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The Prime Minister's Ironing Board and Other State Secrets: True Stories from the Government Archives

Adam Macqueen

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A Daily Telegraph Book of the Year



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Adam Macqueen : The Prime Minister's Ironing Board and Other State Secrets: True Stories from the Government Archives before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all

praised *The Prime Minister's Ironing Board and Other State Secrets: True Stories from the Government Archives:*

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. I enjoyed it immensely. By Phil Y This is a delightful, light and funny look into the British government archives, released under the '30 year rule. Not an obvious source of laughs, I grant you, but Adam MacQueen has found lots of wry humour in the papers of Prime Minister's past. I enjoyed it immensely. After reading "The Prime Minister's Ironing Board and other state secrets" you'll have a favourite story to tell others. My personal choice is a young Robin Cook (later Foreign Secretary) who tabled a motion to create a UK intelligence service since MI5 and MI6 didn't officially exist – Margaret Thatcher was furious! There's also the exchange of letters about providing reading to the recently imprisoned Nelson Mandela back in 1962. MacQueen includes the list of books and Madiba's polite thank you note. I mostly read this book while on a 14 hour flight and it was perfect travel/in-flight reading. There's short sections for each story so you don't have to concentrate for long. You can put down and resume later quite easily. Adam MacQueen previously compiled the 50th anniversary history of *Private Eye* and helped curate the delightful *Private Eye* exhibit at the Victoria and Albert. "The Prime Minister's Ironing Board and other state secrets" will make an excellent gift for some of my friends and is a welcome alternative to the celebrity autobiographies infesting the shelves this Christmas.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A fresh perspective. By Cainea Lovely insight into the British Civil Service and mentality. Witty and nostalgic at times, a very pleasant reading, as deep as you wish to make it.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Pass. By Pamela I didn't finish it. Bored out of my mind. I thought the Brits had a good sense of humor. I think I thought wrong.

Stored in Whitehall's archives are everything from blood-chilling warnings of imminent nuclear attack to comical details of daily life in the corridors of power. Concerned notes from ministers on the subject of the Heir to the Throne's potential brainwashing by Welsh terrorists are shelved alongside worries about housemaids 'on the wobble' at Chequers. Detailed and surprising plans for royal funerals sit beside reports on suspected spies in the showbiz world and bawdy poetry about the monkeys on the Rock of Gibraltar. And Mary Whitehouse's complaints about the sex education syllabus nestle next to thank-you notes from prisoner 13260/62, also known as Nelson Mandela. Adam MacQueen, author of the highly acclaimed bestseller *Private Eye: The First 50 Years*, has searched high and low to present us with some of the most unlikely revelations since the Official secrets act was inaugurated one hundred years ago. Not only about Mrs Thatcher's ironing board, but Ted Heath's car, Harold Macmillan's bedroom carpet, Imelda Marcos and her son Bong Bong's trip to Buckingham Palace and President Eisenhower's particular problem with Winston Churchill's trousers.

A hugely enjoyable bran tub of revelations about our rulers' fancies and foibles over the past century. About the Author Adam MacQueen has worked at *Private Eye* on and off for fourteen years. He was assistant, deputy and finally acting editor of *The Big Issue* between 1999 and 2002 and is currently on the editorial team of *Popbitch.com*. He was also associate producer on Adam Curtis's BBC series *All Watched Over By Machines of Loving Grace*. Adam MacQueen lives on the South Coast with his partner.