**Senate votes rights act hears report on pot**

By Norman Cohen

Washington, D.C. - The Senate was just now beginning to settle after the political scene was somewhat shaken last week by the passage of one major piece of legislation and the possible introduction of yet another.

**Women’s rights**

Sweeping through the Senate, the Women’s Rights Amendment guaranteeing women the right to “absolute equality” with men in all instances before the law.

The proposed amendment, signed by an overwhelming margin of 84-5 after passage in the House last October will, if enacted, virtually nullify all statutes that currently place women in subordinate positions in state and federal law. This results in the granting of certain legal and economic rights which women have been calling for for 40 years in the Congress.

Sponsored by a bi-partisan group of senators, the proponents of the bill said the amendment will end discrimination in job application, the type of jobs women may take (many states specify certain jobs which they consider “unfit” for women), property and business rights against women who commit crimes, and all other sexual laws which treat men and women differently.

In addition, the amendment will return women to a position equal to that of men by ending all current corruptions for women from the draft.

Opponents of the bill, including Republican and Democratic conservatives, argued that passage of the bill would actually infringe upon rights which women, rather than benefiting them. In Virginia, for example, women have requested that women would accept the resulting liability.

In other action on the political scene this week, President Nixon vetoed the Commission on Marijua and Drug Abuse issued a report to the effect that they have determined that the drug causes no permanent damage and recommended the president that all penalties for possession as we abolished.

The report followed a full year of intensive study during which time the Commission did not that a relaxation of the laws may be forthcoming in their recommendations. Shortly after those studies were issued, the White House issued a statement reaffirming Nixon’s opposition to relaxing the laws, and his firm stance on the issue of drugs.

The report states, however, with the results of the Commission’s study now public, the differences between the drug scene and marijuana problems will become more legally distinct.

The results did, however, differentiate between buying and selling of the drug and the actual approval of legalization, as penalties for dealers will remain intact, and some members of the commission expressed disapproval for legalization of marijuana.

Although the penalties for possession the only part were recommended abolished, there linger a number of distinctions which the Commission made between what should and should not be considered punishable.

For instance, growing of marijuana was recommended to remain a federal, possession or distribution in private were considered to be free from criminal enforcement, possession in public of over one ounce was considered to be a crime for a $100 fine, and operating a motor vehicles while under the influence was recommended to be a violation, punishable by fines.

The actual findings of the Commission’s study, originally called for by Nixon, were based upon drug studies done into the physical effects of marijuana, and stated that short-term effects had no bearing upon the crime rate, juvenile delinquency, or sexual promiscuity. “If anything” stated the report, “marijuana generally serves to inhibit aggressive behavior and aggressive tendencies.”

On the subject of long-term effects, the Commission found to be a result of physical, mental, or emotional deterioration side-effects, which have been identified for quite some time.

Marijuana should be noted that the report of the Commission was requested so that national guidelines could be established, however, it appears the report will have little effect upon the President, who will in all probability have the final say concerning national legislation.