

Bernie Sanders says Trump's racism creates climate for hate crimes



New York, August 12 (RHC)-- U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders has accused President Donald Trump of creating a climate for hate crimes and racially motivated attacks such as the recent mass shooting that killed 22 people El Paso, Texas.

Sanders, who is looking forward to win the Democratic Party's 2020 presidential nomination to challenge Trump, said Sunday that didn't want "to see somebody get shot" but his rhetoric promoted violence.

"I think that what [Trump] has created in this country with his incredible rhetoric, his racist rhetoric where he calls Mexicans rapists and criminals, where he almost condones in a rally when someone was attacking somebody ... he creates a climate where we are seeing a significant increase in hate crimes in this country," the Virginia senator told CBS News on Sunday.

"He is creating the kind of divisiveness in this nation that is the last thing that we should be doing," Sanders added. "He creates the climate, but do I think that he wants to see somebody get shot? Absolutely not."

The remarks came after the main suspect of the El Paso shooting earlier this week was tied to a manifesto that pledged to fight a “Hispanic invasion of Texas.”

Sanders and several other presidential candidates have compared manifesto’s language to Trump’s rhetoric, which has included attacks on religious and racial minorities and refusal to condemn white supremacist groups.

Trump condemned white supremacy in the wake of the El Paso shooting and another mass shooting in Dayton, Ohio. Last week he accused his critics of making false charges of racism. Sanders made the remarks a day after calling Trump "an idiot" for claiming climate change is a hoax.

Meanwhile, House Minority Whip Rep. Steve Scalise, who was severely wounded in 2017 when a gunman opened fire on a Republican congressional baseball practice, told the same program before Sanders’ appearance that it was a “slippery slope” to blame Trump for the El Paso shooting.

"The president's no more responsible for that shooting as your next guest, Bernie Sanders, is for my shooting," he charged, implying that Sanders and a number of other Democrats were responsible for the shooting by provoking their supporters to shoot Republican lawmakers.

Sanders rejected Scalise’s claim, saying he condemned the shooting on Senate floor shortly after it happened.

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