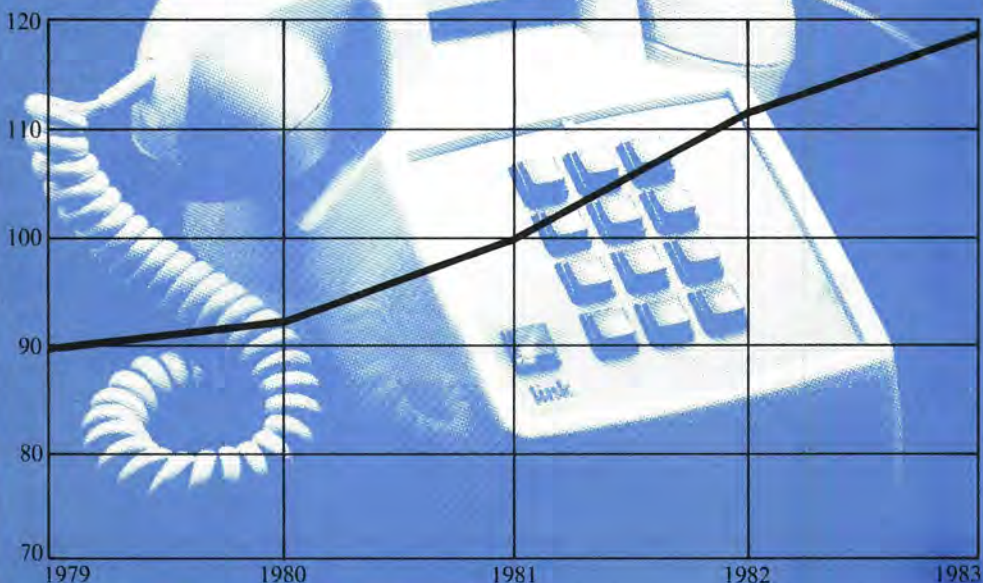


Chart 14.1

Consumer price index for telephone service in Canada (1981=100)

larger communities, most telephone companies have introduced extended-area service which enables customers to place calls in a wider area without paying long-distance rates. The customer pays a slightly higher fee based on the number of telephones in his extended area.

Between 1980 and 1982, telephones increased on private lines for both business and residential use but decreased on party lines, which were gradually being phased out in rural areas. The ratio of telephones to population was highest in Alberta, followed by Yukon and Manitoba. The ratio was lowest in Newfoundland (Tables 14.3, 14.4).

The number of telephone calls rose dramatically between 1975 and 1982 and the number of long-distance calls increased more rapidly than local calls (Table 14.5). One reason is the growing ease in calling long distance. All telephone calls must pass through switching stations for routing. In the past this meant delays with step-by-step switching equipment using a number of separate switches. Now electronic switching systems and digital multiplex switching equipment can handle calls faster and more economically. If the most direct route is busy or out of order, automatic equipment instantly tries several alternative routes until a free or operating one is found.

14.3.2 Record communications

Public message service. CNCP Telecommunications provides a public message service. Messages can be forwarded or received from any point in Canada or, through Teleglobe Canada, throughout the world.

The new information technologies have already invaded the telegraph office. Once a message is filed, it is entered directly into a mini-computer with the aid of a keyboard and visual-display unit. After its destination has been inserted, the message is released into store-and-forward computers for electronic transmission by the best available route. The message appears on a teleprinter terminal near its destination and is delivered by telephone, mail, telex or personal delivery.

Electronic mail. CNCP Telecommunications and Canada Post introduced a new electronic service called Telepost, available in Canada and the United States. Messages filed with CNCP are transmitted electronically to the postal centre nearest the addressee, then delivered by the local mailman.

Telex and TWX messages to overseas points are switched through Teleglobe Canada facilities. The total worldwide complex provides access to about one million subscribers. Telex, the first North American dial-and-type teleprinter service, was introduced in Canada in 1956 by CNCP.