In case anyone's interested, I'm happy with the DLL version of the AVI processor, picked up from the ITTvis site IIRC. This is invoked via CALL_EXTERNAL. The disadvantage is that you have to call it thru a wrapper function, and if you get it wrong, IDL terminates swiftly and silently, which makes debugging tricky. The advantage is that once this is sorted out, it just works and seems to be resilient to IDL upgrades.

It's in the Motley library:

http://www.dfanning.com/hadfield/idl/README.html