

Murdered journalist's father calls for understanding

High school students hear Judea Pearl

BY SIMONE JOSEPH
Staff Writer

The murder of Daniel Pearl is a tragedy that must not be repeated, Mr. Pearl's father, Judea, told Thornhill Secondary School students last week.

"We have a historical obligation to make sure such atrocities don't happen again," he said.

Daniel Pearl was a Wall Street Journal reporter who was kidnapped and murdered by terrorists in Pakistan in early 2002, just four months after the terrorist attacks of 9/11.

Following his death, the Daniel

Pearl Foundation was formed in his memory.

The foundation's mission promoting cross-cultural understanding through journalism, music and innovative communications.

As part of the foundation's work, Prof. Judea Pearl and Akbar Ahmed, who heads the Islamic studies program at American University in Washington, talked about Muslim/Jewish relations in the Middle East.

About 300 high school students watched as Prof. Pearl and Mr. Ahmed rarely disagreed, both communicating the need for dialogue and understanding.

But when it came time for questions, students wanted to know more.

"You make it seem so easy to get

'History is full of ups and downs. There are times of conflict and confrontation. There are also times of compassion and peace.'

Akbar Ahmed
American University

along. Why are there so many conflicts between Arabs and Jews?" read the question of one unidentified student.

The conflict was partially developed by the creation of Israel, Mr. Pearl said.

"Two different paradigms... naturally clash," he said.

Prof. Ahmed also provided a reminder that the two groups have not always sparred.

"History is full of ups and downs. There are times of conflict and confrontation. There are also times of compassion and peace," he said.

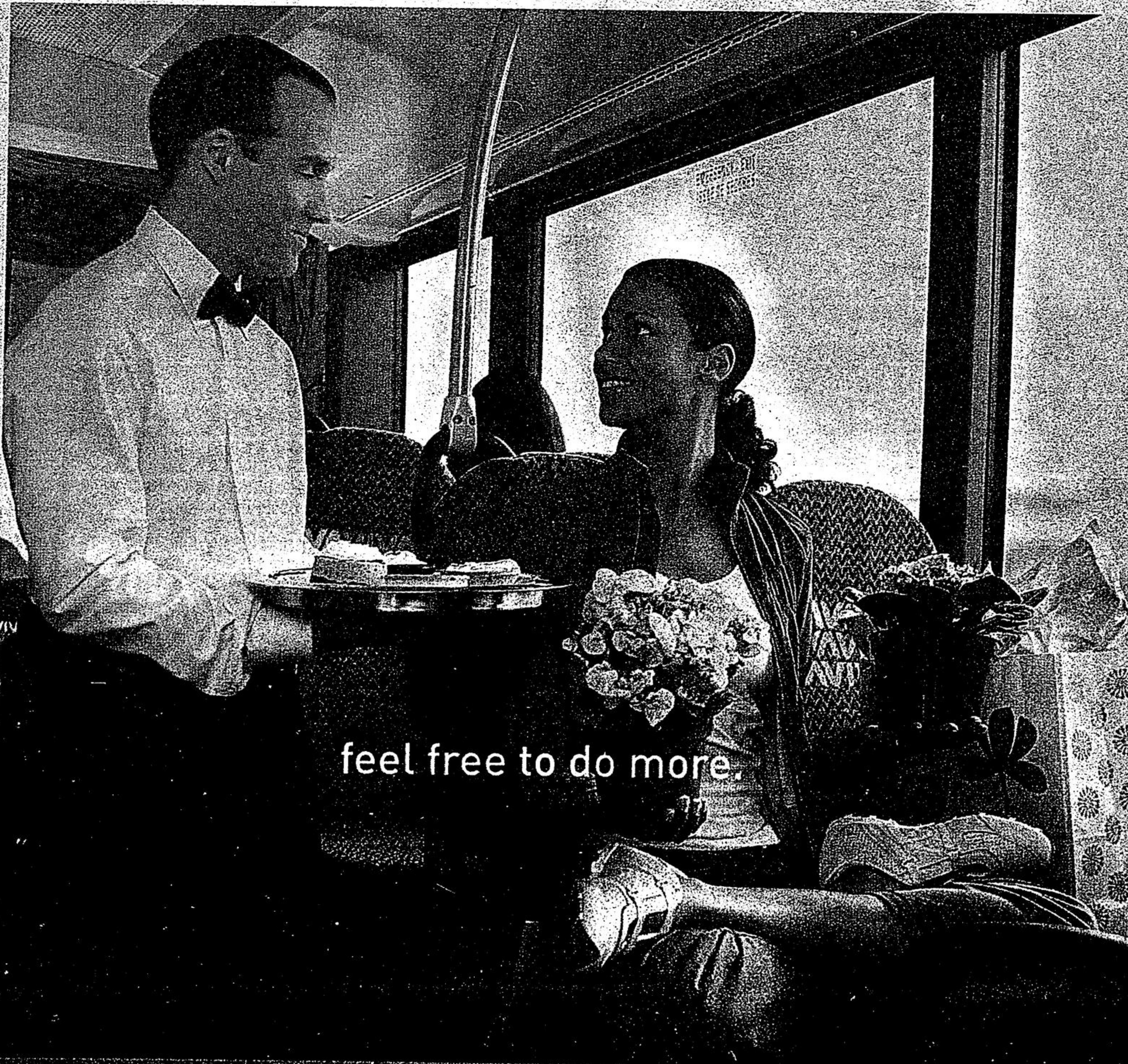
Grade 12 student Adam Saperia was surprised to hear two men from such different backgrounds describe each other as friends.

