intermediate floor of a building and thereafter fixedly secure said container body relative to that floor.

2. A suspendable container as claimed in Claim 1 wherein said anchorage means comprises one or more props vertically extendable when said anchorage means is in the in-use position.

3. A suspendable container as claimed in Claim 2 wherein said anchorage means comprises at least one frame on which said one or more extendable props are fixed.

4. A suspendable container as claimed in Claim 3 wherein said at least one frame is pivotably connected to said container body.

5. A suspendable container as claimed in Claim 3 wherein said at least one frame is slidably connected to said container body.

6. A suspendable container as claimed in Claim 1 wherein said container body comprises one or more movable sling attachments slidable along one or more guide rails.

7. A suspendable container as claimed in Claim 6 wherein each sling attachment is connected to a respective handle member.

8. A suspendable container as claimed in Claim 1 wherein said container body has at least one opening or door.

9. A suspendable container for attachment to a structure comprising a container body;
anchorage means comprising two frames each of which is pivotally connected to said body and being movable from a transport position wherein said frames are retracted to an in-use position wherein said frames protrude from the container body;
releasable means to lock said frames in the in-use position; and
wherein said frames each has one or more props vertically extendable when said frames are in the in-use position, thereby being able to be affixed to an exposed intermediate floor of a building and thereafter fixedly secure said container body relative to that floor.

10. A suspendable container comprising a container body and an anchorage means adapted to be affixed to an exposed intermediate floor of a building, wherein said anchorage means is detachably connected to said container body.

11. A suspendable container as claimed in Claim 8 wherein said anchorage means comprises a frame with at least one or more extendable props.

