

ong may Jo Maugham succeed with his good work that now.

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I was, I admit, directed to listen to this week's edition of The Bunker podcast, which can be linked to via this tweet:

https://twitter.com/bunker_pod/status/1470664864544825345?s=20

I was told that I would like what Jolyn Maugham had to say about me at about 47 minutes into the broadcast when he was discussing with Alex Andreou the consequences of having given up his very high earning work as a tax QC to become a legal campaigner which resulted in him founding the extraordinarily successful Good Law Project.

What he said (and I am not quoting verbatim) was that some years ago he noted that every morning I got up and banged out several blogs before breakfast, largely about tax avoidance in those days. These were read in the barristers' chambers of which he was a member and were very largely mocked, but it occurred to Jolyn that I was doing something that he admired when taking this issue on. His suggestion was that I was 'the man in the arena' to quote President Teddy Roosevelt. [Roosevelt said](#):

It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.

Jo did not say it directly but did very strongly imply that he realised as a result of seeing what I did that despite the pitfalls and the risks, including of being wrong, that he wanted to be 'the man in the arena'. As he noted, few people want their epitaph to be 'he left a large estate'. They would rather be remembered for what they had done. And

so he changed direction.

If a friend is a person who you trust to ask for advice on which you intend to rely, knowing that they will supply it on the basis of their goodwill towards you alone, then Jo and I are friends, because we have sought such opinion from each other in our time.

If unwittingly I did through this blog influence the creation of the Good Law Project then I am flattered, amazed, and humbled. That is one heck of a compliment, but all the credit for its success is Jo's alone. Long may he continue with that good work that now seems so vital to the survival of democracy in this country.