

# Houston Chronicle

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## 'A great injustice has been done'

### Conroe crowd cheers ex-GI who refused U.N. assignment

By **ERIC HANSON**  
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CONROE — Michael New, the Conroe soldier discharged from the U.S. Army for refusing to wear U.N. insignia and serve under U.N. command, returned home to an enthusiastic welcome Sunday at the Montgomery County Courthouse.

"A great injustice has been done to this young man. He is guilty of one thing only, and that is exclusively loving his country," said Col. Ron Ray, New's attorney.

A crowd of about 150 people braved heavy rains and the late afternoon sun to hear speakers praise New, who claimed to be upholding the Constitution when he

refused an order to serve under United Nations command in Macedonia.

In July of last year, New's unit, based in Germany, was ordered to that eastern European country as part of an international peacekeeping force.

The soldiers also were informed that they would wear United Nations insignia.

New refused, saying the Constitution and army regulations forbade soldiers from wearing foreign badges and serving under non-U.S. officers.

In January he was tried by a U.S. Army panel and found guilty of disobedience and given a bad-conduct discharge.

In March, a federal judge refused

to intervene in the military's court-martial proceedings against New.

New's commanding officer issued an order implementing the court's finding earlier this month and he returned to Texas.

One of the speakers at the rally was David Hall, of Associated Conservatives of Texas, who called the 22-year-old New a hero.

New's father, Daniel New, called on the crowd to prevent their sons and daughters from joining the military until Congress deals with the issue of U.S. service personnel serving in foreign lands in undeclared wars.

"We should boycott the recruitment centers and send no more children to sacrifice on the altar of a new world order," New said.