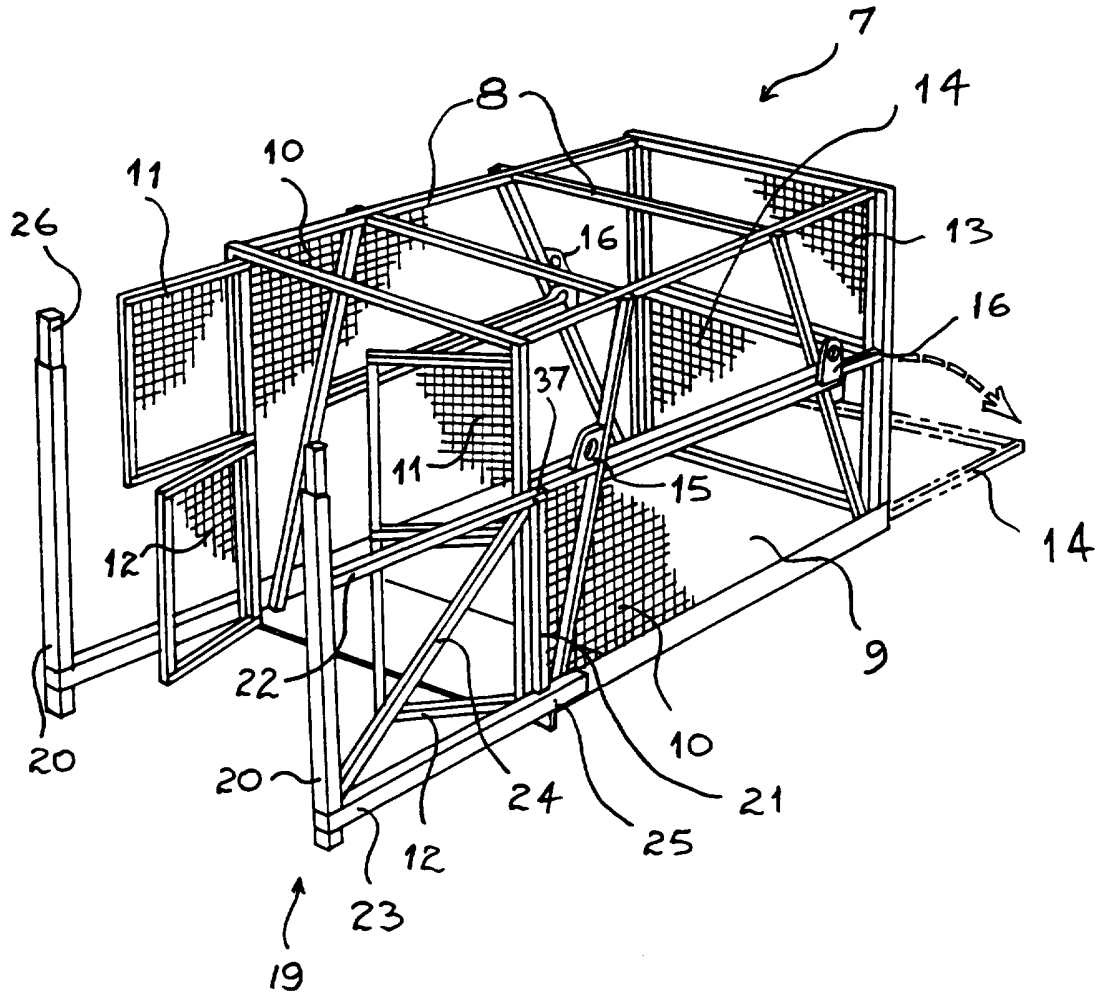

FIG. 1

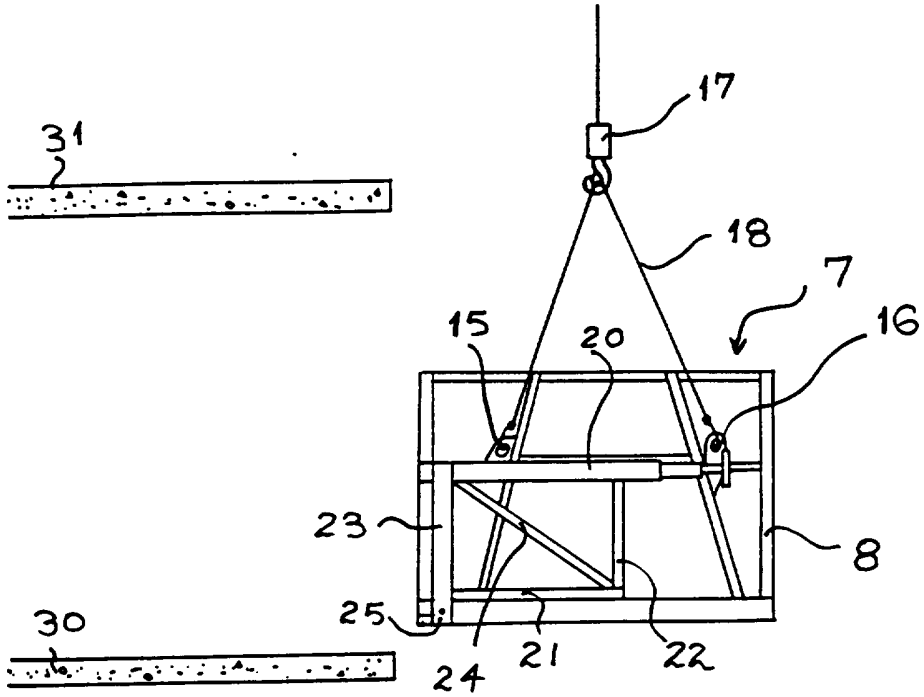
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FIG. 2

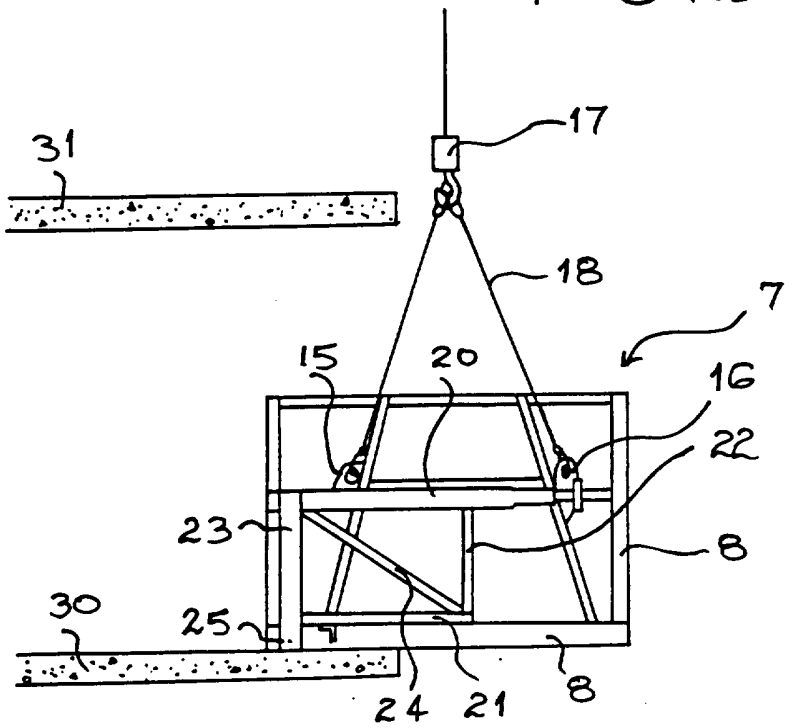
