While the facts have been largely ignored by European media, the “Clockwork Orange” style of jihad of the Islamic State made its debut in Canada at the beginning of the week.

On Monday, a Canadian soldier was fatally wounded (and another one injured) after he has been hit by an known Islamist in his car. On Wednesday, the end of the morning, another serviceman was wounded when a man opened fire against the National War Memorial, in Ottawa. The man ran toward the Canadian Parliament which was closed. Nevertheless, witnesses say they heard “several gunshots” inside the building. It’s too early to assess the last event, but the first one is quite clear.

1) The Facts and the Author’s Summary

On Monday, a car ran over two military personnel (one of whom was wearing his uniform) in a supermarket parking lot in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, 40 kilometres southeast of Montreal. One of the two men, Sergeant Major Patrick Vincent, died due to his injuries. The driver then attempted to flee the scene and was pursued by security personnel. Within several kilometres, the driver lost control of his car and tried to escape on foot before being shot down by police.

This incident quickly proved to be a terrorist incident, as was promptly recognized by the Public Safety Minister, Steven Blaney.

- The man killed by the police has been identified as Martin Couture-Rouleau, alias « Ahmad », who converted to radical Islam about one
year ago. He was 25 years old, recently separated from his partner, and the father of an infant.

- The origin of Couture-Rouleau’s conversion seems to be his depression, which he has had since his separation from his partner and the bankruptcy of a small cleaning company that he had founded with a friend.

- The mosque visited by Couture-Rouleau regularly welcomed a radical preacher, Hamza Chaoui, who emphasized in particular that Islam and democracy are not compatible.

- In June 2014, his parents reported these preceding facts to the authorities, worried about what they believed to be increasing sectarianism.

- In July, Couture-Rouleau was detained at the Montreal airport, where he planned to board a flight to Turkey, most likely with the intention of going to Syria. He was questioned by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), who had to release him due to lack of evidence. However, they were still able to confiscate Couture-Rouleau’s passport.

- Following this incident, the RCMP recommended that Couture-Rouleau be placed under surveillance. He was also suspected of being linked to over 100 Canadian extremists; however, the District Attorney decided that his file was too thin to merit such a response.

- On several occasions between July and October, the RCMP met with Couture-Rouleau several times, occasionally in the presence of his family or an imam, in an attempt to “deradicalize” him. The last meeting took place October 9th and was considered “positive” by the police.

- Couture-Rouleau maintained two Facebook pages, one under the name “Ahmad LeConverti” (which was deleted on Monday) and the other with the name “Ahmad Rouleau” that was still active as of Wednesday morning (https://www.facebook.com/#!/Baller.Qc?fref=ts). The content of these two pages clearly illustrates the ideology that undoubtedly motivated this young man. The latest profile picture of “Ahmad Rouleau” is an image of two open doors, one representing the door to paradise, the other to hell. This image was posted on October 17 at 23:56 without any description.
On Monday, Couture-Rouleau went to the parking lot in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, where he lived, and waited for at least two hours for the arrival of military personnel. The “chance” of seeing members of the armed forces there was practically inevitable: the town is home to the Saint-Jean Garrison and a military college.

2) Conclusions to Take Away

While this incident constitutes a first for Canada, it is also the first time that the recommendations broadcast by a spokesman for the Islamic State at the end of September 2014 have been put into practice. These recommendations specifically targeted Americans, Europeans, Australians, or Canadians1. “If you can not find an explosive device or ammunition, then isolate the American infidel, the French infidel, or any of his allies. Hit his head with a stone, slit his throat with a knife, run him over with your car, throw him off a high point, strangle him, or poison him”.

It is important to note that the method used by Couture-Rouleau was previously used by 2 British converts of Nigerien origin, Michel Adebolajo and Michael Adebowale, in London on May 22, 2013. The two men knocked over a soldier, Drummer Lee Rigby, with their car before killing him with a knife and a meat cleaver. One of the men was consequently sentenced to life in prison and the other to a sentence of at least 45 years.

This attack is the second terrorist attack committed in the West that can be directly linked to the influence of the Islamic State, the first being the

1 See our September 23, 2014 editorial: « Islamic State, the psychopaths speak to the psychopaths ». 
massacre committed by Mehdi Nemmouche at the Jewish Museum of Belgium in Brussels on Saturday, May 24, 2014. Nevertheless, is it notable that:

- The **British authorities** have revealed that they have recently thwarted “several attacks”.
- On September 18, **Australian police** conducted a vast anti-terrorist operation in Brisbane and Sydney. They arrested terrorists who were preparing to kidnap and decapitate an Australian citizen.
- On September 23, in Australia, an 18-year-old man was called in for questioning by local police in Endeavour Hills, due to his supposed ties to the Islamic State. He was killed after having stabbed two police officers.
- **If today’s attack is linked to radical Islam (which is likely), we’ll face the third terrorist attack linked to Islamic State in 5 months.**

**Conclusion:**

- **Attacks linked to the Islamic State have been committed or attempted in four countries** (Belgium, Australia, Canada, and Great Britain) since May 2014.
- The “profile” of Couture-Rouleau emphasizes simultaneously the specific risk of converted citizens, as well as the influence that Islamic State propaganda can have on the minds of the most fragile.
- These incidents clearly reveal that **the Islamic State does not need to directly order attacks for them to take place or to be attempted. This element considerably increases the risk that the attack will succeed.**
- If one considers generally that “only” 100 Canadians are a part of the fighting ranks of the Islamic State or other radical organizations in Syria and Iraq, the **incident in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu must be considered as another alarming signal among the countries who have seen the most volunteers to join fighting in the Middle East**, particularly France (at least 1,000 people), Great Britain and Germany (between 500 and 700 volunteers for each of these two countries) and Belgium (with about 600 reported cases as of last August).

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