

### IDENTIFICATION

Product Code: DEC-08-SBAB-D  
Product Name: PDP-8 Disc System Builder  
Date Created: October 27, 1967  
Maintainer: Software Services Group



1 ABSTRACT

This document describes a fast convenient keyboard oriented monitor which will enable the user to efficiently control the flow of programs through his PDP-8. The system is modular and open-ended allowing the user to build the software components required in his environment. The user may specify the system device (disc or DECTape), the amount of core, number of disc units available and the number, name and size of his resident system programs.

This is a basic package to which DEC will add FORTRAN, Assembler, Editor, Peripheral Interchange Program, DDT, and perhaps other programs, as they become available. The system described here includes all features of the monitor and allows the user full access to the disc as a program storage medium.

The System Monitor is designed to facilitate user/system communication. By typing appropriate commands to the monitor the user may call the loader from the systems device, save a core image on the systems device, or call a saved file into core from the systems device.

2 PRELIMINARY REQUIREMENTS

PDP-8 (4K)  
3 cycle Data Break  
DF32 Disc (or TC01 DECTape)

3 SYSTEM GENERATION3.1 Building the Monitor

To load a monitor system on an empty disc or DECTape, perform the following sequence of operations.

- a. Load RIM Loader
- b. Load Binary Loader
- c. Load BUILD using the Binary Loader
- d. Disable write protect on the desired device; DISC or DTA8
- e. Start at 200<sub>8</sub>
- f. Answer the questions (underlined) asked by the BUILD Program, as shown below,

to fit your hardware system.

```
*TYPE SIZE OF CORE (IN K) )
*4 )
*HIGH SPEED PAPER TAPE? )
*YES )
```



#### 4. OPERATION OF THE DISC SYSTEM

##### 4.1 Loader

4.1.1 General - The loader is a disappearing program allowing paper tape or disc input. It loads in one or two passes and makes all of core available to the user, except the page reserved for the monitor head (7600-7777). The user specifies a command list to the loader and the entry point. After a successful load the loader disappears and enters at the specified starting address.

4.1.2 Operations - From the monitor, type LOAD and wait for \*IN —. The loader uses either high or low speed paper tape as specified at build time by the answer to HIGH SPEED PAPER TAPE?. If you specified high speed paper tape either T: or R: is forced to the high speed reader; if you said no, both devices are forced to low speed. This applies only to the loader.

The loader will load up to five separate tapes. This is done by typing the appropriate command string in response to \*IN —. For example,

```
"*IN — R:,R:,R:↵"
```

causes the loader to expect three separate tapes to be loaded. If the two pass option is specified, each of the three tapes must be read in twice. The loader acknowledges each valid input with a "<cr><LF>↑".

The next typeout is "\*OPT —" which expects a 1-character answer 1 or 2. This argument is the number of passes required. The one pass loader will not load programs in field 0 above 7000. The loader disturbs core from 6000 to 7577. The two pass loader will load programs in all of field 0 except the cells described below.

<u>Core Size</u>	<u>Cells Excepted</u>
4K	7600-7777
8-32K	7574-7777

The two pass loader requires the input tapes be passed through the reader twice. In either case higher fields will be loaded. In the command string, each field, delimited by commas, contains device of one binary program and this command string will be identical for one pass or two pass load of the same program.

The loader asks "\*ST=" and expects a one to five digit answer describing, in octal, the starting address. The highest digit of a five digit number describes the memory extension involved; a four digit or less string implies field 0. For example,

```
"ST= 30200↵"
```

means jump to field 3, address 200.

