United States Patent [19]

Williams et al.

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[54] **METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR PROVIDING REAL TIME DATA ON A VIEWING SCREEN CONCURRENTLY WITH ANY PROGRAMING IN PROCESS**

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Assistant Examiner—John W. Miller

[57] **ABSTRACT**

A computer microcontroller (225) controls the operational functions of a video reporter (10) for superimposing real time emergency broadcast messages and information on a television picture concurrently with any programing in progress. The video reporter (10) has a signal splitting means for splitting a television broadcast signal such that the signal is transmitted to the video reporter and a TV. A tuner (210) constantly scans predetermined channels for video reporter messages of the type to be superimposed. The video messages are embedded in intelligent data having a pre-amble (810) which enables the microcontroller to identify the message type and determine whether it is superimposable.

There is a decoding means (230) for decoding the video reporter data and a message extracting means (240) for extracting messages from the video reporter data. An overlay generating means (250) generates a video signal from the video reporter data and the video signal can be superimposed over any television picture of the programing in progress, including VCR, video game, and other programing by means for superimposing the video signal over the television picture (260).
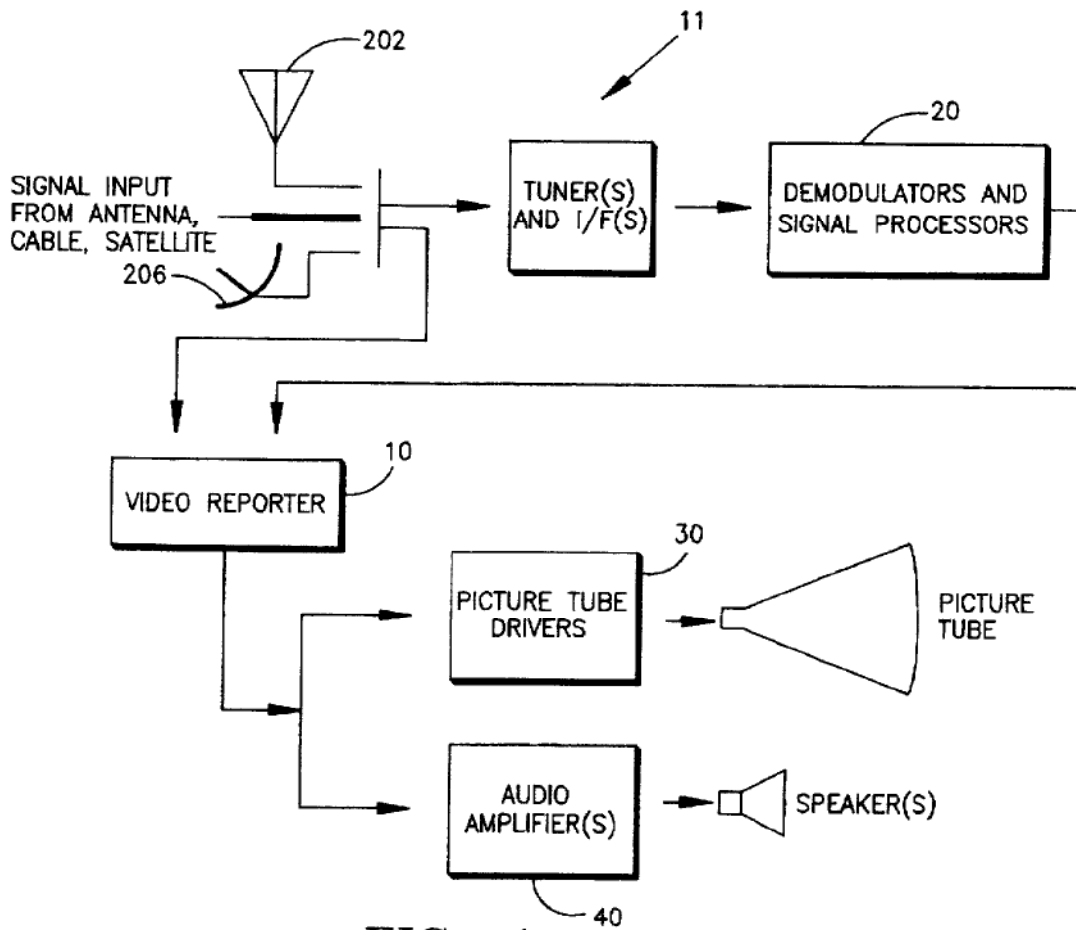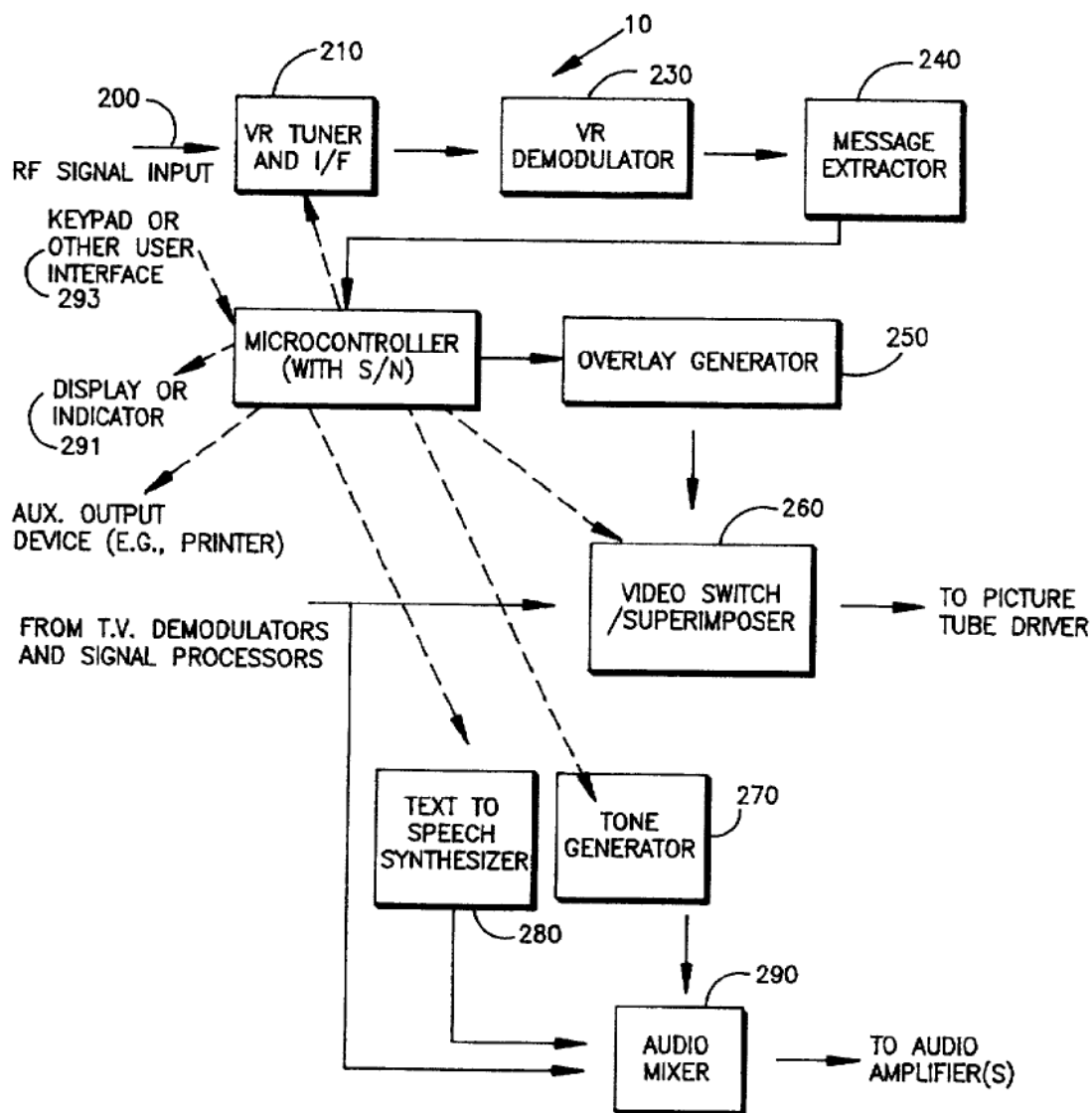
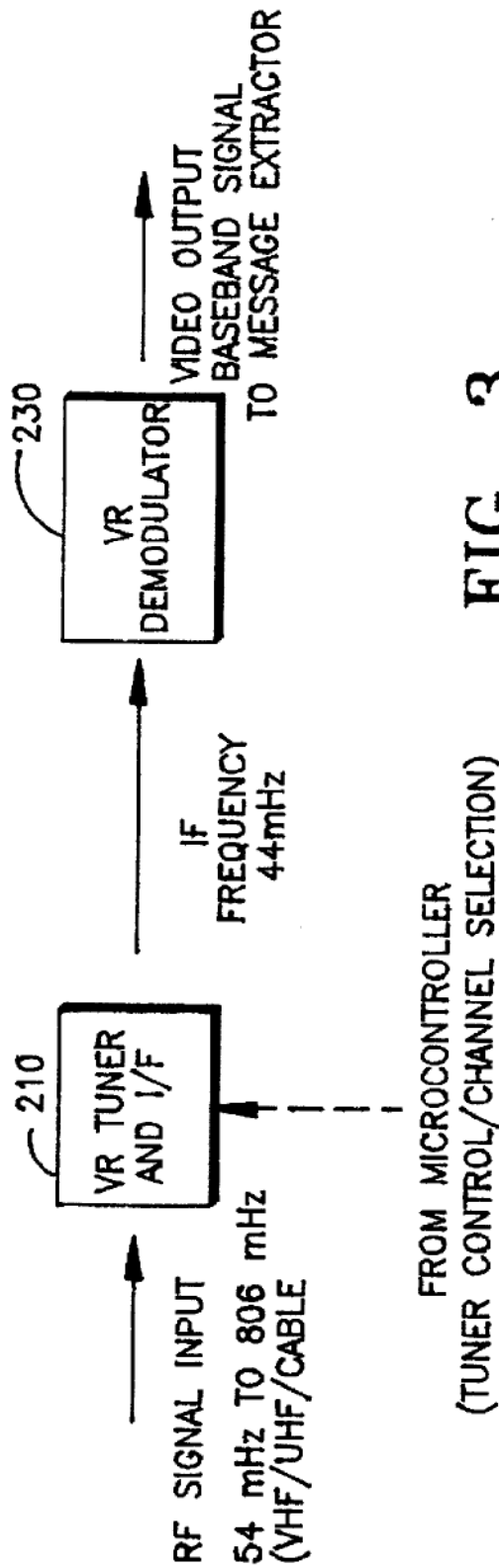**25 Claims, 12 Drawing Sheets**
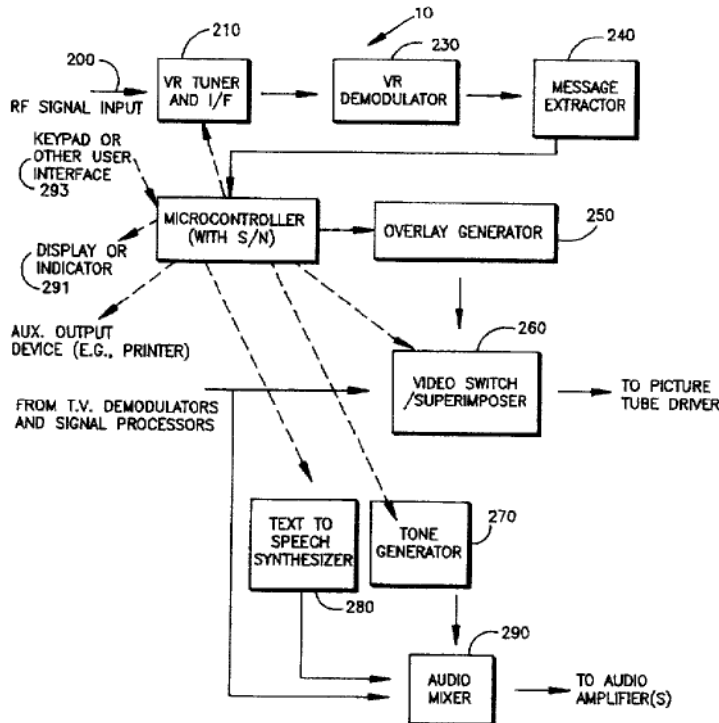
FIG. 1

