

The Chrysler-AMC-Renault story¹

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"There is no question that the cultural revolution caused by the AMC purchase generated enormous long-term benefits and, in retrospect, may have been the single most important ingredient in Chrysler's success since."

- Brock Yates, Editor-At-Large, Car and Driver, 1996

The once-independent American Motors Corporation (AMC), struggling to create a market identity after the demise of their Nash and Rambler labels, came up with small but very heavy cars with available 4WD (Eagle), forerunners of the late-80s bubble-style little cars (Pacer), and fast, furious experimental cars with high-performance engines (AMX).

By the late '70s, it was all to no avail; Renault ended up buying AMC, partly to sell their own cars in the American market.

Their attempt failed, and Chrysler, under "buy and sell" Iaccoca, bought AMC. This move, though widely questioned at the time (probably by the same analysts who loved the Daimler-Chrysler merger), gave Chrysler that most American and potent of icons, Jeep.

The timing was perfect. Light truck U.S. sales increased by nearly two million units from 1988 to 1999, as three-and-a-half million fewer cars were bought in the same period. In 1987, Jeep's own sales were about to see an eighty percent increase by the close of the next decade.

Clearly, Jeep was a big reason for Chrysler's position as a viable Daimler-Benz acquisition target by 1998.

Parts of the story from the 1987 buyout – such as why AMC (and Renault) landed in trouble in the first place, the company's potential for a rapid return to profit even without Chrysler, the transformation of Chrysler's product development engine by AMC's techniques, and the overhauling of Chrysler management at the hands of AMC alumni – have been somewhat forgotten.

To Chrysler's credit, the relatively counter-instinctive idea that an acquired company could hold great value in terms of lessons learned was – behind the scenes – reasonably welcome.

We thought we would revisit the issue.

Our thanks are due to Patrick R. Foster, whose comprehensive, emotionally-written book, American Motors – The Last Independent (ISBN: 0-87341-240-0) is a must-read for anyone interested in AMC's rise and downfall.

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¹ Watermark: Renault 18i with the Statue of Liberty - Car and Driver, December 1980

I - A brief history of American Motors

American Motors was formed in 1954 as a merger of the failing Hudson and Nash manufacturers. In 1970, it usurped Kaiser Willys, itself a combination of Willys-Overland, Studebaker, Packard, and Kaiser-Fraser.

The acquisition of Jeep that came with Kaiser Willys was not enough to save an AMC which had overspent itself continuously upgrading its product in a misguided attempt to compete with the Big Three on their terms.

AMC was perhaps best known for the Rambler nameplate, which was featured on conservatively priced and targeted cars up until 1964, when the full-size Classic appeared – a move which one AMC executive later “count(ed) as the beginning of American Motors’ downturn.”²

When president George Romney had left in 1962, so too – it seemed – had AMC’s understanding of its unique place in the market.

Indeed, the decision to compete in a category – full-size cars – which the Big Three virtually owned was difficult for the small company, which went out of its way to justify the decision with more, and more expensive, cars based on larger platforms. Unfortunately, these fringe cars, such as the Marlin coupe, were bought by few – even after a costly 1967 re-tooling - and the 1974 Matador coupe by fewer still.

Despite the best efforts of two fondly-remembered designers, Ed Anderson and (from the early ‘60s onward) Dick Teague, the somewhat different styling that came out of AMC seemed born more out of a desire to be different than a genuine cornerstone for revolution. AMC’s self-proclaimed “*Philosophy of Difference*” was certainly present in its cars, but to varying degrees of success. However, the company’s yearning to match the Big Three despite its (in the 1970s) under four percent of the market did not quite pan out in practice.

Feeling the need to maintain a plucky – even cheeky – image, AMC’s modus operandi had become foisting designs that were *too* different on the public, then being forced to scale back their powertrain options when sales did not reach their targets. Press response to the company’s efforts was predictably negative, AMC would re-tool, and the cycle would begin again – at higher and higher prices. Cars inherently designed to provide an individual brand of luxury were forced to sell at unprofitable prices, and meager revenues left little room for product improvement in the years that followed.

