

Our Boy Obama on Lady Young Road

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Sunday, 19 April 2009 00:00 -

Just watched President Obama's live press conference from the same roof deck at the Trinidad Hilton at which I first saw Michael Manley, though he wasn't there as Jamaican prime minister but to launch his book, *A History of West Indies Cricket*. It was nighttime, then, and a stiff breeze was blowing and I remember watching Wayne Brown, a friend of the Manley family and an avid sailor, watching him. "I just know," I wrote in TGIF that week, "Wayne was fighting the urge to reef his ears a bit".

No such luck for Our Boy Obama, though. Even though you could see grey skies in the background – Trinidad must be under the same system that brought heavy rains to Barbados this morning – poor Barack was sweating in his jacket-and-tie. I took a special pleasure in him ending his press conference by complaining that it was hot (and, it was implied, "I'm in a firetrucking black suit!). You'd think our clowns would ease up the poor man (and themselves, and us all) by not wearing firetrucking suits in a hot rahtid island; actually, you wouldn't think that, having long experience of watching clerks think they're bosses because they dress like what they think bosses should look like.

Two other things stood out, both supposedly in the background, either of which alone could have derailed any pride I might have had in having the first President of the World in my hometown: one was the huge, ugly scar covering almost all you could see of Lady Chancellor Rd, where the mountain has been destroyed to make way for more luxury condos for Trinidad's mega-rich, mega-tasteless merchants; and the other was the sound of the National Security helicopter hovering overhead for the first half of the press conference. I just knew the crew were gaping at Barack and gallerying themselves. I don't doubt they came down low – at one point it sounded like they were going to land on the firetrucking deck – to show off they' nice gun and Oakley sunglasses and t'ing.

In the words of jointpop, "Sometimes it does make me grin/ This country I living in/ And sometimes it does make me sick/ My people, like they only on gimmick".