

**The Honorable Ronald V. Dellums**  
**U.S. Representative of California (1971–1998)**

**Events: Civil Rights**

**Getting Arrested for the Cause**

Representative Dellums remembers the protests by House Members outside the South African Embassy in Washington, DC.

*Interview recorded June 19, 2012*

And then Walter Fauntroy, who played a very exceptional role, you know, in this whole thing, was part of a group of people that became activists around the embassy. And began to demonstrate in front of the embassy, and some of them, you know, got arrested. And I remember, one day, the phone rings at my home, and my son said, "Hey Pop, Congressman Fauntroy is on the phone." So I picked up the phone and I said, "Walter, where do you want me to be, and what time do you want me to be there to get arrested?" And he started laughing. And he said, "How did you know?" I said, "I've been watching the news. You know, for you to call me, I know that you're asking me to come and be there." And so, I think—I don't know if it was the same—I think it was the next day when we came and we got arrested. And I remember I spent the night in jail. And the next day, I saw these gray whiskers coming out. And I, and I said . . . so by the time I got before the magistrate, or the judge, it was like, late afternoon, like around 5:00 or 6:00 in the evening. And so they let us free, and I go home, and I, "I'm not going to shave this beard until Mandela is free."