The AMC Pacer would be the last all-new, self-produced AMC.

By 1977, AMC was reeling from having placed itself in virtually every Big Three market – a stark contrast to George Romney’s idea of “*hitting them where they ain’t*” – yet without the Big Three’s budgets. The company’s mistakes in the ‘60s had now forced it to make do with aging platforms and price wars it could not afford. The attempts at consolidation could not convince the public that the aging designs were right for the fuel crisis, and AMC found itself desperately needing a fuel-efficient car.

² “1964-1969 - The End of the Road for Rambler,” American Motors – The Last Independent, Patrick R. Foster

II - Negotiations with Renault

In October 1979, Renault – which had been the largest U.S. automotive importer in the '50s but which had lost its way by the '70s – bought nearly twenty-three percent of AMC in return for use of its dealership network to sell the Renault Le Car.

Renault, the world's sixth-best selling nameplate and one which could trace its history back to the turn of the century, was decidedly under-represented in the U.S. Its own two hundred and fifty dealerships were entirely inadequate as were – Renault felt – the eighteen thousand Renaults they managed to move Stateside per year (the number, incidentally, of period Renault dealerships worldwide!)

For its own part, AMC needed to build a new, fuel-efficient car, and the coming AMC/ Renault X42 project was billed as exactly what it needed in order to survive.

III - Renault buys further into AMC

One of the best moves made by AMC in 1980 was the creation of the Eagle – a four-wheel-drive car based on the two-wheel-drive Concord and utilizing the expertise of AMC's Jeep division. Though it seems obvious now, this type of synergy had waited nigh on ten years. Car and Driver's readers named it the "Most Significant New Domestic Car" and certainly, excluding Subaru's somewhat offbeat offerings, the concept of a car with Eagle's available traction was new to the market.

That market, however, was in severe recession. By the end of 1980, AMC faced a one hundred and fifty-five million dollar loss. All American car manufacturers reported losses that year, but little AMC was hurt most. To quote Foster, "AMC stood and fell with Jeep," and Jeep sales had dropped greatly.

Although Eagle buyers had to be put on long waiting lists, AMC dropped behind Volkswagen in American sales statistics; from number four to five.

In a boardroom on the other side of the Atlantic, Renault was eager not to follow Citroën out of the U.S. market. Indeed, in 1980, only two French automakers continued to sell their cars in the United States; Renault's main European competitor, Peugeot, had a better dealership network and a more enthusiastic following.

AMC could fold, or give up another piece of the pie.

An additional one hundred and twenty-two million bought Renault a controlling interest in the company, or a full 46.4% in the company. Thus, in 1981, the 18i sedan (an Americanized – yet "chauvinistically French machine imbued with true character"³ fuel-injected version of the European R18) became the second Renault to be sold by AMC's 1,200 dealers.

A common reason given for Renault's failure in the U.S. is that it was reluctant to redesign its cars in such a way as to make them more palatable to Americans. The 18i – if somewhat forgotten – remains good evidence for the theory.

3.1 - The Renault 18i

"When there is a car from the country that created the Concorde..." the first ad for the R18i began. Yet as opposed to being symbolic of Renault's reemergence as a player in the U.S. market, the forgotten 18i is a four-wheeled guide to why Renault finally gave up.

³ "Renault 18i," Car and Driver, December 1980

The Renault 18 was a car which had been born in France in 1976 after an eighteen month gestation period. Based on the preceding R12, R18 was designed to please everyone, everywhere, and was launched with the theme, “*meeting international requirements.*”

Indeed, in Europe, it became Renault’s biggest success after the R5 (LeCar in the U.S).

Launched at the 1976 Paris Motor Show as a 1977 model, the Renault 18 was summarily criticized for being too mainstream despite Renault’s protests that it was perfectly in line with the laws of evolution.

Certainly, the 18 was more immediately digestible than the 12, its somewhat awkward predecessor. In the tradition now best attributed to Mercedes-Benz, Renault was careful to avoid any major departures from convention in an attempt to ensure the longevity of the 18’s design.

Admittedly, when the most distinguishable feature on a car is the design of its C-pillar (the three black repeating rings became the 18’s signature), one might well wonder the design was distinctive enough.

When the car in question happens to be French, that question is inevitable.

However, since our research deals primarily with the Americanized 18 – the *18i* – we must acknowledge that the 18 looked perfectly French (*too* French, perhaps) to American eyes when launched in the U.S. in 1981. “*Still as Gallic as a bottle of Bordeaux,*”⁴ concluded Car and Driver. The slanted trunk and hood, lower rear wheel arch, rounded edges, and long overhangs were sufficient to distinguish the cars from its peers – and not always for the better.

In America, the R18-based 18i played in the same price class as the AMC Concord but attracted a different group of customers; more sophisticated, perhaps, as Renault might have liked to think. It offered a Bosch Jetronic port-injected 1647cc aluminum block, hemispherical head, four-cylinder engine; front-wheel-drive; a weight-optimized body; a roomy interior, and traditional French comfort (the seats remain among the most comfortable this author has ever sat in) and ‘lolloping’ ride.



Figure 1 The European Renault 18 (above) was modified to comply with American bumper and headlamp legislation, and pampered with options to appeal to the U.S. market. Neither did its Americanization go far enough, nor did its French origins shine through – and thus the car was rendered somewhat forgettable; a pity, for it was a truly relaxed car whose handling could turn quite entertaining when pushed

The 18i was intended to be both Renault’s volume sales sedan (at a base price of \$8,000) and its premium offering (with options, the car could stretch to \$11,000). Renault purposefully loaded-up the 18i with as many options as possible, and priced the car competitively (although it was still the most expensive – and largest - Renault ever sold in the U.S.)

With all those talents, was it not destined for success?

It was not to be.

The build quality was somewhat suspect, the engine was somewhat buzzy despite its advanced fuel delivery system, and the AMC dealership network was never quite sure what to make of these cars.

It took only a few months (through June 1981) for the 18i’s price to be lowered by 10%. Interestingly, 18i’s mid-1982-introduced coupe sister car, the Fuego, sold well enough.

Contrary to expectant press reports at the time, the magnificent 18 Turbo was never imported into the U.S. This car used the pressurized Garrett unit from the U.S. 1.6 Fuego, but the

⁴ “*Charting the Changes,*” Car and Driver, October 1980

boost and overall horsepower was higher. Rumor abounds, though, that a few may have trickled-in Stateside.

The writing was on the wall for the 18i. Gerry Meyers resigned in January, 1982, and Jose J. Dedeurwaerder – a Renault executive – became the new president of AMC.

After 1983, the 18i sedan was dropped. The wagon, renamed ‘Sportswagon,’ continued through 1986 with a 2.2-liter four-cylinder replacing the 1.6 unit. As it turned out, this was the second-last fully-French Renault to come to the United States.

IV - The Alliance bears fruit, then withers

By 1982, Renault had built nearly twenty million front-wheel-drive cars in twenty years of

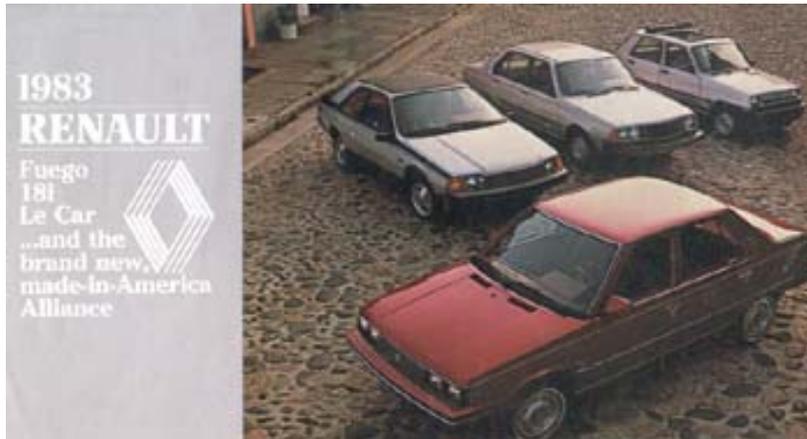


Figure 2 The 1983 Renault Alliance was the first American-built Renault, and was touted as being the most advanced econo-box available.

experience with the layout. Renault’s U.S. sales were up to 38,000, a two hundred percent improvement over the days without AMC, but one which nevertheless gave pause for thought given the investment.

The 18i sold fewer than 8,000 cars in 1982 in both sedan and wagon form. For a company that had predicted 35,000 annual sales, this was incomprehensible even if, in hindsight, it all seems fairly predictable (3.1) .

Renault’s own European designs continued, with the release of the Kenosha, Wisconsin-built Alliance (European R9) in 1983 and its two-door Encore (R11) sister car version in 1984. \$200 million was invested in Kenosha to make production of the new car a viable possibility.

“Renault admits that it expects to lose some marginal 18i sales of people who opt for top-line Alliance DL sedans (about \$8,500 fully loaded),” wrote Motor Trend in November 1982.

“Given the overall importance that the French firm places on successfully launching the Americanized version of its Renault 9,” Motor Trend continued, *“it can afford to be somewhat more philosophical about the dilemma.”*⁵

Fresh from a 1982 Car of Year award, Renault was convinced that its R9 would be a winner in the American market, too. AMC dealers, serving French champagne and Wisconsin cheese to symbolize the partnership, certainly hoped so; Patrick Foster notes that *“many... openly wept.”*⁶ Fuel injection, independent front suspension,



Figure 3 The Kenosha, WI-built Alliance was hyped as much as the Chrysler K-Car, and of equal importance to its parent company.

⁵ *“Renault 18i vs. Volkswagen Quantum,”* Motor Trend, November 1982

and a low \$5595 base price were key features of the little car, which promised 52 mpg on the highway.

Indeed, the Alliance quickly took the crown in the U.S.

In their first full year alone, Alliance/ Encore sold more than eight times the combined number of 18i and Sportswagon cars moved between 1981 and 1986.

Shortly thereafter, however, every Alliance and Encore was recalled for thermal problems relating to tough American winters. Alliance build quality quickly became branded as suspect. This was particularly embarrassing for AMC who had, under Gerry Meyers in the '70s, instituted – and received praise for – an innovative quality improvement program.

That buyers were clamoring at AMC dealerships asking for an Alliance-based wagon seemed lost on Renault, who pointed them toward the Sportswagon (whose image was by now substantially tarnished). The Alliance convertible, instead, graced showrooms.

By 1985, the market was starting to turn on the Alliance/ Encore. The second fuel crisis was over, and buyers' appetites for larger cars were starting to grow again. The Renault side of AMC had little to offer, for Renault's larger-than-Alliance R21 (a replacement for the R18) was two years away, and the five-door-hatch R25 flagship was deemed too different for the U.S.

Year	Alliance sales	Encore sales
1982	24,000	N/A
1983	126,000	20,000
1984	100,000	69,000
1985	71,000	39,000
1986	51,000	15,000

Plans were being made to bring over the R21, and to build a modified R25 in the U.S, but the results would not be seen until 1987. Unfortunately, AMC had bet the farm on the Renault Alliance.

As Renault released a stop-gap turbocharged Alliance, known as the GTA, it was left to the American side of AMC to offer Jeeps and AMC Eagle all-wheel-drive wagons.

By 1986, AMC achieved the dubious honor of being the first to use "zero percent financing" incentives now so common today.

V - Renault wants out

By 1986, Renault was done with the American market. It had lost \$700 million on \$22 billion of sales, and was in debt to the tune of \$9 billion. Indeed, *Regie des Usines Nationales* was even being accused at home of supporting AMC while it laid off French workers; certainly a precarious position to be in for a government-owned company in one of the most automotively xenophobic countries in Europe.

