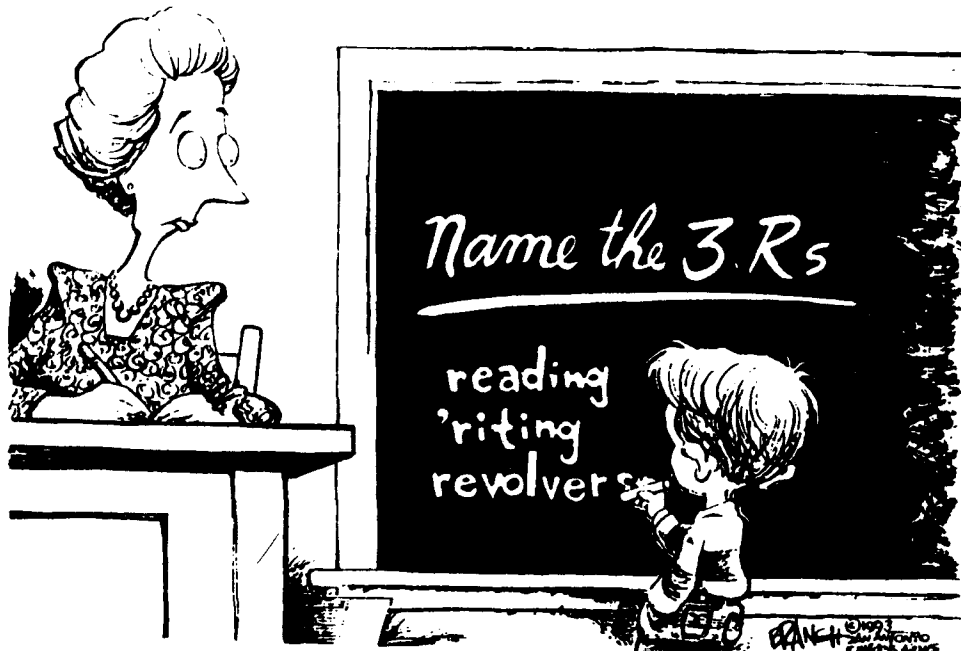


Editorial..

Last night the House of Representatives gave Bill Clinton a major victory in his fight for NAFTA. The House voted to approve the treaty 234-200. The treaty now moves on to the Senate where it is expected to pass by a large margin.

Many people know that NAFTA will create the world's largest free-trade zone, but many do not really know what NAFTA is all about. The free-trade zone will stretch from Mexico to Canada and includes 370 million people. The treaty will lower and eventually eliminate trade barriers between the countries within a time frame of 15 years. At the present time the United States collects a 3.9% tariff on imports and Mexico collects a 10% tariff on imports. Canada's tariffs on United States' imports were eliminated by earlier treaties. NAFTA also promises to promote fair competition between the countries and protect copyrights. Finally, NAFTA will set up a forum to resolve disputes and will establish a framework for future agreements between the countries. Any of the three countries can withdraw from the treaty with six month's notice. These are facts, but opinions are mixed on the ramifications. Supporters claim that the treaty will decrease the number of illegal immigrants that enter the United States because Mexico's economy should improve. Opposers feel that Mexico's economy will not significantly improve and illegal immigrants will flow across open borders. Supporters feel that up to 900,000 jobs will be created as the marketplace grows. Opposers fear that the treaty will push industries south to take advantage of cheaper labor. They are also worried that illegal drug-runners will be able to freely cross borders.

These will be interesting developments to chart if the treaty passes as expected in the Senate. No matter what happens, the House vote was a significant win for Clinton.



Editorial cartoons



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Let us know what you think about our stories, columns or editorial. Write a letter to the editor. Letters must be dropped off at the Collegian office by Tuesday at noon.

THE BEHREND COLLEGE Collegian

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