In the sleepy town of Manta, along Ecuador's remote Pacific Coast, business is good. For narco-terrorists, that is. Ironically, just six years ago, it was the U.S.-Ecuador joint hub of counter-narcotic operations, responsible for 60 percent of drug seizures in the Eastern Pacific, worth over $5 billion per year. How times have changed. Appeasing Ecuador's left-wing populist Rafael Correa, President Barack Obama shuttered the U.S. Forward Operating Location, withdrawing our Air Force and Navy surveillance planes without a fuss. The international left applauded both leaders, as one more bastion of "Yankee Imperialism" crumbled. And the crime syndicates have loved every minute of it. Fast forward to today. President Obama is bowing down to more leftist *caudillos*, arch-enemies for over five decades, Fidel and Raul Castro. Shocking the world this past December, Mr. Obama announced his intent to normalize relations with Cuba. Circumventing Congress, a top aide, 30-something Ben Rhodes, led secret negotiations with Cuban diplomats in Canada. Team Obama plans to open a U.S. Embassy in Havana, further loosen travel restrictions, and widen economic ties. While a high level State Department delegation visited Havana last month, Congressional Republicans from South Florida, Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, Rep. Mario Díaz-Balart and Rep. Carlos Curbelo sponsored a "Vigil for Liberty" in Miami. Meanwhile, the State Department is conducting a six-month review into whether Cuba should be removed from the "State Sponsors of Terrorism" list, a group that includes fellow international pariahs, Iran, Syria and Sudan. While the Castro brothers know they've finally beaten the United States, they still aren't satisfied. Raul wants the embargo lifted and the Naval Base at Guantanamo returned. While lifting the embargo requires an act of Congress, Mr. Obama has more flexibility in other areas. To be clear, Team Obama says it won't return the Naval Base, despite Castro demands. Yet let's consider their track record on misleading the public. Like breaking the law by transferring five top Taliban leaders from Gitmo without the required 30-day Congressional notification. Like blaming the Benghazi Consulate attack on a video. Like the failure to acknowledge radical Islam as a threat. Can anyone really believe anything they say? Since Mr. Obama remains determined to "transform America," it's conceivable that he'll sign on the dotted line, shutter Gitmo and return it to Cuba — even if it's during the last days of his residency to escape the likelihood of impeachment which takes months. The U.S. Naval Base dates back to 1903, established as a coaling station in the days of President Teddy Roosevelt. The $4,085 annual lease can only be broken by mutual consent, signed by heads of state. Fidel Castro has only cashed one rent check decades ago, apparently by mistake. Regaining the Naval Base has been a priority for Fidel since he overthrew General Fulgencio Batista in 1959. It is 45-square miles, featuring an airfield, deep water port, logistics facilities, hospital, de-salinization plant, wind farm, and small town surrounded by a rocky chain of dry and dusty mountainous terrain. So if Mr. Obama signs Gitmo away, like abandoning Manta, Ecuador, what would the Cubans do with it? Considering the regime is a "State Sponsor of Terror," the base could

conceivably fall into terrorist hands. What irony. From the world's most famous lockdown for Al Qaeda, Taliban and affiliates, to the proverbial "inmates running the asylum." Though radical Islamic jihadists wouldn't likely take over, other terror groups certainly could. Like who? For decades, Havana has sheltered the Basque Fatherland and Liberty (ETA) despite their campaign of bombings, shootings and assassinations throughout Spain for five decades. They've also given safe haven to the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), a Marxist group that has fought a guerilla war against Bogota since the 1960s, reportedly claiming over 220,000 lives. According to the Council on Foreign Relations, the FARC nets $500 million a year selling cocaine. With Gitmo's ideal location in the Windward Passage, on Cuba's southeastern tip near Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Turks and Caicos, the Bahamas and not far from the Florida Keys either, what better place to run drugs? And let's not forget Havana's long-standing support to Puerto Rican pro-independence terror networks, the Armed Forces of National Liberation (FALN) and Boricua Popular Army, a.k.a. *Los Macheteros* "Machete-Men." Backed by Cuban intelligence, these terrorists are collectively responsible for bombing 120 targets in the U.S. mainland and Puerto Rico, plus shooting a busload of Sailors outside San Juan. So as Obama continues to obsess about closing the detention facilities and freeing so many Al Qaeda and Taliban detainees, just wait, he may have even bigger "transformational" ideas in mind. Congress and the American people must hold him accountable — even after his term ends. Manta on the Caribbean is the last thing we need.