

## Biography:

**Edward John Orzel**, was the son of Polish immigrants who lived in Whitemouth, Manitoba where his father worked for the Canadian Pacific Railway. He attended Holy Rosary grade school and Cathedral high school and was a graduate of McMaster University and Osgoode Hall. After articling with John Louis Agro from 1957-1958, Orzel was called to the Bar in 1959. Through the years, Orzel specialized in personal injury, sport injury, medical malpractice and environmental malpractice. He later became senior partner in the law firm of Agro, Zaffiro, Parente, Orzel and Baker, now Agro Zaffiro LLP. He served on the executive of the Glendale Golf and Country Club and was the past president of the Hamilton Medical-Legal Society. He was later appointed to Queen's Counsel in 1974.

Described as, "a superb litigator... a very generous person and a leader both of his firm, Hamilton lawyers, and indeed of the Ontario Bar", Edward Orzel was not only a leader in the community, including being a key sponsor of the Hamilton Polonia Soccer Club, but also to the younger lawyers of the Agro Zaffiro firm.

Unwilling to waver in the face of opposition, many found Orzel an unmovable force in court. He was often characterized by his undying persistence on certain points, if he felt confident in his claims. The civil litigation lawyer had defended the Hamilton Board of Education in a \$6 million lawsuit that was launched by the family of a high school junior football player who broke his neck during a game in 1982 and became a quadriplegic. The judge dismissed the case. At the time, Orzel told *The Spectator* that the decision was important to the future of football in Ontario.

Orzel's great support and encouragement for his fellow associates, and his intense focus in the courtroom leave an ever-lasting impression both on those whom he defeated at trial, and even more notably to those who he helped achieve all of their greatest aspirations.

Orzel is survived by his wife Lillian, son Chris and daughter Andrea, two grandchildren, and a brother and sister.

Source: Newcombe, Ian, DeSantis, Francis, et al. "The History of Agro Zaffiro" pg., 7.  
<https://www.hamiltonlaw.on.ca/docs/default-source/history-memory-book/the-history-of-agro-zaffiro.pdf?sfvrsn=2>