

# DEMOCRATS REACH OUT TO CATHOLICS

Two evangelical leaders, Rev. Jim Wallis and Rev. Tony Campolo, have pledged to reach out to Catholics and evangelicals by pushing the Democratic Party to change its Party Platform on abortion. Wallis told ABC News that "Abortion reduction should be a central Democratic Party plank in this election." But he also stressed that no legal restrictions need to be embraced.

Rev. Wallis and Rev. Campolo should be commended for at least triggering a discussion within the Democratic Party on the subject of abortion. But because they explicitly ruled out any legal restrictions, it is unlikely that Catholics will support them.

After the Democrats lost in 2004, Paul Begala and James Carville wrote a book, *Take It Back*, admonishing their fellow Democrats to oppose partial-birth abortion and support parental consent laws. Such policy modifications were necessary, they said, because the public wants abortion restrictions. Evidently, Wallis and Campolo disagree.

A couple of months after the Democrats lost in 2004, Sen. Hillary Clinton angered a pro-abortion crowd when she said abortion was a "sad, even tragic, choice." They didn't want to hear it then, and they don't want to hear it now. The most they are willing to accept is what Howard Dean told them at the time: no need to change positions, but "we can change our vocabulary." There's the rub: This is the politics of deceit.

Wallis and Campolo have a bigger problem this time around. The presumptive Democratic nominee, Sen. Barack Obama, has voted to legalize selective infanticide. So how can the Democrats amend their Party Platform on abortion and reach out to

Catholics when their man—who says he supports universal health care—thinks it's okay for a baby who survives an abortion to be denied medical treatment?

It is going to take more than linguistic gymnastics to persuade the faithful. The Democrats should have listened to Begala and Carville.