



INDEPENDENT

Trump attacked immigrants for 'murders, killings, murders' during most recent El Paso visit, months ahead of shooting

President's attack against immigrants is frequently used — even though immigrant communities commit crimes at lower rates than native-born Americans.

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The last time Donald Trump visited El Paso, the president attacked immigrants in the United States, and emphasised repeatedly that some had committed “murders, murders, killings, murders”.

Mr Trump’s attacks on immigrants came in the form of praise for Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), which he said had picked up immigrants for tens of thousands of crimes, and ticked off a list of those crimes and the stats that he claimed accompanied them.

When he got to murder — he claimed there were 4,000 immigrant murderers swept up by ICE in the previous two years, in spite of a lack of a national database comparing crimes to immigration status — the president belaboured the point.

“Murders, murders, murders. Killings. Murders,” Mr Trump said during that speech, which was recently resurfaced on Twitter by journalist Aaron Rugar, prompting chants of “build the wall” from the crowd in Texas.

The president’s attack is the type of rhetoric that has drawn criticism in recent days, after a white gunman, who had reportedly written an anti-immigrant screed online, killed at least 22 people in a heavily Hispanic area.

And, it’s an attack that is undermined by the available data, which shows that immigrant communities tend to have lower crime rates than native-born Americans.

In Texas, specifically, Alex Nowrasteh, a senior immigration policy analyst with the libertarian Cato Institute, says that data shows criminal conviction and arrest rates are “well below” what is seen with native-born Americans, according to ABC News.

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All told, undocumented immigrants in the state make up just 6 per cent of the state's population, while legal immigrants make up 10 per cent, and native-born Americans make up 80 per cent of the state population, American Community Survey data and the Centre for Migration Studies data shows.

At the same time, undocumented immigrants made up 5.9 per cent of the homicides in the state, legal immigrants made up 3.8 per cent of the state's homicide convictions, and native-born Americans made up 90 per cent of the homicides in Texas, according to an analysis of state data by Mr Nowrasteh.