

President-elect Obama's advisers are quietly crafting a proposal to ship dozens, if not hundreds, of imprisoned terrorism suspects to the United States to face criminal trials, a plan that would make good on his promise to close the Guantanamo Bay prison but could require creation of a controversial new system of justice.

During his campaign, Obama described Guantanamo as a "sad chapter in American history" and has said generally that the U.S. legal system is equipped to handle the detainees. But he has offered few details on what he planned to do once the facility is closed.

Under plans being put together in Obama's camp, some detainees would be released and many others would be prosecuted in U.S. criminal courts.

A third group of detainees — the ones whose cases are most entangled in highly classified information — might have to go before a new court designed especially to handle sensitive national security cases, according to advisers and Democrats involved in the talks. Advisers participating directly in the planning spoke on condition of anonymity because the plans aren't final.

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