FIG. 2

FIG. 3

FIG. 4

DOCKET ALARM
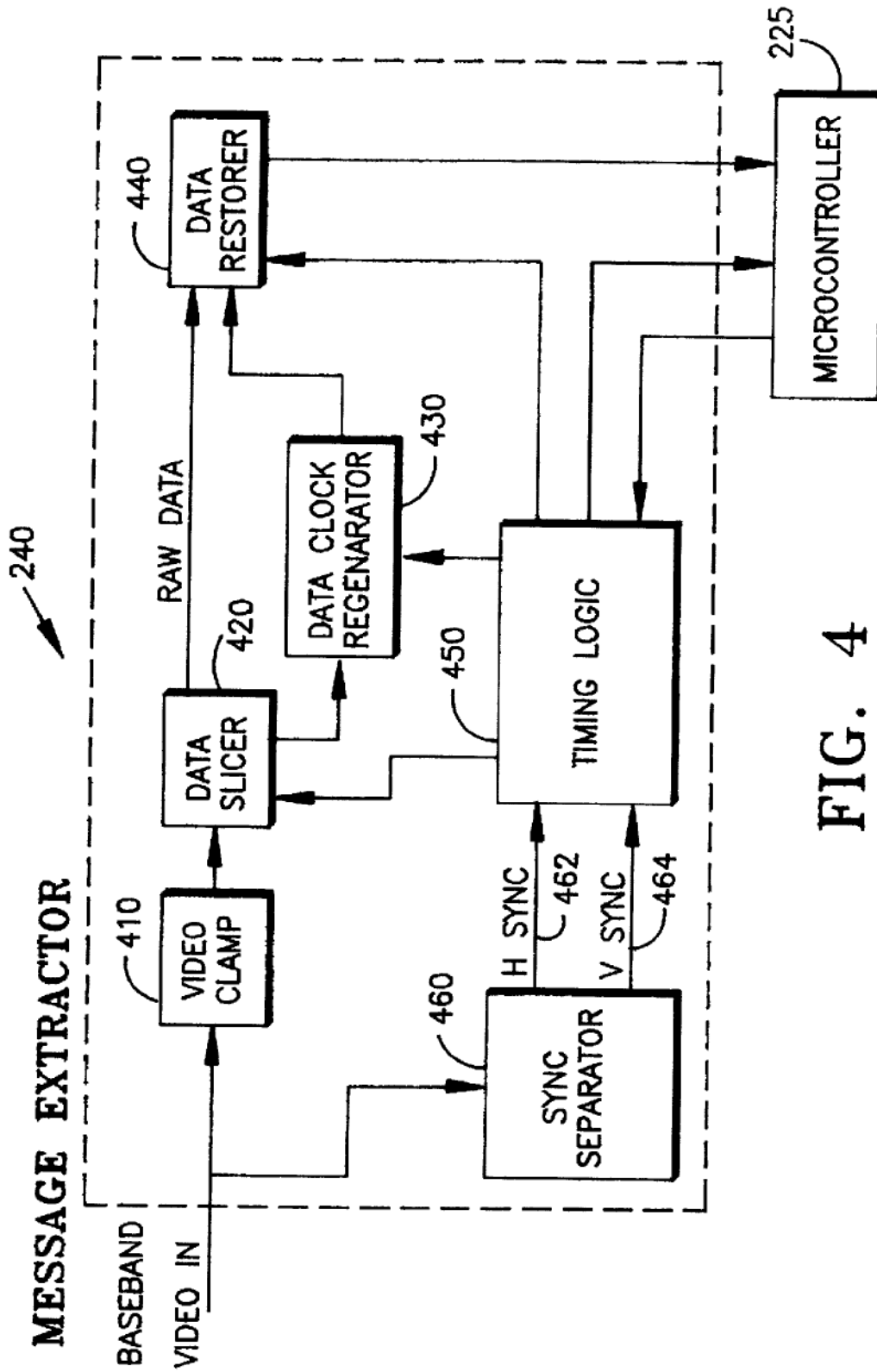
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