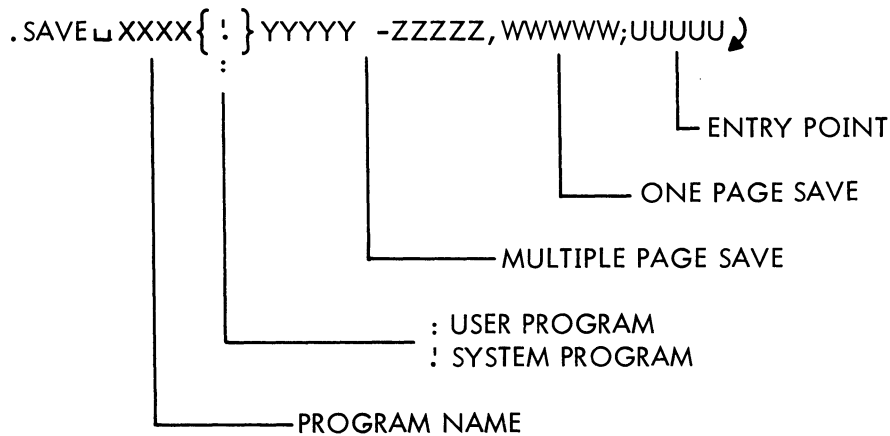
The loader then types "t" and waits for a tape to be inserted in the reader. When the tape is positioned, type <CONTROL>P. The tape is read-in and the loader again types "t" and waits. The low speed reader version of the loader halts; press Continue to resume the requested operation. Continue the above operation until you have matched the number of tapes loaded with the input request. The typing of one more <CONTROL>P causes the loader to enter at the specified starting address. Note that two <CONTROL>P's are required at the end of pass 1 of a two pass load. In two pass mode, tapes are loaded in the following order: Tape 1, Tape 2, Tape 3..., then Tape 1, Tape 2, Tape 3... .

4.1.3 Errors - An illegal checksum causes the loader to type "?" and return to the monitor.

## 4.2 CALL/SAVE

4.2.1 SAVE - Core may be saved on the disc in blocks of 128<sub>10</sub> words. From 1 to 31 (decimal) blocks may be placed on the disc and the blocks may be contiguous or non-contiguous as specified by the user.

The syntax is as follows:



Any combination of multiple page SAVE and/or single page SAVE requests may be requested, up to 32 (decimal) requests. Beginning address of a multiple page request must be smaller than the ending address. All addresses must be in the same field. All addresses are in octal and are one through five digits where the most significant digit of five is the memory extension. For example,

```
.SAVE CORE: 0 , 400-6177; 20 )
```

saves a core image called CORE, as page 0, and all cells from 400 through 6177 with an entry point of 20. Extended memory may be saved through the use of a five digit number. This most significant digit describes the field to be accessed and no check is made for validity in your system. If you save in field 7 you must have memory to match the request. The last non-zero extended field digit entered is remembered. The following three examples perform in exactly the same way.

```
.SAVE FOO:10000 - 17777; 10200
.SAVE FOO:30000 - 67777; 10200
.SAVE FOO:10000 - 7777; 200
```

Only one field may be saved at a time, and an entry point of zero causes a return to monitor at call time.

4.2.2 CALL - Core may be loaded from the disc by name in the following ways:

.CALL XXXX ↵  
 or .XXXX

The former is used if a user program is desired. The latter is used if a system program is desired (see "!" and ":" in SAVE). At the successful completion of the "call", control is transferred to the entry point specified at save time. Only the core specified at save time is disturbed.

5. DETAILS OF OPERATION AND STORAGE

5.1 Core Configuration

The system resides in the top page of field 0. The entry point to the system I/O routine is 7642. The loader, SAVE and CALL can access extended memory. Two modes are used in the system; monitor mode, and user mode. Monitor mode is present when tC is typed at system program time or when the monitor is started. The "." means monitor mode; the "\*" means user mode. (See Figure 1).

