

[54] AUTOMATIC PROGRAM LOCATOR FOR TAPE DECKS

[75] Inventor: Tatsuhiro Yasunaga, Higashihiroshima, Japan
[73] Assignee: Sharp Kabushiki Kaisha, Osaka, Japan
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Related U.S. Patent Documents

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[58] Field of Search 360/72, 74, 75, 78, 360/71, 137, 12-13; 353/25, 26 R; 179/100.1 VC, 100.1 PS

[56]

References Cited

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

Table with 4 columns: Patent No., Date, Inventor, and Class. Includes entries for Joslow et al., Staar, Niioka et al., Ferrari, Crossman, O'Donnel, Takenaka, Darwood, and Fujii et al.

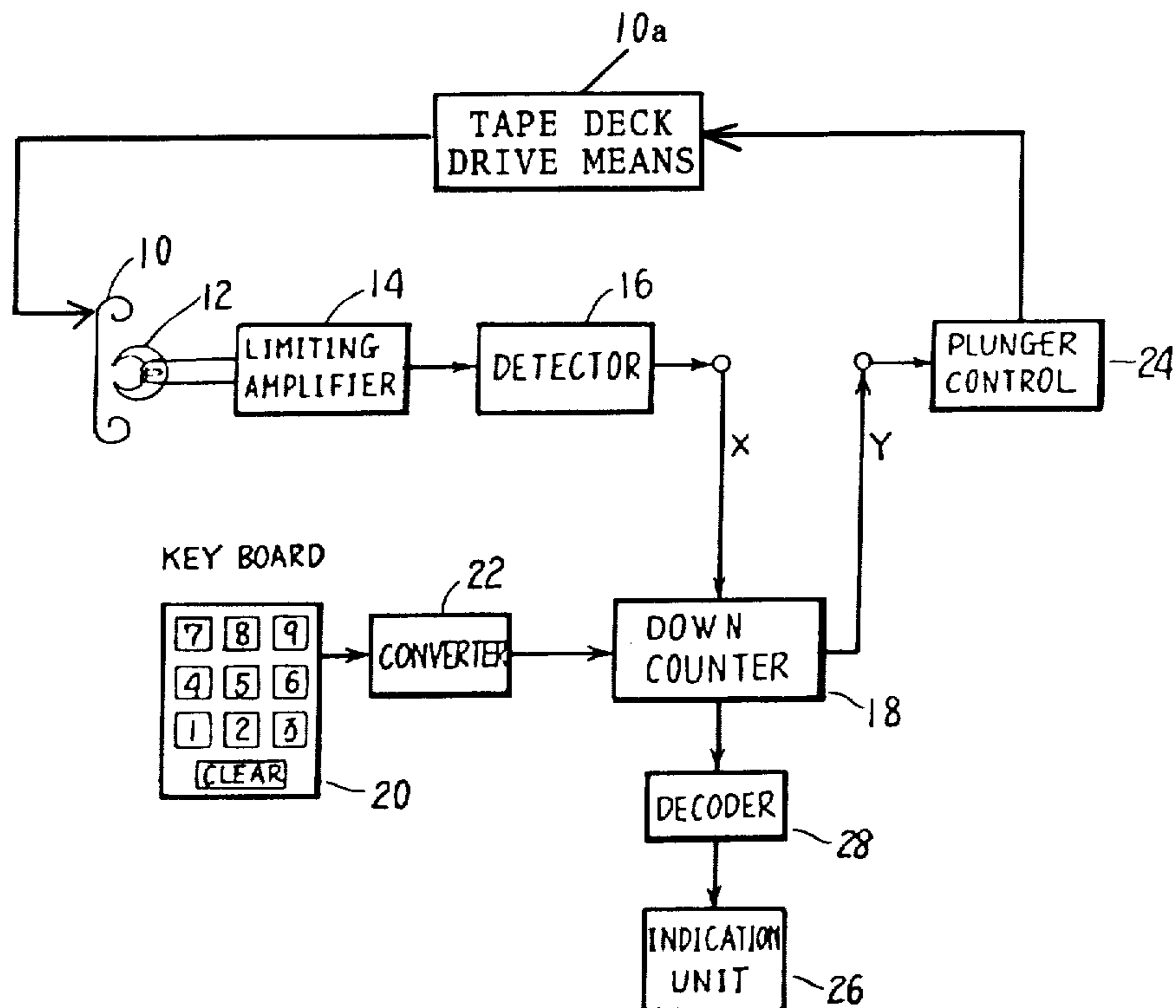
Primary Examiner—Alfred H. Eddleman
Attorney, Agent, or Firm—Birch, Stewart, Kolasch & Birch

[57]

ABSTRACT

The present disclosure relates to tape decks having a detection system responsive to a silence between recorded programs. A key board panel is provided for inputting a desired number to a down counter in order to position a head of a program after skipping a desired number of programs recorded on the tape at the fast movement speed. The count of the down counter is decremented once for every occurrence of a detection signal from the detection system representative of the silence between recorded passages. The tape drive is stopped or returned to its normal playback speed when the contents of the down counter become zero.

