Microsoft Surface Laptop 2 Touchscreen on Linux

Getting the touchscreen to work on Garuda / Arch Linux

I recently came across the Garuda Linux SwayFX variant. It looked nice so I decided to give it a try on some older Microsoft Surface Laptops. I've never used Arch Linux or a variant before. I like the look and feel of the Garuda SwayFX distribution. After loading the [Surface-Linux kernel](), everything worked just find on a Surface Laptop 5, but not on the Surface Laptop 2's.

After comparing the Garuda / Arch system to a working Surface Laptop 2 running Ubuntu Sway Remix 24.04, I noticed the kernel modules **mei** and **mei_me** weren't loaded on the Garuda / Arch system. When I manually used modprobe to load the two modules the touchscreen began to work immediately.

It took me a while to track it down, but I finally found that these two modules were blacklisted in the file shown below. After commenting those two lines out and rebooting, the touchscreen started working on boot.

```
# File: /usr/lib/modprobe.d/noime.conf
# Intel VPRO remote access technology driver.
# 202040704 - Comment these two lines out. They're needed for Surface Laptop 2 touchscreen to
work
#blacklist mei
#blacklist mei_me
```

With those two modules no longer blacklisted the IPTS devices finally showed up in the input devices list.

```
  ┌─user@local in ~ took 2ms
  └─λ lsmod | grep mei
mei_hdcp              28672  0
mei_pxp               20480  0
mei_me                57344  3
mei                  200704  7 mei_hdcp,mei_pxp,mei_me,ipts
```

```
┌─user@local in ~ took 9ms
└─λ grep IPTS /proc/bus/input/devices
N: Name="IPTS 1B96:0979 Touchscreen"
N: Name="IPTS 1B96:0979"
N: Name="IPTS Touch"
N: Name="IPTS Stylus"
```

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