

Agnew Toughs It Out

CENTREVILLE (Md.) — Vice President Agnew, in Maryland yesterday for the first time since he became publicly involved in an investigation of political bribery and extortion, toughed it out for the home folks.

"I intend to fight to establish my innocence of any wrongdoing," Agnew said at a traditional "bull roast," on behalf of a Republican congressional candidate, Robert E. Bauman.

But a pall of scandal hung over the usually festive occasion. Only a few hundred attended. Traditionally it has drawn several thousand.

Bauman is running to fill a vacancy created when incumbent William Mills, a

Republican, killed himself as a result of an incident connected to the Watergate investigation.

Even by their cheers and shouts of good wishes for Agnew, the crowd made it clear his troubles were on their minds.

Indeed Agnew said: "1973 has been a rather tough year for Republicans. But it doesn't have to keep getting worse.

"You can begin turning it around by setting an example. The President is very much aware of this race because it comes at a time when it will be an indication of how people will go in the country. And this one will be watched closely."