Many have suggested that Renault's reluctance to redesign cars to better suit the American market was its downfall. Indeed, competitor and fellow Francophone Peugeot's best year ever in the U.S. was 1984 – in which it managed to move just 25,000 cars.

We would agree, somewhat, but would also add that the needs of the American market extend to a standard of reliability that the French have generally lived with in return for true character. Also worthy of note is the American market's desire to categorize cars; vehicles such as the 18i – a comfortable cruiser but yet with a cheeky tendency to snap-oversteer under trailing throttle in a corner; a reasonably pricey car with a suitably thought-out interior countered by a somewhat loud engine, and a feature-packed product whose features operated in a manner far from the standard (witness the ignition-operated oil-level indicator which

⁶ "1978-1984 – The French Connection and the Brave New Jeep," American Motors – The Last Independent, Patrick R. Foster

dropped back to zero once the engine was started, “causing the uninformed driver no small consternation”⁷) – did not pigeon-hole well.

Either way, the days of cars which now-[Autoweek](#) Editor and then [Car and Driver](#) contributor Rich Ceppos had referred to as “a slice of the French psyche on wheels”⁸ were numbered.

VI - Chrysler catches a windfall

Behind the scenes in 1986, AMC was offered to Fuji, Daihatsu, and Nissan - even as it accepted a contract from Chrysler to build the M-body Dodge Diplomat and Chrysler Fifth Avenue in its Kenosha, Wisconsin factory.

When cash-strapped Chrysler looked at purchasing AMC – primarily for the purpose of getting Jeep - Renault was only too pleased to offer an unbeatable deal: \$35 million in cash and a \$200 million note.

What cost Chrysler \$1.7 billion in total, therefore, came out to \$35 million in immediate cash. The package included AMC’s 1,400-strong dealer network, the all-important Jeep brand, and brand new (\$700 million) Bramalea, Ontario plant.

Bramalea was a clean-sheet factory, which incorporated every new advance in production techniques. The factory was designed in the shape of a capital ‘E’, with numerous loading docks; this facilitated “just in time” delivery of parts and material. Numerous robots were installed to ensure the most accurate assembly of the cars.

Renault sold AMC to Chrysler in the fall of 1987.

As Manufacturing Chief R. Dauch said, “we knew how to fix Chrysler in 1980 and we know how to fix AMC now.”

VII - ‘Big Third’ moves quickly to integrate ‘Little Fourth’

Chrysler had experienced an unbelievable turnaround in the first part of the decade, and by 1987 it was convinced that it could do the same for AMC – or, at least, for the Jeep brand.

With the Bramalea plant came the Renault Premier (European R25), a new car that would have been launched by AMC in the fall of 1987 as a 1988 model, and its sister car, the French-built Renault Medallion (European R21). Originally, AMC was to build two other models on the Premier platform: a station wagon, and a two door sport coupe called the Allure.

Chrysler had agreed to sell a certain number of these two Renaults, Premier and Medallion. However, Iacocca was adamant that a new division be created; “Eagle” resulted, a name then applied to the outgoing 4,000 pound, four-wheel-drive AMC cross-over which can still be found in snowy and hilly areas.

The two cars were subsequently re-badged ‘Eagle Premier’ and ‘Eagle Medallion.’

The original model (1988) of the Premier was rushed into production so quickly after the sale of AMC to Chrysler that the vehicles had AMC build plates on the driver’s door. All models including 1992 had radiator hoses with the AMC logo.

Eagle’s mission was to try and bring import buyers to the Chrysler fold. The Eagle Premier was to attract affluent import buyers; The Eagle Summit (Mitsubishi Colt/ Mirage) was a stop-gap

⁷ “Renault 18i,” [Car and Driver](#), December 1980

⁸ “Renault 18i,” [Car and Driver](#), December 1980

model intended to give Renault Alliance/ Encore owners somewhere to go for a few years. Keeping the new Eagle Medallion (Renault 21), a midsize replacement for the 18i, Stateside had been one of Renault's conditions for selling.

