

# Lindquist gets ready to rumble PNM to probe EBC

By GAIL ALEXANDER

THE PNM Government will launch a Commission of Enquiry into the Elections and Boundaries Commission in about two weeks' time. But Commissions of Enquiry into other projects may be shelved.

Attorney General Glenda Morean disclosed this yesterday at her Cabildo Chambers office where she introduced Canadian accounting forensic expert Bob Lindquist.

Lindquist has returned to T&T to conclude corruption probes, primarily into the Piarco airport project. Yesterday he also met with the Integrity Commission following its request two months ago to meet with him.

Lindquist worked in T&T between 1989 to 1990, assisting the NAR Government investigate allegations of bribery by former PNM Government Ministers including John O'Halloran. Some \$7 million was recovered. The case represented the first time a foreign country was successful in an action for bribery against a US company in the US courts.

Morean said Lindquist's preliminary report on the Airport project was submitted in December. Lindquist said he was restricted in what he could reveal on the matter. He confirmed he has been asked by Government to do other investigations, but was not free to disclose them.

He said he was well beyond 75 per cent complete with the Piarco investigation.

"When we have all, then let's see what it really says — that's where we're at in this process," he said.



**CORRUPTION BUSTER:** ATTORNEY GENERAL Glenda Morean smiles as forensic investigator Bob Lindquist makes a point at a news conference at Cabildo House yesterday.

Photo by NOEL SALDENHA

On the high-priority projects for investigation, Morean said Government is focusing on the Piarco issue, the Desalination plant and Inncogen, as well as the EBC. However, she said the latter will be dealt with through a Commission of Enquiry.

She said Government is still exploring if Lindquist will handle the Desal and Inncogen projects.

But the AG said the Commissions of Enquiry into 12 various projects —

which had been agreed to by the PNM and UNC in their recent accord — will have to be shelved.

"Because it may be that after we get the report, we may not need a Commission of Enquiry and we may be able to bring the situation to completion, whatever that may be, whether it's to bring people to justice or close the case," she added.

"We're going with a Commission of Enquiry into the EBC and are proceed-

ing by way of our investigative report with the anti-corruption unit in terms of the other matters," she said.

"You have to process the facts before you act. You don't want to act rashly and I'm not one to do so. I'm not saying we're not going to establish Commissions of Enquiry into the others, but we're examining all the information before we proceed."

Yesterday, EBC Chairman Oswald Wilson said: "Let them come with it."