



AP/photo

Susan Mooney, left, yells at a member of the North American Man/Boy Love Association. The group has enraged S.F. citizens.

SAC UNION 21 JAN 92

# Pedophiles defend meetings

## They claim media have ignited hysterical witch-hunt

By DENNIS GEORGATOS  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

SAN FRANCISCO — A group of pedophiles on Monday defended their past meetings at a public library as harmless and blamed a media "witch hunt" they said created an atmosphere of hysteria over their activities.

As counter-protesters shouted "double-talk" and held signs saying "Death to Child Molesters" and "Stop Child Abuse," a spokesman for the North American Man-Boy Love Association denied any wrongdoing by the group and criticized mainstream media coverage as bigoted and distorted.

The demonstration, which drew about 50 people, was held outside the offices of KRON television.

The NBC affiliate reported a week ago that the group held monthly meetings at the Potrero Hill branch library for the past two years and that some people associated with the group had arrest records for child molestation.

Other stations and newspapers and ra-

Angry residents demanded the group's ouster, but library officials said free speech issues were involved.

"NAMBLA is an open, public organization with nothing to hide," NAMBLA spokesman Bill Andriette said, adding the group was upset over KRON "barging" into a meeting with cameras rolling as well as earlier use of an undercover camera.

"Will the station next send an undercover agent with a camera into a support group for HIV-positive people...? Will they send undercover agents to a meeting of a group for rape victims and reveal their faces on the evening news?" Andriette asked. "The right of people to organize around sensitive or controversial topics is virtually worthless if tactics like these are tolerated."

KRON officials defended their stories as "fair, accurate, honest and forthright."

"We raised genuine issues of concern among the various organizations and communities involved — especially as these issues apply to the First Amendment,"

"We hope that the dialogue created will result in better understanding of the issues raised."

There are about 60 NAMBLA members in the San Francisco chapter and 900 nationwide. The group advocates legalized sex between men and boys and campaigns for abolition of sexual age of consent laws.

Those kinds of views infuriated Jano Brindisi, 38, who was among about 25 counter-protesters. Brindisi said she was molested as a child.

"Exploiting children is wrong. Manipulating children is wrong," she said. "There are so few laws protecting children. One of them is the age of consent law, the very law NAMBLA seeks to abolish."

"I'm particularly offended by this organization cloaking themselves in gay rights issues and First Amendment issues. I just think they are hiding behind all this rhetoric."

Andriette acknowledged that some people associated with the group have been in