

ARTICLE I, ARTICLE II, & ARTICLE III

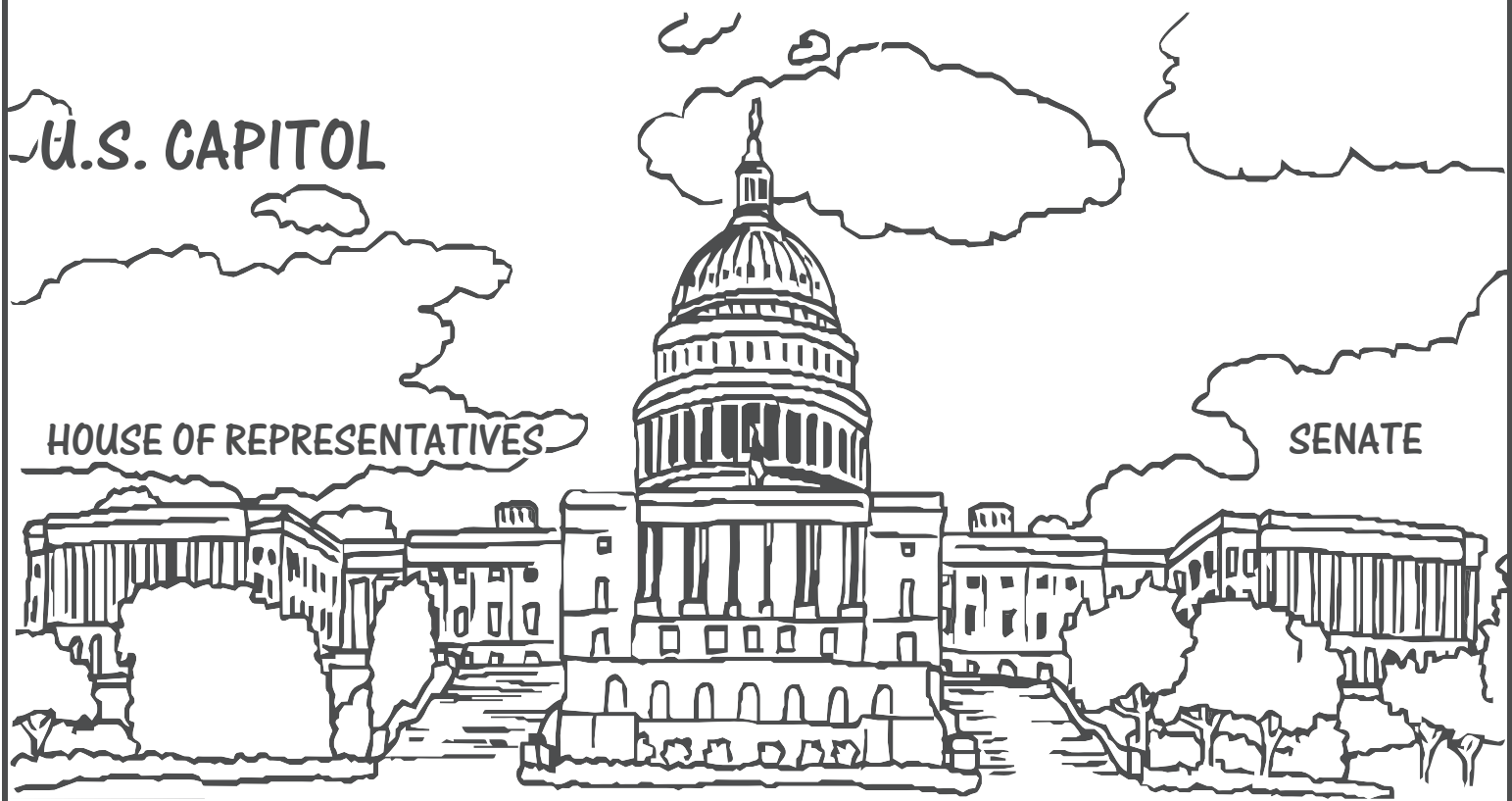
Three Branches of Government

Articles 1, 2, and 3 divide the Federal Government into three branches; Legislative, Executive, and Judicial.