24 Claims, 3 Drawing Figures



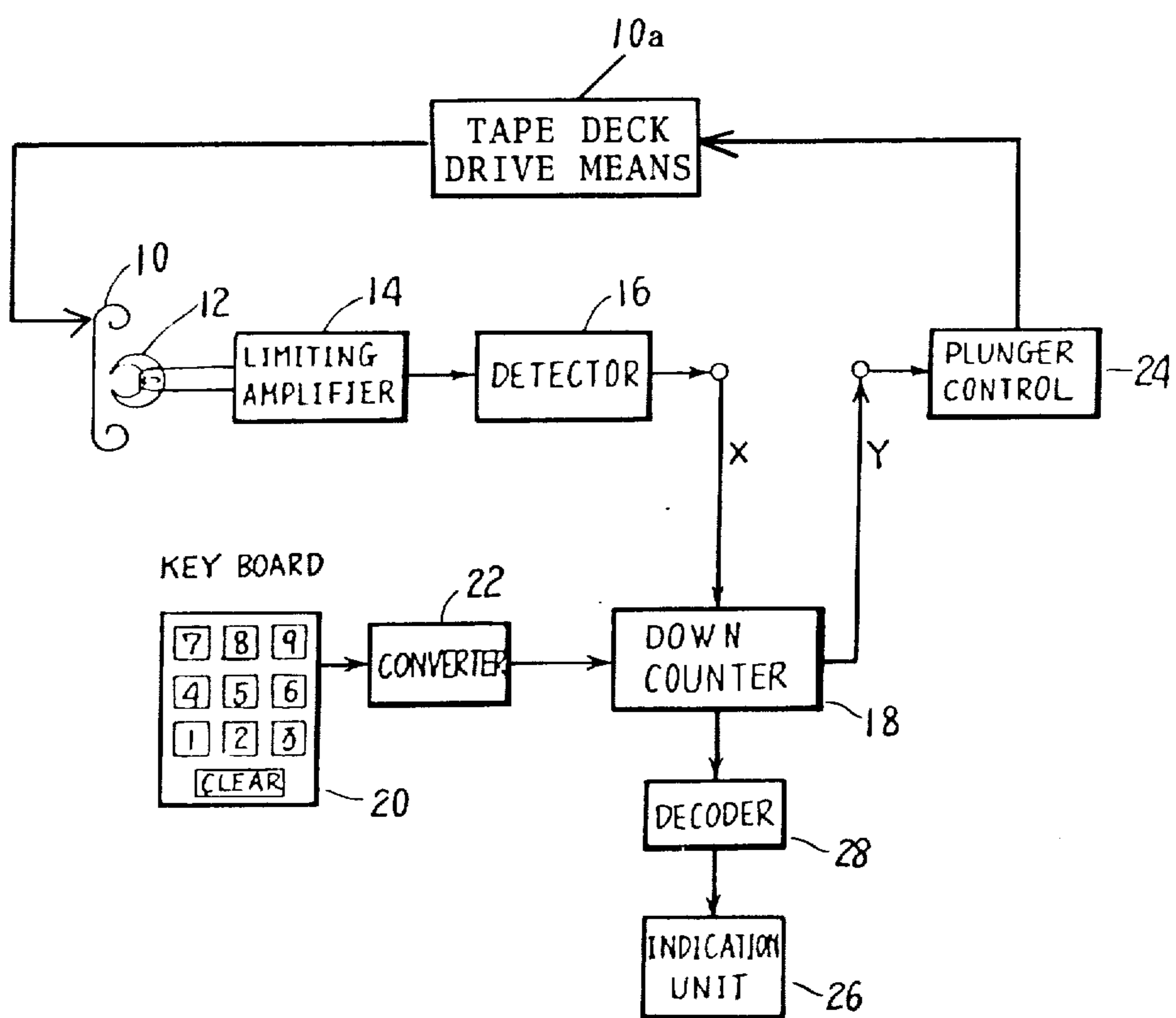


FIG. 1

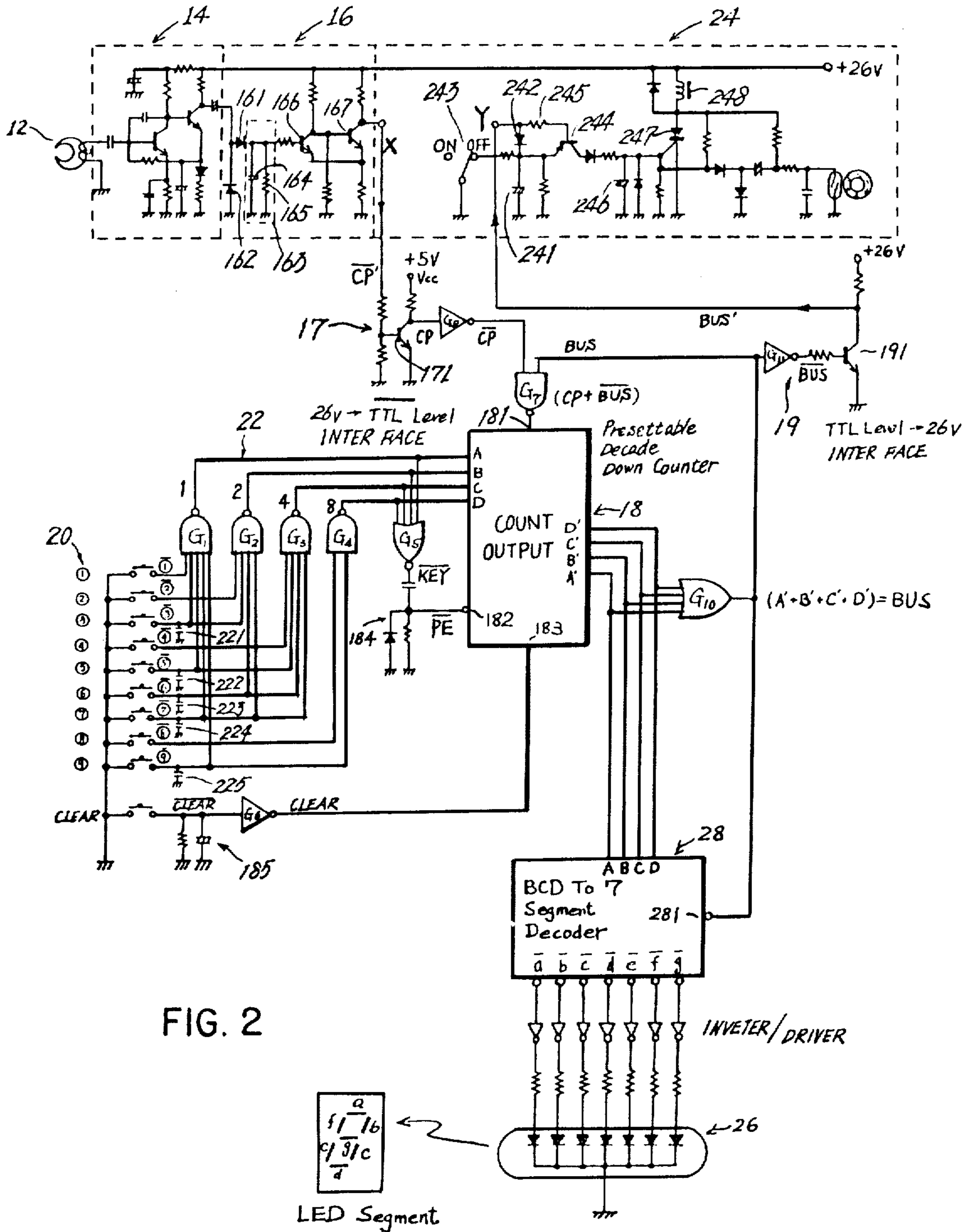


FIG. 2

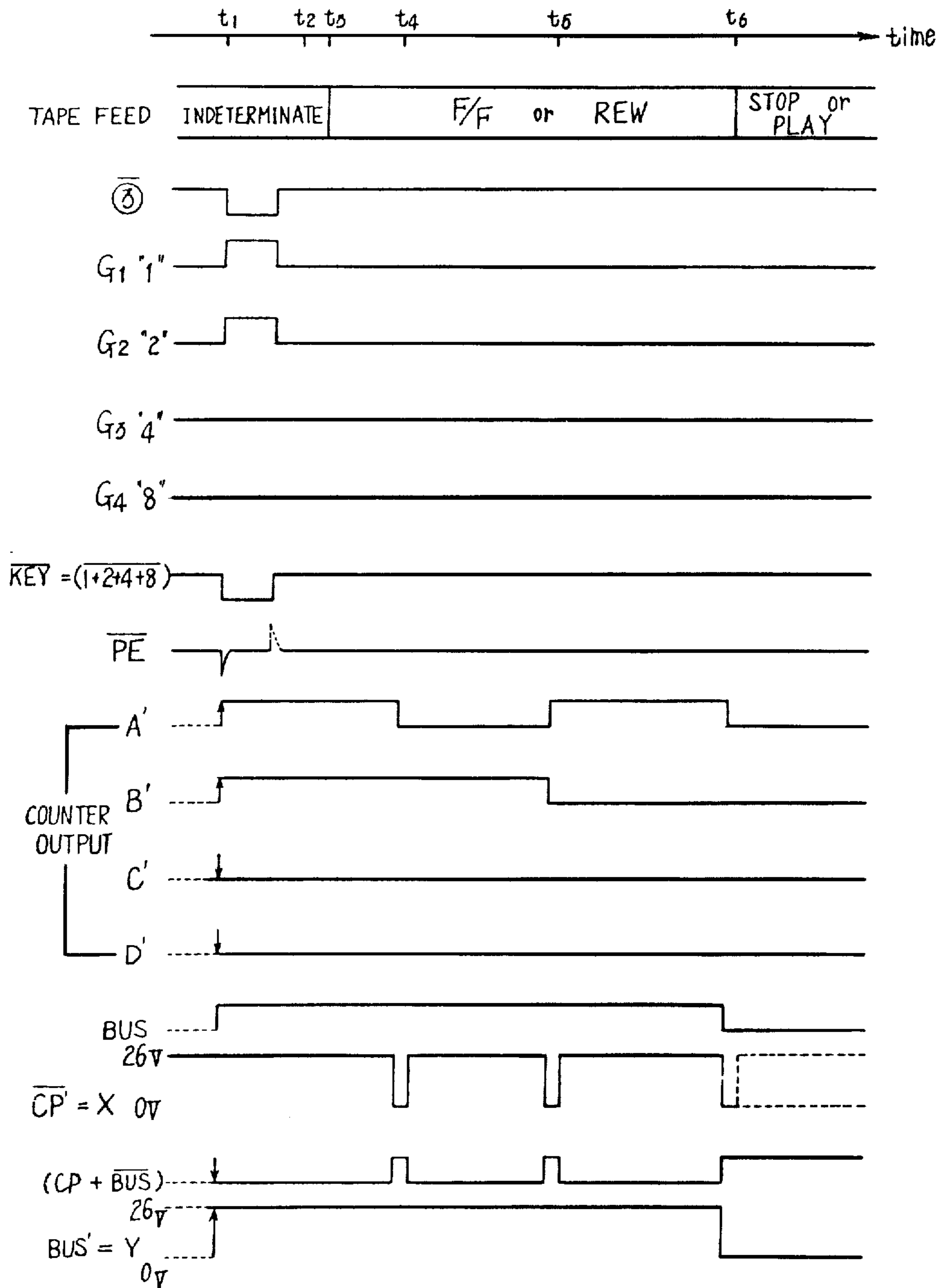


FIG. 3

AUTOMATIC PROGRAM LOCATOR FOR TAPE DECKS

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

BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to an automatic program locating system for tape decks for skipping a desired number of programs recorded on the tape at the fast movement speed and going on to the program following the desired number of programs.

Program head positioning systems responsive to a silence between recorded programs on a tape during fast movement of the tape have been proposed. For example, U.S. Pat. No. 3,665,117, to Theophiel Clement Jozef Lodewijk Staar entitled TAPE CARTRIDGE APPARATUS INCLUDING A SILENCE RESPONSIVE POSITIONING CONTROL, issued on May 23, 1972, and the U.S. Pat. No. 3,723,666, to Leonard A. Ferrari entitled METHOD FOR DISTINGUISHING PAUSES IN RECORDED FEATURES DURING REPLAY THEREOF, issued on Mar. 27, 1973 illustrate systems of this type.

The program head positioning systems of the prior art are responsive to a silence between recorded passages on the tape during fast movement of the tape and cause the tape drive to stop or shift to its normal playback speed when only one silence between recorded passages is detected. When it is desired to skip more than one of the programs recorded on the tape, the operator must repeat the introduction of the command to position the head of the following program until the head of the desired program is positioned at the playback head. This results in a time consuming and troublesome process. Accordingly, an object of the present invention is to provide a novel automatic program locator for tape decks.

Another object of the present invention is to provide an automatic program head positioning system suitable for positioning a head of a desired program recorded on a tape at a playback head after skipping one or more programs recorded on the tape at a fast movement speed.

Other objects and further scope of applicability of the present invention will become apparent from the detailed description given hereinafter. It should be understood, however, that the detailed description and specific examples, while indicating preferred embodiments of the invention, are given by way of illustration only, since various changes and modifications within the spirit and scope of the invention will become apparent to those skilled in the art from this detailed description.

To achieve the above objectives, pursuant to the present invention, there is provided a down counter and a key board panel for introducing and storing a desired number corresponding to a desired number of programs which should be skipped at a fast movement speed. The contents of the down counter are decreased once for every occurrence of a detection signal representative of the silence between recorded passages from a silence detection system which can be of a conventional construction. The tape drive is stopped or shifted to its normal playback speed when the contents of the down

counter become zero after passing the desired number of programs. An indication unit is preferably provided for indicating the contents of the down counter, thereby enabling the operator to confirm the operation of the automatic program locator of the present invention.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The present invention will become more fully understood from the detailed description given hereinbelow and the accompanying drawings which are given by way of illustration only, and thus are not limitative of the present invention and wherein,

FIG. 1 is a schematic circuit diagram of an automatic program locator of the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a detailed circuit diagram of the automatic program locator of FIG. 1; and

FIG. 3 is a time chart for the purpose of explanation of the operation of the automatic program locator of FIG. 1.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

The present invention will be described in greater detail with reference to an embodiment wherein a head of a desired program recorded on a music tape, on which plural programs are recorded, is positioned at a playback head after skipping one or more programs at the fast movement speed.

FIG. 1 shows an automatic program locating system for tape decks of the present invention. A sensing head 12 is in physical contact with a music tape 10 on which several programs are recorded, when the tape deck drive means 10a is in the fast forward or rewind drive mode. Output signals of the sensing head 12 are introduced to a limiting amplifier 14 and amplified to produce amplified signals of a predetermined amplitude. The amplified signals are applied to a recorded passage detection circuit 16 which outputs a pulse signal X to a presettable decade down counter 18 for every detection of the silence between recorded programs. The initial count of the presettable decade down counter 18 is preset by a key board panel 20 through a converter 22. The key board panel 20 comprises numeral keys for introducing a desired number to the presettable decade down counter 18, and a clear key for resetting the [pre-set] preset count. The count of the presettable decade down counter 18 is decremented once for occurrence of the pulse signal X. The presettable decade down counter 18 generates a pulse signal Y when the count of the presettable decade down counter 18 becomes zero. The pulse signal Y is applied to a plunger control 24 such that the tape drive means 10a is stopped or returned to its normal playback speed when the count of the presettable decade down counter 18 becomes zero. An indication unit 26 is connected with the presettable decade down counter 18 through a decoder 28 in order to indicate the contents of the presettable decade down counter 18, thereby enabling the operator to confirm the operation of the automatic program locating system.

FIG. 2 typically shows a detailed circuit diagram of the automatic program locating system of FIG. 1. The sensing head 12 is in physical contact with the music tape 10 (see FIG. 1) when the tape deck drive means 10a is in the fast forward or rewind drive mode. The amplified signals from the limiting amplifier 14 are rectified by the diodes 161 and 162. The rectified signals are

applied to a time constant circuit 163 comprising a capacitor 164 and a resistor 165. It will be noted that in this example the discharge time constant of the time constant circuit 163 is longer than a period of any rest in the music but shorter than the period of silence between recorded programs, for example, one second. The charge on the capacitor 164 renders a transistor 166 ON and another transistor 167 OFF. Therefore, the output signal X of the recorded passage detection circuit 16 bears a high level, about +26 V, when the sensing head 12 is in physical contact with the recorded portion. When the sensing head 12 reaches a silence portion between recorded programs, the charge on the capacitor 164 is discharged through the resistor 165. Therefore, the transistor 166 is turned OFF and hence the transistor 167 is turned ON. This results in that the voltage level of the output signal X becomes low, approximately zero volts.

The output signal X is applied to the presettable decade down counter 18 through a first interface 17 and an inhibition gate G₇. The first interface 17 comprises a transistor 171 and an inverter G₈. When the output signal X is at the high level, the transistor 171 is ON and hence a signal CP from the inverter G₈ is at a high level. Conversely, when the output signal X is at the low level, the transistor 171 is OFF and hence the signal CP is at a low level.

The presettable decade down counter 18 can be of a conventional construction and includes a down count input terminal 181 connected to receive a signal from the inhibition gate G₇, preset input terminals A, B, C and D, a key depression indicating signal input terminal 182, a clear signal input terminal 183, and count output terminals A', B', C' and D'.

The preset input terminals A, B, C and D are connected to receive a binary-coded decimal information corresponding to a depressed numeral key on the key board panel 20 through the converter 22 including NAND gates G₁, G₂, G₃ and G₄. A NOR gate G₅ provides a KEY signal which bears a low level upon depression of any one of numeral keys ①-⑨. The KEY signal is differentiated by a differentiation circuit 184 to provide a key depression indicating signal PE which will be applied to the key depression indicating signal input terminal 182. The key depression indicating signal PE bears a low level at the time when the KEY signal changes from its high level to its low level. The presettable decade down counter 18 is so constructed that the binary-coded decimal information can be read in only when the key depression indicating signal PE is at its low level, thereby preventing an erroneous introduction of the preset information. Chattering preventing capacitors 221, 222, 223, 224 and 225 are connected with the key switches ③, ⑤, ⑥, ⑦ and ⑨, respectively, to prevent an erroneous introduction of the numeral information as is well known in the art.

