

## RHINO HORN ON SALE IN THE UK

[*Swara*, July/Aug, 1990, p.20]

Continuing illegal trade in African rhinoceros horns was recently revealed in the UK after an investigation carried out by the newspaper *The Times*. For the second time in three years, substantial number of rhino horns were offered for sale by London-based dealers in contravention of EEC and UK laws. Much of the rhino horn on sale in the UK is thought to be old, allegedly purchased by antique dealers from private individuals. *The Times* reported that a separate police investigation is under way involving the offering for sale of 54 black rhinoceros horns by another UK dealer. The entry of such large quantities of horn into the market, regardless of source, could supplement the amount of horn derived illegally from wild populations and therefore help to fuel continuing demand. This is one of the factors which prompted the adoption of a resolution at the last CITES meeting which urged all parties to establish a complete prohibition on all trade, internal and international, involving rhinoceros parts and derivatives, including personal effects.

To date, there have been no prosecutions in the UK relating to illegal sale or offering for sale of rhinoceros horns. This most

recent case closely followed considerable public criticism of the UK government's low level of commitment to the control of illegal trade in wildlife, with particular concerns for the lack of monitoring of the internal market and poor co-ordination between enforcement bodies.

### "DURER'S RHINO THE MOST BOOTLEGGED IN THE BIZ"

[Excerpted from the *Boston Sunday Globe*, May 20, 1990, by Milo Miles]

"Albrecht Durer (1471-1528) is the all-time champion among animal illustrators when it comes to being bootlegged. The subject in Durer's case was the first living rhinoceros brought to Europe in more than 1,200 years.

Durer never saw the rhino in the flesh instead composing his drawing from a sketch made in Portugal. A particular distinguishing mark is a wholly fictitious horn sprouting between the rhino's shoulders. In other, later renderings that horn is a dead giveaway that the picture had been copied from Durer - or from a copy.

T.H. Clarke, in his peculiar and truly obsessive study *The Rhinoceros from Durer to Stubbs, 1515-1799*, catalogs all manner of cartoons, ceramics, sculptures, tapestries and timepieces based on the Durer rhinoceros occurring more than two centuries. Clarke notes that 'Despite contemporary portraits of the first Lisbon rhinoceros by other hands, and despite later and more naturalistic portraits of the rhinoceros of 1579, 1684 and 1739, the Durer image of 1515 prevailed.'