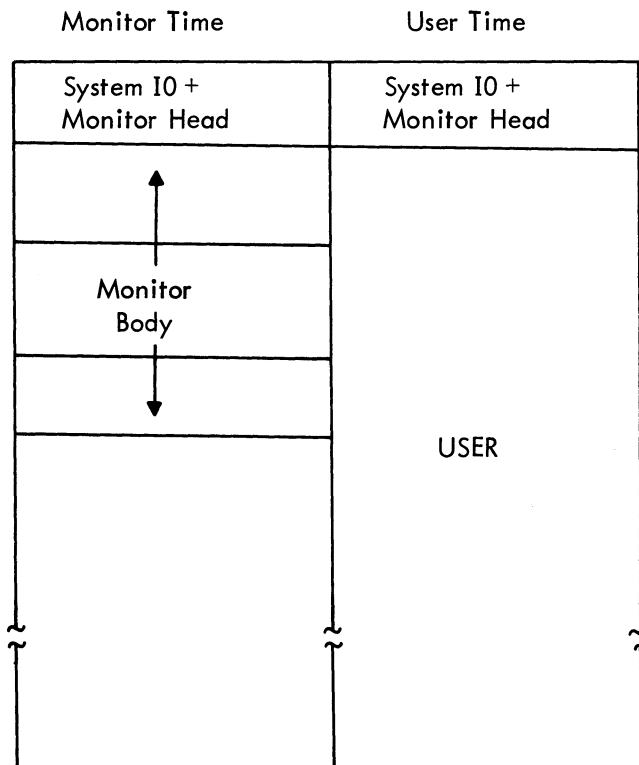


Figure 1 Core Storage Configuration

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The operation of the system after it is built and stored on the disc is described below. Appendix B shows the bootstrap which must be toggled in to start the system, if the machine core is cleared or destroyed.

At monitor and SP time the keyboard listens to a tC and returns to the head of the monitor (top page of field 0). The system is completely open ended, allowing flexibility in system content at the user installation. The system is built easily on the user's machine from a tutorial system builder program.

Monitor start is at location 7600 of field 0. At monitor start the code from 7200 to 7577 is saved in the first two scratch blocks on the systems device, and the monitor (block 1 and 2) is read into these cells. Control is transferred to the monitor which types a carriage return, line feed and a ".". A "." at the start of any line informs the user that he is communicating with the monitor. A <CONTROL> C(tC), when typed to either the monitor or loader causes an immediate transfer of control to 7600. A rubout typed to the monitor causes a monitor restart without destroying the contents of the scratch blocks on the systems device.

Core images may be saved by typing: SAVE NAME:  $n_1$  - $n_2$ ,  $n_3$ ;  $n_4$  ↵, where NAME is any one to four character program name. The dash between  $n_1$  and  $n_2$  indicates a contiguous save from the page containing address  $n_1$  through the page containing  $n_2$ . Address  $n_3$  is comma delimited and indicates a single page save. The entry point  $n_4$  is delineated by a semicolon.

A list showing the required pages is constructed from the information typed by the operator and a block requirement count is kept. When the carriage return is typed (allowing the save to begin) a directory name (DN) search is initiated. If a file of the name specified is found, it is replaced by the present file; if not, a new file is created. A storage availability search finds sufficient available blocks to satisfy the requirement count generated as the page list was built. Their numbers are stored on a corresponding block list. These blocks are then filled with the contents of the pages to be saved until the typed request has been satisfied. When the save is completed control returns to the start of the monitor (7600).

A save file may be recovered by typing "CALL NAME ↵". The file is loaded back into core and control is transferred to the entry point specified during the save. If the file was designated a systems program at save time it will be recovered by typing only NAME ↵. When a program is called, a DN search is initiated to find the name specified. Associated with the name is the entry point, and file protection and extension information. If the DN entry is found to be a save file of the proper mode (systems or non-systems), calling proceeds. If not, the call is terminated and control is returned to the monitor. When the call is completed (i.e., all of the saved code is back in core) control is transferred to the entry point specified at save time. The time for a program to be saved or called is less than the time to type the request.

5.2 Mass Storage Configuration

5.2.1 File Structure - A relatively sophisticated file structure is implemented to allow for automatic retrieval of storage for use by the system and a requirement for a single DECTape system. (See Figure 2.) Two types of blocks are present - directory name (DN), and storage allocation map (SAM) blocks. The former are described in Figure 3, the latter in Figure 4. All blocks are linked with the end of chain line - 0. The top of the SAM block chain is addressed in all DN blocks. The SAM block is the item which allows automatic storage retrieval. Each DN entry has a SAM number between  $1-77_8$ . A zero means unused. A SAM block has a record of  $256_{10}$  pages of mass storage (Figure 4). The first page of any numbered program is found by searching SAM blocks until an entry with matching number is found. To add to a file, find a SAM block entry equal to 0, insert the correct SAM number and adjust the storage block linking. To delete a block, the DN entry is cleared and the SAM block entries (equal to the DN number) are zeroed out.