The clear key CLEAR is connected with the clear signal input terminal 183 through an inverter G₆. The count of the presettable decade down counter 18 is cleared and hence all of the count output terminals A', B', C' and D' provide O signals upon depression of the clear key CLEAR. An auto-clear circuit 185 is provided at the input site of the inverter G₆ in order to automatically clear the count of the presettable decade down counter upon throw of the power switch (not shown).

The indication unit 26 can be a conventional indication unit such as a segment shaped LED indication unit.

The count of the presettable decade down counter is indicated by the indication unit 26 through the count output terminals A', B', C' and D' and the decoder 28. The decoder 28 can be of a conventional construction and comprises input terminals A, B, C and D connected with the count output terminals A', B', C' and D' of the presettable decade down counter 18, output terminals \bar{a} , \bar{b} , \bar{c} , \bar{d} , \bar{e} , \bar{f} and \bar{g} providing output signals for the indication unit 26, and a blanking input terminal 281. An OR gate G₁₀ is connected with the count output terminals A', B', C' and D' in order to determine whether the count of the presettable decade down counter 18 is zero. The output signal of the OR gate G₁₀, which will be referred to as BUS hereinafter, is at its high level when the count of the presettable decade down counter 18 is not zero. The blanking input terminal 281 of the decoder 28 is connected to receive the inversion of the BUS signal, thereby extinguishing the indication when the contents of the presettable decade down counter 18 is zero, or the automatic program locating operation is completed.

The BUS signal is also applied to a second interface 19 comprising an inverter G₁₁ and a transistor 191. An output signal BUS' of the second interface 19, which is identical with the aforementioned pulse signal Y, is at its high level when the BUS signal bears the high level, and is at its low level when the BUS signal bears the low level or the count of the presettable decade down counter 18 becomes zero. The output signal BUS' is applied to a capacitor 241 through a diode 242 within the plunger control 24. When an APL switch 243 is ON and the output signal BUS' is at its high level, the capacitor 241 is charged through the diode 242. The charged voltage is supplied to the emitter of a transistor 244. Since the base of the transistor 244 is connected via a resistor 245 to receive the output signal BUS', the base-emitter path of the transistor 244 is reverse biased due to forward voltage drop in the diode 242 and thus the transistor 244 held OFF. When the count of the presettable decade down counter 18 becomes zero and hence the output signal BUS' bears its low level, the charge on the capacitor 241 causes the transistor 244 to turn ON. The discharge current of the capacitor 241 through the transistor 244 charges another capacitor 246. When the charge voltage across the capacitor 246 reaches the threshold level of an SCR 247, the SCR 247 is turned ON with the results that current flow passes through a plunger 248 and the recorder apparatus is led to the stop mode or the normal playback mode. Such a plunger control is described in detail in copending application, AUTOMATIC PROGRAM FINDER SYSTEM FOR TAPE DECKS, Ser. No. 394,532, filed Sept. 5, 1973 by Takashi Takenaka and assigned to the same assignee as the present application, which is now U.S. Pat. No. 3,893,177.

The BUS signal is also applied to the aforementioned inhibition gate G₇ in order to prevent an undesirable counting in of the presettable decade down counter. When the count of the presettable decade down counter 18 becomes zero, the plunger 248 is enabled and, therefore, a noise is unavoidably generated. Since at this time the BUS signal bears the low level, the noise can not be introduced to the presettable decade down counter. Moreover, the output X from the recorded passage detection circuit 16 cannot be introduced to the presettable decade down counter 18 after the count of the presettable decade down counter 18 becomes zero.

The above-mentioned presettable decade down counter 18 and the decoder 28 can be constructed by the HD2541P and HD2532P manufactured by HITACHI Ltd., respectively.

The operation mode of the automatic program locating system of the present invention will be fully understood from the following description when considered in conjunction with the FIG. 3 time chart.

