

States' Rights

States' Right is the belief that each individual state has the exclusive power to govern themselves. Under states' rights, individual states retain all powers to govern except those listed in the Constitution. During the years leading up to the Civil War, southerners felt they had to defend these rights against the federal government which was infringing upon them. People of the South justified their secession from the United States because they felt when the government refused to enforce the Fugitive Slave Law and tried to limit slavery in territories it was an invasion upon their rights. This "invasion" gave them the right to abolish all ties with the United States. It was upon this belief that the Confederate States of America was formed.

A picture of states' rights might look like this:

