

REVOKING AN EXEMPTION FROM SOCIAL SECURITY

Ministers may exempt themselves from self-employment taxes for ministerial earnings by filing a timely 4361 Form if they HAVE A RELIGIOUS CONVICTION against RECEIVING government insurance – not a conviction against PAYING it. Many ministers have exempted themselves

unethically because they did not understand

that provision. Some ministers who opted out of Social Security have wanted to rejoin once they realized they were not qualified to receive Medicare benefits - and that health insurance over the age of 65 was nearly impossible to obtain. However, they were not permitted to revoke their exemption.

CHURCH LAW

In December 1999, Congress opened a window of time during which ministers may revoke their exemption. Those who do so must begin paying self-employment taxes as of either January 1, 2000, or January 1, 2001. In order to avoid paying several quarters of back taxes, ministers may file a form anytime this year and elect to begin paying taxes as of January 1, 2001.

You must file form 2031, *Revocation of Exemption from Social Security Coverage by Certain Members of the Clergy*.

I URGE YOU TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS WINDOW AND REVOKE YOUR EXEMPTION FOR ETHICAL AS WELL AS PRACTICAL REASONS.