"Talking about each other as friends is so different than what you see in most forms of media or television shows. It is so often publicized as a battle between the two," Mr. Saperia said.

Valerie Platitsa, 18, said she had seen the two men speaking on the BBC before and was glad they touched on the history between Muslims and Jews.



About 300 high school students listened to journalist Daniel Pearl's father speak about his son's murder.



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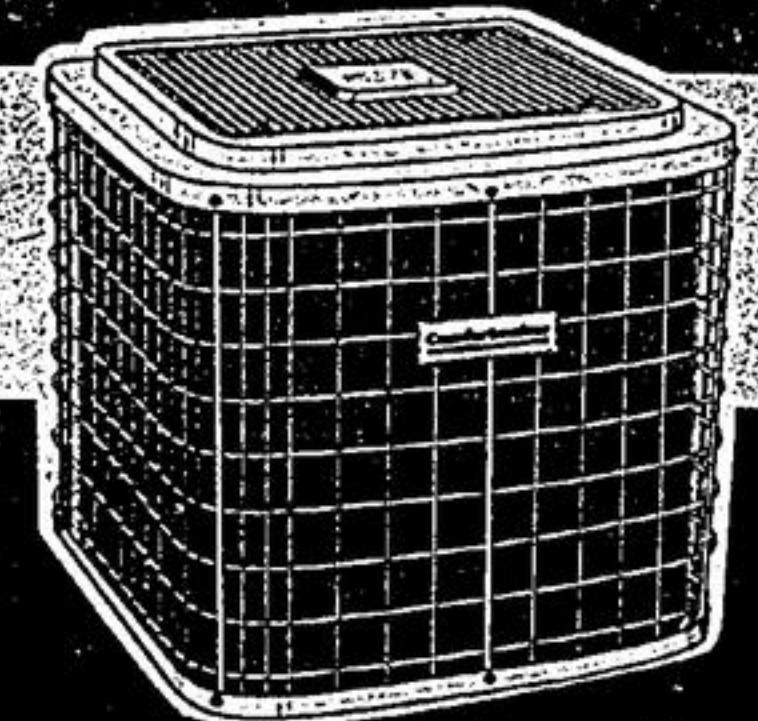
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