

NOW! ALL NEW!! ONE THIRD THE CAMPAIGNERS

The McCain campaign, noting that by adding a celebrity to their ticket they can actually fill rallies, has announced McCain and Palin will continue to campaign together after she returns from trying to cover up her dirt in Alaska.

The **McCain** campaign is "very seriously considering" having McCain and **Palin** campaign together more often than not in the next two months, a senior campaign aide said, adding it could be the most a presidential and vice presidential candidate campaign in tandem in recent history.

The aide said the two have developed a strong chemistry together and will likely utilize it through joint rallies. He likened it to the chemistry **Bill Clinton** and **Al Gore** had in 1992, suggesting it was instinctive.

"Sometimes these vice presidential selections, the pairings, work in a magical way," the aide told reporters on the Palin campaign plane, on condition of anonymity.

Though, really, it's not so much "chemistry" or "magic." It's necessity. You can't promise concert-goers Carrie Underwood and then deliver Lawrence Welk—which is what the McCain campaign will be doing until they get their hot celebrity back on the trail.

In fact, McCain couldn't even get through his first campaign rally after Palin left, though that appears to have been Democrats capitalizing on really bad advance work from the McCain team.

Republican presidential candidate John McCain cut short his first public

appearance without running-mate Sarah Palin after chanting supporters of Democratic rival Barack Obama interrupted his speech.

After lunching with a roundtable of women at Philadelphia's Down Home Diner, McCain shook hands with supporters and strode up to a podium to deliver a statement. But as he spoke, chants of "Obama, Obama, Obama" filled the room.

Reporters craned forward trying to hear the Arizona senator. Unfortunately for McCain – and possibly overlooked by aides who planned the event – a section of the diner opened up to a market where a crowd had gathered behind a cordon.

A large contingent of Obama supporters showed up, mixed with some who had bumper stickers reading "Democrats for McCain".

[snip]

His words were barely audible. [my emphasis]

Frankly, this state of affairs has a lot of risk for McCain. He is already depending on her to bring out the crowds—which suggests a real dependency which kind of weakens the whole war hero image.

But I'm most interested in what McCain's reliance on Palin will do for his ability to campaign. The race is currently effectively tied both nationally and in a number of key swing states. Barring some other big campaign news, those states will be decided by the amount of close attention each candidate gives them—the number of rallies they have. And by setting it up so that McCain has to appear with Palin to draw any crowd (and given the leers McCain has already made towards Palin's legs, I presume Cindy McCain will continue to chaperone the pair), the McCain team has basically cut their

number of potential campaigners by two thirds.

Every day, Barack Obama and Joe Biden split up, head to different swing states, and hit different kinds of voters (Biden, for example, has a much better draw among Catholics and white working class people). In addition, Michelle Obama seems to do at least one event a week, meeting with women to talk about economic issues. Any of the three of these people has the ability to represent Obama and his message proudly. Meanwhile, it looks increasingly like the McCain team will be offering McPalin-and-the-wife, one unit, at one third of the total campaign spots.

Already, the GOP is operating at a disadvantage because they didn't have anything to excite the Christian conservatives who serve as key campaign volunteers until last week. They're facing a Democrat who has the best ground game of recent memory. But now it looks like, on top of those hidden handicaps, the McCain team will be working this election with one third the campaigners.