

SETTING UP A BLOOD BANK

Extensive campaign for donors

By a Staff Reporter

The Maltese Association of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta announced yesterday that its blood bank is to be officially inaugurated by the Grandmaster of the Order in June this year. Of the £4,000 estimated to be spent in the setting up of the bank, £1,300 are to be made available by the Association.

Mr. Joe Calleja, a Maltese-American, has promised the Association material help which he plans to obtain in

the United States. The Cathedral Chapter, on the initiative of His Grace the Archbishop, is to provide the remaining sum for the setting up of the bank.

Members of the Association said that the setting up of the bank required both technical know-how and finance. A number of doctors, members of the Association, are rendering help and contacts have been established with professors and doctors specializing in this field abroad.

The money to be made available by the Association comes from the proceeds of the sale of the medal coined two and a half years ago to commemorate the Great Siege. The Cathedral Chapter has also promised the Association to foot the bill for the maintenance and running of the bank. Maintenance and running costs are estimated to amount to between £2,000 and £3,000 a year.

The blood bank will be housed in six rooms at the Headquarters of the Association in St. Ursula Street, Valetta. The bank's equipment is expected to be completely up to date. A technician and a nurse will be employed. The order for the equipment required is to be made shortly.

Blood will be given to individuals on medical advice, free of charge. The Association, which plans to cooperate with Government, is to carry

out an extensive campaign for blood donors. "It is very important that every person knows his type of blood," said Association members.

Blood is normally stored for not more than three weeks. There are four basic categories of blood, and the Association hopes to establish a panel of blood donors to keep good supplies available.

Director of the blood bank will be Dr. P. Farrugia who has compiled a report on the setting up of the bank. Dr. Farrugia will be leaving Malta for Rome this week to finalize the project.