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(54) Title: SWITCHABLE MULTI-DROP VIDEO DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

(57) Abstract

A technique for controlling node equipment in a SONET ring transmission system. Control signals from a control center are transmitted in a selected byte of the SONET frame to each node (50-57) coupled to the SONET ring (24). Each SONET node includes a decoder (61) for decoding the control signals as to a destination address, and if a match is found, the node decodes a command field to carry out the representative functions. The command may be to activate or deactivate node circuits, or to receive or transmit video signals in specified VT channels of the SONET frame. In this manner, equipment can be switched on or off at the respective node to thereby optimize the bandwidth efficiency of the SONET network.

