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paint and a coordinated interior. The announcement said nothing about the Golden Lancer drivetrain. However, Custom Royals with D-500 gear and Golden Lancer decor would have come as close as anything in terms of looks, luxury, and performance to Chrysler's other '56 "super cars," the Chrysler 300-B, DeSoto Adventurer, and Plymouth Fury.

Dodge introduced "Swept-Wing" styling for 1957. The cars stretched longer, lower, and wider, while the tailfins soared higher. The Custom Royal of 1957 measured up to 16.2 inches longer than the Dodge Royal of 1954 and weighed 265 to 315 pounds more.

George Romney, president of American Motors, once remarked, "Cars 19 feet long, weighing two tons are used to run a 118-pound housewife three blocks to the drug store for a two-ounce package of bobby pins and lipstick." He called the typical American car "a dinosaur in the driveway."

Dodge customers didn't feel that way, at least not yet. One 1957 Dodge owner told *Popular Mechanics*, "You only have to sit behind the wheel and all the world stops, watches and admires. You feel like a king, you are so proud." Another said, "I gave my wife a choice of anything less than Cadillac's price. She took to the Dodge



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looks and I can't say that I blame her."

Nor was the engineering prehistoric. Like all 1957 Chrysler Corporation cars, Dodge adopted "Torsion-Aire" suspension, a system of longitudinal torsion-bar front springs, low-pressure 14-inch tires, and relocated rear leaf springs that delivered tight handling with a smooth ride. Torsion-Aire weighed less than conventional suspensions, lowered the center of gravity, and cost less to manufacture.

Dodges were also now available with Chrysler's TorqueFlite three-speed push-button automatic transmission. TorqueFlite delivered smooth shifting, better fuel economy, and more relaxed highway performance. It was offered as

an option for all V-8 models, which now meant a 325-cid mill that made 245 or 260 bhp as standard in Royals and Custom Royals, respectively.

*Motor Trend* named the entire Chrysler Corporation lineup "Car of the Year" for 1957, citing the Chrysler vehicles for "superior handling and roadability qualities." Additionally, the Industrial Designers Institute recognized stylists Virgil Exner, Henry King, H. T. Bannister, Clifford Voss, Carl Reynolds, and Robert Bingman for the trendsetting looks of the corporation's 1957 cars that made even the designers at industry styling leader GM stop in their tracks.

An omen loomed over the success of