

3 March 1992

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The Secretary of State and the Minister of State met the ~~4~~ party leaders this morning to discuss the holding of substantive political talks. The Secretary of State on behalf of ~~the Government~~ <sup>the Government</sup> welcomed the statement the party leaders had issued on Friday. In a positive discussion, it was agreed that, with the assurances which it was expected the Prime Minister and Mr Kinnock would give, it would be possible and valuable to begin such talks as soon as possible. The Secretary of State confirmed that he would wish to discuss this with the Irish Government at the ~~forthcoming~~ <sup>this week</sup> meeting of the Inter-Governmental Conference in the expectation that substantive talks would begin very soon. Today's meeting moved on to discuss the economy, as had been planned when the meeting had been set up.

Stromont Castle.