

GRAHAM PLATNER

It doesn't matter if he's a Nazi or swears. As long as he isn't sexist

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This week's American political scandal is the withdrawal of Graham Platner, now the former Democratic candidate for the Senate in the state of Maine. He was one of the [rising stars of the new American socialism](#), on the far left of the party, backed by Bernie

Sanders, the doyen of democratic socialism (and a multiple presidential primary candidate). His campaign came to an abrupt end in just three days, as soon as his ex-partner, Jenny Racicot, claimed in *Politico* magazine – and later on CNN – that she had been raped by Platner one night in 2021, when he turned up at her home drunk and uninvited.

If an allegation – however detailed – concerning events from five years ago leads to the withdrawal of a candidacy without even waiting for the first-instance trial, it is worth reflecting on just how powerful American feminist vigilantism still is, even ten years after the wave of allegations sparked by the #MeToo movement. Objectively speaking, Platner is not entirely wrong when, in his farewell message, he accused the media and the political establishment of acting as “judge, jury and executioner”, whilst continuing to vehemently deny every allegation.

It is even more thought-provoking that Platner’s candidacy had never been called into question, even after it emerged that he had had an **SS Totenkopf tattoo** done whilst serving in the Marine Corps. He had only rushed to cover it up 18 years later, when he was already being tipped as a candidate, and although Platner claims he did not know its meaning, **his own old social media posts** and **former lovers** state that he certainly did know. Platner is one of the leading critics of Israel, of the American alliance with the Jewish state and of AIPAC, the pro-Israel lobby in the US: the suspicion that his stance is not merely ‘criticism of the Israeli government’ is more than well-founded.

‘As you grow up, you become a conservative, but,’ Platner replied in a discussion forum on the social network Reddit, **‘I got older and became communist’**. This statement, made five years ago, was later denied or played down by him, but it is consistent with everything he said **in the debates at the time**, when he made no secret of supporting armed class struggle and carrying a gun because “Still got the guns though, I don’t trust the fascists to act politely”. He called police officers “bastards” and supported Black Lives Matter. But it was all fine, because even as this past resurfaced, the left-wing press described him as an “authentic” candidate, not one concocted behind closed doors. In those same debates, Platner **heavily blasphemed against Jesus and the Virgin Mary**. But evidently, the Democrats care little or nothing about offending Christians.

What is incredible is that these ideas, these outbursts, these insults, all written down in black and white and signed, did not in the slightest compromise Graham Platner’s career; he won the Democratic primary by a landslide.

It took a sex scandal to stop him. But even here: there are first-rate and second-rate sex scandals. Several other second-rate scandals had already occurred and had been swept under the carpet.

Last summer, Katie Glueck and Lisa Lerer of the *New York Times* published an article gathering testimonies from several women who accused Platner of abusive behaviour. Among the most serious allegations was that of Lyndsey Fifield, who recounted being violently dragged out of a taxi and locked in a bedroom by the Democratic candidate. However, in the article, the *NYT* journalists appeared to cast doubt on Fifield's claims, stating that they were "unable to independently corroborate" her account.

Fifield was a Republican activist, perhaps the sole reason for this media scepticism. Jodi Kantor, who helped launch the #MeToo movement with her investigation into media mogul Harvey Weinstein in 2017, described Fifield's statements as "highly sensationalised text messages about sex", emphasising that they were part of a "consensual relationship" .

Racicot, the victim who came forward this week with *Politico*, is, on the other hand, a staunch Democrat of the socialist wing. "One of the reasons I didn't come forward sooner was, the huge moral conflict that I had between supporting his politics, but not supporting him as a person," she said in her interview. She is also being defended by Cheyenne Hunt, an influential Democratic lawyer and social media influencer, someone who can easily mobilise support and has hundreds of thousands of followers daily. So suddenly, the "authentic candidate" becomes a rapist.

It follows, therefore, that: the substance of a candidate's political views counts for little or nothing. Profanity counts for nothing. Anti-Semitism (the real, Nazi-style kind) is now accepted on the left. Extreme ideologies cause no scandal, not even when espoused by a candidate for the national Senate. In a society that is heavily influenced by social media and deeply conformist, what causes a scandal on the left is, above all, anything that goes against the fight against patriarchy. In that case, a single accusation is enough to finish you off (but only if it comes from the right woman at the right time).