

Stimson Reports Allies On Top In Tunisian Battle

WASHINGTON, March 11. (AP)—Allied forces in Tunisia “had much the better of the fighting last week,” Secretary of War Stimson reported today. But he added that losses on both sides “have been substantial.”

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The secretary said at his press conference that casualty reports from North Africa are incomplete, but that the Allies have taken more than 1,000 German and Italian prisoners and destroyed well over 100 Axis tanks.

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The heaviest American losses, he said, occurred in the week of Feb. 14-20—the period of the American retreat and initial counterattack on the central front—when casualties were 59 killed, 176 wounded, and 2,007 missing. Most of the missing, Stimson said, probably were taken prisoner but it is possible some of them might yet return to the American lines.

Reports indicate that a number of Germans have been killed and wounded, the secretary said, while British and French losses in the recent fighting appear to have been relatively light.

During the last week, he said, the highly mobile forces of German Marshal Ervin Rommel have been extremely active in southern Tunisia, but he called the net result of their activity decidedly unfavorable to the Axis.