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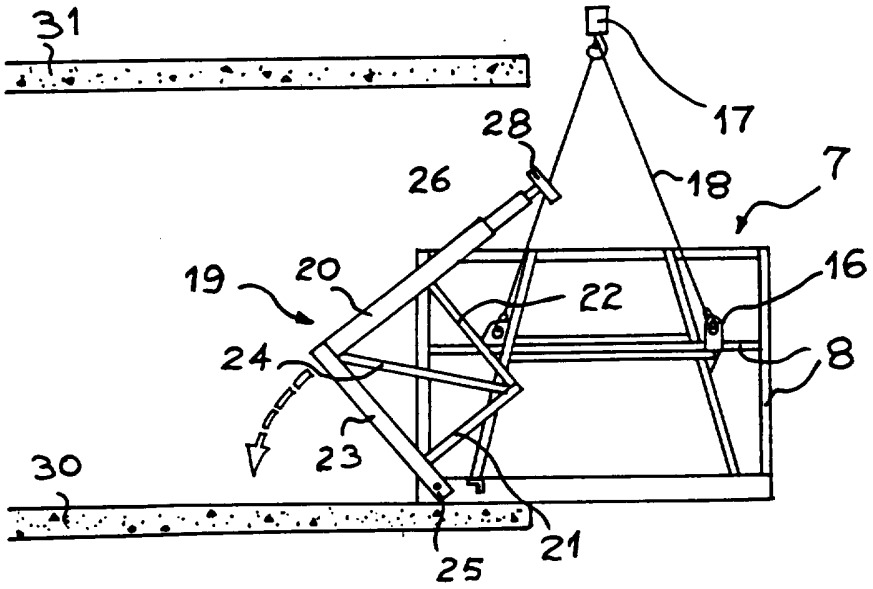
FIG. 3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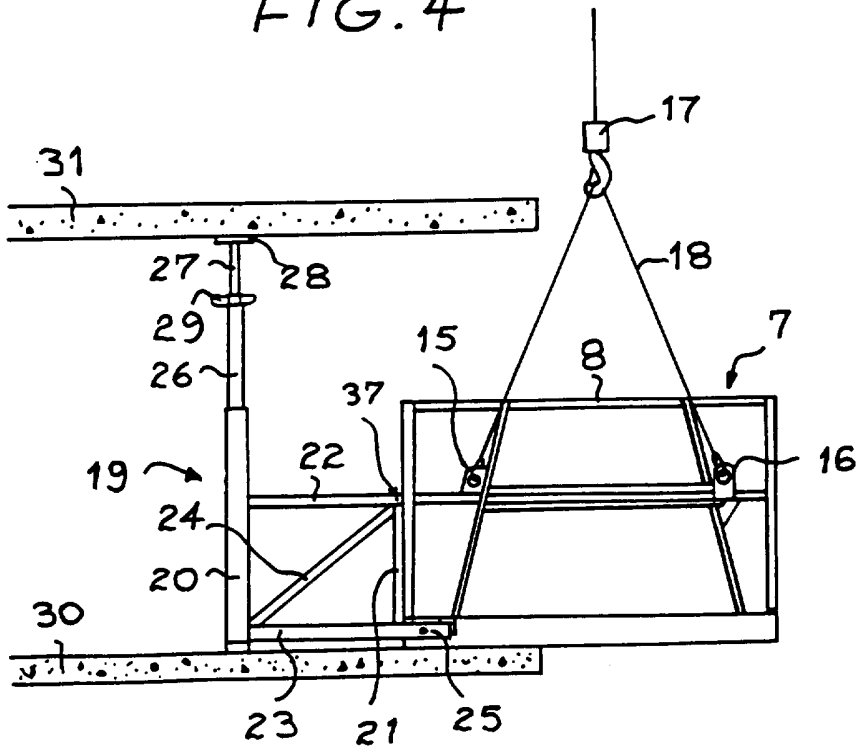
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FIG. 5

