

## Lawyer Offers To Appear As Defense Witness

Mineola—Michael Franzese, stepson of convicted mob figure John (Sonny) Franzese, got an unexpected helping hand in court yesterday.

Ernest J. Peace, a Mineola lawyer who represents another defendant in the case, arose during a calendar hearing on the scheduled Franzese trial on attempted coercion and conspiracy charges, in order to volunteer as a defense witness in the case.

Peace said the district attorney's complaining witness, Anthony Morano, 32, a partner with Franzese in a West Hempstead auto leasing firm, "is one of the most degenerate liars I have ever met." He told County Court Judge Henderson W. Morrison that he will testify to that effect. Peace had formerly served as counsel for Morano.

Franzese and eight other men have been named in two indictments alleging that they joined in trying to force Morano, of 700 Fulton St., Farmingdale, out of the business, MBE Auto Leasing Corp. at 140 Cherry Valley Ave., West Hempstead, with punches and threats of death.

Outside the court, Franzese and a number of defendants shook Peace's hand and thanked him. Peace said he met with Morano, Felice Vizzari and another defendant in January and discussed Morano's possible ouster from the firm. Peace said that everything was strictly peaceful and businesslike at that meeting. "There were no threats," he said.

Peace's firm represents Vizzari, one of the defendants. Peace said that since legal ethics preclude him from acting as both witness and trial attorney in the same case, an associate, Benedict Gullo, will be Vizzari's trial counsel.

Judge Morrison adjourned the case to April 26, and also lowered bail on one of the defendants, Oscar Teitelbaum of Ozone Park, from \$25,000 to \$10,000.

The elder Franzese is serving a 50-year sentence on conspiracy to commit bank robbery. The younger Franzese is a pre-medical student at Hofstra.

## Union to Hear Shanker Speak

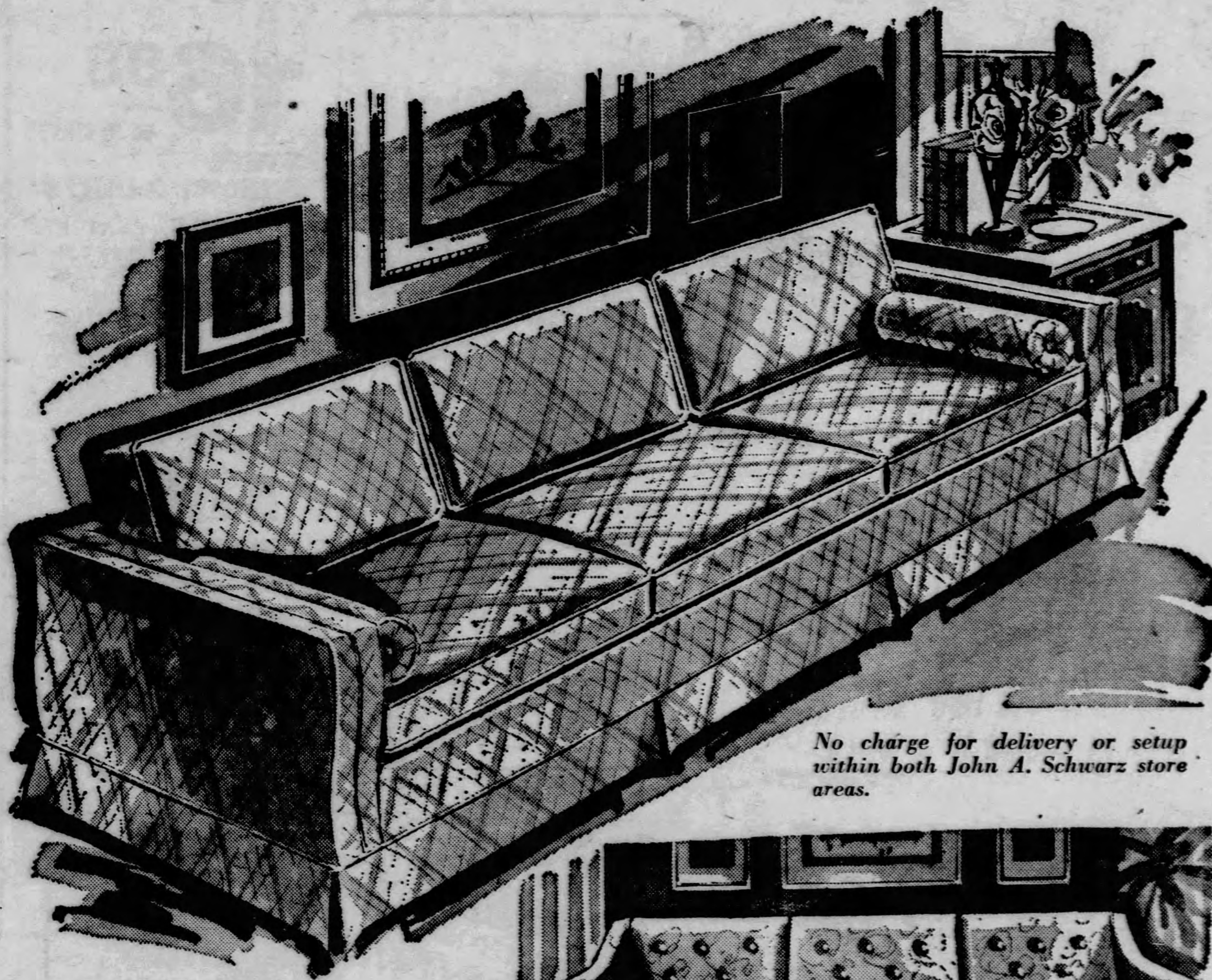
Mastic Beach—Albert Shanker, the prominent teachers union leader, will speak at 10:30 AM Friday at the William Floyd High School during the District 32 United Federation of Teachers conference.

Shanker, executive vice president of the 200,000-member state union, will speak on the advantages of union organization, federal aid to education and effects of the Taylor Law.

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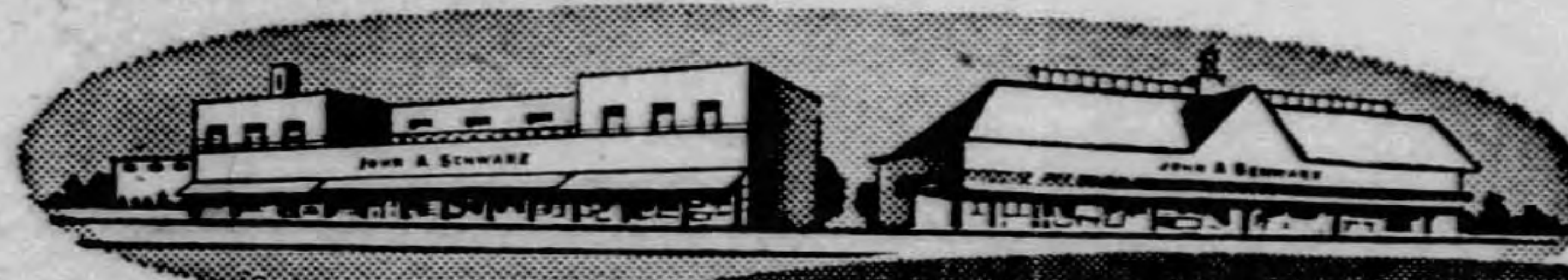
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