I AM FIRM, YOU ARE OBSTINATE

AARON MARTIN COHEN
Tokyo, Japan

In the August 1969 Kickshaws, Dave Silverman briefly discusses the word game "Conjugating Irregular Verbs" (I am firm, you are obstinate, he is a pig-headed fool), and suggests a "Rich man, poor man" variant (rich man: tired; poor man: lazy). But such games can also be played in deadly earnest, particularly in religious and political confrontations. A classic example is afforded by the terminology used by the People's Republic of China, as interpreted for home consumption by the Nationalist Chinese government on Taiwan. The following phrases are taken verbatim from Huang Chih-Hsing and Chen Ying-Leu, Psychological Warfare Theories and Application, as translated by Lee Wah-Chung (Hong Kong: The Chi Hsing Press Branch, 1955), pp. 90-91. Part of the charm of this list lies in the inept English translation, rivaling the Portuguese-English phrase-book immortalized by Mark Twain in 1883 (see November 1970 Kickshaws).

The long march of 25,000 miles
Civil war
University of Revolution
The thought of Mao Tse Tung
Democratic intelligensia
Liquidation
Frankness
Study
Principle of warm affection
3 Reflections and 5 reflections
People's will
Liberation district
New Marriage Law
Liberation
People's police
People uplifting their heads
Peace front
United front
Democratic Intelligensia
A clear mind
Liberation army
Contribution towards the purchase of aeroplanes
Cultural reformation
Anti-Revolution

The fleeing of 25,000 miles
Rebellion
Centre of Crime Manufacture
Treachery, plot of high treason
Communist satellites
Massacre
Self-false accusation
Forced thinking
Human nature
Secret mail
Adulterated people's will
District without freedom
Creation of obscenity
Slavery
Dictator's accomplices
People falling into water
Agression front
Group of scum
Communist Appenixes
Processing of coercion and intoxication
Atrociouls bandits
Scraping people's money
Burning of books and killing of scholars
Reasonable Reformation