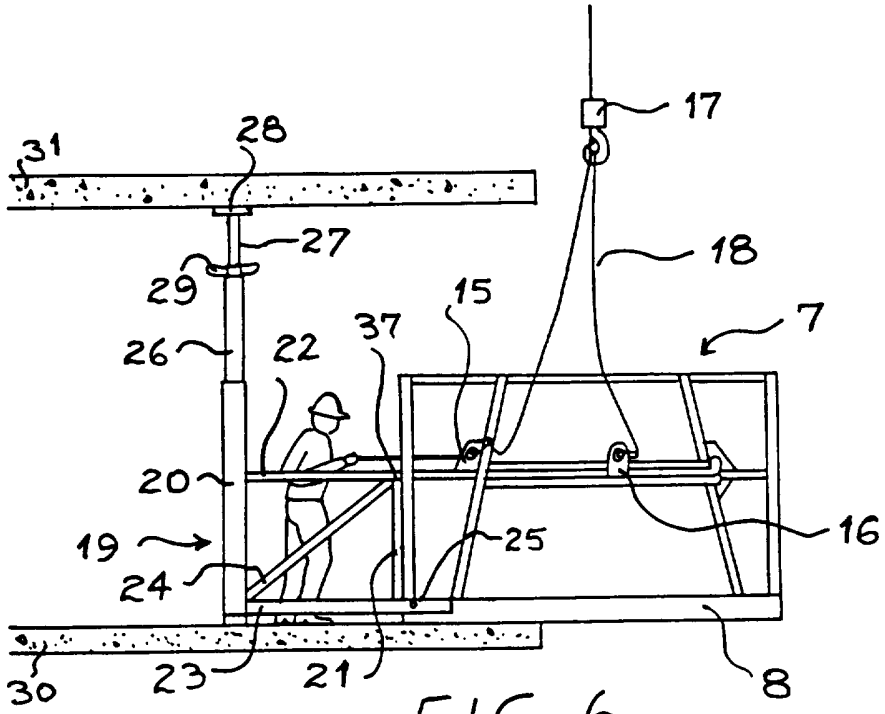
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FIG. 6

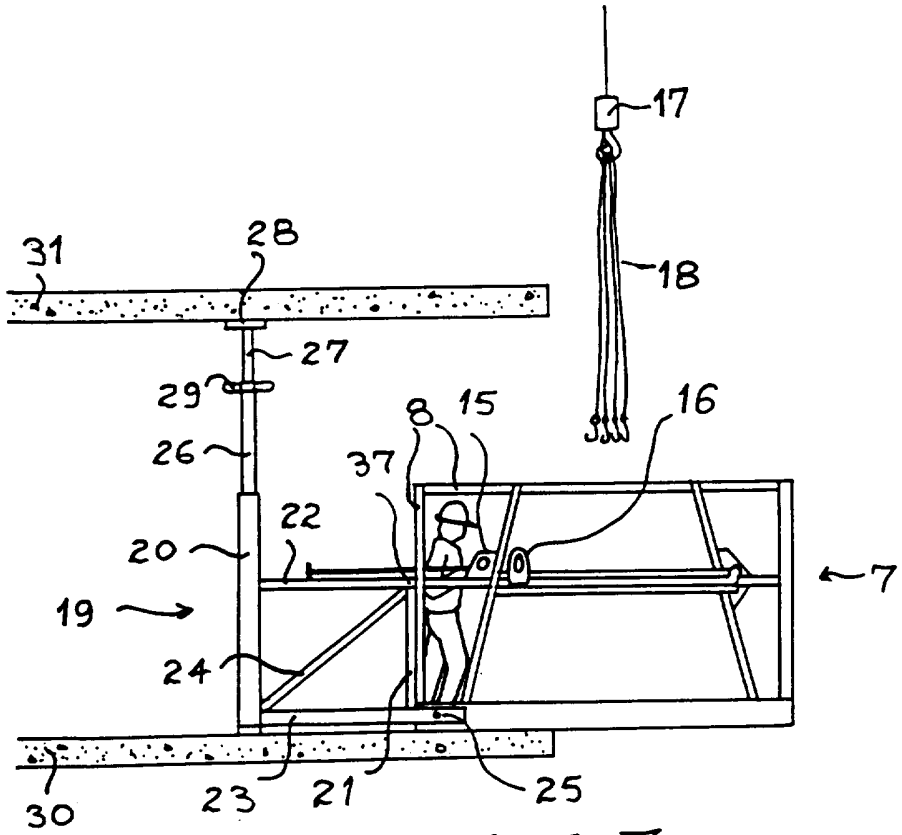
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FIG. 7

