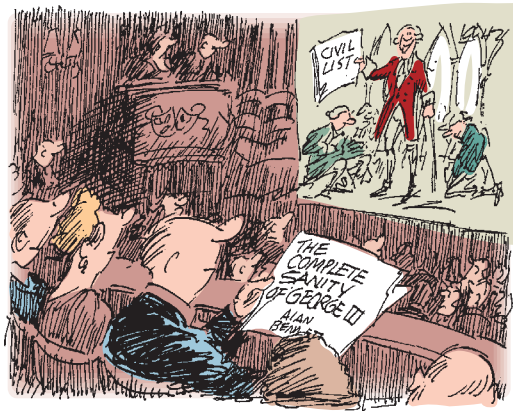


The origin of the Civil List



The kings and queens of England, as its rulers, used to pay all the expenses of government and raised feudal taxes with the assent of the Great Council, from which Parliament evolved **King George III** is remembered as the mad king but was perfectly sane in recognising he was in deep financial difficulty, unable to cover the government's requirements primarily because of the costly Seven Years' War of 1756-63. He handed over most of his hereditary revenue in relief of the burden and in return for an annual grant, still called the **Civil List**, to pay the bills of the royal household and the civil and diplomatic services – the latter subsequently dropped