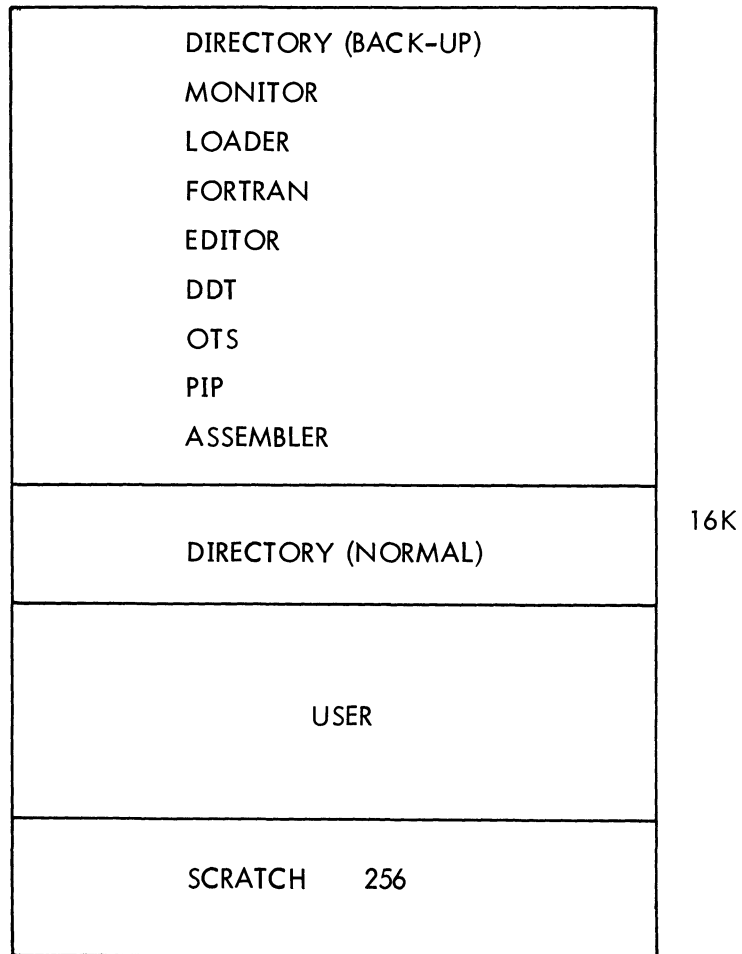


Figure 2 Mass Storage Configuration

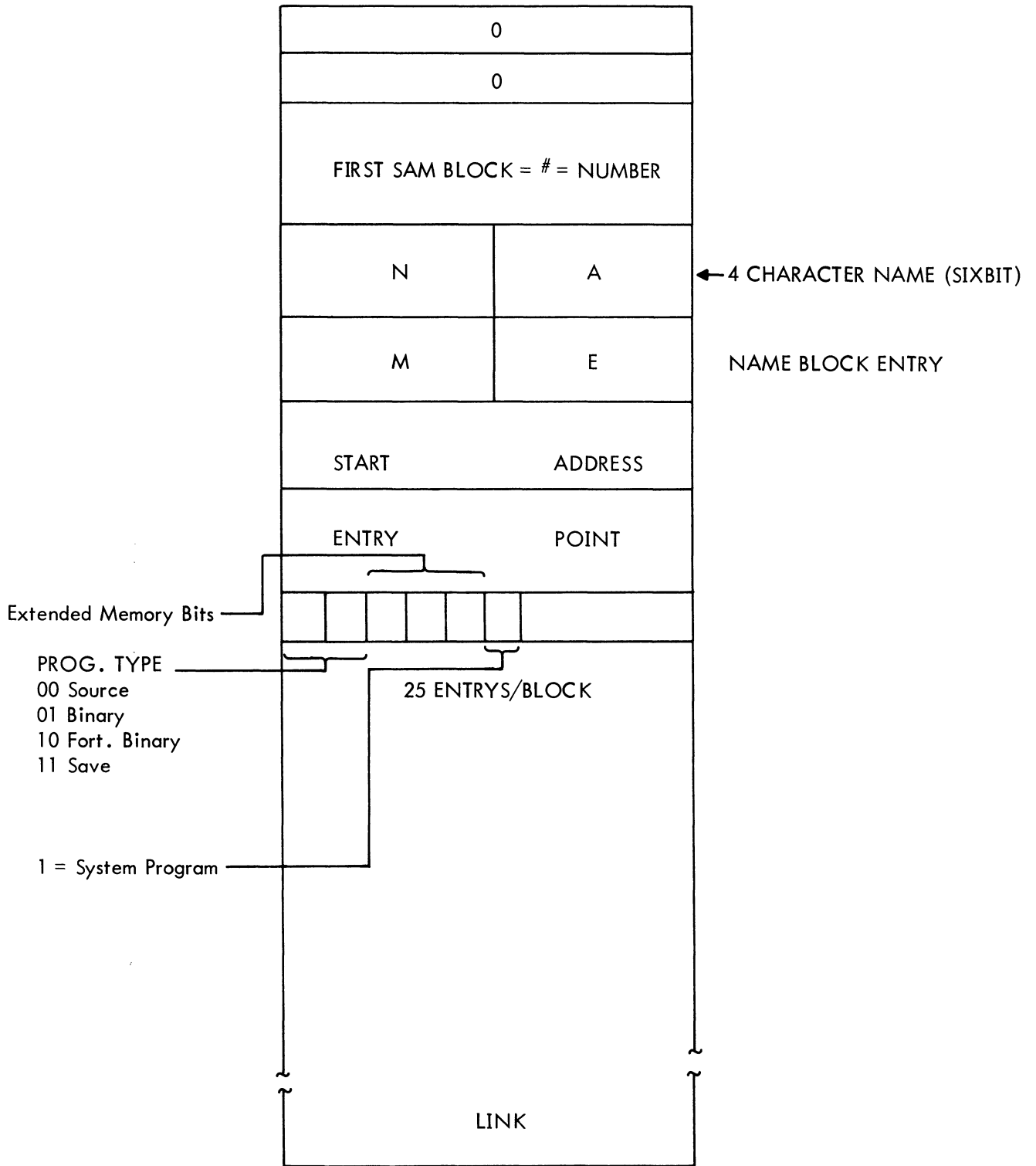


Figure 3 Directory Name Block



5.2.2 Disc Configuration - The Disc configuration is shown in Figure 5B. The scratch area for system overlay is located in the last two pages of disc storage. Additional DN and SAM blocks are added, one each per 32K of disc.

5.2.3 DECtape Configuration - The DECtape configuration (Figure 5A) is logically equivalent to the disc system but has the SAM and DN blocks ordered differently for efficiency.

