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Ben Stein: Gestapo Tactics Got Larry Craig

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Former Sen. Larry Craig didn't do anything illegal and was railroaded with "Gestapo tactics," says actor and commentator Ben Stein.

Appearing recently on Your World With Neil Cavuto program, Stein remarked: "I don't like the idea that people are sitting in the next stall from you at a public bathroom listening to whether or not you tap your foot. This is, as I said, Gestapo tactics. Gestapo, Gestapo, Gestapo. It's not America."

Stein says Craig, who was arrested June 11 by Minneapolis police and pled guilty to a charge of disorderly conduct, is a victim of "pure police entrapment and thuggery."

"The police have real work to do at the airport," Stein says. "It's an airport, hello. There are security problems at airports. Al-qaida: Are you listening? Our security people are entrapping perfectly honest U.S. senators in lavatory stalls instead of looking for you terrorists."

Stein charges that police intimidated Craig into pleading guilty to disorderly conduct after he was arrested for tapping his foot in a bathroom stall at the Minneapolis-St. Paul airport.

Police say foot tapping is a common overture used to signal interest in a sexual encounter. Minneapolis police had reportedly made several arrests in recent months for lewd conduct in restrooms at the airport.

"A policeman drags him off, or verbally drags him off, starts browbeating him, essentially threatens he's going to ruin his career if the guy doesn't plead guilty right away," Stein tells Cavuto. "This is Gestapo tactics in Minneapolis-St. Paul. It's not nice."

Stein adds that it was wrong for GOP stalwarts to join the drumbeat for Craig's resignation: "This is some way to treat the people who have been loyal members of your part for many years. What did he do wrong? Suppose he was soliciting for gay sex. Gay sex is not illegal in the United

States, the Supreme Court has said that. If it were illegal, it would be a different story. It's not illegal. He didn't do anything illegal, they're just bludgeoning him into a confession."

The Craig scandal points out a fundamental question about the balance of political power, according to Stein.

"On trumped up charges, they bring down the legislator and change the balance of power within the United States generally," he says. "This is a really serious case of police overreaching and the victim here is Larry Craig and the Constitution of the United States."

Craig has represented Idaho in Congress for over a quarter of a century and was up for re-election next year.

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