

---

Subject: Re: Question on IDL Error: Unable to free memory: from array descriptor  
Posted by [Dick Jackson](#) on Mon, 07 Apr 2003 17:10:48 GMT

[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

---

Hi Ken,

"Ken Knapp" <Ken.Knapp@noaa.gov> wrote in message  
news:6146a9fd.0304030627.361c402e@posting.google.com...

>  
> PROBLEM:  
> When processing satellite code, sometimes IDL bombs out with the  
> following message:  
> Loop over image  
> % Unable to free memory: from array descriptor.  
> Interrupted system call  
> % Execution halted at: PROC\_TAU        1634  
> /home/kknapp/work/lib/idl/goes/gasp9.pro  
>  
> [...]  
>  
> SYSTEM:  
> Linux Redhat 7.1  
> IDL 5.6 (recent upgrade)  
> -plenty of RAM (1Gb) and swap

David's idea (too much memory) is plausible, in that it can make us  
think we're invincible to memory shortages! A client of mine got a 2GB  
machine, and we promptly found a way to exhaust it with some insanely  
large images and processing methods.

Since the error message mentioned "array descriptor" I thought of an  
issue that came up for me a while ago. The issue is summarized at:  
[http://www.dfanning.com/misc\\_tips/submemory.html](http://www.dfanning.com/misc_tips/submemory.html)

Any big array subscripting going on around line 1634? (don't know why  
"Unable to free memory" would be the problem, but have a look anyway)

Cheers,

--

-Dick

Dick Jackson                    /        dick@d-jackson.com  
D-Jackson Software Consulting /        <http://www.d-jackson.com>  
Calgary, Alberta, Canada     / +1-403-242-7398 / Fax: 241-7392

---