

GRAHAM ROWLANDS

TOP SECRET

That's ice
that's ice-sheeting the roof of
Parliament House. Those holes there
are hot water holes through the white
honeycomb of ice. Those hands are human
hands holding the heavy hoses in belts and tackle.

Suspended from steel cables
the steel strings of the hanging bridge
rain, hail — a taut frozen instrument of ice.
Like fingers, working with fingers, they're
men and women up there, popping off
eye dropper, ice dropper
icicles.

Snow ploughs sweep off assembly lines.
Men and women bolt them together for
men and women to drive
wet black out of
scooping orange
through white.

The frosted cones of the Three Sisters
defrost by mirrors of one day's sun
for the tourists. That's
once a year. But
making and placing
the mirrors
takes the rest of the year.

Let there be war
said one Prime Minister
and there was war.

Let there be work
said another Prime Minister
and there was ice.