History teaches us that if all government power is in the hands of a king or a small group of people, they will usually turn into tyrants. A tyrant abuses the individual rights of the people. James Madison proposed that our government be separated into three branches. This divides power and makes it more difficult to abuse rights.

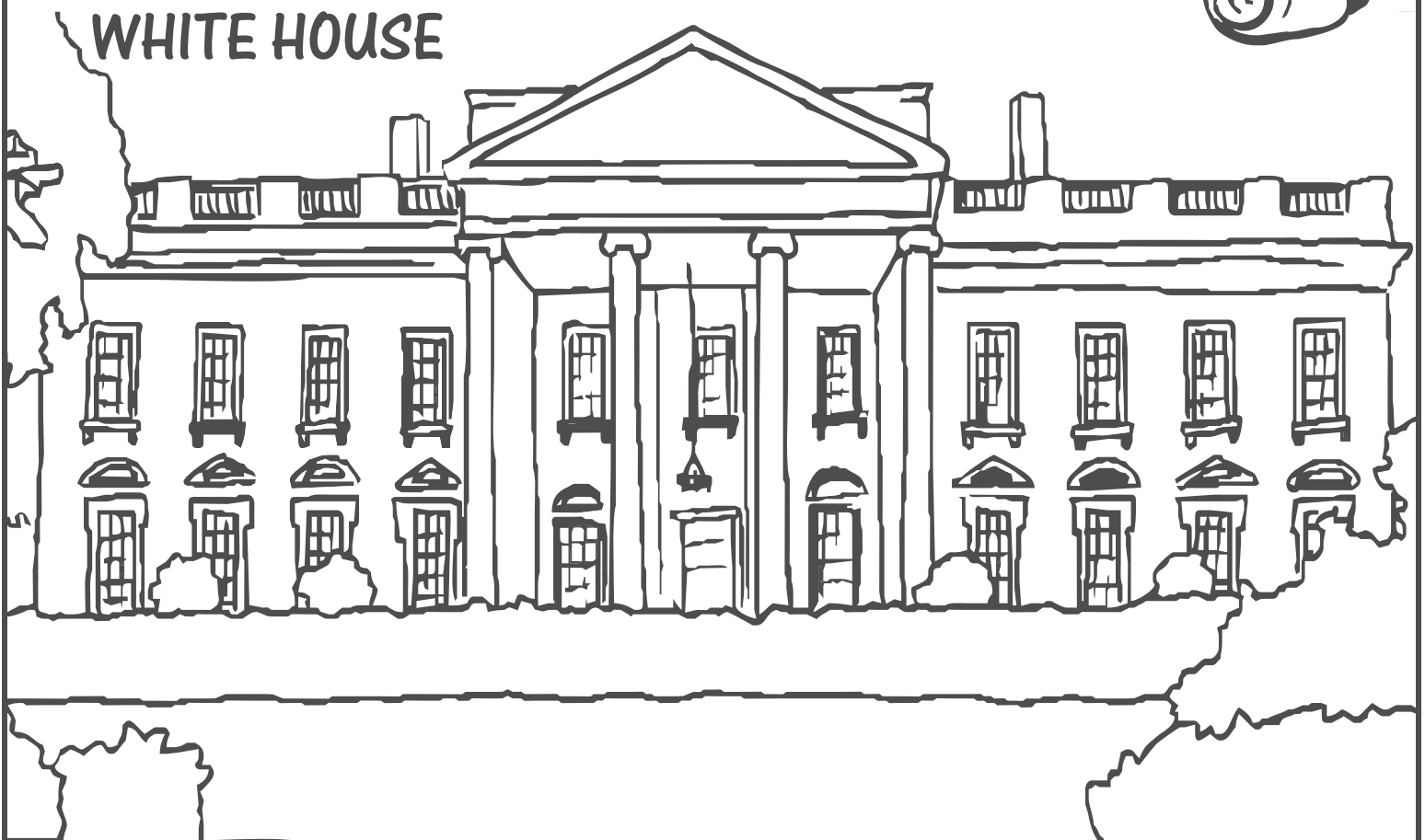
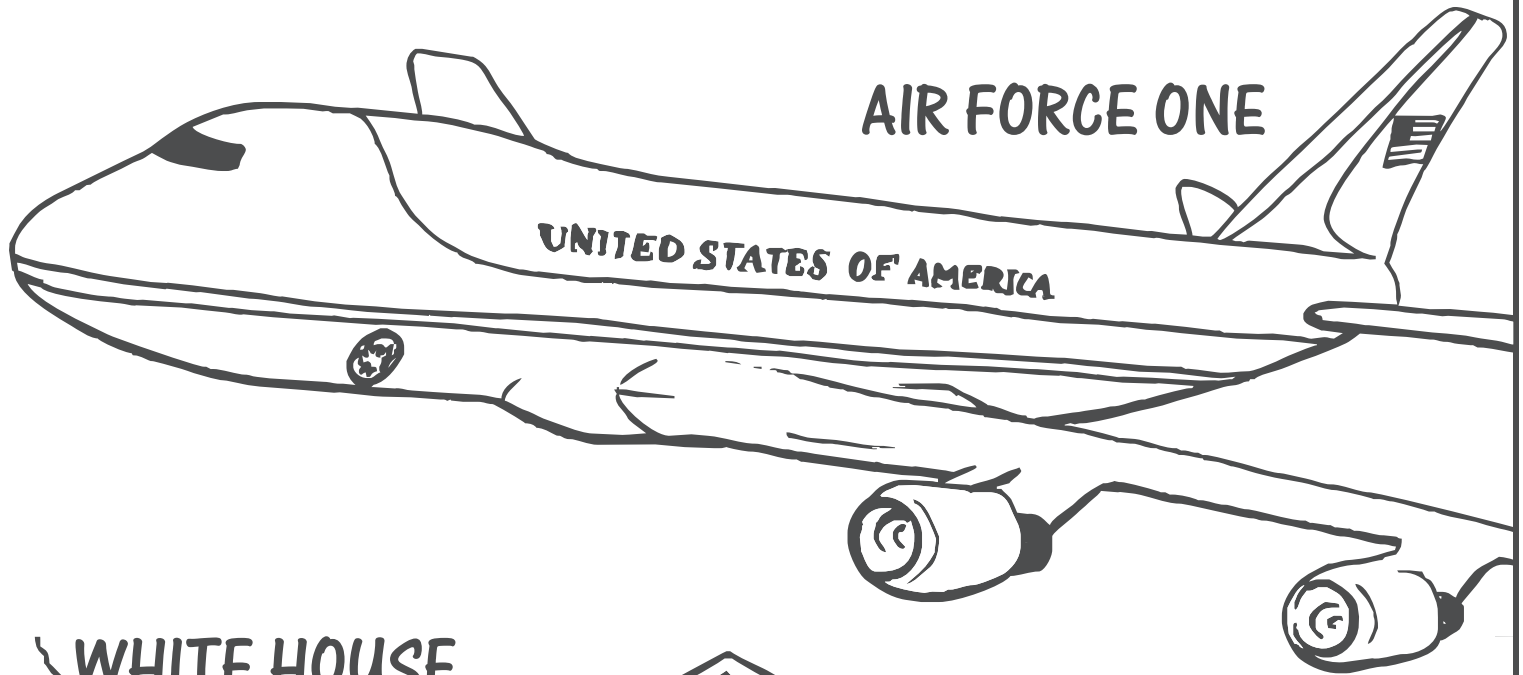
ARTICLE I - LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

The Legislative Branch is the law making branch. They meet in the Capitol and make the rules for our government. However, they cannot make just any rules or laws. They can only make laws that the Constitution says they can make. The Legislative Branch is the most powerful branch because it has the power to tax and to make the laws. To spread this power, it is divided into two houses, the House of Representatives and the Senate. All laws have to be passed by both.



ARTICLE II - EXECUTIVE BRANCH

The President of the United States is the Executive Branch. He lives and works in the White House. He and his staff execute the law. In other words, they put the laws into action. He meets with leaders of other countries, and he is the commander of the army. He can also forgive people of their crimes; this is called a pardon.



ARTICLE III - JUDICIAL BRANCH

The Supreme Court and other lower federal courts interpret and judge the law. If there are any disagreements between citizens and/or states, the courts help decide how to resolve the disagreement based on the laws. Judges are chosen by the President, and the Senate must approve of them. Once federal judges are appointed, they serve in that position as long as they continue to have good behavior. If they behave, they can stay a judge for the rest of their life.

