

would not want to expose myself to that situation again.

There is, too, an even more sinister process at work at this time in Western society, one that governments should take a look at: the enormous flow of energy from those slender few inches of soil into our seas, to be lost to the land for ever. The modern one-way farming system depends on an excessive use of fertilisers and sprays, and on putting our animals in factories, and with the washing away of farm sludge, and the emptying of waste into the sewage systems of our cities, rivers and seas are becoming choked with squandered energy. Water can be the soil's best friend. It can also be its worst enemy. Rain and river may steal away our soil almost without our realising it.

The fault lies in our desire for cheap food. Given the huge increase in human population and the decrease in animals, the surpluses from food processing and sewage must find their way back to our soil, or there will be a disaster. And Western society cannot live on cheap food from developing countries without these countries facing a similar situation. Time is not on our side. Half of the soil energy at Fordhall was washed into the River Tern during the 15 years my father farmed it. The greatest civic service a city-dweller could perform would be to hand back his waste to the farmers, composted, and free of any toxic residues. This is the best way to subsidise farming.

Arthur Hollins spoke about his farm not long ago on Radio 4.

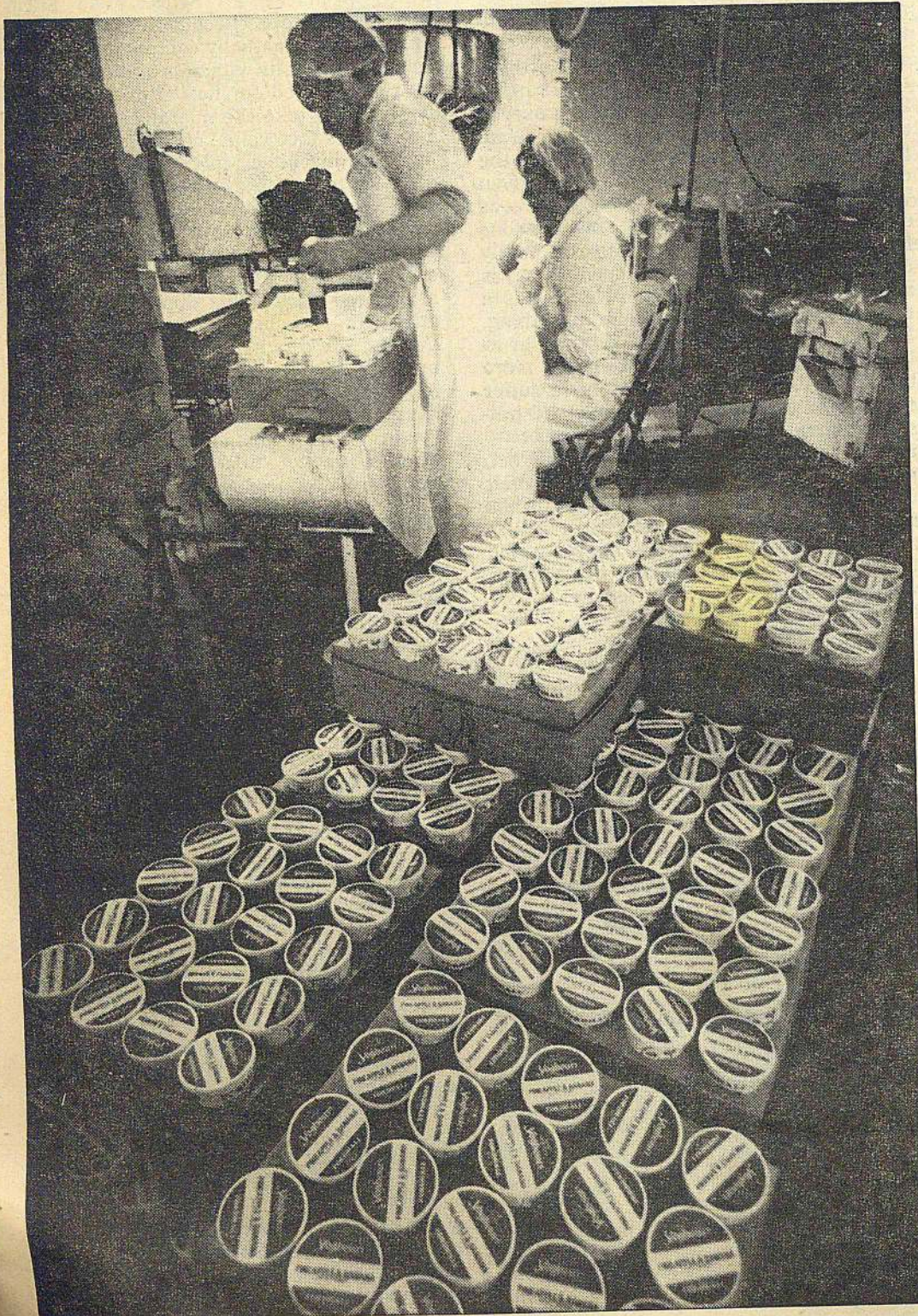
Seven Square Meals a Day by Magnus Py

It is commonly held that a nutritional status is best attained by a regimen of three square meals a day, although the precise connotation of the term 'square' when used in this context is not altogether clear. On the other hand, you will remember the words of the character Belloc's characters, a certain He

Oh my friends, be warned by me
That breakfast, dinner, lunch and tea
Are all the human frame requires
With that the wretched child ex

(Not, I may say, because of the inadequacy of his diet but rather on account of the fact that he has eaten pieces of string.) This position is that four meals a day are the ideal. Until recently, nutritionists have paid remarkably little attention to how many meals we should eat. Their attention has been so firmly fixed on assessing the needs of the total population, in terms of calories, proteins and all the rest, that when they applied themselves to individual cases they have often shown that they have considered the problem with

During the war, when food was scarce, it was only reasonable for the Government to advise its advisers to the Government to set nutritional standards for school children. It was decreed that the statutory minimum, regardless of the precise requirements of any particular day, should be covered by such foods and in such amounts as to provide a thousand calories. The basis for this target, so far as I know, has never been made clear, was that since a young boy—but not, I should add, a young girl—may in fact possess a daily caloric need for 3,000 calories working day, and since—here comes the unexamined assumption—boys and girls should at least should eat, three square meals a day, it follows that when a school diet provides one of these three it ought to contain 1,000 calories. I remember with some pleasure attending an evening session when a mixed group of children, some of them Majesty's Inspectors of Schools, were then were, some selected seniors and a few others sat down to eat some meals which had been specially constructed to contain the 1,000 calories. They were rather large. Since then, more, it seems, by reference to the fact that they should be eaten more precisely of what should be eaten for the sake of perfection—the Department of Health and Science have established a target of 880 calories, with at least 20 per cent protein and fat, for the average school child—still, it would appear, on the basis of a three-square-meal day. I am concerned with factory canteens t



Arthur's yoghurts