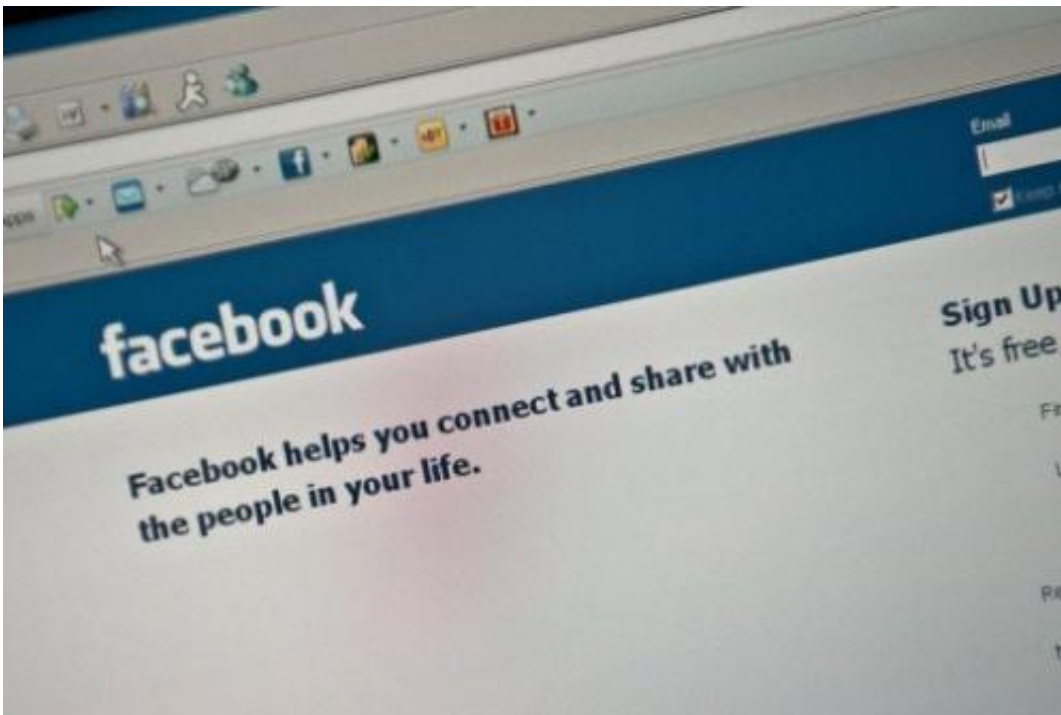


# Venezuelans told to 'unfriend' Facebook over US spying

July 11 2013

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A government minister in Venezuela, which has offered fugitive US intelligence leaker Edward Snowden asylum, is urging her countrymen to cancel their Facebook accounts lest they be targeted by US snooping.

"Fellow Venezuelans: cancel your Facebook accounts, since you unwittingly have worked as CIA informants! Look at the Snowden case!" prisons minister Maria Iris Varela said in a Twitter posting.

Varela also said victims of "gringo espionage" should file lawsuits to demand "fair compensation" and bankrupt the US government.

In apparent limbo in Moscow, Snowden has applied for asylum in 27 countries as he tries to evade American justice for disclosing a vast program of US worldwide [electronic surveillance](#).

It remains unclear how Snowden would be able to leave the transit zone of Sheremetyevo Airport, where he has been marooned without a valid passport since he arrived from Hong Kong on June 23.

Snowden, a former IT contractor at the US National Security Agency, said it had gathered vast amounts of users' private Internet data from Facebook and other Internet giants.

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