The following description relates to the operation mode when the head of the third program counted from the now reproduced program is desired to be positioned at the playback head. When the numeral key ③ on the key board panel 20 is depressed at the time t_1 , the presettable decade down counter 18 stores the numeral information "three". The APL switch 243 is manually turned ON at the time t_2 and the fast forward switch is manually locked at the time t_3 and hence the sensing head 12 is forced into contact with the tape. The indication unit 26 indicates "3" since the presettable decade down counter 18 outputs "three" at the count output terminals A', B', C' and D' thereof. When the sensing head 12 reaches a first silence portion between the recorded programs on the tape at the time t_4 , the output signal X from the recorded passage detection circuit 16 becomes low and hence a pulse ($\overline{CP} + \overline{BUS}$) is applied to the presettable decade down counter 18, the count of which is decremented one. The indication at the indication unit 26 is changed to 2. Similarly, when the sensing head 12 reaches a second silence portion at the time t_5 , the count of the presettable decade down counter 18 is decremented one and hence the indication unit 26 indicates 1. When the sensing head 12 reaches a third silence portion at the time t_6 , the count of the presettable decade down counter 18 becomes "zero". The BUS signal changes to its low level and hence the indication on the indication unit 26 is extinguished to indicate that the program head positioning operation is completed. At the same time the output signal BUS' of the second interface 19 reaches its low level and, therefore, the plunger 248 is enabled to shift the operation mode of the tape deck to its stop state or the normal playback state.

The invention being thus described, it will be obvious that the same way be varied in many ways. Such variations are not to be regarded as a departure from the spirit and scope of the invention, and all such modifications are intended to be included within the scope of the following claims.

What is claimed is:

1. An automatic program locating system for tape reproduction systems comprising:

- a. a sensing head in physical contact with a tape when the tape reproduction system is in the fast forward or rewind drive mode;
- b. recorded passage detection circuit means connected to receive signals from the sensing head for generating a silence detection signal when the sensing head reaches a silence portion between recorded programs;
- c. down counter means which counts down one count in response to each occurrence of a silence detection signal;
- d. key input means for introducing a desired number into the down counter,
- e. count output detection circuit means for generating a control signal when the down counter counts from said desired number down to zero; and

f. shifting means for shifting the operational states of the tape reproduction system upon receiving the control signal.

2. The automatic program locating system for tape reproduction systems of claim 1 wherein the down counter is a presettable decade down counter and the desired number is introduced by a binary-coded decimal notation through a converter.

3. The automatic program locating system for tape reproduction systems of claim 1 wherein the shifting means comprises;

- a. a plunger for shifting the operational states of the tape reproduction system; and
- b. a plunger activating circuit for activating the plunger upon receiving the control signal.

4. The automatic program locating system for tape reproduction systems of claim 1 wherein the operational states of the tape reproduction system are shifted to its stop state upon receiving the control signal.

5. The automatic program locating system for tape reproduction systems of claim 1 wherein the operational states of the tape reproduction system are shifted to its normal playback state upon receiving the control signal.

6. The automatic program locating system for tape reproduction systems of claim 1 further comprising an inhibit gate of which input terminals are connected to receive the silence detection signal and the control signal, and of which an output terminal is connected with the down count input terminal of the down counter, thereby preventing erroneous introduction of a signal to the down counter.

7. The automatic program locating system for tape reproduction systems of claim 1 further comprising:

- a. an indication unit for indicating the contents of the down counter; and
- b. a decoder for decoding the contents of the down counter to a suitable form for the indication unit.

8. The automatic program locating system for tape reproduction systems of claim 7 wherein the decoder includes a blanking input terminal connected to receive the control signal, thereby extinguishing the indication on the indication unit when the count of the down counter is zero.

9. The automatic program locating system for tape reproduction systems of claim 1 further comprising a clear key for resetting the contents of the down counter.

10. The automatic program locating system for tape reproduction systems of claim 1 further comprising an auto-clear circuit for resetting the contents of the down counter upon throw of a power switch of the tape reproduction system.

11. An automatic program locating system for tape reproduction systems comprising:

- drive means for moving a tape with recorded material thereon through said reproduction system past a program reproduction head;*
- detector means for sensing the presence or absence of recorded material on said tape, the presence of said recorded material being indicative of a program on said tape and the absence of said recorded material being indicative of a silence portion between programs, said detector means generating a detection signal for each silence portion of a predetermined length sensed as said tape passes through said reproduction system; and*
- means for preselecting for reproduction from any given program position that the tape occupies in said repro-*

duction system any specific program including programs which are not adjacent to the program at said given program position as a function of the number of detection signals generated by said detector means counted from said given program position.

12. The automatic program locating system for tape reproduction systems of claim 11 wherein said means for preselecting includes:

control signal producing means for constraining said drive means to position a selected program on said tape into position for reproduction by said reproduction head in response to the occurrence of a presettable number of said detection signals; and

means for presetting said number to any selected one of a plurality of different values.

13. The automatic program locating system for tape reproduction systems of claim 12 wherein said control signal producing means includes counter means for counting each occurrence of a silence detection signal and count output detection circuit means for generating a control signal to said drive means when said counter means counts said presettable number of said detection signals.

