

**Remarks made by Phillip W. Weiss on February 25, 2004 at**

**Bellevue Hospital Center**

**Social Work Department Staff Meeting**

**My name is Phillip Weiss. My civil service title is Supervisor I Social Worker. I am also a delegate to the New York City Central Labor Council, representing Health Services Employees Local 768, which an affiliate of District Council 37, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees. I have served as a delegate to the New York City Central Labor Council since 1999.**

**Almost everyone in this room is represented either by Local 768 or by Social Services Employees Union Local 371. Like Local 768, Local 371 is an affiliate of District Council 37, which is a federation of 56 public employee unions representing 125,000 white collar, blue collar, and professional city workers. Presently, District Council 37 is negotiating a new citywide contract with the City. The results of these negotiations will directly affect almost each and every one of you in this room. Therefore I urge you to keep informed of the progress of these negotiations. You can keep informed by reading the Public Employee Press, attending general membership and chapter meetings, calling your union headquarters directly, contacting your shop stewards, or by logging on to the D. C. 37 website which is [www.dc37.net](http://www.dc37.net). To help you contact your local, here are some names and telephone numbers you can call:**

**Darryl Ramsey, President, Local 768, tel. (212) 815-1935**

**Paul McGinn, Shop Steward, Local 768, ext. 3371**

**Tom Barton, Shop Steward, Local 768, ext. 7345**

**Charles Ensley, President, S. S. E. U. Local 371, tel. (212) 677-3900**

**Thomas Lane, Shop Steward, Local 371, ext 4095.**

**My extension is 4445.**

**The right of workers to organize and bargain collectively is one of the cornerstones of American society. On July 5, 1935, Congress enacted the National Labor Relations Act, which affirmed the right of employees to organize and bargain collectively. On April 12, 1937, in the case *National Labor Relations Board v. Jones & Laughlin Steel Corp.*, the United States Supreme Court sustained the constitutionality of the National Labor Relations Act. In the opinion written for the Court, the Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court, Charles Evans Hughes, wrote: “Experience has abundantly demonstrated that the recognition of the right of employees to self-organization and to have representatives of their own choosing for the purpose of collective bargaining is often an essential condition of industrial peace. Refusal to confer and negotiate has been one of the most prolific causes of strife. This is such an outstanding fact in the history of labor disturbances that it is a proper subject of judicial notice and requires no citation of instances.” Thus, through legislation, executive action and judicial review the right of workers to organize and bargain collectively is firmly established in American law. It is a right that should be, and indeed must be, cherished, nurtured and never taken for granted.**

