

Democracy Dies in Darkness

## Regarding the May 9 front-page article “Justice Dept. moves to drop case against Flynn”:

The major problem with our criminal law system is not its misuse for political gain giving rise to a small handful of high-profile cases but its routine, unheralded, ignored and forgotten function flushing millions of the poor, nonwhite, mentally ill and otherwise disfavored detritus of our socioeconomic system down our “correctional” system drain. It is akin to how Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn described the gulag — a sewer to rid society of the unwanted. Chest-beating and outrage about the likes of the Michael Flynn prosecution bring to mind a line in Harry Golden’s 1958 memoir, “For 2¢ Plain,” recounting a gentile colleague’s outrage on learning that Hitler had fined nuns for hoarding food to feed the poor: “Now the sonofabitch has gone too far.” I recall this because it was the first and only time I ever heard my father use an indelicate word.

If there is a silver lining to the novel coronavirus plague, it is one of shining a bright light on the outrageous inequities we tolerate, largely correlated with wealth and color, and the hope that people will not turn their attention away once the immediate crisis is over. This includes our criminal law system as much as our provision of health care. **Victor M. Glasberg, Alexandria**