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By appointment to Her Majesty The Queen Suppliers of Butter and Cheese St. Ivel Ltd., Swindon, Wiltshire

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Dear Dietitian,

November 1989

DIETARY FAT DEBATE

In the current media debate about polyunsaturates, dietary fat and health, I am writing to correct certain misconceptions which have frequently appeared in various newspapers.

- A low fat spread is <u>NOT</u> the same product as margarine or margarine high in polyunsaturated fats.
- A low fat spread contains half the fat of any butter or margarine i.e. contains less than 40% fat. This fat may be saturated, polyunsaturated, monounsaturated or a combination in varying ratios.
- A margarine is <u>high</u> in fat, i.e. more than 80%. The fat may be saturated, polyunsaturated, monounsaturated or a combination in varying ratios.

A nutritional comparison table is attached which shows that the polyunsaturated margarines which have currently been in the news, are not low fat spreads, and in fact contain the same amount of fat as butter. Not all low fat spreads are high in polyunsaturates, for example, St Ivel Gold, which is a low fat spread, contains 6.5g polyunsaturates per 100g, whereas Flora a margarine high in polyunsaturates contains 42g polyunsaturated fat per 100g.

Charts which show the 1984 COMA Report "Diet and Cardiovascular Diet" recommendations on fat intake, compared with what is actually being consumed are enclosed. These highlight that there has been little change in total fat consumption since 1984, and we are still eating more than 42% of our diet as fat, which is 7% more than the 35% recommended by the COMA report. The only change which has taken place since 1984 is in the type of fat consumed.

Copies of current literature available from the St. Ivel Educational Service are included. If you would like any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Jane Stevenson

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