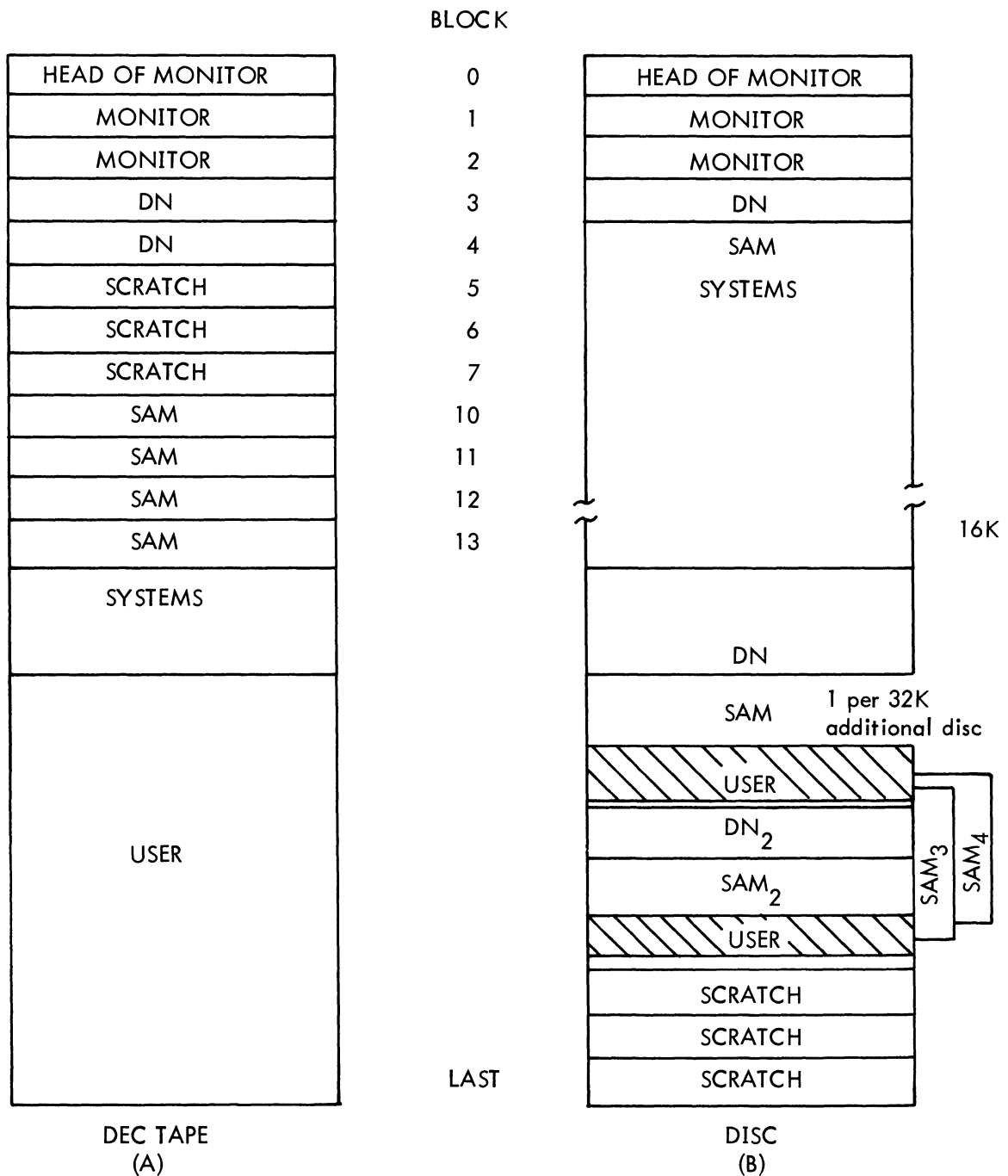


Figure 5 Mass Storage Configuration

### 5.3 Error Messages

a. The monitor protects the user from himself to the extent that it recognizes incorrect syntax in input command strings. Any errors discovered are remembered and at the time the user types a carriage return the monitor signals them with a "?".

b. The command decoder notifies the user of the following errors, by typing the key letter shown opposite the offending condition.

No such inputs	-	I
Illegal input characters or miscellaneous error condition	-	?
Directory full	-	D
System I/O failure	-	S
Excessive inputs or outputs	-	E

c. The local errors are described in the write-ups for each system program.

d. Monitor time read/write errors cause a halt to occur. Persistence of this condition means a hardware failure, as the system I/O routine tries to read and write three times before it gives up.

## 6 SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS INSTRUCTIONS OR FORMATS

### 6.1 Command Strings

The command string structure for the PDP-8 Disc System software enables the user to easily communicate with the system. The punctuation of the input is as described below.

