

for them but only when it doesn't interfere with our work. Most Indians prefer that we do it because we don't charge. A lawyer will ~~charge~~ charge, about ~~twenty-five~~ twenty-five or thirty dollars.

(What does the Indian Bureau think now about having allotted Indian lands on an individual basis?)

Well, you always have to remember: First there was the tremendous pressure of the constituents on their congressmen. They wanted land and the congressmen weren't able to resist. Congressmen are one-hundred percent politicians and always have their ear to the ground. Americans were clamoring for land. Secondly, in that period of our national expansion the greatest desire of any person was to own 160 acres of his own land. Our social philosophy was that a man who owned his own land was a man of substance. So congress did what they thought everybody wanted and what was best. The allotment system was a failure because the Indian by culture and by inclination was not a farmer. He had no idea of ownership in severalty. And any work that was ever done in the days before the white man was done by the Indians. The Indian man saved himself for fighting and hunting. He had to rest up. The Indian was a failure as a farmer because he couldn't get his wife out there to work. Then too, he just wasn't interested. So he became a race of absentee land owners. The white man hated to see land idle when he could be making money out of it. Finally the white man would get use of the land, not anyway he could. The government tried to prevent these "trespassers", they called them. Congress finally decided to make leasing legal. This was the first acknowledgement of the failure of the allotment system.

The present policy of the Bureau of Indian Affairs is to get the land back to tribal ownership. (Do you think it is too late to affect this?) Yes, in this part of the country. Here land is too expensive. The amount of Indian land to non-Indian land represents such a disparity that it would be practically impossible in an intensively farmed area like Alabama.