

The Last Joint Effort, a tribute to FOCO

by Jim Beatson

I thought Foco sounded brilliant and was in phone, letter, cuttings and pamphlet contact with Bris pretty much on a weekly basis (almost daily) and reading the Qld newspapers every few days by dropping into Aust and Qld Houses in the Strand. I even gave a talk on Foco to Australians and New Zealanders Against the Vietnam War in London.

It's true to say Foco was the inspiration I never saw. But, like John Stanwell, I saw it as exactly as what ZZZ should do. John was brilliant in starting up a team to look after the promotional fund raising side of ZZZ with great financial and organisational success. The Joint Effort, clearly inspired by Foco, was at the heart of these fundraising efforts.

In 1990s when I returned to work for 4ZZZ for 2 years ('93 & '94) a small group of us organised one last night time Joint Effort just as I had imagined Foco to be.

Our headline bands were *Luv's A Blur* and an Afro band (whose name escapes me), with a music break during which a Hemp Clothing Fashion Show took place with the Queensland heads of Amnesty, Animal Liberation and Greenpeace as our manikins with two comics in costume as the MCs plus a performance artist all in the main dance area. In a screening area we showed Queensland movies: *Madness of Two*, Queensland's first feminist feature film, the award winning doco *Meatheads* and Damien Ledwych's Atom award winning animation, *Feral Television*. In another room there was a Veggo Cafe (can't remember whose but Animal Lib lined it up) and in the same area we had a few short talks on activism and some stand up comedians. The only thing I felt we missed through lack of time and energy (we were trying a run a very busy radio station at the same time) was a short theatre performance, poetry readings and decoration of the huge area.

It was a great night but financially only broke even as God laid one of those tropical thunderstorms of torrential proportions which commenced mid afternoon and was still going when we closed around midnight.

To finish. It had been a very hard slog over those two years. A dreadful battle to push the junkie group within Z to not have any fingers in its finances, overhaul its programming to serve the interests of the audience instead of its presenters (including excellent qualitative and quantitative surveys done by QUT students), building a new newsroom team with two telephones recorder booths, getting three years of shoe boxes of invoices and accounts audited, increasing subscriptions from 500 to 1300 and finally raising the deposit for purchasing the building from the CPA through several major events and fund raisers and getting a \$70,000 State government grant. I also persuaded the architect, (?? A great guy designed the Cement Box theatre whose name is on the tip of my tongue) drew up detailed plans to rebuild the building. That final downpour plus the endless resistance (and also great support from some ZZZ staffers) led me to quit and move back to the normality of Sydney.
Blah, blah, blah.