

## Potomac Mansions: Kalu and Atiku are Neighbours

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Nigerians love real estate. The acquisition penchant of Nigerians is unmatched. Even in this era of so-called 'economic hardships,' Nigerians continue to buy prime real estate. In the 1980's-1990's, South of France and other parts of Western Europe were veritable play grounds for unscrupulous Nigerian businessmen and politicians. Today, it is the United States of America. And the areas of choice are the Maryland cities that are shouting distances from Washington D.C. The other prime area is New York City and the surrounding suburbs of New Jersey.

Two weeks ago, Elendureports.com broke the story of Vice President Atiku's multimillion dollar mansion in Potomac, Maryland. The Vice President made a feeble attempt at whitewashing the story by describing it as 'no big deal' since he has maintained a residence in the United States for over a decade. While there have been claims that Atiku was a very rich man before becoming the Vice President of Nigeria in 1999, he did not acquire the multimillion dollar Maryland mansion until one and a half years after he became Nigeria's number two citizen. But for the immunity he enjoys as the Vice President of Nigeria, he could have been prosecuted for committing a crime.

Although he enjoys the same immunity as Abubakar Atiku, Orji Uzor Kalu, the governor of Abia State was dragged before the code of conduct bureau for maintaining foreign bank accounts. The governor is fighting the charges in a different court. However, Elendureports.com investigations show that Orji Kalu also acquired a multimillion dollar property on June 26, 2003, barely one month after being sworn-in for his second term as governor of Abia State. Kalu is known as a rich young man who became a millionaire in his twenties. The two storey house was built in 1996 on 5.00 acres. Kalu paid one million and seven hundred thousand dollars for this property.

It is speculated that Kalu was a front for some powerful individuals who were in positions of influence and authority in the 80's and 90's. Sen. Jubril Aminu, who was Kalu's vice chancellor at the University Maidugiri where Kalu had his undergraduate studies in the 80's is part of this group. The list also includes Gen. Ibrahim Babangida, Nigeria's military president for eight years. Kalu, who is running for president told Elendureports.com in an exclusive interview a few months ago, that Pres. Obasanjo would not hesitate to disgrace him if there were any evidence of corruption against him.

Potomac, Maryland is a small city. It has a population of about forty-five thousand. Seventy-five per cent of Potomac residents are white while blacks make up only four per cent of the population. The city's unemployment rate is about two per cent, three points lower than the US average. The median yearly income in Potomac is about one hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars. The city is the twelfth most expensive zip code in the United States.

Disgraced former Senate President, Adolphus Wabara is not left out in the US property mania. Through wife, Felicia, Wabara acquired a piece of Queens, New York for the handsome price of nine hundred and ninety-five thousand dollars. The house was purchased on March 11, 2005, while the documents were filed with the city on April 1, 2005. Felicia Wabara was sighted at the hotel around this time. Elendureports.com is yet to confirm if the white man she was seen with one evening in March is the real estate agent. Ms. Wabara spent hours with this gentleman and at some point she kicked off her shoes and stretched out her legs. Her husband, Adolpus and some other Nigerian senators were busy somewhere else at Four Seasons hotel in Manhattan on the night Felicia was sighted. Alliance for Democracy senator, Tokunbo Afikuyomi was part of the group of senators that were guests at the Four Seasons hotel on that day.

Olu Obasanjo G. is another famous Nigerian name that acquired a piece of New York real estate. On March 1, 2005, Olu Obasanjo bought a Brooklyn, New York property for five hundred and thirty-seven thousand, one hundred and twenty-six dollars. At about 1:00 PM on April 1, 2005, his agents filed papers with the city. Elendureports.com has been trying for two weeks to confirm the identity of Olu Obasanjo G. A source told Elendureports.com that Olu Obasanjo G is one of Pres. Obasanjo's sons. The source further stated that the President's son is a former law student who lived with Andrew Young, the former United States Ambassador to the United Nations and the Chairman of Goodworks Int. LLC., a firm which lobbies the United States government on behalf of Nigeria.

Elendureports.com made several attempts to get in touch with Gov. Orji Uzor Kalu for this story. Gloria, a staffer at the Government House, Umuahia, told Elendureports.com that Kalu had travelled to Abuja. Calls to the governor's cell phone were not answered. Attempts by this magazine to get to Wabara were not successful before press time.

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