

Presidential hopefuls differ on detainees

by UPI

WASHINGTON - The U.S. presidential candidates differ on how the death-penalty trials of alleged Sept. 11, 2001, conspirators should be conducted. The Miami Herald reported Monday that Democratic contender Sen. Hillary Clinton of New York said as president she would ask the U.S. Justice Department to determine whether the six detainees, including the suspected mastermind of the Sept. 11 attacks Khalid Sheik Mohammed, could be tried in federal or military court. "As president, she would direct the Justice Department to evaluate the evidence amassed against these prisoners and make a determination," said Lee Feinstein, the Clinton campaign's national security director. Clinton's rival, Sen. Barack Obama, however, said the alleged conspirators should be tried in federal or traditional military court. "As a candidate to be the next commander-in-chief ... I think it's important to be careful about commenting on specific cases pending before the tribunals at Guantanamo Bay," the Illinois senator said in a statement quoted by the newspaper. On the Republican side, front-runner John McCain said he would continue the trials at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. The Arizona senator has proposed moving Guantanamo detainees to the military's maximum-security prison at Fort Leavenworth, Kan. Some legal experts have said the detainees would be able to invoke more constitutional rights if they were held in the United States. "The last thing Senator McCain wants to see is Khalid Sheik Mohammed getting all the legal protections of someone who is arrested for a traffic violation or a criminal violation in the United States," said Randy Scheunemann, who handles foreign policy and national security for McCain's campaign.

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