

# Spicer recounts tumultuous White House tenure

By **GEORGE LURIE**  
The Daily Courier

Former White House spokesman Sean Spicer briefed a crowd of more than 350 at the Yavapai College Performing Arts Center Saturday evening, offering a mix of partisan political views and often humorous personal anecdotes from his tumultuous seven-month tenure as President Donald Trump's first press secretary.

The event, sponsored by the Republican Women of Prescott, was Day 26 of Spicer's current nationwide tour to promote his new book, "The Briefing: Politics, the Press, and The President," which recently cracked the New York Times' bestsellers list.

Spicer, 46, served as Trump's communications director in 2017, frequently sparking controversy with his brash, combative style and stormy relationship with the press, stoked by Spicer's claims at his very first press conference that crowds attending the president's inauguration were the largest in history.

During his White House tenure, Spicer's public profile increased significantly, as he was frequently parodied on Saturday Night Live by actress and comedienne Melissa McCarthy.

Although there was no mention of McCarthy at Saturday night's presentation, Spicer did start off his talk by walking away from the podium and toward the front of the stage. "I gave up podiums for Lent," he said jokingly.

At the start of his hour and twenty minute speech, Spicer said, "I want to talk politics and also a little about my book, because that's why I'm here."

The Rhode Island native, who also answered a handful of questions from the audience at the end of his speech, said it was "an honor and a privilege to watch such a disruptive president," calling his time in the White House "a fascinating journey."

On his often combative relationship with the press, Spicer said, "If I could do it over again, would I do things differently? Well, ya."

Asked why he recently chose to appear on the Megyn Kelly Today Show after the controversial television journalist famously sparred with then-candidate Trump during a pre-election debate — the audience member referred to Kelly as "such a bully" — Spicer responded, "Look, I'm trying to sell a book."

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Asked about the recent uproar created by former White House aide Omarosa Manigault Newman, who secretly recorded and then released sensitive conversations taped inside the White House Situation Room, Spicer tempered his

response. "Obviously I know her," he said. "I'm not a fan. I think what she did was the epitome of disloyalty."

During the course of the presentation, Spicer also encouraged the audience to "get behind" Republican winners in the upcoming primary elections. Maintaining GOP majorities in

the House and Senate "is absolutely critical" to forwarding the president's agenda, he added.

Spicer had nothing but praise for the president. "The country is in better shape because of Donald Trump. There's no question about it," he said.

The audience frequent-

ly cheered Spicer's pro-Republican comments and gave him a standing ovation at the end of his presentation. Although Spicer has encountered protesters and hecklers at several recent book tour stops, there were no disruptions during Saturday night's speech.

Prescott Lakes resident

Nancy Rispoli said she and husband, Tony, turned out for the speech because "we are ultra, ultra conservative and big supporters of the president — Trump, Trump, he's our man," Nancy said. Her husband came with a pre-printed question he hoped to ask Spicer regarding the

ongoing Russia investigation, which Spicer did not directly address.

Prescott resident Gayle Stevens said she came to the event "because it's my husband's birthday and he wanted to hear what Mr. Spicer had to say. We really didn't know what to expect."