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Since I am the guy who got the whole Shete, Machete thing started with what I thought was a really innocent question, I got to thinking and decide to write this. It's my Idea on how the name Shete came to be the common term for sword in the Midwest and surrounding areas.

## How the Shete got its name.

By

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Excerpt: Iowans Remember: The Oral history of the Iowa Republic - The first 30 years.  
Iowa Republic University Free Press, Ames Iowa 2028

So you want to know about the Shete, well first off forget all the stories, it wasn't because every one started using Machetes immediately after the change for protection, this was Iowa not some back ass third world country, we had power tools for Gods sake! You know...tools that you, oh hell never mind. And let me tell you this, who ever came up with the idea that every one on the east side had a machete in his garage was just plane

stupid!! Me I carried my softball bat and let me tell you it saw some use by God! Punk ass cops gonna come in ant tell us they are going to take all the stuff we off loaded form that train and give it to the people in Clive! That the Grain elevator that was in our neighborhood now belonged to the state and we had to off load it! Think we were going to roll over without a fight, those bastards! Well we showed them, and forget what the fancy people at the capitol said about the train, it was over a mile long, and the elevator was full, there was plenty for every one and we were willing to share! Those government bastards just wanted to save them selves from getting their hands dirty, and make us do all the work! They wanted to take all the food and stuff that we had off loaded and were guarding and had the gall to want us to carry it half way across town. Screw em!

Oh, ya the shete, sorry, it's been 30 years and I was old then, so forgive an old fart if his mind wonders.

The story is pretty simple really; it was about a month right after the first big shown down between the east sider's and the government people that happened about two weeks after the change. We were pretty well organized by the end of that first week, thanks to those witches, and Chris Richards and his friends. God when I think about how bad it could have went, man we got lucky! Not only a full grain elevator but also a full mixed freight train stopped right next to that abandoned elevator on Capitol Avenue. Richards convinced us to start unloading the stuff the second day and to put it inside the elevator to make it easier to guard. And make sure you get this right! He never said that we should kill any one trying to take stuff off the train! I was there OK! What he said was to use as much force as necessary to protect the stuff we already had, and the rail cars we were off loading at any given time. But to let any one else take what ever they wanted from rail cars we had not yet opened. And to dam well not go in and jack the stuff from a car an outsider has started to salvage! Now after they left the car that was a different story, but no one from the East Side ever refused any one the right to salvage any thing off that train

Any way it took the Boss man two weeks to finally look at the East Side, too busy checking on those folks in West Des Moines Clive and Urbandle, his money people

for the election, had to be taken care of them first not us Ghetto people! Stupid bastards finally realize that all those years of zoning laws had put all the bulk food and working rail lines on the East side and it still took them over two weeks to realize that. Then the bastards had the nerve to try and take all the stuff we had already unloaded and wanted us to haul it out to Clive to some refugee camp! Stupid bastards! Like we were going to do that with out a fight, and let me tell you we were ready by God! Bows, bats, barricades the whole works. Let me tell you kid it would have been a hell of a fight. But that witch Linda Jefferson managed to calm things down enough so that she and Richards could talk to the cops and government people. They managed to get a meeting with the Boss man and let me tell you they cut one hell of a deal.

Stop shaking your head, I was there dam it and those history book, well they don't ever tell the whole story, and what they do tell is mostly lies!

Oh sorry, the shete....ya back to what happened.

Well any way it was late April, and things were starting to go fairly well for us on the East side. A little too well for the boss man I think and I think he wanted to slap us back into our proper place after forcing such a good deal on him. Hell back then this was the ghetto! Where all the dam trash lived, and I know it riled those folks in Clive no end. They wanted us back in the ghetto doing their dirty work, back in our proper place one of them said. So the Boss man and his friends they passed this law; didn't even let us have a say on it, that any one not a member of the guard was forbidden to carry weapons. Oh we could still keep our bows as long as we only carried them to go out hunting and got permission, but no bats, no spears, no knives longer then 10 inches. By then he had those SCA pukes working for him, and part of the Guard organized with better weapons then riot gear. Law said any one carrying a weapon, or any neighborhood that was armed would be considered in open rebellion against the Lawful government and subject to immediate execution and confication of all their goods!

Well we knew we were in a Fu.. ah messed up situation. Ya we were able to stand them down during the first show down, but now things were different, we had some

armor, but not much. Hay you expect workingmen and women to have the time to go off and play at being Knights in shining armor like those rich pukes did back then?! We had the area east of 14<sup>th</sup> street blocked off, mostly cars pushed end to end on 14<sup>th</sup> and other side streets and the like. We did had some serious stuff around the elevators, beams and barbed wire, knife rests blocking the roads, men and women on top with bows and fire bombs, all that. But a pitched battle would have been pretty iffy, and we knew it, worse yet the Boss Man knew it too. But no way were we going to give up, this was our home, we were fighting for our families, and our chance of building a decent life. Plus we had done all that work, no way were any of us going to walk away from all that.

But a fight would have been bad, we would have won but it would have been bad. And forget what those history books say, Richards and his friends never wanted one! Why you kids believe that a man smart enough to play a major roll in the formation of the Republic would be that stupid I'll never know. Hell he's one of the main reasons the East Side not only survived but is what it is today. But any way Richards knew there was no way he could convince the Boss Man to let us keep our weapons, and that there was no way to get us to stop carrying weapons, so he had to find a way to do both.

He probably got the idea for the original Shete, and those original ones were a lot different from the ones you see now, from that Philippine family over on 16<sup>th</sup>. Or maybe from his time in the Philippines as a soldier, either way I know he got allot of help from the Philippine community, they knew how to make Bolo's out of leaf springs using a grinder, not only make them but make them fast! And if there is one thing we had plenty of it was leaf springs, and it's not hard to rig a grinder to be powered by hand.

I still remember the day the Boss man's guards came by to try and enforce the new law, there we were all peaceful law abiding citizens going about our day to day tasks with yard long bolo' strapped to our sides, and big grins on our faces.

Then Richards with that big grin on his face, just standing there at the gate all innocent like nothing was out of the ordinary, just another day on the East Side. Talking to that major who kept saying Machetes were weapons and Richards, that devil, smiling

and nodding his head agreeing with him but saying that these were not machetes but Shete's and Shete's were tools. The look on that major's face when Richards looked him dead in the eye and said, "Come on major what are you going to do next? Take our axes and bush cutters? What about hammers? Or saws? We need our tools, to survive! And if you are gonna take em you are gonna have a fight on you hand!"

The major had to know he was in trouble, I know he did not want a fight against this many armed people, and we dam sure did not want to take on his men, but he did have a job to do. I think he welcomed a way out that allowed him to save face. He got one of those official looks on his face and said, "Ok I you can keep your tools, but if you start carrying weapons I'll be back." He then formed up his men and marched away.

Well you know the rest, as soon as other people found out how to beat the law they started making all kinds of bladed weapons and calling them Shetes, and the East Siders began to make armor to protect them selves. About a year or two later Daniels and Josephs started their company "D & J arms" out at the old tire plant and came out with the standard version of the long Shete that every one know today.

And that's the real story, not as flashy or dramatic as what you read in the history book, but then again the truth never is.