

# Bad axle and bearing blamed for derailment

**United Press International**  
HENDERSON, N.C. — A bad bearing and a broken axle on a locomotive were blamed Tuesday for sending Amtrak's Silver Star passenger train barreling off the track at 79 mph, injuring at least 51 of the 269 people aboard.

Most of the injuries were minor but a Columbia, S.C., man suffered a broken neck. All 18 cars and one of the three engines pulling the New York-to-Florida train left the track.

National Transportation Safety Board member Vernon Grose said at a news conference Tuesday the bearing and axle would be taken to Wilmington, Del., for analysis.

"We don't know which came first, the broken axle or the failed bearing," Grose said.

Ray Bullard, a spokesman for Seaboard Systems, which operates the train for Amtrak and owns the track where the accident occurred, said investigators found an axle on the last of the three engines had snapped.

"There's no way it could have been a result of the derailment," Bullard said. "This is concurred in by Seaboard and Amtrak."

Noting that a trestle over the Tar River is only a quarter mile away, Grose said "I think there are good places to derail and there are poor places to derail and when you go over a bridge, that's not a good place to derail. You can say we are very fortunate."

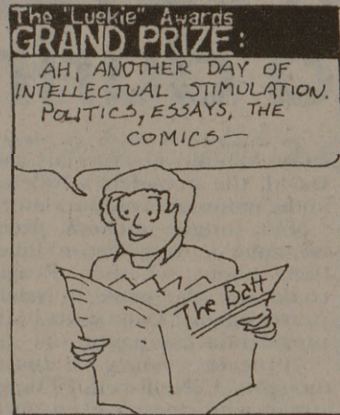
Bullard said the train was running at 79 mph, which is the speed limit for that section of track, when it derailed. It was raining at the time, but Bullard said the axle is believed to be the sole cause of the accident.

"The track was not a factor, nor the speed nor the weather," he said.

An Amtrak spokesman in Washington said damage to equipment was estimated at \$1,485,000, not counting another \$55,000 in damage to the track. Seaboard crews worked in a steady rain Tuesday to repair about 3,000 feet of track.

The train derailed around 6:45 p.m., sending some cars down steep embankments on either side of the roadbed.

R.I.



# Gulf, Socal may have to sell service stations if merged

**United Press International**  
PITTSBURGH — Standard Oil Co. of California and Gulf Oil Corp. might be forced to sell gas stations and refineries to overcome antitrust hurdles to their merger, the biggest in corporate history, industry experts said Tuesday.

"We are still dealing with a risk that the merger may not happen," said oil analyst Alvin D. Silber of Dean Witter Reynolds in New York. "Whether that risk is 5 percent or 20 percent, it's hard to say."

Socal, the nation's fifth-largest oil firm, agreed Monday to buy sixth-ranked Gulf for \$13.2 billion, or \$80 per share, rescuing it from a hostile bid by Texas oilman T. Boone Pickens.

A combined Gulf-Socal would be the nation's third-largest oil firm in terms of sales and the largest gasoline retailer, with a 10.1 percent market share, industry experts said.

The massive deal could be halted if antitrust experts at the Federal Trade Commission object. The agency said Tuesday it will investigate the plan.

But the FTC and the companies are free to negotiate an agreement to resolve any objections. Texaco Inc. and Getty Oil

Co. had to agree to sell 1,900 gas stations and other properties to win the government's blessing of their \$10.1 billion merger, the largest takeover approved so far.

Socal and Gulf also might have to get rid of some of their gas stations and refineries, though their oil and gas reserves are probably safe, said George Baker, oil analyst for Smith Barney in New York.

Pittsburgh-based Gulf runs 14,908 gas stations. Socal of San Francisco operates 7,579 Chevron stations.

The location of the outlets might concentrate too much

market power in the southern United States, said Silber.

Company officials refused comment. "It's just too soon to tell on that," a Gulf spokesman said.

The current leading refiner is Amoco Oil Co., with a 7.2 percent share of the gasoline market, said Dan Lunge, a Los Angeles oil expert.

Gulf now holds a 5.1 percent share, Socal 5 percent, he said.

Some consumer advocates charged the deal would raise prices, but Lunge said it is "simplistic" to predict merger's effect on oil prices.

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