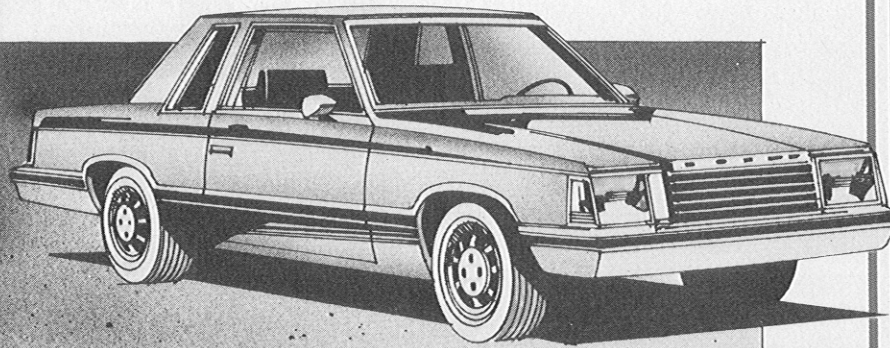


LARRY TOPLE



The 1981 Aspen/Volaré: Front-wheel drive, a stingy four-cylinder engine, handsome styling, and just about everything else Chrysler needs to return to prosperity in the Eighties.

NEW & IMPROVED

• **Chrysler's six-year plan:** The troubled automaker recently unveiled its comeback strategy for the next half-dozen model years. Next year, as almost everyone knows, Chrysler will debut its **fwd Aspen/Volaré** compacts to compete with GM's X-cars. The **Imperial** coupe, which is based on the current Mirada/Cordoba, will bow as well. In 1982, a couple of specialty coupes, à la Aspen R/T, will spice up the compact line, and Chrysler will replace the Omni/Horizon's VW powerplant with a home-built, 1.8-liter four-cylinder engine. In 1983, the current **Mirada** and **Cordoba** will be succeeded by a pair of fwd coupes derived from the Aspen/Volaré sedans. That same year, Chrysler will begin building a small pickup like the one now imported from Mitsubishi. In 1984, new fwd intermediates, slightly larger than the Aspen/Volaré compacts, will replace the aging **LeBaron** and **Diplomat** lines; a new V-6 of about 2.8 liters and a four-speed automatic transaxle will be standard on those cars. In 1985, the remainder of the corporation's cars—the full-sized Newport/New Yorker, Gran Fury, St. Regis, and Imperial—will be downsized drastically and switched to fwd. The following year, an all-new compact-van line will be brought to market. If Chrysler can squeeze through 1980, its fortunes should take a sharp turn for the better.