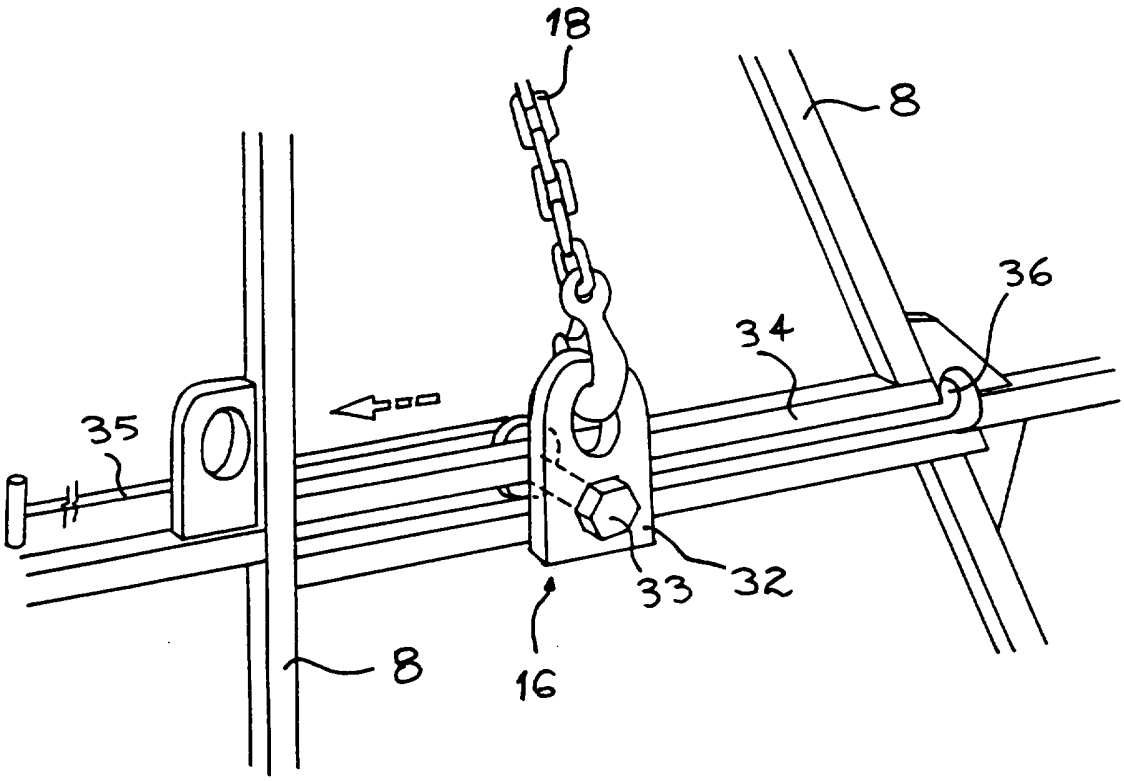

FIG. 8

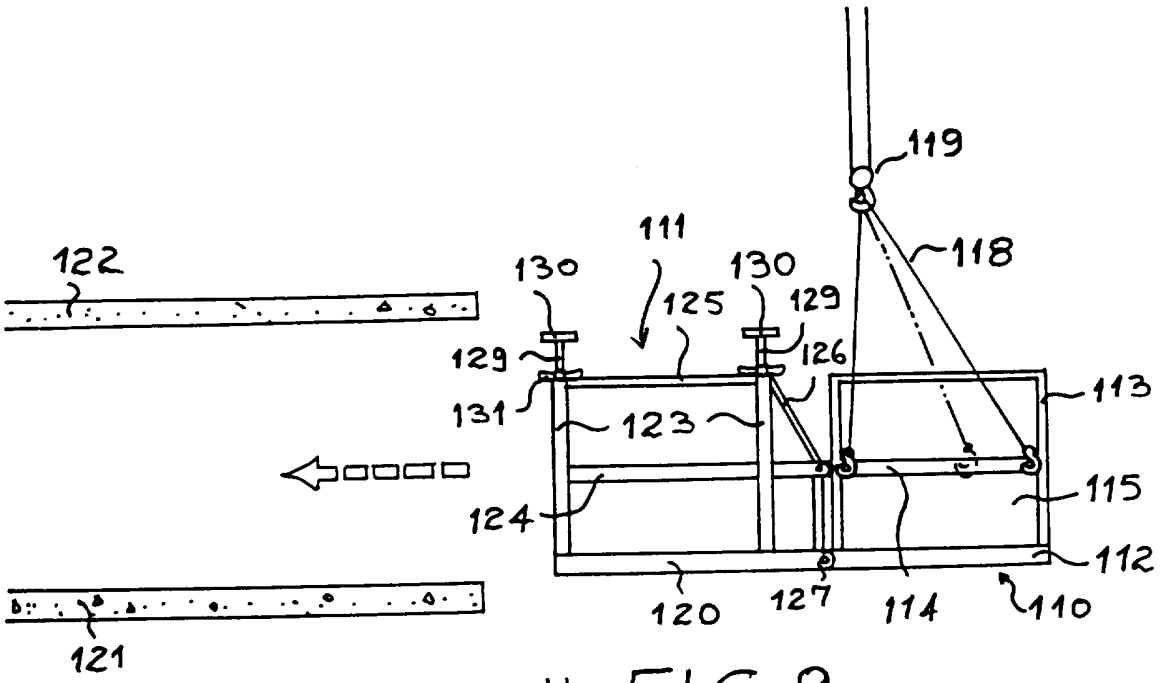
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FIG. 9

