FORTH Computer Crashes

From an email by Peter Milne:

"I am having problems with the FORTH computer at the Minn60. I am able to get through "TELESCOPE LOAD" and have set the date.....but the computer crashes when I prepare to actually choose a target or move. It even fails if I just let it sit there after sending the "2TERM" command. I do get an "INVALID PARAMETER" after each command. When it crashes, it talks of "Ran otu of stack buffers". This seems to me to not be a cabling issue, but a problem with the computer. Could it be cabling? I hhave checked the connections already, and it is really cold to just play with cables out there."

There are two things that we've found that cause this issue.

There are two boxes in the warm room (a MUX and a bus extender), and two boxes in the dome in the blue rack (another MUX and bus extender). The MUX units are black and look like rack mounted computers and have lights that say "Talk", "Listen", "Power". The bus extenders are square white boxes with fiber optic cables coming out of them.

If you look at the MUX units when the problem is happening, the "Talk" and/or "Listen" light is not on on one unit, and the "Power" light is not on on the other unit. This is caused by the cables wiggling themselves out. Make sure the power cords for all 4 units are not only plugged into a power strip but are firmly plugged into the backs of the units. We've had this problem both when the bus extender doesn't have power, and the MUX unit doesn't have power.

You then have to restart the FORTH computer, and everything should work fine.