



Chief Davi Kopenawa Yanomami of Demini and Kathy Wilson of Fairbanks.

# Alaska Native delegates visit Yanomami in Brazil

When Theresa Devlin, Kathy Wilson and Ricky Ashby traveled to the jungles of Brazil last summer, their sojourn among the Yanomami and other indigenous peoples was a dramatic experience consisting of many emotional layers. As representatives of the Alaska Native Leadership Project (funded by the Kellogg Foundation), they were attuned to some of the political, economic and social issues confronting their southern brothers and sisters. But it was impossible not to personalize the comparisons between the exotic and rudimentary existence of the Yanomami and their own experience of village life in Alaska.

Then, upon their return home, the trio shared the horror of learning through international headlines that a Yanomami village had been burned to the ground and scores of local residents slaughtered by land-hungry gold miners. Days passed before they learned that the village they visited had not been the one hit by the attack. However, one of their hosts, Chief Davi Kopenawa Yanomami, was quoted extensively in media reports demanding justice for his people. The gold miners, like those who invaded the

sacred Black Hills of South Dakota in the last century, are not supposed to be in territory controlled by the Yanomami, who have recently won constitutional land rights but are now faced with the daunting task of enforcing those rights.

Devlin wrote to Alaska Sen. Ted Stevens as well as President Clinton about the massacre and pressed for an American response. Stevens added his voice to those inquiring at the State Department about a possible protest. When she contacted Yanomami representatives to find out what could be done to help, the response was that financial contributions to the Yanomami Health Project, in the form of money orders payable to CCPY, could be mailed to the following address:

Comissao pela Criacao  
do Parque Yanomami - CCPY  
Banco Sudameris Brasil  
Branch no. (Agencia) 726  
Avenida Paulista 1000  
Current Account no. (Conta corrente) 12613.3000.9  
Sao Paulo SP Brazil