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By DAVE ITZKOFF

The satirical publication *The Onion* apologized on Monday for a post published Sunday night on *its Twitter account* that made an obscene reference to Quvenzhané Wallis, the 9-year-old actress nominated for an Academy Award for her performance in "Beasts of the Southern Wild."

"On behalf of The Onion, I offer my personal apology to Quvenzhané Wallis and the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences for the tweet that was circulated last night during the Oscars," Steve Hannah, chief executive of The Onion, wrote in a post on Facebook . "It was crude and offensive — not to mention inconsistent with The Onion's commitment to parody and

satire, however biting."

Mr. Hannah's post continued: "No person should be subjected to such a senseless, humorless comment masquerading as satire. The tweet was taken down within an hour of publication. We have instituted new and tighter Twitter procedures to ensure that this kind of mistake does not occur again. In addition, we are taking immediate steps to discipline those individuals responsible. Miss Wallis, you are young and talented and deserve better. All of us at The Onion are deeply sorry."

The tweet was posted during the Academy Awards ceremony amid other comical items about the Oscars ("Daniel Craig Takes Home Pretty Good Actor Award," read one parody headline, while another declared, "Kathryn Bigelow Stuns on Red Carpet Wearing Blood-Soaked Rags Osama bin Laden Was Killed In.")

The item about Ms. Wallis was widely re-tweeted but also drew quick condemnation from followers of The Onion's Twitter account, and was deleted about an hour or so after it was published. The offending tweet was posted around the same time that Seth MacFarlane, the Oscars host, remarked about Ms. Wallis that "it'll be 16 years before she's too old for" George Clooney, a joke that was also criticized for being insensitive to the young actress.