LIGNER-THAN-AIR-SHIPS. Since the lamentable disasters to the dirigibles Macon and Akron a few years ago which cost many lives, little or nothing has been done by the United States in the development and Zeppelin type air craft. Thoro are experts who believe that dirigibles will have but limited use in both military and commercial fields. The fact remains that the U.S. is better equipped to develop this type of craft than any other nation because of an almost inexhaustible supply of helium gas. Helium is a by product, derived from natural gas in the oil fields and is found in Utah, Texas, Colorado, Idaho and other places. We are the only nation with such a supply of natural helium. It has 95% of the buoyancy or "lifting power" of hydrogen and is inflammable. Before the whole world, helium was a laboratory curiosity that cost $1500 per cubic foot. During the war, the price was brought down to 140 per cubic foot. Today, natural helium can be procured for 13 ½ per cubic foot. From $1500 to 13 ½ is quite a drop. Thus for the U.S., it has built but 3 dirigibles, England 16, and Germany 136. German Zoepplins fly regular schedules to South America and over the North Atlantic route. In the last 6 years, the Graf Zeppelin has made 565 flights, being 16,000 hours in the air and covering 1,000,000 miles. She carried 36,300 persons, 13,000 passengers, 91,000 pounds of mail, 126,000 pounds of freight, all for pay and made 152 ocean crossings. Since March 1938, the Graf has made 8 round trips between Germany and Brazil and 10 round trips over the North Atlantic. Interest in dirigibles is awakening. You will hear more about them.

WAR DEBTS AGAIN. Sir Runciman of England and Monsieur Bonnet of France have been here recently to discuss trade relations, finances and other international matters and their visit has revived heated discussion of the war debt problem. Do you remember how flying squadrons of Minute men and spellbinders exhorted folks to buy Liberty and Victory bonds during the war. The money derived from the sale of these bonds was loaned to European nations and with that money they bought shoes, clothing, munitions, and supplies to carry on the war. We took their promissory notes during the war for war stricken nations to pay it off. When they complained, we appointed a War Debt Refunding Commission to talk it over with them. That Commission suggested a plan to place these doctas on a 62 year basis at greatly reduced interest rates. Under the new plan, the debtor nations made annual payments until 1932. In that year, they again complained about the burden they were carrying and at the instance of President Hoover, a moratorium was declared for one year. At the end of the moratorium, they decided not to pay anything more so that today, they still owe us about 113 billions plus interest. The difficulty in paying war debts arises from the fact that no means or method of payment has been devised. Debts between nations must be settled in gold. If we took all the gold they had, it would still be far from enough to pay and draining away their gold supply would destroy the credit base in those foreign countries and injure international trade. One other method of payment would be to buy their manufactured goods and farm products so they could set up credits in this country to apply to their war debts. Trouble with that is that we have too much unemployment for one thing and produce more than enough farm products for another. So what? Many a statesman would welcome a feasible solution of the war debt matter particularly the debtor nations because they would like to borrow some of our money and can't under the law so long as the war debts remain unpaid.

COUNTING NOSES. The recent demand for a census of unemployed provokes the thought that we are a statistical-minded people. We like to count people, gather up business data, assemble figures from which to draw factual conclusions for the better guidance of the nation. The U.S. Census Bureau still continues to be the greatest statistical organization in this country. Day in and day out, a large number of people are busy checking information, making up tables and telling us about ourselves. The first census taking in 1790 when we had but 4 million people required 18 months. The enumerators or census takers travelled by foot and on horseback, swam swollen streams, fought Indians and had to undergo many hardships in the business of counting noses. At that time, New York City had but 33,000 people and Detroit was so small they didn't even bother to count the folks up there. Our western boundary at that time was really the Mississippi River. Now we have 128 million people and it takes only 30 days to take a census but the time spent in preparation for a census is much longer. From the census takers we learn a lot of things. They have figured out that there is a birth in the U.S. every 15 seconds, a death every 22 seconds, an immigrant every 15 minutes, an emigrant every 144 minutes, all of which means a gain in our population of one person every 35 seconds. So you see we're still growing. Here's a question for arithmetic wizards. At this rate of gain, if it remained constant, how many people will we gain from the time you read this until January 1st 1950.
IICROFILMING. Literally, it means a microscopic film or small film. It is here referred to as a process devised by the National Archives in Washington for the preservation of records and documents. The National Archives is a huge artistic building standing at the intersection of Pennsylvania and Constitution Avenues where government documents that have any historic or continuing future value are stored. We never had such a storehouse before. It is an enormous task to search through millions and millions of documents, select those that have value and file them away in fireproof, dust proof, vermin proof spaces so that future generations may read all about us. One problem constantly before the Archivist is the matter of economizing on space and to that end a process has been worked out for filming documents on tiny films. If they need to be examined the film is placed in a projection machine and magnified to normal size. The Archivist wanted to preserve the card index records of World War and other veterans which are now on film in the Veteran Administration. To copy them by hand would cost $76,000. So they hit upon the microfilming idea which costs only $1900. It is a new process that may have big value in the future in commercial work. It is said that the Bank of England intends to microfilm all it's records and deposit them somewhere in Wales so that in the event of war, the records will be intact. Might have possibilities to prevent destruction of records in case of fire or flood also. Just another step in the march of scientific progress.

LI PO-TIEN. It's a long way from Tientsin China to the Congress in Washington, D.C. but not so far but what Li Po-Tien will probably obtain $300 by act of that same Congress. Li is a Chinese lady. She operates a restaurant and bar room in Tientsin. Li must have Yankee ways because she extended credit freely. In fact a large part of Li's business was on credit and much of these accounts were worthless. But that's neither here nor there. All that matters is that shortly after midnight on January 3rd, 1929 a private in the U.S. Marine Corps came to Li's place. His name was Tofil. He was a fighting Marine. He must have been because he took out a knife and began a one man offensive in and about Li's place as a result of which Li was severely cut about the face, arms, neck, hands, chest, back. Li was rushed to the hospital and it cost $54 in Chinese money to get Li fixed up. However, Li was restored to normalcy and continues to dispense drink to the thirsty and food to the hungry. As for fisticuffer Tofil, he was tried by general court martial and sentenced to 10 years imprisonment. But Mr. Tofil in prison did not restore the $54 hospital charge to Li's purse so Li called upon Uncle Sam for restitution. The good Uncle thru his proper officers felt that $300 would assuage Li's wounded feelings and her injured pocketbook. So it was recommended. So it was decreed by the House of Representatives on the 2nd of February 1937, little more than 8 years afterwards. But here's a query. Do you know of any reason why we should have troops in China from whose relationships with natives, these provocations may yet develop a spark that could start a conflagration.