*By **Lord Lyon Cnut**, our Labour Spin Correspondent (well, one of them)*

As arch-lefty Jeremy Corbyn surges ahead in the London Labour leadership contest, party managers are preparing to delegitimise his victory while preparing the ground to blame the SNP, an insider has revealed.

An unnamed Labour politician, who says he is speaking to the BBC because he is unhappy at having been sacked as leader in Scotland following the near wipeout of his party, has told the BBC that plans are in place for MPs to stage a coup if Mr Corbyn is elected leader in August.

The group of influential MPs will claim that Corbyn's popularity is illegitimate as it is mainly due to non-Labour supporters taking advantage of the '*pay for a say*' promotion which was introduced as part of the one member one vote changes which replaced Labour's electoral college.

Our insider, whom we will call 'Slim Jim', told us that without affiliated members who became Labour members automatically after joining a trades union or the coop, or by taking advantage of the cheap beer in their local Labour club, there were embarrassingly few actual members of the Labour Party left.

Worse still, most of the few thousand genuine card-carrying members were either elected politicians, party officials and their families, or elderly care-home residents who had simply forgotten to discontinue their subs.

Rather than being forced to reveal the pitiful number of real members when announcing the vote, party managers decided to include anyone who has a connection with Labour, however tenuous, and to offer special one-off votes to anyone who has £3 in spare change. This, it was hoped, would make the number of voters appear more respectable, hiding the truly awful state of the party.

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