

Don't call us, ET, we'll call on you

If ET, the extra-terrestrial, won't come to Earth, we could go looking for him -- at a cost of \$4-trillion.

Dr. David Stephenson of the Max Planck Institute in West Germany told a physics meeting Friday at the University of Alberta, that a starship powered by nuclear bombs could now be built to travel at one-tenth the speed of light, carrying 10,000 people to the nearest star.

The trip would take 40 years. For even longer trips, present technology would allow human embryos to be frozen for up to 400 years. A computerized "mother" could raise them during the last leg of the journey.

As for the cost, Stephenson said it is only 10 times the amount spent worldwide each year on armaments.

"If all the nuclear warheads now in the world were used, they could power that starship."

A cheaper search for extra-terrestrial intelligence can be conducted simply by beaming microwaves into space.

Stephenson said we already have the technology to send messages halfway across the galaxy.