

I thought perhaps we could agree how to handle certain topics, but complete silence was not an option.

275. I was shaken by Bain's request that I never speak about my experience. They knew my position on so many serious ethical topics relating to their behaviour – I still hoped that they would want to engage on these and find a way to come clean. I could understand abiding by a confidentiality agreement but the demand for complete silence shook me.

276. I recalled Cottrell saying to me on one of our phonecalls that Bain's lawyers would be "very aggressive" with me if we ended up in court. I also recalled discussions between Bain and Baker McKenzie about hiring a private investigator to track Massone and the thought occurred to me that they may already have me followed. My family's anxiety grew over my safety, as did mine, when Bain's determination to silence me became apparent. I realised that any involvement Bain would have had in corrupt activities involved powerful people in South Africa who would also have an incentive to keep me quiet. Driven by fear and urged by my family I wavered and began discussing options with Bain.

277. Spending time out of the country seemed like a good option for me. I could go to Oxford to complete my doctorate, something that I needed to do anyway, and this would take me off Bain's war path in the short term. Bain loved this idea when I mentioned it to Cottrell, after all they were getting what they wanted. Numerous phonecalls followed to work out the details which would see Bain cover my cost to be in the UK as part of my separation terms with the firm.

278. On 4 November 2019 Cottrell called with a settlement offer that would require that I go to Oxford for two years, as I had suggested, and Bain would cover the costs of me being there and my opportunity costs of not working in South Africa. I indicated that their offer was unattractive on financial grounds. The structure of our discussions was such that if I went along with Bain's request for silence they would waive amounts that I owed them plus offer additional money. Ethical discomfort started arising over the position in which I found myself – I could consider

