

Despite his stated desire to close the American prison at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, President Bush has decided not to do so, and never considered proposals drafted in the State Department and the Pentagon that outlined options for transferring the detainees elsewhere, according to senior administration officials.

Mr. Bush's top advisers held a series of meetings at the White House this summer after a Supreme Court ruling in June cast doubt on the future of the American detention center. But Mr. Bush adopted the view of his most hawkish advisers that closing Guantánamo would involve too many legal and political risks to be acceptable, now or any time soon, the officials said.

The administration is proceeding on the assumption that Guantánamo will remain open not only for the rest of Mr. Bush's presidency but also well beyond, the officials said, as the site for military tribunals of those facing terrorism-related charges and for the long prison sentences that could follow convictions.

The effect of Mr. Bush's stance is to leave in place a prison that has become a reviled symbol of the administration's fight against terrorism, and to leave another contentious foreign policy decision for the next president.

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