14. The automatic program locating system of claim 13 wherein said means for presetting includes key input means for introducing a desired number into said counter means.

15. The automatic program locating system of claim 13 wherein said drive means moves at a first speed during the generation of said detection signals by said detector means and at a second slower speed during the reproduction of a selected program and there is further provided means for constraining said drive means to move said tape at said second speed in response to the control signal from said count output detection circuit means.

16. An automatic program locating system for tape reproduction systems comprising:

drive means for moving the tape;

control means for controlling the drive means to perform fast forward, fast rewind, or normal playback operation on the tape;

a sensing head for sensing information recorded on a tape at least when the tape reproduction system is in the fast forward or rewind drive mode;

recorded passage detection circuit means connected to receive signals from the sensing head for generating a silence detection signal when the sensing head reaches a silence portion between recorded programs;

counter means which count in response to each occurrence of a silence detection signal;

storage means for storing a desired digital coded number therein;

key input means for introducing said desired number into said storage means;

detection means for generating a control signal when said counter means counts an equal number of said silence detection signals to said desired digital coded number stored in said storage means; and

shifting means for shifting the operational states of the tape reproduction system from said fast forward or fast rewind operation to said normal playback operation upon receiving the control signal.

17. An automatic program locating system for tape reproduction systems comprising:

drive means for moving the tape;

control means for controlling the drive means to perform a fast forward, fast rewind, or normal playback operation on the tape;

a reproduction head arranged to sense, during said fast forward or fast rewind operation, information recorded on the tape;

a detector coupled to the output of said reproduction head for producing a detection signal when a portion of tape exceeding a predetermined length on which no information is recorded is sensed;

control signal producing means arranged to produce a control signal when a presettable number of said detection signals have been produced by said detector, said presettable number being equal to the number of detection signals which will be produced between any given program position that the tape occupies in said reproduction system and the program to be located, the control means being responsive to the control signal to discontinue said fast forward or fast rewind operation; and

means for presetting said number to any selected one of a plurality of different values.

18. An automatic program locating system for tape reproduction systems comprising:

a. a sensing head in physical contact with a tape when the tape reproduction system is in the fast forward or rewind drive mode;

b. recorded passage detection circuit means connected to receive signals from the sensing head for generating a silence detection signal when the sensing head reaches a silence portion between recorded programs;

c. counter means which counts one count in response to each occurrence of a silence detection signal;

d. key input means for introducing a desired number into the counter means;

e. count output detection circuit means for generating a control signal when the counter means counts said desired number; and

f. shifting means for shifting the operational states of the tape reproduction system upon receiving the control signal.

19. An automatic program locating system for tape reproduction systems comprising:

a sensing head in physical contact with a tape when the tape reproduction system is in a fast forward or rewind drive mode;

recorded passage detection circuit means connected to receive signals from the sensing head for generating a silence detection signal when the sensing head reaches a silence portion between recorded programs;

storage means the contents of which are progressively varied in response to occurrence of a silence detection signal;

key input means for introducing a desired number into the storage means;

detection circuit means for generating a control signal when the contents of the storage means are varied by said desired number; and

shifting means for shifting the operational states of the tape reproduction system upon receiving said control signal.

20. An automatic program locating system for tape reproduction systems comprising:

a sensing head for sensing information recorded on a tape at least when the tape reproduction system is in a fast forward or rewind mode;

recorded passage detection circuit means connected to receive signals from the sensing head for generating a silence detection signal when the sensing head reaches a silence portion between recorded programs;

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counter means which count in response to each occurrence of a silence detection signal;

semiconductor storage means for storing a desired digital coded number therein;

a keyboard panel including numeral keys for introducing said desired number into said semiconductor storage means;

converter means connected between said keyboard panel and said semiconductor storage means for converting an output signal from said keyboard panel into the digital coded number;

detection means for generating a control signal when said counter means count an equal number of said silence detection signals to said desired number stored in said semiconductor storage means; and

shifting means for shifting the operational states of the tape reproduction system upon receiving said control signal.

21. An automatic program locating system according to claim 16, wherein said desired digital coded number intro-

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duced by said key input means is equal to the number of silence portions between any given program position which the tape occupies in the reproduction system and the program to be located.

22. An automatic program locating system according to claim 18, wherein said desired number introduced by said key input means is equal to the number of silence portions between any given program position which the tape occupies in said reproduction system and the program to be located.

23. An automatic program locating system according to claim 19, wherein said desired number introduced by said key input means is equal to the number of silence portions between any given program position which the tape occupies in said reproduction system and the program to be located.

24. An automatic program locating system according to claim 20, wherein said desired number introduced by said key input means is equal to the number of silence portions between any given program position which the tape occupies in said reproduction system and the program to be located.

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