We now know that one of Chrysler's primary acquisition objectives was to close the Kenosha plant (accomplished in 1988, despite Lee Iacocca's pledge not to), and to drop the Renault line as soon as feasible.

Indeed, the Kenosha, Wisconsin assembly plant – active since the first Rambler in 1897 – was torn down almost to the year of the announcement of the merger. The Alliance line was dropped in 1987; the Eagle Medallion (a replacement for the 18i) sold for only two years and folded after the 1989 model year, and the Eagle Premier – after a brief re-badge as a Dodge Monaco sister car – soldiered on until 1992.

Then, Chrysler turned its attention to what it had really come for. Chrysler President Hal Sperlich laid it out in 1987 in no uncertain terms: *"the fundamental reason for our interest in AMC was one word: Jeep... the core of the acquisition was aimed at that brand... it's known everywhere... it's almost synonymous with freedom... it's America."*

7.1 - The Eagle Premier

Featuring the 90-degree "Douvrin" PRV (Peugeot/ Renault/ Volvo) 3.0-liter V6 engine found in the DeLorean, Chrysler's only overdrive automatic until 1990, an independent rear suspension, all-around disc brakes, an aerodynamic Giugiaro design, and more room than any car in its class, the Premier should have been a success.

However, Douvrin was an aging block that had spunk and reliability but not much refinement; the ZF-built automatic was prone to problems; the suspension and brakes were advanced enough to require relatively frequent repair; the Giugiaro design was somewhat forgettable if evergreen, and pre-1991 models experienced varying degrees of electrical trouble.

In 1990, Chrysler added a Dodge version, the Monaco.

In 1993, the Premier was replaced by the Eagle Vision, a sister car to the Dodge Intrepid and Chrysler Concorde. Had the Eagle brand not been killed in 1997, the 300M would have taken the Vision's place.

The fact remains, though, that the Premier was - for its size - the lightest car that Chrysler built at the time (with a shipping weight of 2999 lbs.), the stiffest (torsionally), and the best riding (almost 8.7 inches of wheel travel vs. 4.5 for the K-cars that underpinned every Chrysler car then available. It benefited from decades of Renault experience with front-wheel-drive, and a good example will still impress even today.

It is interesting to note that the Eagle Vision did not sell in higher volumes than did Premier. Indeed, it has been said that Premier's slow sales were more down to Chrysler being unsure of what its mission was. It seemed that Chrysler aimed the low line models against Taurus, and the ES against Acura and Volvo. This confused message resulted in Eagle competing against corresponding Chrysler & Dodge models.

More on the Premier can be found in our ['We Remembear – Eagle Premier'](#) feature.

7.2 - The Eagle Medallion

Being the most forgotten car ever sold under the Eagle badge takes a serious misstep, but the four-cylinder Medallion (European Renault 21) managed it. The last French-built Renault to be offered in the U.S., Medallion's launch was overshadowed by the Chrysler takeover but – as Foster points out – *"it was so similar to the earlier Renault 18i that it probably would not have sold well anyway."*⁹ A Medallion wagon is truly a rare find today, and the sedan is virtually nonexistent.

⁹ "1985-1987 – Time Runs Out," [American Motors – The Last Independent](#), Patrick R. Foster

VIII - The Jeep brand as an integral part of Chrysler's success

Chrysler was convinced that the SUV market would boom; as Sperlich put it, that Jeep's position "*(would) explode, from a market standpoint.*"

"The SUV is the area between truck and car... that market, in my mind, is the forgotten product segment and it's the one that is going to explode... we're going to bet the ranch on it," Sperlich prophesized in 1987.

Indeed, truck sales in America increased 50% in just a decade, between 1988 and 1998, and high-profit Jeep sales rode and beat the trend by 30%.