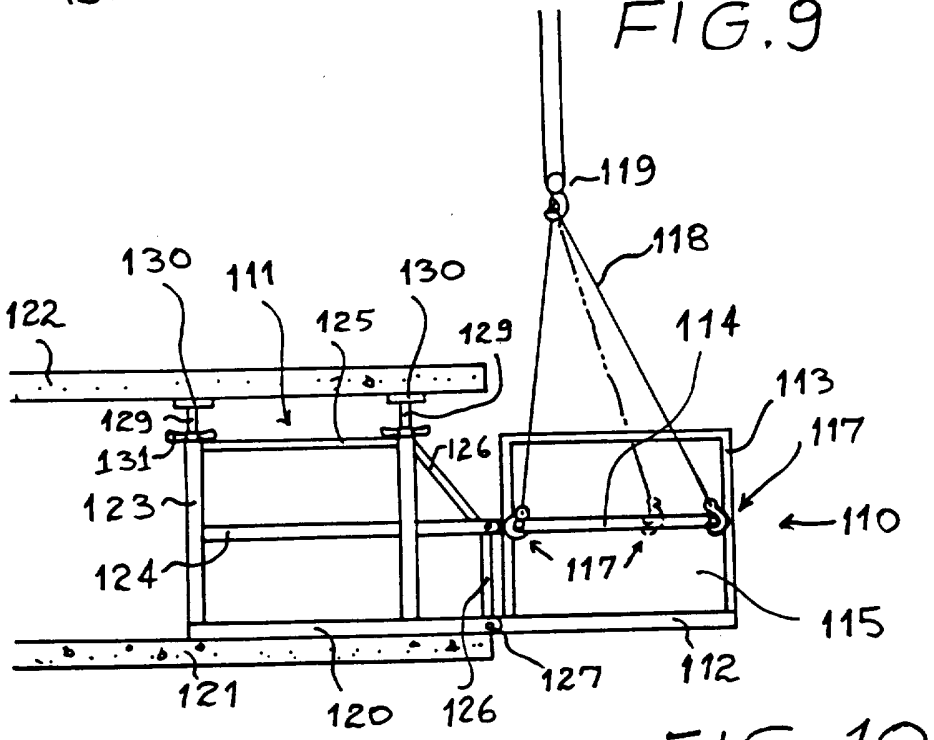
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FIG. 10

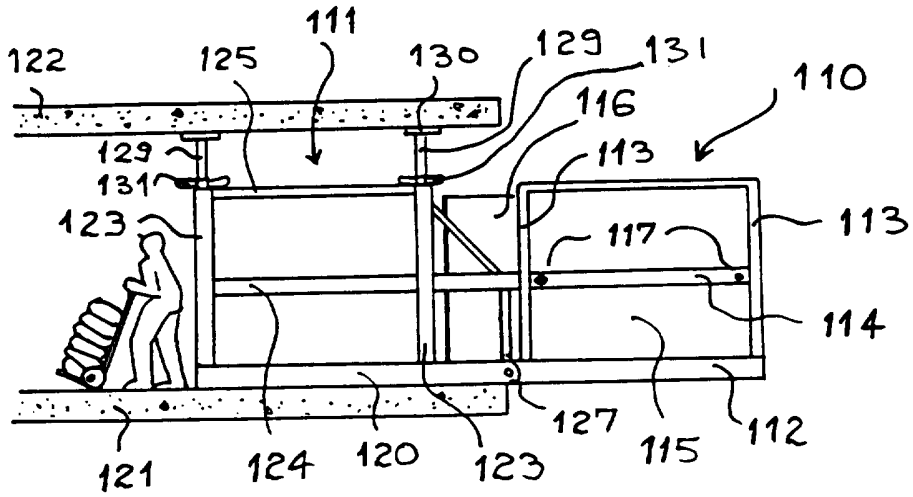
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FIG. 11

