

Sec. 8—Powers of Congress

Cl. 3—Power to Regulate Commerce

merce or affecting commerce were brought within the protection of the minimum wage-maximum hours standards.⁹³⁴ The “enterprise concept” was sustained by the Court in *Maryland v. Wirtz*.⁹³⁵ Justice Harlan for a unanimous Court on this issue found the extension entirely proper on the basis of two theories: one, a business’s competitive position in commerce is determined in part by all its significant labor costs, and not just those costs attributable to its employees engaged in production in interstate commerce, and, two, labor peace and thus smooth functioning of interstate commerce were facilitated by the termination of substandard labor conditions affecting all employees, and not just those actually engaged in interstate commerce.⁹³⁶

Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act.—After its initial frustrations, Congress returned to the task of bolstering agriculture by passing the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of June 3, 1937,⁹³⁷ authorizing the Secretary of Agriculture to fix the minimum prices of certain agricultural products, when the handling of such products occurs “in the current of interstate or foreign commerce or . . . directly burdens, obstructs or affects interstate or foreign commerce in such commodity or product thereof.” In *United States v. Wrightwood Dairy Co.*,⁹³⁸ the Court sustained an order of the Secretary of Agriculture fixing the minimum prices to be paid to producers of milk in the Chicago “marketing area.” The dairy company demurred to the regulation on the ground it applied to milk produced and sold intrastate. Sustaining the order, the Court said:

Congress plainly has power to regulate the price of milk distributed through the medium of interstate commerce . . . and it possesses every power needed to make that regulation effective. The commerce power is not confined in its exercise to the regulation of commerce among the States. It extends to those activities intrastate which so affect interstate commerce, or the exertion of the power of Congress over it, as to make regulation of them appropriate means to the attainment of a legitimate end, the effective execution of the granted power to regulate interstate commerce. The power of Congress over interstate commerce is plenary and complete in itself, may be exercised to its utmost extent, and acknowledges no limitations other than are prescribed in the Constitution. . . . It follows that no form of State activity can constitutionally thwart the regulatory power granted by the com-

⁹³⁴ 29 U.S.C. §§ 203(r), 203(s).

⁹³⁵ 392 U.S. 183 (1968).

⁹³⁶ Another aspect of this case was overruled in *National League of Cities v. Usery*, 426 U.S. 833 (1976), which itself was overruled in *Garcia v. San Antonio Metropolitan Transit Auth.*, 469 U.S. 528 (1985).

⁹³⁷ 50 Stat. 246, 7 U.S.C. §§ 601 *et seq.*

⁹³⁸ 315 U.S. 110 (1942). The Court had previously upheld other legislation that regulated agricultural production through limitations on sales in or affecting interstate commerce. *Currin v. Wallace*, 306 U.S. 1 (1939); *Mulford v. Smith*, 307 U.S. 38 (1939).