.	= monitor mode
*	= system program mode
,	= more devices in list
:	= separator between device and file name
↑C	= <CONTROL> C Request to return to monitor
↵	= carriage return
↑P	= <CONTROL> P. Proceed with next operation.
Rubout	= <RO> Go back to start of input string.

### 6.2 Device Names

DX	- DEctape if disc and DEctape are on system [ X=unit number 0-7] *
S	- System (disc or DEctape)
R	- High-speed paper tape
T	- Teletype (low-speed paper tape)

\* Not implemented

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The command decoder used by all system programs asks one to three questions:

- a. OUTPUT in the form "\*OUT-".
- b. INPUT in the form "\*IN-".
- c. OPTIONS or SWITCHES in the form "\*OPT-".

Each system program may chose to use any or all of these options when it enters the command decoder. The user may type in one output device, one option (any character, which is transmitted in ASCII to the using program) and a string of one or more input devices.

Each system program using the command decoder must tell it the type of file being dealt with, i.e., Binary, Fort. Bin., or ASCII.

Some examples of command strings are shown below.

```
*IN - S:SAM )  
*IN - S:FOO2,R: )  
*OUT - D7:BAR )  
*OPT - M )
```

```
*TYPE SIZE OF CORE (IN K)  
*4  
*HIGH SPEED PAPER TAPE?  
*YES  
*DISC OR TAPE?  
*DISC  
*TYPE NUMBER OF DISC UNITS  
*1  
*  
. LOAD  
*IN-R:  
↑  
*OPT-2  
ST= 7600  
↑↑↑↑  
. SAVE FORT! 0-7577;4511  
. LOAD  
*IN-R:  
↑  
*OPT-1  
ST= 7600  
↑↑  
. SAVE PAL! 0-3400;241  
. LOAD  
*IN-R:  
↑  
*OPT-2  
ST= 7600  
↑↑↑↑  
. SAVE DDT! 5000-7577;5400  
.
```

Typical System Builder Output

Figure 6

APPENDIX A

SAVE SYNTAX FOR STANDARD PDP-8 SYSTEM PROGRAMS

.SAVE FORT! 0 - 7577; 4511  
.SAVE PAL! 0 - 3400; 241  
.SAVE DDT! 5000 - 7577; 5400  
.SAVE LODT! 1000 - 1577; 1000  
.SAVE HODT! 7000 - 7577; 7000  
.SAVE MAC8! 0 - 7577; 2041\*  
.SAVE FOTS! 0 - 6200; 200

\* LOAD 200, SET SWITCHES + RUN.

APPENDIX B  
BOOTSTRAP LOADERS

A. DISC BOOTSTRAP

0200	/7600	/CLA
0201	/6615	/DEAL
0202	/1215	/TAD 215
0203	/3613	/DCA I 213
0204	/1212	/TAD 212
0205	/3614	/DCA I 214
0206	/6603	/DMAR
0207	/6622	/DFSC
0210	/5207	/JMP 207
0211	/5600	/JMP I 200
0212	/7576	
0213	/7750	/WC
0214	/7751	/CA
0215	/7577	

B. DECTAPE BOOTSTRAP

(See TC01 System Bootstrap)

APPENDIX C  
 CALLING SEQUENCE (SYSTEM ROUTINE)

A CALLING SEQUENCE

JMS I SYSIO	/ CELL "SYSIO" POINTS TO I/O
FUNCT	/ SEE PARA. II
BLOCK	/ BLOCK TO BE ACCESSED
CORE	/ LOW ORDER CORE ADDRESS
LINK	/ FILLED BY WRITE, USED BY READ
ERROR	/ ERROR RETURNS HERE
.	/ NORMAL RETURN HERE
.	

B FUNCTION CELL

BITS 0-1	UNUSED
BITS 2	= 0, NORMAL; = 1, RETURN AT END OF READ/WRITE TO (ADDRESS + 1 IN ERROR RETURN.
BITS 3-5	UNIT NO. (IF DECTAPE)
BITS 6-8	MEMORY FIELD
BITS 9-11	FUNCTION; READ = 3, WRITE = 5.