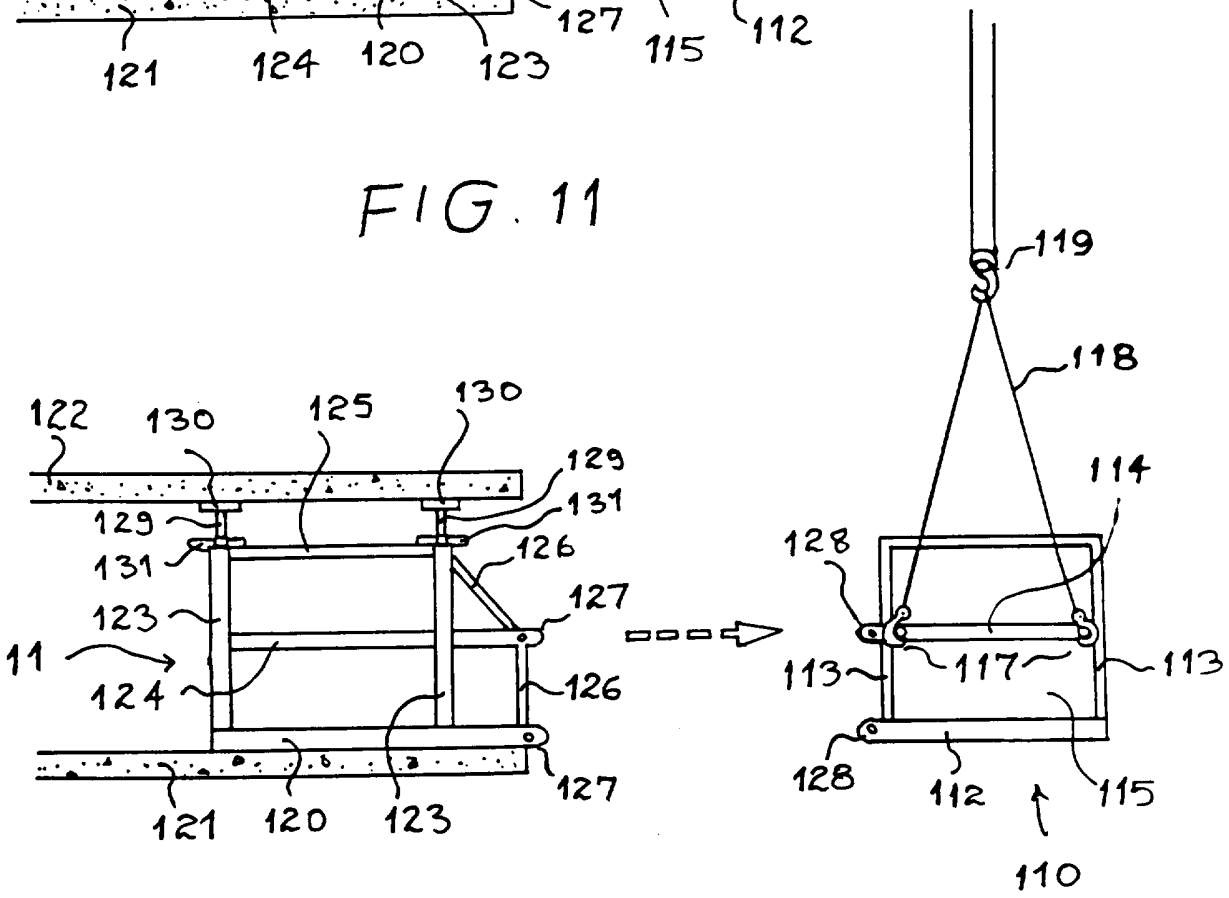
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FIG. 12

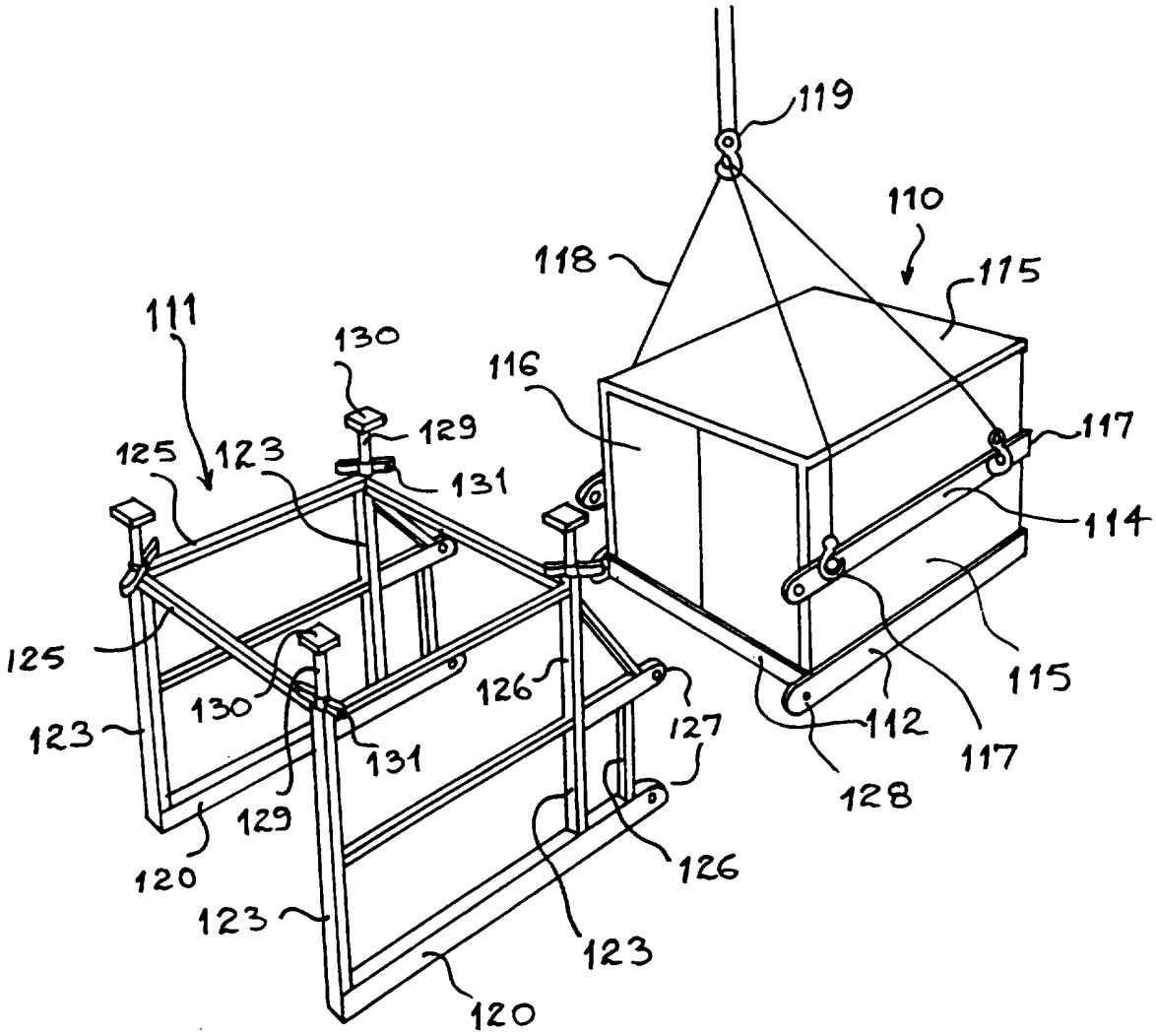
119
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FIG. 13

