

# Russo Claims Jail Mistreatment

*Anthony Russo, 35, was a research analyst at Rand Corporation and was recently indicted in connection with Daniel Ellsberg and distribution of the Pentagon Papers. Before that he was imprisoned for 47 days for refusal to testify before a grand jury. His description below is of Los Angeles County Jail.*

**Russo:** About 6 o'clock I was called to the booking room . . . where clerks take the valuables you weren't supposed to have in jail . . . The lady behind the window ~~didn't~~ want me to keep my reading glasses nor my fountain pen . . . I said, "Please, I'd like to keep those because I need them to read. The glasses I have on are for long distance . . ." And she replied, "Well, you're not gonna need them because you're not gonna be doing

much reading where you're going." Which kind of upset me. I always thought that one could read in jail . . . I said, "You're not serious, are you?" . . .

A guard walked up, and he said, "You got a problem here?" And I looked at him and I said, "No, I don't have any problem. Do you?" . . . As I was talking with the lady clerk, the guard walked up, grabbed me by the arm and started pushing me out of the room . . . I walked down the hallway about a hundred feet, when all of a sudden, four guards turned on me and they bodily . . . pushed me through this door, and there I was in a maximum security cell . . . Concrete, solid, no windows . . . Six other guys . . . [Russo said he had not made a phone call after he surrendered himself and

wanted to call his lawyer. He says he tried unsuccessfully to get a response from two guards sitting outside his door.]

So I began to yell out through there about how those guys were violating my constitutional rights . . . I was getting madder and madder . . . and I began to kick the door . . . as hard as I could and these big metal doors make a lot of noise . . .

I did that for about five minutes and all of sudden the door flew open and a flying wedge of guards came through, four or five and I was flattened . . . they came through, hit me, pushed me up against the wall, said, "Turn around, put your hands against the wall." I did . . . and one hand was jerked away and pushed up behind me really tight. I felt like my arm was

going to be pulled out of the socket. And then the second arm was pulled behind me . . . And then someone kicked my legs out from under me. I felt kneed all over me, knees on my head, on my neck. I wasn't struggling . . . it would be ridiculous to struggle . . .

They began to chain up my legs, and they put my wrists in handcuffs . . . really tight . . . so they tied my hands cuffed behind me and my legs shackled together. Then they tied my hands to my ankles, so I was done up in a little neat bow there, lying on my belly . . .

After about half an hour we had the chains loose so I could stand up . . . I was really so mad then that . . . I spun around and chained the door bam!—and did that a couple of times . . . And all of a sudden the