Under Chrysler, the Toledo Jeep plant contract was renegotiated; AMC made \$200 million of profit in 1988, no doubt buoyed by an average \$1,000 of profit on each of 250,000 Jeeps.

IX - The AMC alumni as an integral part of Chrysler's success

The lesser-known part of the story is how instrumental existing AMC designs and personnel were in transforming Chrysler through its second crisis in the early '90s. AMC had become accustomed to being a plucky little player in a highly competitive market, and its product development practices were considerably more streamlined than Chrysler's. One AMC executive offered, "*we were already operating with teams at AMC, if for no other reason than that we did not have enough money or personnel to do otherwise.*"

Although, as Brock Yates put it in 1996, "*initially the small band (of AMC managers)... was treated more like refugees from a defeated nation,*" the AMC alumni soon became crucial to Chrysler's continued survival and success.

Most notably, Francois Castaing, who best understood and supported the Premier's layout, retained his seven hundred engineers at Chrysler as Chief Engineer.

AMC President Joe Cappy stayed on, as did Quality Control man Franson, Miller in large car design, Levine in sales, Julow in marketing, and Adams in Europe.

First Jeep, then Chrysler's own LH sedans (Concorde/ Intrepid/ Vision/ LHS/ 300M) and the Voyager/ Caravan minivans benefited from higher speed development at lower cost.

This was in no small part thanks to the use of existing AMC engineering. The Jeep Grand Cherokee, which sold to the tune of 230,000 in 1998 alone, was a "*96% intact*" AMC design. The LH sedans borrowed substantially from the Eagle Premier, a car which had sold poorly but whose engineering was fundamentally sound.

In addition, the Premier – whose production ceased in December of 1992 to convert the Bramalea plant for LH production – was the basis for Chrysler's LH sedans (widely believed to have, along with Jeep, saved the company the second time around). The Premier's legacy lives on in the Dodge Viper's rear disc brake design, and in the North-South orientation of the LH models' engines (which restricts engine vibrations side-to-side, less noticeable than front-to-back).

Incidentally, the Eagle's sister car - the AMC Concord - eventually found a namesake in a Chrysler LH car (Chrysler Concorde).

X - Epilogue

AMC is but a memory, and its famous Kenosha, Wisconsin plant is now gone. Patrick Foster put it best: *"as a people, we are poorer by the loss of American Motors. Not so much because we will never buy an AMC car, but rather because we no longer have the option of buying an AMC car. Our choice in the market is now that much less. The old line independent automakers have been replaced now by a new generation of multi-nationals with Japanese names, and if truth be told, they are very fine cars. What they lack is personality and eccentricity, and yes, heritage and history."*¹⁰

Renault cars are no longer to be found in American showrooms. When last questioned on the subject, Renault expressed the belief that its reputation Stateside was too damaged to contemplate a return.

Automobile fooled many with a parody advertisement of Peugeot's own return this past April, and the piece – captioned, *"Peugeot – more than you deserve"* – remains an instructive if obviously exaggerated view of why the French marques failed in the U.S.

*"We forgive all you bourgeois pigs,"*¹¹ stated the ad, continuing that *"it is not for us to hold the grudge - not even against ignorant swine. And so we come back to America, where you think your replacement starter should come as fast as your cherished McNuggets. A starter is not a McNugget. It is a creation wrenched from the mind of man. It is a symbol. It is art. Sadly, you cannot understand such things. So this time, like the indulgent parent, we add features expressly designed for Americans."*

However, with the French having discovered multiplexing, with Renault's Carlos Ghosn well on his way to reviving Nissan and with Renault Design Director Patrick Le Quément instituting an upscale feel to Renault's style, there is a possibility that we may yet see Renaults Stateside – badged as Infinitis – in the future. Renault CEO Louis Schweitzer has indicated that, by 2010, Renault's participation in the American market will be required; stay tuned.

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¹⁰ American Motors – the Last Independent, Patrick R. Foster

¹¹ *"Peugeot – More than you Deserve,"* Automobile, April 2003