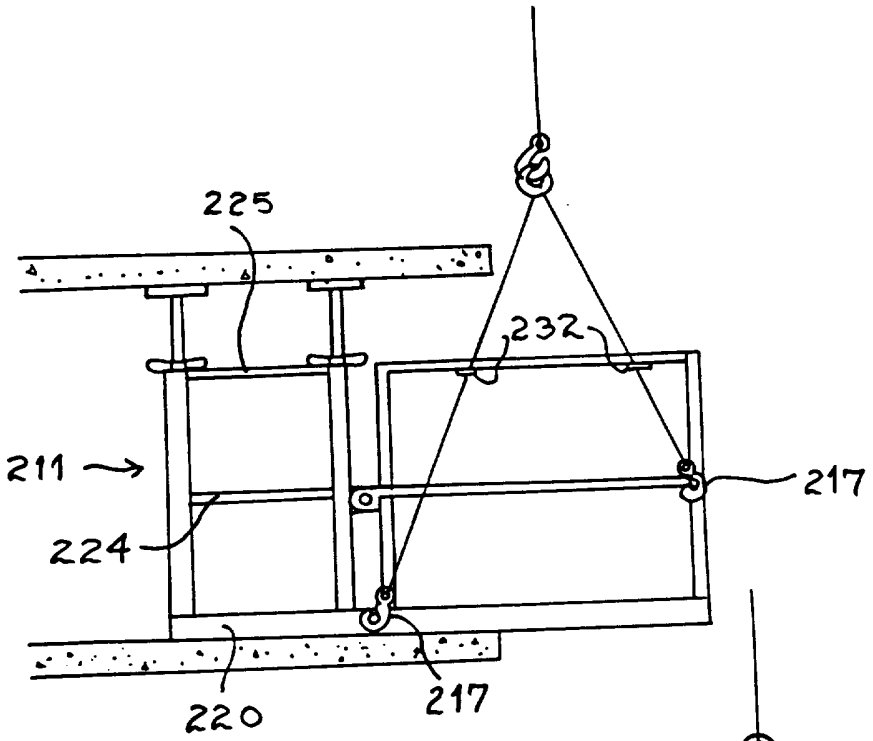

FIG. 14

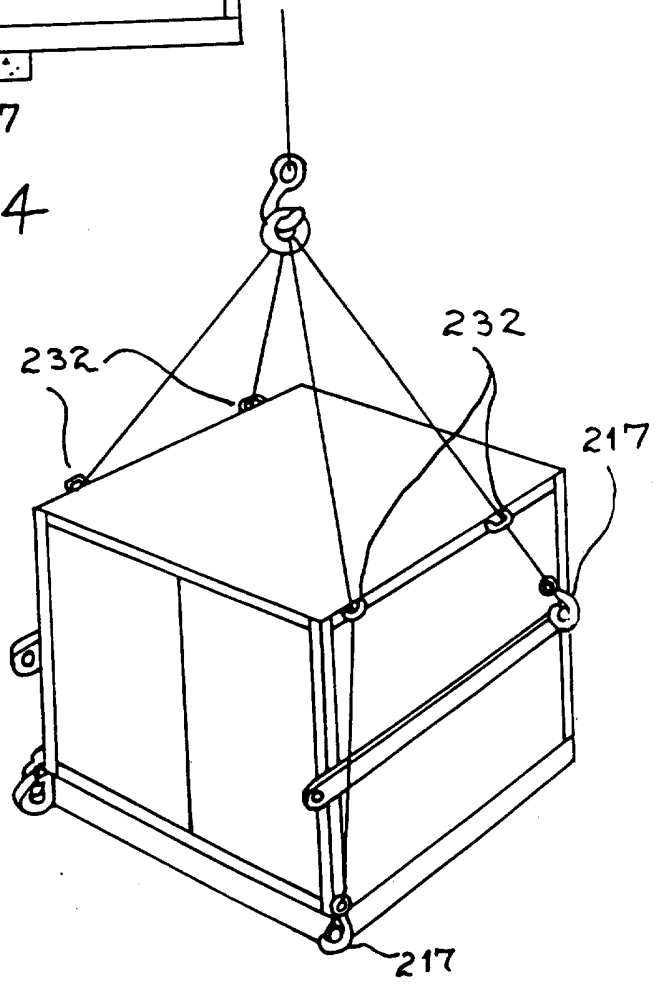

FIG. 15

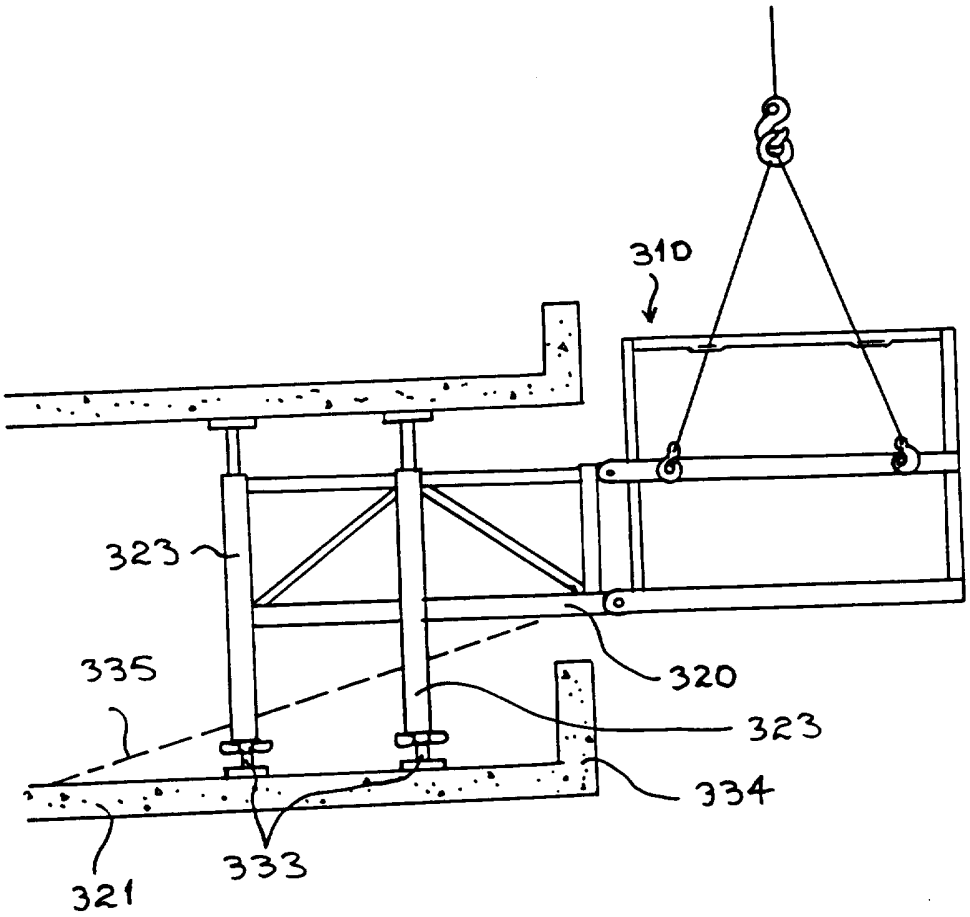

FIG. 16

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No.
PCT/AU 96/00036

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

Int Cl[6]: E04G 3/02, 3/06, 21/14, 27/00; E04F 17/10; B66F 9/00; B65D 90/12

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)
IPC E04G 3/02, 3/06, 5/04, 21/00, 21/14, 27/00; E04F 17/10; B65D 90/12, 87/08; B66F 9/00

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched
AU : IPC as above

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)
DERWENT

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	AU 56331/86 A (POND) 23 October 1986 Page 6 lines 1-26 and figure 1	1-3,5-8
X	AU 74565/74 A (TANK HOLDINGS PTY LTD) 29 April 1976 Pages 4-5 and figure 1	10-11
X	US 3679026 A (HANSEN et al) 25 July 1972 Column 2 lines 19-33, column 4 lines 43-56 and figure 2	10-11

[X] Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C

[X] See patent family annex

* Special categories of cited documents:

"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance

"E" earlier document but published on or after the international filing date

"L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)

"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means

"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention

"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone

"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art

"&" document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search	Date of mailing of the international search report
25 March 1996	10.04.96

Name and mailing address of the ISA/AU	Authorized officer
AUSTRALIAN INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY ORGANISATION PO BOX 200 WODEN ACT 2606 AUSTRALIA Facsimile No.: (06) 285 3929	J. HO Telephone No.: (06) 283 2329

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No.
PCT/AU 96/00036

C (Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 2658803 A (LONG et al) 13 April 1950 Figures 2-4	1-3
X	FR 2173430 A (SOCIETE ALFORIENNE DE TRAVAUX PUBLICS) 5 October 1973 Figure 1	1-2,4
X	Patent Abstracts of Japan, M-1731, page 21, JP 6-272389 A (OHBAYASHI CORP.) 27 September 1994 Abstract	10-11
X	Patent Abstracts of Japan, JP 6-346585 A (MEGUMI SANGYO KK) 20 December 1994 Abstract	10-11
P,X	WO 95/23264 A (PRESTON) 31 August 1995 Page 9 lines 7-21, figures 5-7	1-3,8

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No.

PCT/AU 96/00036

Box 1 Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of item 1 of first sheet)

This International Search Report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2)(a) for the following reasons:

1. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they relate to subject matter not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:

2. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they relate to parts of the international application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to such an extent that no meaningful international search can be carried out, specifically:

3. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they are dependent claims and are not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of Rule 6.4(a)

Box II Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of item 2 of first sheet)

This International Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this international application, as follows:

The international application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention because it does not relate to one invention or to a group of inventions so linked as to form a single general inventive concept. In coming to this conclusion the International Searching Authority has found that there are two inventions:
1. Claims 1-9 are directed to a suspendable container comprising a container body and a retractable anchoring means for attachment to an exposed intermediate floor of a building.
2. Claims 10-11 are directed to a suspendable container comprising a container body and an anchoring means for attachment to an exposed intermediate floor wherein the anchoring means is detachably attached to the container body.
Since the abovementioned groups of claims do not share common novel features, the groups of claims lack unity a posteriori.

1. ☐ As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers all searchable claims

2. ☒ As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, this Authority did not invite payment of any additional fee.

3. ☐ As only some of the required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers only those claims for which fees were paid, specifically claims Nos.

4. ☐ No required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant. Consequently, this international search report is restricted to the invention first mentioned in the claims; it is covered by claims Nos.:

Remark on Protest

☐ The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest.

☐ No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No.
PCT/AU 96/00036

This Annex lists the known "A" publication level patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned international search report. The Australian Patent Office is in no way liable for these particulars which are merely given for the purpose of information.

Patent Document Cited in Search Report		Patent Family Member	
AU	56331/86		
WO	9523264	AU	17490/95

END OF ANNEX